

LOVE

LOVE!

To find ourselves together with someone special to have and to hold forever is the greatest gift life can give us. Yours is the golden ticket to the possibility of happily ever after. Commit to building each other up every day and you will be surprised at how many doors your love will open.

In these stories and recipes we hope you will find inspiration to make cooking and sharing meals together a special time in your lives for your love to grow through the years. For so many of us, the kitchen table has been where people become family and where families grow. Please don't miss this opportunity, it really is the best life has to offer.

Congratulations!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bill". The letters are slightly slanted and have a casual, personal feel.

Bill Penzey

Contents

Marge and Bud 4-6

Tomato Juice Cake
Pumpkin Pancakes

Kate and Damian 7-10

French Toast Bake
Shrimp 'n' Crawfish Po' Boys

Sally and Chris 11-14

Squash and Sausage Bundle
Carrot Soup

John and Susan 15-17

Grilled Fajitas
Grilled Pizzas

Carmen and Kincaid 18-20

Fox Point Salmon
Cauliflower Smash Up

Mary and Jeff 21-23

Chicken Casserole
Refrigerator Cookies



Marge and Bud

Marge and Bud Benishek celebrated their 65th wedding anniversary in June of 2011 surrounded by their children, grandchildren and great grandchildren. “We had a very nice dinner together,” Bud recalls from his home in Findlay, Ohio.

“We were introduced by my sister Irene and Marge’s mother Ella who were friends. We dated a few times and liked each other, though we didn’t stay in touch during the four years I was in the Navy where I was assigned as baker.

The Benisheks shared many anniversaries. “Marge gave me a beautiful ring for our 50th anniversary. It turns out she had been putting money aside each month for years to surprise me!”

medical leave until I recuperated. One evening, tired of sitting home, I decided to drop by a local nightclub. As soon as I walked in the door I saw Marge and went over to say hello. We began chatting, renewing our acquaintance.

“We went steady after that, going out every night but one, when we rested up. We’d often go dancing till dawn. Before we knew it I returned to duty.

“We kept in touch through letters until I was discharged in January and by June we decided to get married. Marge thought, ‘If we’re going to get married, we might as well just go ahead and do it.’ So a week later on June 29th we were married by the Justice of the Peace. It was 96 degrees that day. We celebrated with an ice cream cone and returned to Moline to share the happy news with our parents.

“While cooking our first dinner, Marge found she didn’t have a can opener so she sent me over to her grandmother’s who exclaimed, ‘What, she’s feeding you out of a can already?’ Marge never lived that one down. Gram thought that was so funny.

“In November we both quit our jobs and

“Home on leave, I was in a traffic accident and placed on extended

went on a four-week honeymoon to New Orleans. When we returned I worked for Peters Bakery making \$45 a week. Marge didn’t have to work with that big income,” Bud laughs.

“I knew I didn’t want to be a baker the rest of my life and was told about a franchise for Dairy Queen, an up-and-coming business. We decided to go for it. With 2-week-old son David, we moved to Findlay, Ohio, to open one of the first Dairy Queens in the state. We were young. It never occurred to us that we might be taking a risk. We owned the store for 12 years.

“The person we leased the building from offered to renovate the top floor of his house for us, which we did rent for a couple years until we were able to save for our own house, the house I still live in today. It’s amazing what people are willing to do for you.

“Patience saw us through tough times, though there weren’t many. We were practical and saved our pennies, nickels and dimes. Marge didn’t work in the store often, but each day she would make shredded chicken at home to be sold as sandwiches for the lunch crowd.

“Marge took care of the home and our four children. We couldn’t go far as I worked seven days a week, but we did take some Saturdays to go to the zoo or

the beach, maybe an amusement park. We enjoyed our kids.

“Marge was definitely the cook. There were no family specialties, just lots of meals to feed a family with four kids—spaghetti, chili and roasts with mashed potatoes. She was a good cook. There was always lots of food and laughter. Marge always said that I taught her to laugh. The sound of children’s laughter made her the happiest.”

After Bud’s retirement they enjoyed their family and each other, as they traveled together around the country. As Bud has always known, “She was the one for me!”



Bud and Marge became sweethearts for life.

Tomato Juice Cake

Marge and Bud’s daughter Kristine writes, “I had never heard of Tomato Juice Cake when I saw this recipe in the little notebook of recipes my dad used as a baker while serving in the Navy during World War II. I was determined to try it, got out a calculator, and reduced the huge quantity of ingredients they needed to literally ‘feed an army’ (in this case Navy), then tweaked the recipe slightly. The result is a very moist cake, and no—it does not taste like tomatoes! It won’t rise as high as most cakes, so just cut it into bars to serve and eat it like a Texas Sheet Cake or bar cookie.”

