

# Birmingham grad finds dream job at Stars

By Keely Wygonik  
staff writer

When she was little, Hollyce Snyder was the "child who could never keep out of the kitchen," said her mother Jo. And while she didn't plan it, this Birmingham Seaholm High School graduate who studied television and radio at Michigan State University with the idea of someday producing documentaries, has found her dream job — assistant pastry chef, at Stars, one of the most acclaimed restaurants in America.

"Sometimes I'd be in the middle of making something and reach for an ingredient, and it would be gone," said Jo, who enjoys cooking, entertaining and collecting cookbooks.

"Holly always found ways to make a recipe uniquely her own. She decided early on an aptitude for food, and spilled goo on a lot of cookbooks."

When Hollyce, 32, came to visit recently, Jo didn't mind letting her daughter take over the kitchen.

SHE USED to be messy, said her mother. Not anymore, you can't be when you're working in a pastry kitchen that serves nine different desserts a night to an average of 300 customers.

One of the things Hollyce brought home was a copy of the newly published "Stars Desserts" cookbook. Written by pastry chef Emily Luchetti, the hardcover book published by Harper Collins, \$27.50, features full-color photographs of the 64 recipes in the book. It is available at area bookstores.

A lot of the desserts photographed in the book were made by Luchetti's assistant — Hollyce. Some of her recipes like Hollyce's oatmeal scones, Hollyce's sin pot, sour cherry muffins, and ginger cookies are in the book.

"I visited San Francisco and fell in love with the city," said Snyder, who moved to Los Angeles after graduation from college. "I went back with \$75 in my pocket, and a place to hang my hat. I worked for a political research firm until a roommate who worked at Stars told me the pastry chef was looking for an assistant. I applied, got the job, and was scared to death."

At Stars, special attention is paid to how a dessert is "plated" for the customer. The first 10 months of Hollyce's pastry career were spent plating desserts to serve customers. Since the restaurant also makes souffles to order, extra care is taken on dessert presentation.

SNYDER ALSO worked in the kitchen a few days a week baking and decorating cakes.

Four years ago Luchetti joined the staff. "Emily has always wanted to write a cookbook," said Snyder. "She spent two years compiling and testing recipes. While she worked on the book, I made sure the pastry department stayed together."

"The book is written to appeal to a wide range of cooks, from people who like to bake to those who have never baked before. Instructions are clear and concise. Photographs emphasize the food and give people an idea of what the dessert should look like," said Snyder.

One of the recipes, a "somewhat unattractive but delicious fruit compote," called "Hollyce's sin pot," is a variation of her mother's recipe. "We always had a jar of it sitting on the kitchen counter," she said.

Her advice to new cooks — "Always read the recipe through once or twice. Pay attention to what the recipe says. Measure accurately — inaccurate measurements can cause disaster."

"Stars is quite a place. I can't believe I get paid to bake cookies and decorate cakes. It's a dream job."

Here's a recipe from the book.

**SOUR CHERRY MUFFINS**  
Yield 12 muffins

1 1/2 cups dried sour cherries  
6 ounces (1 1/2 sticks) sweet butter  
1 cup firmly packed light brown sugar  
3 large eggs  
2 1/2 tablespoons milk  
1 1/4 teaspoons vanilla extract  
2 cups flour  
1 1/4 teaspoons baking powder  
3/4 teaspoon salt  
1/2 teaspoon baking soda

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees. Paperline the muffin tins or butter them. Cover the sour cherries with hot water and soak them for 15 minutes. Drain the cherries and set them aside.

Put the butter and brown sugar in the bowl of an electric mixer. Using the paddle attachment, beat on medium speed until light and fluffy. Continue mixing and add the eggs, milk, and vanilla extract. Fold in the dry ingredients and the reserved cherries. Spoon the batter into the

prepared muffin tins. Bake the muffins for 30 minutes, until a skewer inserted in the middle comes out clean. Let the muffins sit for 5 minutes and then turn them out.



STEVE CANTRELL/staff photographer  
Hollyce Snyder, a graduate of Birmingham Seaholm High School.

# Lawyer sets precedent with books on wine

Success hasn't spoiled Robert M. Parker, Jr. He is the most read wine writer in America. Even with the rigors of European travel, daily tastings, and publishing a wine newsletter that started it all, he remains enthusiastic, upbeat and excited about wine.

