

## CHAT ROOM



JONI HUBRED

## Amish bread baking proves too challenging

The first thing you should know is I don't cook.

Which is not to say I can't; I simply choose not to. My nest is empty, and my days fill up of their own accord without my adding unnecessary endeavors.

Me, cook? Don't be absurd. Not as long as the Burger King on Grand River stays in business.

Imagine my horror, then, when our receptionist, Katie McManus, brought in bags of something called "Amish Friendship Bread," with a request that I take one and ... bake it. Over a period of 10 days, I was to squeeze the bag, add some ingredients, squeeze for another couple of days, add some more ingredients, then bake it.

Ask anybody who knows her: it's tough to say "no" to Katie.

My first mistake was thinking if I left the bag in the office, I'd remember to squeeze it. I did. But I forgot to bring it home over the weekend. Katie said I'd probably got another shot at it, if I wanted. Turns out this stuff gets passed around a lot, among friends.

### Putting the squeeze on

With a little encouragement, I brought home a second bag. Squeezed it for five days. On the sixth day, the Amish Friendship Bread batter bag got buried under some cans and boxes I left on the kitchen counter. What I found days later was ugly and, I'm afraid, quite dead.

By this time, our Hometown Life editor Mary Rodrigue (a former Betty Crocker homemaker of the year) had succeeded with a batch and brought in the result, which was delicious. I'd decided I was doomed to letting others bake for me, but something niggled at the back of my mind, something disquieting.

I may be a newspaper editor, but I am still a woman sprung from hearty Scandinavian stock and proud of the person I've become. I wasn't going to let a little bag of bitter batter beat me. I wanted one more chance, one last opportunity to break my Amish Friendship Bread curse.

And two weeks later, I got that chance, courtesy of my friend Alice, who also overnight-mailed batter to relatives out of state. Desperate times call for desperate measures, I guess.

In my tiny kitchen, I set the bag on the counter, in plain view and out of harm's way. Day after day, I squeezed. I added milk, sugar and flour, and squeezed some more.

On the 10th day, it was time to bake my Amish Friendship Bread. The package comes with directions, which I hadn't really taken the time to read through from beginning to end. After all, how tough could this be? The Amish thrive on simplicity.

Simple. Right.

First, I had to fill bags for four friends. I added a cup of milk, a cup of flour and a cup of sugar to the already augmented batter.

Next step: Stir, with a wooden spoon.

### Now what

In my search for said wooden spoon, I noticed the handle of my rubber scraper was made of wood. Aside from leaving a few stubborn lumps that could certainly be squeezed into submission, it worked pretty well. It is still unclear whether I own a wooden spoon.

Next step: Place one cup of batter into each of four, one-gallon size zip-lock bags.

Hadn't thought to get the bags. So at 10 p.m., I'm scouring the shelves at Farmer Jack. The bags don't come in fives or tens. They come in 40s. If this country ever experiences a food-storage crisis, I'm prepared.

Bags labeled and dated, I turned my attention to the remainder of the recipe. As I dumped in two cups of flour, half a cup of milk, a cup of oil, a cup of sugar, a box of instant pudding and three eggs, it became painfully apparent I hadn't chosen a large enough bowl.

And I hadn't even gotten to the chocolate chips.

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# Mystery of wandering gravestone

BY RUTH MOEHLMAN  
SPECIAL WRITER

Can the mystery of the wandering grave stone be solved? Maybe some will explain why a stone from the Uley or East Farmington Cemetery was buried in a backyard in Farmington.



Walt Gajeski was digging a hole for a new fence post in his garden when he struck a large stone.

To Gajeski's surprise, the stone turned out to be a grave marker for Byron Cogdill, a 5-year-old child who died in 1843.

Gajeski called historian Nancy Leonard. She suggested he call Farmington City Hall to see if the stone belonged in one of the Farmington cemeteries. It didn't belong there.

Gajeski's next call was to the Farmington Hills Planning Department. The grave stone belongs in one of the Farmington Hills cemeteries.

The stone has been picked up and reinstalled in its proper location.