- 1¼ Cups white flour
- ½ tsp. baking soda
- 2 tsp. baking powder
- ½ tsp. salt
- 1 tsp. CINNAMON
- ¼ tsp. GROUND CLOVES
- ¼ tsp. GROUND NUTMEG
- ½ tsp. GROUND ALLSPICE
- ⅓ Cup butter, softened
- ¼ Cup applesauce
- ¾ Cup sugar
- 2 large eggs
- 1 Cup tomato juice
- ½ Cup golden raisins (optional)
- ½ Cup walnuts, finely ground (optional)

Frosting:

- 3 oz. cream cheese, room temperature
- ½ Cup butter, (1 stick), room temperature
- 1 tsp. PURE VANILLA EXTRACT
- ¾ Cup powdered sugar



Preheat oven to 350°. In a medium bowl, combine the flour, baking soda, baking powder, salt and SPICES; set aside. In a large bowl, beat together the butter, applesauce and sugar until smooth; beat in the eggs one at a time. Add the flour mixture alternately with the tomato juice, beating until smooth and well blended. Stir in the raisins and ground walnuts, if desired. Pour into a greased 9x13-inch baking dish. Bake at 350° for 25 minutes, or until a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean. Let cool completely before frosting. For the frosting: In a medium bowl beat together the cream cheese, butter and PURE VANILLA EXTRACT. Reduce the speed to low and gradually add the powdered sugar. Mix until smooth. Spread over the cooled cake and serve.

Prep. time: 10 minutes

Baking time: 25 minutes

Serves: 12-15

Nutritional Information: Servings 12; Serving Size 1 piece (115g); Calories 340; Calories from fat 170; Total fat 19g; Cholesterol 90mg; Sodium 440mg; Carbohydrate 40g; Dietary Fiber <1g; Sugars 27g; Protein 4g.



Pumpkin Pancakes

Kristine Benishek writes, "The pumpkin makes these pancakes light and moist. They have a subtle pumpkin flavor with just enough pumpkin to be able to taste and enjoy. If you have PUMPKIN PIE SPICE on hand, you can replace the last three spices in this recipe with that instead."

- 1 large egg, beaten
- 1/4 Cup vanilla yogurt (or 1/4 cup plain yogurt plus 1/4 tsp. PURE VANILLA EXTRACT)
- 3/4 Cup milk
- 3/4 Cup canned pumpkin
- 2 TB. butter, melted
- 1 Cup light baking flour
- 1/4 tsp. salt
- 2 TB. brown sugar
- 1 tsp. baking powder
- 1/2 tsp. baking soda
- 1/2 tsp. CINNAMON
- 1/4 tsp. NUTMEG
- 1/2 tsp. POWDERED GINGER

In a large bowl, combine the egg, yogurt, milk, pumpkin and melted butter. Mix well. Add the flour, salt, sugar, baking powder, baking soda and SPICES. Stir together until well blended. Pour or spoon the batter into a hot skillet over medium-high heat; when bubbles begin to form, and the underside is browned, turn over to brown the other side. These pancakes tend to be a bit more fragile than regular ones so make sure to slide the spatula all the way under when turning, and do it gently. Remove the cooked pancakes and repeat the process with the remaining batter.

Prep. time: 10 minutes

Cooking time: 4-6 minutes per batch

Serves: 4

Nutritional Information: Servings 4; Serving Size 7 small pancakes (144g); Calories 220; Calories from fat 70; Total fat 7g; Cholesterol 65mg; Sodium 440mg; Carbohydrate 32g; Dietary Fiber 3g; Sugars 9g; Protein 7g.



Kate, Damian and their daughters Scout, West and Dove fill their home with love, laughter and lots of fun.

Kate and Damian

“My children amaze me in so many ways,” says Kate Dominic-Munoz. “With each milestone, change in their interests and unique blossoming characteristic, I feel so honored to be along for the ride as I watch them ‘become.’ It is the most rewarding part of being a mom.”

Kate, her fiancé Damian Dominic and their three children are a multi-racial family living and loving together in Omaha, Nebraska.

Kate says, “My fiancé is black and I am white. Our two oldest girls, Scout and West, are white and Hispanic and our youngest daughter, Dove, is white and African-American. This makes for a beautiful dynamic and a rich blend of culture.”

Each of Kate and Damian’s girls has

her own special interests and personality. “Scout, who is 9 years old, is our scientist, animal lover and rocker. She plays the viola and participates in Girls Rock each summer, where she plays the electric bass.” (Girls Rock is a camp that helps to build confidence and self-esteem through a variety of programs and musical education.)