We spoke with Parker while he was autographing 600 books for people attending a tasting of 1989 Bordeaux sponsored by the Cloverleaf Market of Southfield at Detroit's Rattlesnake Club.

"I am a product of the Ralph Nader generation and I never tire of the chase," Parker said. He states emphatically that wine is pleasure and meant to be enjoyed. "If it isn't, you're drinking the wrong wine."

UNTIL 1984, Parker practiced corporate law in Monks, Maryland. He followed the love of his life to Europe, married her and fell in love with French wine. By 1978, his love of wine had blossomed into a wine newsletter that he called "The Wine Advocate."

"Actually, I wanted to use the French word, 'avocat,'" Parker said, "which translates as lawyer or barrister. At first, I sent my newsletter free to my friends and anyone who was interested. When I retired from law, I made wine my full-time occupation. I am proud that I remain an independent critic, paying my own way on all European trips and paying out of my own pocket for 75 percent of the wine I critique."



focus on wine  
**Eleanor and Ray Heald**

"The Wine Advocate," with a circulation over 28,000 (including 4,700 foreign subscribers), is completely subscription-driven. It is remarkable that Parker has been able to survive publishing an independent newsletter without one shred of advertising revenue.

It is evident by the twinkle in his

eye and the pride in his voice that Parker is pleased that he is not a part of the wine trade, as are the British Masters of Wine, who have set wine opinion for the last 100 years. He is also happy that he, as an American (not British) has become one of the world's foremost wine critics.

PARKER, A prolific author of wine books, has written six books in as many years. His first book on Bordeaux, published by Simon and Schuster in 1985, was recently updated to include 2,700 tasting notes on the wines of 677 chateaux from the 1961 through 1990 vintages.

"I learned about the wines of Burgundy and the Rhone Valley first, but I established my credentials more easily by writing about Bordeaux," he said.

Parker has also published books on the wines of Burgundy, the Rhone and Provence, and a consumer buying guide that is the most popular of the lot.

"Bordeaux vintages can be divided into heat-wave years producing wines with richness and early drinkability (1961, '82, and '87) and years producing hard, concentrated wines (1986) that require patience," said Parker.

Of the 1989 Bordeaux wines tasted, Parker prefers the Chateau Haut-Brion and Chateau Latite Rothschild. However, since he knows that not many people can afford these classic renditions, he is quick to point out good values. For more affordable Bordeaux he likes the 1989 La Dominique and Grand Mayne.

Parker is well known for his opinion that there are "too many disappointing California wines." However, he does find many distinctive California zinfandels. Perhaps this is because there is no French counterpart for comparison!

"French wines are more naturally made," he said. This concluding remark certainly indicates that Parker needs to learn much more about California wines. Perhaps then he will write his first book on American wines.

# Cooking classes help cure winter blues

If you're feeling tired and blue, pick yourself up and enroll in a community education cooking class. Call the board of education office to find out what's being offered in your area.

Learn about California, French, German, Italian and sparkling wines at the Community House, 380 South Bates Street Birmingham. There's also a one session beer tasting of 12 different styles from around the world. For information about these and other classes, call 644-5832.

IN FARMINGTON HILLS at The Community Center, 24705 Farmington Hills, ward off winter with simmering soups or learn how to make gourmet and ethnic dishes like shrimp de jangle and vegetarian lasagna. Call 477-8404 for information.

Troy Public Schools offers winter classes in bread making, the foods of Italy and candy making. Call 879-7382 for more information.

GARDEN CITY Public Schools is offering classes in cake decorating, Chinese, Polish cooking and vegetarian cooking. Call 422-7198 for information.

ENTER YOUR favorite beef recipe in the 1992 Michigan Beef Cook-Off. There are three areas in which to enter — indoor, outdoor barbecue and microwave. The cook-off will be Saturday, April 25, at the Meridian Mall in Okemos. First-place winner receives \$500 and expense-paid trip to two to compete in the National Beef Cook-Off in Sacramento, Calif. Sept. 17-19. Other prizes include \$200 for second place and \$100 for third place.

For a complete set of rules write to Michigan Beef Industry Commission, 2145 University Park Drive, Suite 300, Okemos 48864.