Little Byron Cogdill belonged to a pioneer Farmington family. The first Cogdill was William B., who arrived in Farmington in 1825. Next was Clark, who came in 1826.

The family, according to historians William and Francis Cogdill, can trace their origins back to Birmingham, England.

Clark Cogdill and his wife, Sophia, came to Michigan from Wayne County, New York. Their farm was in Section 12 of Farmington Township, near Buckhorn Corners, at 12 Mile and Inaker.

Clark and Sophia Cogdill had five children and a prosperous homestead. Buckhorn Corners was a community with a saw mill, a carpenter shop, a school and a cemetery.

The East Farmington Cemetery was donated by Plegel Uley and kept up by the neighbors, who formed an association called the Mystic Workers.

The Mystic Workers were a social club. They held pot-luck dinners once a month and an ice cream social to raise money for the upkeep of the cemetery.



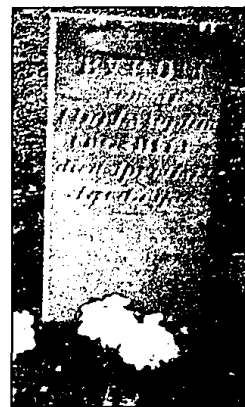
Grave site: Homeowner Walt Gajeski unearthed the missing grave stone when he was digging a post for his fence. At right, a close up view of the engraved stone, which belongs to the Cogdill family plot.

Most likely the Cogdills were members because they owned cemetery plots. Life was hard in early Farmington. In 1836, the Clark Cogdill family buried 9-month-old Alvira. Seven years later, 5-year-old Byron died and was also buried in the cemetery.

### Family plot

Clark, Sophia and son Norman are buried in the family plot, too. The location is marked now by a large Cogdill monument.

It is estimated that Byron Cogdill's headstone was buried under a picket fence more than 25 years ago. William Cogdill, a descendant of the pioneer family, was involved when Farmington Hills took over the preservation of the Uley or East Farmington Cemetery. He said there was considerable mis-



chief between the time the cemetery was no longer cared for and when the city took over and began caring for it. At one time, William Cogdill recalled, pranksters put television antennas on the graves.

Now there are some stiff penalties voted into law to protect cemeteries. Farmington Hills will pick up and re-install any historical artifacts that belong to local historical sites.

Someone who cared about the antique headstone found it. Walt Gajeski, a member of the Farmington Hills Beautification Commission, helped get new historic signs for the Farmington Historic District.

His current project with neighbor David Judge is to arrange for a farmer's market in downtown Farmington.

Nancy Leonard guesses that someone took the Byron Cogdill stone and then didn't know what to do with it so buried it. Other artifacts found in Gajeski's backyard were pieces of broken china and glass and various nails — usual items found in backyards of old homes.

Members of the Farmington Hills Historic District Commission are grateful to Gajeski for finding and returning the historic gravestone.

Somewhere there are stones for Clark, Sophia, Norman and little Alvira Cogdill. Someone must know where the other headstones are.

Ruth Moehlman is a local historian and author of "If Walls Could Talk: Historic Homes of Farmington."

# Nun marks 90 years in religious service

BY KIMBERLY A. MORTSON  
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Sister Mary Ludmilla believes it has been at God's discretion that she live past 100 years of age.

"It's all up to God," said Sister Ludmilla, who turned 108 recently. "It's God's will that I have lived that long."

The Felician sister was born on June 29, 1893, in Detroit. One of six children, her parents were born in Poland and regarded as hardworking, devout Catholics.

She was baptized as Anna Stender at St. Francis of Assisi Church in Detroit and attended Our Lady of Mount Carmel school. It was during her elementary years at the Wyandotte parochial school that she was first introduced to the teachings of the Felician Sisters.

She spent her first two years of high school at the Seminary of the Felician Sisters in Detroit and entered the novitiate on June 24, 1910. Earlier this month she officially celebrated 90 years in the service of the church and the religious community according to Sister Mary Renetta, provincial minister of the Felician Sisters of Livonia.

