

MONDAY, FEBRUARY 14, 1994

# TASTE

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## TASTE BUDS



CHEF LARRY JONES

### Lenten season brings meatless meals, sacrifice

**R**owing up in Wyandotte, we never called it "Fat Tuesday." We heard about Mardi Gras in current events at school, but never dreamed it was so raucous until we experienced it ourselves.

There was no such thing as "Paczki Day." To us, it all started on Ash Wednesday, the only day of the year you could tell who was a good Catholic and who wasn't simply by the gray smudge of ash embedded on their forehead.

Ash Wednesday signaled the beginning of Lent, a time of fasting and other forms of self sacrifice. Since my oldest brother was an ordained Roman Catholic priest, the meaning of Lent stayed with us until Easter, far longer than the smudge of gray ash.

We did special chores around the house to earn money to "buy" pagan babies. In addition to Sunday mass, there were novenas on Tuesdays, stations of the cross on Fridays and confession on Saturdays.

For 40 days and 40 nights, meat did not grace the Jones Gang dinner table. We wondered how McDonald's stayed in business. I can remember eating so much pasta one year, I thought we were Italian.

#### Meatless meals

Momma was, and still is, an amazing cook. Besides pasta, main dishes included potatoes or rice. Potato soup was a weekly favorite, usually coupled with what we called "johnnycake" otherwise known as cornbread. Fish, which I distinctly remember as being nothing but butter dipped and deep fried perch or smelt, was served with homemade french fries and coleslaw.

Oh yes, there was always tuna fish drained and tossed with Miracle Whip, a small chopped yellow onion, and served on toast. I can recall when Momma cooked her first tuna casserole, replete with tuna, noodles and of course, Campbell's cream of mushroom soup. We were especially enamored when potato chips were crushed by hand and spread over the top prior to baking.

#### Sweet dreams

Sweets were something we dreamed of getting in our Easter baskets. Doughnuts were forbidden, and to this day I still feel cheated knowing that we never gorged on rich foods and paczki before Lent began.

As kids, we looked forward to Jimmy Millette's birthday party the first week in March because we knew that his parents knew nothing of Lent. After three weeks of fasting we welcomed the opportunity to gorge on Jimmy's favorite - Sander's yellow cake and Affholter's blue moon ice cream.

During Lent we ate gourmet but never realized it. Momma made quiche, but we called it impossible pie because it was impossible for Momma to remember the recipe if she didn't have a box of Bisquick to read from. When a recipe called for cooked ground beef momma substituted frozen broccoli.

We had a Frigidaire deep freeze in the basement that housed chopped tomatoes and frozen corn gleaned from the garden the previous summer. Tomatoes were simmered with a few herbs and served over cooked spaghetti. Corn was dumped into luscious cream based chowders.

There was little doubt it was still a few days before payday when homemade dumplings simmered in vegetable broth were the main course on the dinner table. Of course, we thought it was nothing more than meatless food. Little did we know then that Momma's culinary talents would be cherished today.

#### New traditions

Throughout the years, the Jones Gang has continued to hold sacred the season of Lent. But with changing times, the new Catholicism, Mass changing from Latin to English, our thoughts have evolved. Yes, we observe the weekly ritual of meatless meals, but the fasting and purchasing of pagan babies has given way to modern rituals that accentuate the positive.

On payday, the first check written goes to the Salvation Army. We have agreed to prepare a meal at the Ronald McDonald House as a family for families in need. This year we will prepare a batch of cookies for a neighbor confined to a nursing home.

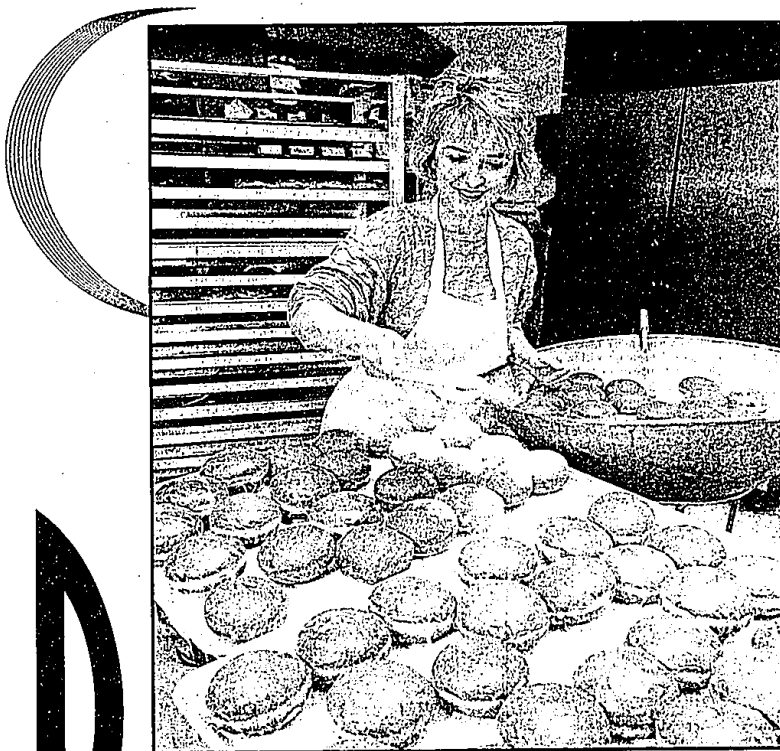
See Larry Jones' family-tested recipes inside. To leave a message for Chef Larry, dial 953-2047 on a touch-tone phone, then mailbox number 1886.

