

taste buds

chef Larry Janes

Cooking no labor for chef

I'll be honest. I have to give credit where credit is due. As a chef, food writer, cook and patriarch of the Janes Gang, I only wish I had the time to play in the kitchen all day. When I meet readers at groceries and restaurants over town, the most asked question is always, "Where do you get your ideas and recipes?"

I'll answer this with a four-part response. First, I love to cook. Cooking is not work, it is an opportunity for me to create something. I liken it to an artist with my knives and utensils as brushes and food as the paint. I get to play scientist by wondering how a roux will thicken a sauce. I get to play mathematician when I triple a recipe and convert 1 1/2 teaspoons times three. I'm a nutritionalist when I create a meal using all the food groups, and an environmentalist when I recycle cans, jars and throw my scraps on the compost pile.

Next, I listen. I listen to what the great chefs of our day say and do. I watch cooking demonstrations more than some guys watch football. I've learned from some of the best in the business. Giuliano Engelli, Master Chef Milos Chelika, the venerable grande dame, Julia Childs, and last but certainly not least, my momma. This lady can make an award-winning pie crust using a bag of flour, some Crisco, water, salt and only her hands. The only cookbooks she owns are torn scraps of yellowed paper crammed into an old shoebox using a bag of flour, some Crisco, water, salt and only her hands. The only cookbooks she owns are torn scraps of yellowed paper crammed into an old shoebox using a bag of flour, some Crisco, water, salt and only her hands.

There is little doubt that the third reason for my culinary success is that I love to read. I read cookbooks like a CEO reads the Wall Street Journal. I get every cooking magazine available and read them cover-to-cover. I read everything I can get my hands on when it comes to food. I read nutrition labels, ingredient listings, press releases and product development information. Friends send me food related clippings from all over the country. Favorite culinary authors are M.F.K. Fisher, Rose Levy Berenbaum and Robin Mather. I relish the opportunity to get stuck by a train so I can read or ponder something about food. In enjoy "reading" menus, and can pretty much tell when a chef writes the menu for kitchen convenience or creative abilities.

The last reason I simply enjoy cooking to its fullest is the simple fact that I have all the proper tools. I'm a gadget freak. I can turn a cucumber into a palm tree in 30 seconds. I slice, dice, whirl, chop, blend, puree, mince, rice, frappe, saute, broil, bake, deep fry, microwave, shred, steam, liquify and beat with the flick of a switch. Imelda Marcos' shoe collection has nothing against my kitchen gadget drawer. I have pizza bricks, oven mitts, sandwich makers and bread makers. I can't imagine what I would do without my Cuisinart and Kitchen Aid. How did the pilgrims survive? I have to venture on down to mommas to clear my head and light the gas oven on my hands and knees to keep from buying more from Williams-Sonoma and Kitchen Glamor. This is truly the joy of technological age when they can mass produce a machine that will roast and grind your coffee, then brew it to perfection and monitor the heat for proper holding. Why do I love what I'm doing? Because I hear from folks like you who say they read me and try some of the things I suggest. That's the biggest compliment of all. And with the help of all those listed above, I thank you.

See recipes inside.

Toying over new gadgets in the kitchen

By Joan Boram
special writer

THE HOLIDAYS are over, the wrapping paper and ribbon are ironed and put away until next year, and post-holiday letdown has begun. Or, it would have begun if you weren't preoccupied with that chrome-plated gizmo on the kitchen counter.

Sure, it was a gesture of love and affection and confidence that once you find the "on" switch, you'll be able to cope with instructions written by a Japanese engineer. And who could have guessed that you'd rather have a cashmere sweater set?

AS WITH any other relationship, first you get used to having it around, and gradually you grow to love it.

"People often call me at the Oakland County Extension Service to ask about a new kitchen machine that isn't working right," said home economist Lois Thieleke. "The first question I ask is, 'Have you read the instruction book?' You'd be surprised how many times I hear, 'No, do you think it would do any good?'"

"It would do a lot more good than putting the machine on the phone so I can listen and tell them if it's working right, as a few people have offered to do."