“Scout likes to cook and eat. She was very proud of the first chicken dish she made this past summer. It was quite an accomplishment!

“West, our middle daughter, is 7. We call her our Wild West. She is our creative soul who is forever in a homemade costume and never without her art supplies. West does spot-on imitations and is an amazing singer. Her favorite food is sushi and when it comes to helping with stirring, she’s the best.

“Dove is our baby girl. She is 18 months old and quite independent. She pretty much runs the house,” Kate laughs. “Dove is silly and sweet. She loves to dance and

sing and play with our dog Lulu. Lovey Dovey will eat just about anything but avocados.

“The girls are pretty official when we cook together. They put on aprons and chef hats and take charge of the recipes. They will eat almost anything they cook, no matter the ingredients. This is how I get them to eat their vegetables and to be more adventurous with eating ... I just have them cook it.”

Smart Mom.

Kate recalls, “I learned to cook when I worked with Food Not Bombs, a nonprofit in Omaha, where I attended college. A group of friends joined together to gather food that would have been discarded from restaurants and grocery stores. We took this food home, prepared vegan meals and shared it with anyone in our community who was hungry—no questions asked.

“It was here I learned to get creative with ingredients. These days were full of laughter, music, singing and fostering some wonderful relationships and memories. It inspired my love of cooking.”

While in college Kate studied to be a special education teacher. “I have always known I wanted to do this. School always came easily to me and I didn’t think it was fair that it was difficult for others.

“I’ve always had a little itch to



French Toast Bake

No syrup needed. That's how great this tastes.

½	Cup (1 stick) melted butter
1	Cup brown sugar
¾-1	loaf Texas toast (12 slices)
4	eggs
1½	Cup milk
1	tsp. PURE VANILLA EXTRACT
1-3	TB. sugar
½-1	tsp. PENZEYS CINNAMON
¼	tsp. GROUND NUTMEG
2	TB. extra melted butter

Preheat oven to 350° (unless you're making this ahead of time). Melt the butter in a saucepan or in the microwave. Add the brown sugar and stir until thoroughly blended. Pour the mixture into a 9x13 pan and spread evenly to coat the bottom. In a bowl, beat together the eggs, milk and VANILLA. Lay a single layer of Texas toast in the pan. Spoon half of the egg mixture over the bread. Sprinkle with sugar, CINNAMON and NUTMEG. Top with a second layer of Texas toast. Spoon the remaining egg mixture on the bread. Drizzle with a thin layer of butter. Sprinkle lightly with sugar and CINNAMON. At this point you can refrigerate the dish overnight or cook right away. Cover with foil. Bake at 350° for 30 minutes. Remove the foil and bake for another 15-25 minutes. The top will be crusty and golden brown, and the bottom has an incredible sticky deliciousness!

Prep. time: 20 minutes

Cooking time: 45-55 minutes

Serves: 6-8

Nutritional Information: Servings 6-8; Serving Size 1-2 slices (183g); Calories 460; Calories from fat 170; Total fat 19g; Cholesterol 145mg; Sodium 500mg; Carbohydrate 63g; Dietary Fiber 2g; Sugars 34g; Protein 9g.

rebel, to remake and re-envision the world—to make things better for kids who have varied obstacles against them. I wanted to assist them along the way to help make their educational path easier, thereby opening up infinite possibilities for their lives.

“There is something lovely about amplifying the voice of an under-represented demographic and I’m always up for championing equality,” she says.

“I teach 7th and 8th grade students in a self-contained classroom. I enjoy remaking the educational box so my students not only fit, but succeed as well. It takes a lot of work and modifications, but when they see their own reactions, behaviors and academic aptitude rise, there is no greater feeling.

“It is such a blessing working with these amazing kids. They are brilliant in creative ways and are such great souls. I feel lucky that their families have shared them with me.”

As Kate is busy planning her wedding to Damian she recalls how they found each other.

“I met my sweet fiancé Damian on the dance floor where we danced together all night long,” Kate says. “While it would be nice to have a more interesting story, it does seem fitting that we met someplace while having fun, because we haven’t

stopped having fun together since that first dance.

“We love to dance to Zydeco music, which I was first introduced to when we visited Damian’s hometown of Lafayette, Louisiana.

“Damian brings that Cajun goodness into our everyday cooking. We like to get creative in the kitchen, usually starting with a tried and true recipe and then changing it up a bit. He’s a great cook,” Kate says.