Last year, Eleanor Froehlich of Rochester placed second. Here's her recipe:

**DEVILED STEAK STRIPS**  
3 pounds sirloin steak, cut 1 inch thick  
1/2 cup each chili sauce and Dijon-style mustard  
1/2 cup finely minced green onion  
1/2 cup prepared horseradish, drained  
2 cloves garlic, finely minced  
1 tablespoon Worcestershire sauce  
1 teaspoon hot pepper sauce

If you've lost a favorite recipe that appeared in the Taste section, or would like to comment on something you read in Taste, call or write: Keely Wygonik, Observer & Eccentric Newspapers, Inc. 36251 Scholerat, Livonia 48150, 953-2105. Betty Crocker tip of the week: The pomegranate is an unusual fruit that's actually hundreds of pea-sized, juicy pods. It looks beautiful stirred into fruit compote with apples, dates and oranges. Garnish roast beef or pork with the bright red seeds.

**tidbits**  
**Keely Wygonik**

1-inch strips, 3 inches long. Combine Devil's Sauce ingredients. Line baking dish (10 by 15 by 1) with foil, brush well with sauce. Lay steak strips on top, brush sauce over exposed surfaces. Roast in hot oven (425 degrees) 30 minutes, brushing with sauce every 5 minutes. Arrange on serving platter. Garnish with tomatoes, parsley and sauteed peppers and mushrooms.

**DEVIL'S SAUCE**  
1 cup tomato catsup

**LOSE WEIGHT WITH MEDICINE**  
You already know what you should eat. You know what you should do. You know what you should think. Now you can lose weight. **DIET RESULTS MEDICATION** is the only medicine that helps you lose weight. It's the only medicine that helps you lose weight. It's the only medicine that helps you lose weight. **DIET RESULTS MEDICATION** is the only medicine that helps you lose weight. It's the only medicine that helps you lose weight. It's the only medicine that helps you lose weight.

**Homecrest**  
BATH CABINET  
**INVENTORY BLOWOUT!**  
CABINETS STARTING AT \$66.95  
CABINET ONLY  
LYNCH VIB 21  
Saves available:  
20", 30", 42", 48" plus  
special orders  
Hours: Mon.-Sat., 9 A.M.-5 P.M.  
**CABINET KING**  
26472 Grand River  
Rochester Township  
**534-2330**

**Permanent Weight Loss**  
Dr. Ralph P. Keith, PH.D.  
28336 Franklin Rd.  
Southfield, MI  
746-0844

Once you have recognized that being overweight involves more than dieting and taking medications and diet supplements, you are on the road to resolving your weight problem.

You probably have been able to lose weight, but have regained it quickly. This happens because food and eating satisfy many emotional needs we are seldom aware of.

For example, people who are or have been in abusive or unfulfilling relationships use food to provide comfort and protection. People who have difficulty recognizing their emotions and asserting their needs tend to stuff food as quickly as they swallow their anger.

If you sincerely want to gain control of your problem call and find out how to qualify for the program and insurance coverage.

**CALL 746-0844**

**The FRESH CHOICE**  
19330 Middlebelt • Livonia  
Between 7 & 8 Mile Next to Kids R US  
Across From Sears Livonia Mall

**Lean, Tender BONELESS PORK LOINS**  
\$1.89 lb.  
Sliced Free

**Fresh GROUND CHUCK**  
\$1.59 lb.  
Lean GROUND ROUND \$1.79 lb.  
Extra Lean GROUND SIRLOIN \$1.89 lb.

**Fresh CHICKEN LEGS** 39¢ lb.  
**Fresh CORNED BEEF BRISKETS** 99¢ lb.  
**Grass TURKEY WINGS or TURKEY DRUMSTICKS** 39¢ lb.  
**Old Fashioned HARD SALAMI** \$1.99 lb.  
**Large Shell-On TIGER SHRIMP** 26-30 ct. \$5.99 lb.  
**Melody Farms-Assorted Flavors LITE YOGURT** 8 oz. Cup 3/1.00

**BROCCOLI or CAULIFLOWER** 77¢ Head  
Your Choice...

**Fresh Squeezed Hys Farms APPLE CIDER** All Natural \$1.99 Gal.  
**Cherry TOMATOES** 69¢ Pt. Carton  
**ROMAINE LETTUCE** 69¢ lb.  
**Yellow Dry ONIONS** 5 lbs. / \$1.00

**Free Federal Consumer Information Catalog.**  
Dept. 1D, Pueblo, Colorado 81009

**Super Bowl Parties**  
Super Subs  
3 ft. • 5 ft. • 6 ft.  
Party Trays  
Hors d'oeuvres,  
and buffets  
**A-D-Q Catering**  
731-2929