

Greek dessert, baklava, on foreign pastry cart

By ETHEL SIMMONS
When Kingswood and Cranbrook Schools got together to plan their first joint fund-raiser, the result was the upcoming "Foreign Connection." An international supper, from 5 to 8

p.m. in the baronial hall, is part of the day's activities Saturday at Cranbrook in Bloomfield Hills. According to Sally Parsons, whose daughter attends Kingswood, "We were going to have the Cranbrook dining room do the whole menu, but so many mothers wanted to do desserts, the pastry carts will bring with their contributions." Also wanting to share in the dessert making were students of Francine Rode from her January enrichment course in Greek culture and cooking.



Teacher Francine Rode (center) and Kingswood School Cranbrook girls help in preparation of baklava (Staff photos by Barbara McClellan)

A TEAM of girls gathered last week in the Kingswood School kitchen where they made the Greek, honey-drenched dessert, baklava. Ms. Rode, who heads the English department, is not Greek herself but explained, "My major in school was classical studies. I've been to Greece many times and wound up with Greek friends. I've got a lot of Greek recipes." She describes Greek food as "very traditional home-type dishes. They have unique spices and flavor." To make baklava, you alternate layers of Greek filo ("It's really strudel dough," Ms. Rode said) brushed with butter and a mixture of nuts and spices.

"GREEKTOWN tends to be expensive to buy things," she said, "so I just buy the specialties." She added, "But they have fantastic prices on lamb. The traditional lamb chops are always good for a meal." A Kingswood girl removed the damp towel that kept the filo from Greetown moist, then tenderly lifted and folded a sheet before laying it in the baking dish. "It feels like parchment," she said. Other students chopped almonds and walnuts. "It takes forever," one girl declared. Mrs. Rode said making baklava isn't difficult. "It's just tedious." The baklava was to be baked that evening, then covered with the syrup before going into the freezer. It would be thawed out a few days before the supper and refrigerated until the day of "The Foreign Connection."



Nuts and spices go together and top buttered sheets of Greek filo (strudel dough)

Good Life

BEFORE THEY get to pastries, Cranbrook guests will enjoy English roast of beef, French green beans al mandine, Swiss potatoes and Greek salad. Tickets for the modestly priced supper can be purchased by calling Cranbrook. Other events Saturday include a fair with an assortment of booths from 3 to 6 p.m. in the Cranbrook Little Gym and an evening coffee house with live dance music, for older students in the Cranbrook lower dining hall. "The Foreign Connection" proceeds will be used to sponsor foreign exchange students, as well as students on special scholarship programs.

- BAKLAVA**
- 1/2 pound sweet butter, melted
 - 1/2 pound filo
 - 1/2 pounds blanched almonds, chopped
 - 1/2 pound walnuts, chopped
 - 1 cup sugar
 - 1 teaspoon cinnamon
 - 1/2 teaspoon allspice
 - 15-18 whole cloves
- Syrup**
- 1 cup honey
 - 1 cup water
 - 1 cup sugar
 - 1 cinnamon stick
 - 1 teaspoon grated orange peel
 - 1/2 teaspoon vanilla

From society's banquet table

By MARGARET MILLER
If you had been one of those who attended the society banquets of a few years back, you'd know all about cocoa paintings. Also ice carvings and tallow figures. These works—edible but never eaten—graced many a delicacy-laden table in the days of more lavish and leisurely dining, says Laura Kriss, a brand-new graduate of Schoolcraft College's culinary arts program. But they have become pretty much just arts, according to Miss Kriss, who is delighted that she had a chance to learn them during her studies in the Livonia school. Cocoa painting involves pictures created in intricate detail on a hardened gum-paste base that resembles fine china. You don't see it often, but Miss Kriss and her fellow student, Pam Michael of Garden City, intend to do something about that with a small business. Ice sculpture is better known, but not often practiced because facilities and materials to learn the art aren't very available. Tallow work involves molding the tallow, you render from animal fat around a wire form to create a sculptured figure. It's impressive, Miss Kriss says, but she has to admit there are drawbacks. The tallow is greasy to work with, she says, and pretty smelly when soft. (It arrives at the banquet table refrigerated and odorless, though.)

MISS KRISS, a Northville resident, showed samples of cocoa painting and tallow figures in the recent culinary arts sale at Oakland Community College, Orchard Ridge campus. She and Mrs. Michael have concentrated on the cocoa works during the Schoolcraft term just completed. "The gum-paste base," she said, "is made of sugar, glucose, cornstarch and a little water. You roll it out like pie dough—it's that consistency—and then form it over the back of a dish. It has to dry for a couple of days, and when ready to paint it's more delicate than fragile china." The picture is outlined first and then painted with a fine brush dipped in a melted chocolate mixture. "Or you can use cocoa mixed with enough butter," Miss Kriss said. "Use white chocolate for the shading, and sometimes white chocolate is tinted for pastel pictures." MISS KRISS does her paintings free hand. "I studied at Schoolcraft for two semesters," she said. "It helps if you're an artist." Mrs. Michael isn't an artist, but comes up with attractive paintings by tracing lines sketched in. Both have studied the art with Jim Van Buren, one of the chefs in the culinary arts program. They are following in the tradition of many great chefs of the past who did decorations of this kind for their elegant banquets. Most good pastry chefs today are learning the art, Miss Kriss added.

her artistic talent as well as being a practical skill. Mrs. Michael, who has won 25 ribbons in cake-decorating shows, is employed by a Detroit bakery and makes special occasion cakes. The two women currently are working on a supply of cocoa paintings to offer for sale. They figure the paintings will be back soon as decor for the elegant banquet.



Laura Kriss (right) gives Pam Michael some advice on a cocoa painting creation (Staff photo)

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