Damian served in the U.S. Air Force where he received certification as a sous chef at Scott Air Force Base in Illinois. He was deployed five times, usually for four to six months at a time. His duty was to cook for the airmen, at times setting up the kitchens in a tent.

His Permanent Change of Station (PCS) for one year in Korea was followed by his final PCS in Nebraska where he cooked for the officers and crew chiefs. Kate and the girls are thrilled and so happy to finally have him home! (*See note below.)

Kate and Damian will marry in July on the Caribbean island of Jamaica. “I am sure our wedding day will be just magical. How could it not?” says Kate. “We will be in one of the most majestic places on earth. Damian is the most amazing man I have ever met and I know I will be overwhelmed with love and gratitude

that I have been lucky enough to find him wandering this earth.

“He’s traveled from Louisiana to Korea and a million places in-between. Then he was brought to me. I envision lots of grateful tears and then a big ol’ party afterwards. We have some wonderful friends to celebrate with, followed by a big reception for family and friends when we get home.

“Our girls are looking forward to staying with Grandma, because as Scout says, ‘The wedding is boring. You have to be quiet and sit still. It’s the reception that has all the FUN, FOOD and DANCING!’

“We want our wedding day to be effortless, fantastic and beautiful. We want it to be a day about celebrating us.

“My hope for our future is to continue laughing and having great times together. I hope this fun never stops. I hope Damian continues to tell me stories of things he has done and things he has seen in this world.

“I hope our children grow up surrounded by the type of love that makes them feel secure enough to be brave.”

Here’s to the soon-to-be newlyweds. May you continue to laugh and love and enjoy life together as a family and may all your hopes and dreams come true!



Kate, Damian and their daughters Scout, West and Dove fill their home with love, laughter and lots of fun.

The girls in their Easter finery.



Shrimp 'n' Crawfish Po' Boys

Kate writes, "Most of the time I see Shrimp Po' Boys OR Crawfish Po' Boys, but I'm wild and crazy and mix the two any chance I get."

- vegetable oil for frying (we used 2 Cups)
- 1 Cup cornmeal
- ½ Cup flour
- 2 tsp. CAJUN or CHESAPEAKE BAY SEASONING (Damian uses a local Creole seasoning which is similar to our CHESAPEAKE BAY SEASONING with a bit of extra CAYENNE. CAJUN SEASONING would also be a great choice.)
- 1 tsp. salt
- 1 tsp. PENZEYS FRESHLY GROUND PEPPER
- 1 Cup buttermilk
- 2 tsp. hot sauce (or more to taste)
- ½ lb. medium shrimp, cleaned and deveined
- 1 lb. crawfish tails, rinsed and drained
- 6-8 hoagie rolls
- 2 Cups shredded lettuce

Remoulade Sauce:

- 1 Cup mayonnaise
- 2 TB. dill pickle relish
- 2 TB. chopped fresh parsley
- 2 TB. chopped chives
- 2 TB. capers
- 2 tsp. Creole mustard (use Dijon-style with a bit of hot sauce and Worcestershire if you don't see any "Creole-style")
- ½ tsp. diced shallots (or ½ tsp. dried SHALLOTS)
- hot sauce, to taste

For the sauce: Combine all of the ingredients and mix well. Refrigerate until ready to use. The longer you let it sit, the better it is. As Kate says, "Just let all those flavors get cozy in there together. You will be thankful you did."

In a large pan or deep fryer, heat the oil to 350°. In a bowl, combine the cornmeal, flour,

SEASONING of choice, salt and PEPPER. In a separate bowl, combine the buttermilk and hot sauce. Soak the shrimp and crawfish in the milk mixture for at least 10 minutes while the oil heats. The longer, the better. Dredge the seafood in the flour mix. Fry in batches for about 3 minutes per batch or until golden brown. Kate advises: "Go ahead and pop a few in your mouth just to make sure they are good. And another! You deserve it!" Drain on paper towels. Serve on hoagie buns with lettuce and Remoulade Sauce.

Prep. time: 20 minutes

Cooking time: 9-12 minutes total

Serves: 6-8

Nutritional Information: Servings 8; Serving Size 1 sandwich (269g); Calories 580; Calories from fat 270; Total fat 31g; Cholesterol 115mg; Sodium 1110mg; Carbohydrate 56g; Dietary Fiber 7g; Sugars 7g; Protein 24g.



Chris Zingler and Sally Masters were married in Massachusetts before moving to Wisconsin.

Sally and Chris

“I think at the heart of it, by nature, I am very much an encourager,” says Sally Masters, now of Appleton, Wisconsin.

Her day job is at the University of Wisconsin-Oshkosh, where she works as associate director of academic advising. In addition to supervisory work, she handles advising for students who are undecided on their majors.