With an infectious smile and a strong will, Sister Ludmilla continues to serve as a role model and a confidant to many who reside in the Provincial

### House.

"She is such a joy and a delight to be around," said Sister Renetta. "She's a very holy and spiritual person and she has a great sense of humor."

### Teacher for 61 years

After entering the aspirancy Sister Ludmilla began teaching — a vocation that has proven to be one of the most rewarding aspects of her life. In 61 years Sister Ludmilla taught grades first through eighth in the states of Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana and Michigan — two years of which included serving as a principal and local superior of the convent.

At the start of her teaching career she was invested in the habit on Feb. 19, 1912, and was given the religious name Sister Mary Ludmilla. She made her first profession of vows the following year and final vows in 1919. She is one of the earliest vocations from Wyandotte.

"We must live for God alone. Whoever it is ... live for God," said Sister Ludmilla of her lifelong commitment to the church.

While she was teaching she took on extra responsibilities such as cooking, baking and caring for the sisters when they fell ill. "We just obey," said Sister Ludmilla. "We're doing what God is asking of us." At the time there were no trained nurses in the convent so her nights were occupied by taking charge of the infirm. During her service she saw many sisters die from tuberculosis.

"She was always active," said Sister Mary Bertha, local minister of St. Joseph Angela Hall where Sister Ludmilla and approximately 12 other nuns live in the infirmary of the Felician Provincial. "She has such a strong sense of obedience to God and to the



Then: Sister Mary Ludmilla taught in Wyandotte in 1942.



Now: Sister Ludmilla is 108 and has been a nun 90 years.

service of the nuns ... to please them. She is active in mind and very observant."

### Prayer and reflection

At the age of 107 Sister Ludmilla enjoys a peaceful life of prayer and reflection. She assumed residence at the Provincial House in Livonia in 1989, immediately accepted assigned duties and participated fully in the ministry of prayer. A broken hip in recent years slowed her down physically and now she uses a wheelchair to move about said Nancy Franke, administrator of St. Joseph Angela Hall. "She's also a breast cancer survivor."

When she was moved into the infirmary, Sister Bertha remembers Sister Ludmilla saying that was a place "for the aged and for the sick," and that she would do "whatever they told her," when it came to living there.

"That's how youthful she is," said Sister Bertha.

"Even past the age of 100 she still found it hard to believe she was worthy of living there."

Sister Ludmilla's day begins at 6 a.m. in chapel followed by Mass and holy communion at 8 a.m. Franke says she enjoys two pieces of bread with butter at every meal and puts sugar on everything.

"At breakfast she is most gracious saying please and thank you for everything," said Sister Bertha, who describes Sister Ludmilla's personality as cheerful and giddy.

"She still feeds herself and watches

what everyone is doing during meal time. She relaxes people by her cool disposition and her godliness."

Long before television or radio, Sister Ludmilla was known for entertaining the sisters with skits, pranks and jokes, and she possessed a strong love of the arts.

During her residence at a convent in Alpena she would use nearly empty paint tubes, old brushes and scraps of canvas to paint. She fashioned an easel on a chair and sat on the floor to sketch.

In 1976, Sister Ludmilla began a second career at the age of 83. She accepted assignments at various local convents in the field of culinary arts and would prepare meals and baked goods for the sisters residing in parishes in Bay City, Hamtramck and Livonia.

Sister Cynthia Ann Machlik, vicar and provincial secretary of the Felician Sisters, said Sister Ludmilla was admired for performing a multitude of tasks and surprises for others "which gave her much joy."

"Her cheerfulness and readiness to help appeared to be her most valued traits," said Sister Cynthia Ann. Sister Ludmilla will celebrate her 108th birthday surrounded by the women of the Felician Sisters whom she has both admired and mentored.

When asked how she would like to be remembered by the Sisters and the religious community Sister Ludmilla said, "I'll be with God and with you. That's my hope for the future."



STAFF PHOTO BY BETTAN MCKENNA

Greeting: Sister Mary Ludmilla and Sister Mary Renetta, provincial minister of the Felician Sisters of Livonia.