If you're intimidated by your new toy, take heart. There are people out there whose existence is brightened by regular use of kitchen gadgets.

Sandy Zeskind is a self-proclaimed gadget person. "If they make it, I probably have it," said the West Bloomfield resident.

"I've been taking cooking classes, mostly at Kitchen Glamor, for 10 years, but I just never felt comfortable with yeast. So when the first Panasonic bread machine came on the market, I went right out and bought one. It only made one 1-pound loaf, though, and that's not very much for a family of 5."

"Then last year they came out with a newer version. It makes a 1 1/2-pound loaf and, with this one, you can stop the machine midway in the process and improvise, adding nuts or cheese and then either put the dough back in the machine, or finish the process by hand."

With 1991 only one day away from being over, and not a minute too soon, I might add, I find myself reminded of Charles Dickens opening words in "A Tale of Two Cities."

family tested winner dinner
Betsy Brethen

of darkness, it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair.... Written in 1859, those same words could be used to describe the world today. For 1991 was a year of dramatic ups and downs marked by joy and sorrow, war and peace, fear and hope. And of all these things, it is hope that fills my heart as a new year begins, that things will get better for all mankind.

This week's Winner Dinner, submitted by Kathy Wilson of Livonia, will help you start off the new year by making use of leftover turkey or ham. After all, just as history repeats itself, so does food. Married and the mother of three children, Wilson's family loves her "Leftover" Cheesy Noodle Casserole, which she likes to serve with a salad, toasted pita bread and apple crisp.

Wilson grew up in Dearborn and has worked for year and a half as a secretary for Casco Products in Novi. Because she works full-time, Wilson carefully plans her meals and often prepares meals in advance by cooking in the evening after dinner or on weekends.

Some of her resolutions for the new year are to exercise regularly, make more "free time" and do more things for herself. She and her family plan to be home for the holidays, but are looking forward to

"My father-in-law, Marvin Zeskind, used to go into my kitchen and kind of caress the bread machine, so I gave him my old one. Now we share breads and recipes."

ZESKIND HAS logged 40 hours of bread-making classes with Larry Galbraith at Southfield adult education. She now makes more bread by hand than with the machine. "But I still love the machine."

The Zeskind family feasts on freshly-made pasta from a pasta machine, and the Zeskind teen-agers snack on apple and banana chips from a brand-new dehydrator ("No additives," Zeskind said).

Zeskind admits that she doesn't have an espresso machine or an ice cream maker yet, but you can bet she will soon.

"Espresso/cappuccino machines were extremely popular gifts this holiday season," said Harry Tatsalis, gadget buyer at Kitchen Glamour. Krupp makes a combination espresso machine and drip coffee maker that operates separately or simultaneously, as you prefer.

"But the surprise best seller was the stainless steel pressure cooker. They've been vastly improved since our mother's version; for one thing, they have relief valves in two different places, so they don't explode any more."

"Working women are switching from microwaves to pressure cookers for after-work meals. You don't lose flavor or color with a pressure cooker like you do with a microwave."

"A lot of people received a Cuisinart combination convection/microwave oven. If sales are any indication, both ovens can be used simultaneously, and the microwave has a turntable, so foods cook evenly."

Jacobson's stores featured some really nifty small gadgets, boasts buyer Sandy Mattison. "One of my favorites, and everybody else's, was a sandwich maker that crimps a regular bread sandwich all around the edges, creating a pocket sandwich. Ideal for people who like bean, or other drippy, sandwiches."

"Kids loved the Mickey Mouse waffle maker, which makes two



DAN DEAN/staff photographer

Sandy Zeskind, a self-proclaimed "gadget person," enjoys making bread in a bread machine. She bought one when they first came out. Last year she bought the newer model that makes a

1 1/2 pound loaf. Her father-in-law is now enjoying her old machine that makes one 1 pound loaf.