“I love working with students until they figure it out,” Sally says. “And when they figure it out, there’s nothing more rewarding.”

Sally and other advisors talk to students about what college can mean.

“They have a decision to make,” she says. “Are they here just to get a degree or are they here to get an education? There’s a difference between those two things. Really, an education includes the degree and so much more.”

Then there’s the value of general education courses not related to any specific degree.

“Students need a good education with transferrable skills. Those transferrable skills are what employers are looking for more and more. They’re learning how to learn and how to apply that learning to any job situation. They’re learning communication skills and critical thinking.

“The research we have says that 70% of the jobs that will exist in 2020 don’t exist yet. These students will have anywhere from five to eight jobs or careers in their lifetimes.”

In Sally’s own life, she’s found an unexpected second career as an officiant for weddings and other milestones, calling that Masters Ceremonies.

“I started in Massachusetts after I was appointed as a justice of the peace in 2004, the month before same-sex marriage became legal. It’s a gift to find the person you want to spend your life with and I am there to help couples—

every couple—celebrate that they’ve found that person.”

For Sally, that special person is Chris Zingler.

“Chris and I were married in Massachusetts on 11/11/11 at 11:11 a.m.,” she says.

Sally first grew up in Kansas City, Missouri, with other stops.

“My dad was a career Navy man,” she says. “We lived in Japan for two years when I was in 4th and 5th grade. It was my first opportunity to live someplace where I was a minority. I developed a love and appreciation for people who are different from me and I think that’s where my bent toward social justice came from.”

Chris grew up in Green Bay, Wisconsin, and retired as assistant principal at Menasha High School in nearby Menasha. After a stint in North Carolina, they moved to Wisconsin for Sally’s new job.

“We specifically chose Appleton because it was more welcoming,” Sally says, explaining the city offers domestic partnership benefits to municipal employees. “We wanted our taxes to support that kind of city.”

In 2009, Sally was ordained as an interfaith minister. She officiates at all kinds of weddings and ceremonies, including child blessings, adoption rituals and funerals.



Squash and Sausage Bundle

Sally shares, "This is my most favorite dish in the world. If you are vegan/vegetarian like me, it's a great meal that will have even the most committed of omnivores wanting more and not missing meat!"

- 3 Cups butternut squash (acorn squash would also be good), cut into 1-inch cubes (1 medium)
- 1 TB. olive oil
- ¼ tsp. SALT (Sally uses SEA SALT)
- ¼ tsp. PENZEYS FRESHLY GROUND PEPPER
- ¼ tsp. MURAL OF FLAVOR, optional
- ½ tsp. RUBBED SAGE
- 1 medium Granny Smith apple, chopped

⅔ Cup chopped onion (1 large onion)
 3 links meatless sausage, cut in half lengthwise and then thinly sliced (Sally uses Field Roast brand Apple-Sage flavor. If you want to use meat sausage, Sally suggests a chicken and sage variety)

Preheat oven to 375°. Place the pared and cut squash in a large bowl. Add the olive oil and stir to coat. In a small bowl, combine the SEA SALT, PEPPER, MURAL OF FLAVOR (if using) and SAGE. Add to the squash and mix well. Lay a piece of heavy-duty aluminum foil on a large 18x12 rimmed baking sheet. The foil should be large enough to cover the pan plus hang over approximately 2 inches. Spread the squash onto the foil in an even layer, leaving 2-3 inches of foil around the edges. Sprinkle

the apple and onion evenly over the top. Place the sausage slices on top. Place another large piece of aluminum foil on top and seal all of the edges. Place the baking pan on the center oven rack and bake at 375° for 50-60 minutes or until the squash is soft enough to be easily pierced with a fork. Be careful when you unseal the edges of the foil, as the steam will be very hot.

Prep. time: 15 minutes

Cooking time: 50-60 minutes

Serves: 4

Nutritional Information: Servings 4; Serving Size 1 1/2 cups (232g); Calories 280; Calories from fat 100; Total fat 11g; Cholesterol 0mg; Sodium 600mg; Carbohydrate 27g; Dietary Fiber 5g; Sugars 8g; Protein 21g.

Recently, she and Chris helped support same-sex couples as they attempted to get marriage licenses. Sally rushed to perform a ceremony on the Winnebago County Courthouse steps after university friends got their license.

Once again, she was able to say the words for a same-sex couple.

“‘I now pronounce you legally married,’” she says. “It’s extremely powerful to hear those words. That’s when the tears flow.

“I’ve performed more than 700 weddings and in some most unusual places, including in a hot air balloon,” Sally says.