### LOOKING AHEAD

What to watch for in Taste next week:

■ Three area cooks show you how to put some zip into Lenten meatless meals.

■ Wine columnist Eleanor and Ray Heald introduce new flavorful and well-priced Italian wines.



JIM JACOBSON/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Dusting powder: Lidija Vangelov owner of Heritage Bakery in Livonia dusts freshly made paczki with powdered sugar. All over town, mouths water at the thought of these jelly filled jewels that are made only once a year.

# PACZKI

IT'S NOT JUST AN ORDINARY DOUGHNUT



Richer filling and dough, these are the things that make paczki the Cadillac of doughnuts. One bite and you'll be hooked. These plump jelly doughnuts are made only once a year.

BY KEELY WYGONIK  
STAFF WRITER

In Hamtramck Paczki Day is like a holiday. People start lining up at bakeries on Jos. Campau and Conant as early as 5 a.m. Nobody seems to mind waiting in line, and those that do buy their paczki on Monday.

It's a Polish tradition that has spread to the suburbs where it continues to grow more popular every year. A lot of the bakers I talked to said it's the biggest day of the year for them.

Lidija Vangelov, owner of Heritage Bakery in Livonia, averages 42 hours straight without sleep on Paczki Day.

"Four girls who worked for me while they were going to college take the day off work every year just to work in the bakery on Paczki Day," said Vangelov. "They said they wouldn't miss

it. It's like a holiday."

Vangelov and her husband Vasil (Vick) opened their first bakery, New Family Bakery, in Detroit in 1974. They've been in Livonia since 1983.

"Our paczki recipe is an original Polish recipe from the family we bought New Family Bakery from," said Vangelov. Heritage Bakery is a family-run business. Vick does the baking, and will work round the clock, with help from relatives, to meet the increased demand for paczki. The couple's children, John, 18, an engineering student at Henry Ford Community College, and Annette, 16, a junior at Crestwood High School, also help out at the bakery, after school and on weekends.

See PACZKI, 2B

### Health conscious restaurant owner enjoys low-fat fare



BY KEELY WYGONIK  
STAFF WRITER

Lucy Mitchell grew up in a restaurant family and didn't plan to carry on the family tradition. She studied dance and fashion photography, and even had her own photo studio in downtown Pontiac for 10 years.

In June, she and her husband Darryl Date both 30, opened Mitchell & Max TOGO, a carryout restaurant at 28901 Southfield Road in Lathrup Village that specializes in barbecue ribs, chicken, pizza, pasta and more. She's also part owner of Mitchell's Barbecue and Grill in Royal Oak and the third generation of her family to be involved in the restaurant business. Her father and uncle owned Mitchell's on Cass Lake.

"We always had a big pot of spaghetti on the stove at my house," said Mitchell. "My dad would always say you can never put enough garlic or onion in food."

While pizza and hickory smoked ribs are family specialties, Mitchell who studied dance for over 20 years, and teaches ballet classes in Southfield's community education program, said she's always been health conscious.

"I don't use butter when I cook. I use olive or

vegetable oil," she said. "I like to be creative when I cook. I always buy low-fat sour cream and cheese."

Mitchell likes to cook with chicken, her husband Darryl who makes a "very good lasagna," likes beef fillets. Mitchell compromises when she cooks by mixing ground beef with ground turkey. "My husband would know the difference if I used all ground turkey," she said. Add whole tomatoes to the meat mixture, a little tomato sauce, warm and serve over rice for a quick dinner. This mixture can also be used to stuff green peppers.

Another Mitchell creation is sauteed zucchini, green peppers, onions, and mushrooms mixed with tomato sauce, sprinkled with Parmesan cheese and baked in the oven at 350 degrees for about 10 minutes until the cheese melts.

Sauteed broccoli and mushrooms tossed with pasta, olive oil and Parmesan cheese is also quick and healthy.

"Once I sauteed lean hamburger with zucchini, carrots, green pepper and onion, rolled it in Lavosh bread, and served it with a yogurt and fresh dill sauce," said Mitchell. "It was very good."

Since they opened Mitchell & Max TOGO, Mitchell said she doesn't have much time to cook. "We provide quality food for people on the go," said Mitchell. Their motto is "An old tradition with you in mind."

Customers can either dine in or take-out. They also offer a catering service. Often, Mitchell and her staff are cooking for someone like you and me who are rushing home after work and don't have time to cook dinner.

Their oven roasted and barbecue chicken are big sellers and so are the vegetarian dishes and Greek specialties that are a family tradition. See recipe inside.



JERRY ZALTSBERG/STAFF PHOTOGRAPHER

Quick dinner: Lucy Mitchell enjoys creating recipes. Chicken Lulu made with marinara sauce and fresh vegetables is one of her specialties.