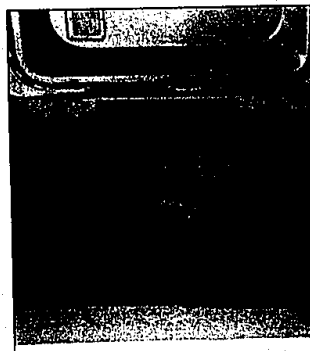
waffles at a time shaped like Mickey Mouse heads.

"Compactness is the latest trend in kitchen gadgets. The Quick-Prep hand blender and the new Cuisinart Mini-Prep food processor can do a lot of kitchen tasks and will fit in a drawer when not being used."

If you're terminally intimidated, both Jacobson's and Kitchen Glamour's professional staff will gladly give advice. But before you panic, let Lois Thieleke give you one last bit of advice:

"BEFORE YOU decide the relationship is hopeless, give the machine another chance. Don't just make something once and decide that you weren't meant for one another. Make at least two batches. If it's still a bomb, maybe the recipe needs adjusting. Don't just put the machine on the shelf. Work with it. More often than not, you'll be glad you did."

See recipes inside.



DAN DEAN/staff photographer

Casserole recycles leftovers

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GUY WARREN/staff photographer

Kathy Wilson, Ron (left) Schaefer, Jeff and Brian present their Winner Dinner — "Leftover" Cheesy Noodle Casserole, salad, apple crisp, and fresh rolls.

watching their youngest son, Brian, play in a hockey tournament in Canada in January.

Thank you, Kathy Wilson, for sharing your delicious recipes with

us and congratulations on being selected this week's Winner Dinner Winner. Best wishes to you and your family and to all my loyal readers. I extend to you my sincerest wish for a happy, healthy, New Year.

OBSERVER & ECCENTRIC WINNER DINNER

Recipes

"I made up this recipe around Thanksgiving," said Kathy Wilson. "We had a big turkey and lots of leftovers."

When her family said they couldn't eat another turkey sandwich, Wilson said she started trying to think of something to do with the turkey.

Wilson's "Leftover" Cheesy Noodle Casserole is a variation of another family favorite — tuna casserole. It can also be made with leftover chicken or ham.

Not only is this casserole a good way to recycle leftovers, it's perfect for busy families who don't have a lot of time to fuss with dinner.

Wilson assembles her "Leftover" Cheesy Noodle Casserole early in the morning and refrigerates it until the dinner hour. While it's baking, she's relaxing.

The apple crisp can also be made in advance and reheated before serving. For quick salads, combine greens, and your choice of seedless vegetables like shredded carrots and purple cabbage. Store in an airtight container. Slice tomatoes and cucumbers, but store them in separate containers. Add to salad just before serving. Your greens will stay crisp. This recipe serves four to six.

"LEFTOVER" CHEESY NOODLE CASSEROLE
4 cups egg noodles, cooked and drained
4 cups cubed leftover turkey, chicken or ham
1 can cream of chicken soup (if using ham, only use 2 cans cream of celery soup)
1 can cream of celery soup

1 soup can milk
1 pound Velveeta cheese, cubed
1 package frozen peas or broccoli, thawed
1 jar pimentos, chopped
Mix all the ingredients together and place in a buttered 4 quart casserole.
Bake covered at 350 degrees for 30-45 minutes.

BURT REYNOLD'S SALAD DRESSING

Make a crunchy green salad and toss it with this delicious salad dressing.
6 tablespoons olive oil
2 1/2 tablespoons lemon juice
1 teaspoon sugar
1 teaspoon salt
1/4 teaspoon pepper
1/4 teaspoon Accent (optional)
1/4 teaspoon Dijon mustard
1 clove of garlic, crushed
Mix the ingredients in a jar and shake well before serving.

PITA CRISPS

Open up a pita round, cut each piece in half and spread with butter or margarine. Sprinkle a little Parmesan cheese and, if desired, some garlic powder, and broil until lightly browned.

APPLE CRISP

4 cups peeled, cored and sliced apples
2 cups quick oatmeal
2 cups brown sugar
1/2 cup butter
1/4 cup flour
Mix all ingredients and place in a buttered 8 inch square baking dish.
Bake at 350 degrees for 30 minutes or until golden brown and bubbly.