It was her first time in a hot air balloon.

“We went directly up—actually fairly high up—but we were still tethered. Then they brought me back down. They took a ride for a couple of hours before they came down and had a big reception. It was something they had always dreamed of.

“Another couple got married at the 18th hole of a golf course, which was where they met. One couple got married at home plate on a softball field. And I’ve officiated on many beaches and cruises.

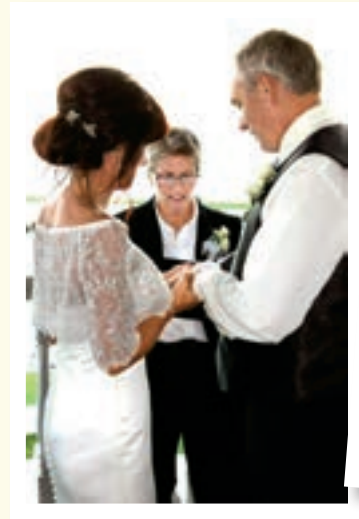
“On a more serious note, I’ve performed weddings for people in hospitals, one for a woman who was dying.”

When an expectant mother was bedridden with severe complications, Sally performed the official marriage ceremony

for the couple. She celebrated with them a year later after the birth of a healthy baby.

It’s what someone who calls herself an encourager does.

“I want to help all couples know their relationships are worth celebrating,” she says. “And I love encouraging students until they find their own fit.”



Sally serves as officiant at the wedding of Cory and Dean Jadin.

Sally and Chris’s dogs, Harper and Scout, look good in formal wear.



Sally knows the power of the words, “I now pronounce you legally married.” Here she officiates at the wedding for Jeff Amstutz and Chad Hershner. (Photo courtesy Ken Cravillion)

Carrot Soup

This recipe from Sally Masters can easily be doubled or tripled, and it even freezes well. Whip up a batch today!

- 2 tsp. olive oil (Sally prefers extra virgin)
- ¼ Cup chopped scallions or onion
- 1 garlic clove, minced (or ¼ tsp. PENZEYS MINCED GARLIC)
- 1¼ Cups sliced carrots (4-5 medium)
- ½ tsp. SWEET CURRY POWDER
- ¼ tsp. SMOKED SPANISH-STYLE PAPRIKA, optional
- 2 Cups vegetable stock (or 2 Cups water mixed with 1 tsp. VEGETABLE SOUP BASE), divided
- ¼-½ tsp. salt, to taste
- ⅛-¼ tsp. PENZEYS FRESHLY GROUND PEPPER, to taste

Heat the olive oil in a large pot over medium heat. Add the scallions or onions, garlic, carrots, CURRY POWDER and PAPRIKA (if using) and stir. Add 1 cup of the vegetable stock. Bring almost to a boil and then reduce heat to low. Cook until all of the veggies are tender, 10-15 minutes. Add salt and PEPPER to taste. Let cool. Transfer the contents of the pot to a blender and add the remaining vegetable stock a little at a time, blending after each addition until you reach the desired consistency. A hand potato masher may be used for a chunkier texture. Rinse the pot and transfer the soup from the blender to the pot. Heat over low until steaming and serve.

Prep. time: 15 minutes
Cooking time: 20 minutes
Serves: 2

Nutritional Information: Servings 2; Serving Size 1½ cups (341g); Calories 90; Calories from fat 45; Total fat 5g; Cholesterol 0mg; Sodium 770mg; Carbohydrate 11g; Dietary Fiber 3g; Sugars 5g; Protein 1g.





Daughters Sarah (left) and Erin joined their parents for an Oakley family portrait prior to John's deployment to Iraq.

John and Susan



Our story together began at Fort Bragg, North Carolina,” recalls Susan Oakley, whose husband John is the state training officer for the Wisconsin National Guard. They make their home in Appleton.

“We were both active duty in the Army. We met during training for our expert field medical badge. I left the military in 1987 but John stayed on in the Guard, doing his once-a-month weekends while at first going to school and then working. It wasn't until 2000 that John began working for the Guard full time. He had always enjoyed the military and decided to make it a career.

“Our life was going along quite normally at that point. We were busy with our two daughters, Erin and Sarah, a big yellow

Lab and fixing up our house that was built in 1907. Then 9/11 happened and the world changed for everyone.”

John explains, “The first and immediate impact for the Guard was a new focus for training. No longer did we prepare for possible scenarios; we now had a real enemy and a real threat. Second, we started receiving funding. Just two years prior to 9/11, we had to leave our tanks and personnel carriers parked because there wasn't enough money to pay for fuel and parts. We received new equipment as well.”

In 2005, with the Oakleys' daughters in the 5th and 8th grade, John was deployed to Camp Navistar in Kuwait, where he served as the battalion operations officer.

“It was quite a sudden change for our family,” says Susan. “When he returned after the year we gave him a Weber grill for Father's Day. We realized how time together is very important and what better way to enjoy it than time spent in our backyard with good food.”

John was deployed a second time, to Iraq, in 2009. “This time he was committed to making a difference in the lives of the children in Iraq,” says Susan. “He put out a call for school supplies, clothing and other items to be sent for distribution among the children. We went to work ourselves to get items from school, work, church and neighbors. The local VFW covered the postage for sending the boxes overseas. With generous

donations from other families in his unit, John was able to distribute tons of goods to the children. And John did not seem as far away to the girls and me now that we had a common cause.

“Now we are enjoying being together again as a family. The past summer saw more grilling action. We had pizzas and great fajitas. This year the plan is to roast tomatoes, onions and peppers on the grill to make a roasted salsa.

“The National Guard has a tradition of being a hometown unit comprised mostly of citizen-soldiers that live locally,” says John. “That atmosphere created a closeness that really became the strength of the unit. Over the years this has changed, but the identity gained by belonging to a unit and the esprit de corps the members have based on the unit’s history and, finally, the bond shared between brothers and sisters in arms, especially through combat, make it much stronger than it was before.”



Grilled Fajitas

Fire up the grill and prepare a fiesta in a flash with this recipe from the Oakleys.

- 2 lbs. beef skirt steak (flank or round steak work as well)
- 2-3 bell peppers, any color, sliced into strips
- 1 large onion, peeled and sliced in thin wedges
- 8-12 tortillas (fajita tortillas are larger than taco tortillas)

Marinade:

- 1/2 Cup Italian Dressing (or mix 1 1/2 tsp. ITALIAN VINEGAR & OIL DRESSING MIX with 5 TB. olive oil and 3 TB. vinegar)
- 1/2 Cup apple cider vinegar
- 1/2 Cup soy sauce (we used low sodium)
- 1/3 Cup Worcestershire sauce
- 1/3 Cup brown sugar
- 2 TB. lime juice (juice of 1 lime)
- 1 tsp. PENZEYS FRESHLY GROUND PEPPER
- 1/4 tsp. GRANULATED GARLIC POWDER or ROASTED GARLIC
- 1/4 tsp. ARIZONA DREAMING, optional

Combine the marinade ingredients and pour over the skirt steaks. Cover and refrigerate for at least 2 hours — 6-8 hours or overnight is even better! Remove steaks from marinade, discard marinade, and place the steaks on the grill over medium-hot coals. Grill the steaks for 8 minutes, covered, turning once. Remove the steaks from the grill and let stand for 5 minutes. If you can fit the veggies on at the same time, great, otherwise grill the veggies for 6-8 minutes total while the steak is resting. Wrap the tortillas in foil and place on the grill to warm for a few minutes while slicing the steak. Slice steak at an angle, across the grain, in 1/4-inch slices. Serve with tortillas and veggies.

Prep. time: 15 minutes plus marinating time.

Cooking time: 8-16 minutes

Yield: 11 fajitas

Nutritional Information: Servings 11; Serving Size 1 fajita (172g); Calories 270; Calories from fat 100; Total fat 11g; Cholesterol 55mg; Sodium 360mg; Carbohydrate 19g; Dietary Fiber 1g; Sugars 2g; Protein 24g.

Grilled Pizzas

Move family pizza night outside with this great recipe from the Oakleys.

Pizza dough:

- 4 Cups bread flour, plus $\frac{1}{3}$ - $\frac{2}{3}$ Cup extra for kneading
 - 1 TB. salt
 - 1 tsp. sugar
 - 1 pkg. yeast
 - $\frac{1}{2}$ -1 tsp. PENZEYS FRESHLY GROUND PEPPER, to taste
 - 1-2 TB. FROZEN PIZZA SEASONING, to taste
 - 2 TB. olive oil
 - 1-1 $\frac{1}{2}$ Cups warm water

 - $\frac{1}{3}$ Cup olive oil
 - $\frac{1}{2}$ -1 tsp. GRANULATED GARLIC, ROASTED GARLIC, GARLIC SALT or SANDWICH SPRINKLE, to taste
- toppings of choice (We used sautéed mushrooms and onions, raw spinach, mozzarella and chèvre and sausage. To make your own sausage, mix $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. coarsely-ground pork with 2 tsp. PIZZA SEASONING, and pre-cook before placing on top of the pizzas.)

For the dough: In a large bowl, combine 4 cups flour, salt, sugar, yeast, PEPPER and FROZEN PIZZA SEASONING. Stir to combine. Make a well in the center. Pour the olive oil in the well and mix with just enough warm water to form a soft dough. Remove the dough from the bowl and place on a lightly-floured surface. Knead for about 10 minutes, adding extra flour to the surface as required as long as the dough is



sticky, kneading until smooth and elastic. Place the dough in a lightly-greased bowl, cover with plastic wrap and leave in a warm place for about 1 hour or until doubled in size. You can cover and refrigerate overnight at this point if desired.

Roll the dough out into 10-12 individual pizzas, about 6-inches in diameter. In a small bowl, combine the olive oil and GARLIC, ROASTED GARLIC, GARLIC SALT or SANDWICH SPRINKLE. Brush one side of each of the pizzas with the oil mix and place on a hot grill, oil-side down. Brush the tops of the pizzas with the oil mix. When golden brown, flip the pizzas with tongs. Place your desired toppings

on the browned side and cover the grill to heat through/melt cheese. Don't add too much weight in the way of toppings. Great with or without cheese!

Prep. time: 40 minutes plus rising time

Cooking time: 6-12 minutes depending on the thickness of the pizzas and heat of the grill

Serves: 8-10

Nutritional Information for Pizza Crust only: Servings 8; Serving Size 1 pizza crust (115g); Calories 360; Calories from fat 130; Total fat 14g; Cholesterol 0mg; Sodium 870mg; Carbohydrate 51g; Dietary Fiber 2g; Sugars 1g; Protein 9g.



"My favorite part of cooking dinner is taking a break from stirring to do some dancin' to old soul and funk music."

Carmen and Kincaid

Many think 'how corny' when we tell them our anniversary is on Valentine's Day, but we know the truth," says Carmen Romano of San Jose, California.

"Our story began when we met in college; Kincaid was 21, I was 16 and we had become good friends. It was only a few years later that 'K' and his band Hepcat decided to leave college to tour the world.

"Well, fast forward seven years; a friend invited me to a Hepcat show in Hollywood. I told her I once knew someone in that band. We wondered if he would remember

me, so right then and there I called him.

"We were dating for a year and a half. During this time I had finished my Doctorate in Physical Therapy and decided to start studying for the boards in Texas. We were separated for a month here and there, and soon decided things were too good to be apart from each other.

"Now, here comes the fun part. After a romantic dinner we strolled along the river walk in San Antonio. On bended knee, Kincaid proposed with an opal ring (he knows diamonds aren't my thing) and of course, I said yes! We danced the night away and just had a blast!

"A year of dragging my heels went by; nerves and planning a wedding with our families spread out across America didn't make it easy. K was getting a little tired of pestering me about the date, so I decided to give him a Valentine's present he'd never forget. A surprise wedding!

"I asked for a half day off of work and had K do the same. I told him this was a pretty fancy Valentine's Day event and to come hungry.

"The night before my friend and I made the bouquet, boutonnières and corsages and hid them where my mom told me no boy would ever look—in the vegetable bin

of the fridge.

"We dressed for a special day together. I snuck the flowers into the trunk and blindfolded Kincaid for the 25-minute drive to the San Mateo County court house. I had secretly told our families to wait for my call (my code that we had arrived). The call went, 'Hello, this is Dr. Romano, I have a reservation.'

"Our families gathered around our car, and with the cameras ready I removed the blindfold and we all shouted, 'Surprise, it's your wedding day!' His jaw-dropped expression just said, 'What are you guys doing here?' He then turned to me and said, 'I can't believe you're ready!'

Carmen and Kincaid are loving their life together. "His sweetness, patience and persistence is what has brought us closer together and he tells me I've taught him a great balance of fun, drive and creativity.

"We get a kick out of telling our story and seeing people's faces when they ask, 'You mean he didn't know he was getting married?'

"Kincaid just smiles and says, 'That was the best wedding present you could have given me!'"

Fox Point Salmon

According to Carmen Romano, "My husband says this is the only way he'll eat salmon and we like how quick and easy the recipe is for a mid-week dinner."

- 2 fillets of salmon (6-8 oz. each)
- 1 tsp. FOX POINT SEASONING or MURAL OF FLAVOR
- 1 TB. butter
- 1/2 lemon

Preheat oven to 375°. Lightly grease a baking sheet. Place the fillets on the sheet, skin side down. Sprinkle with FOX POINT SEASONING or MURAL OF FLAVOR. Cut the butter into small pieces and place over the fish. Then squeeze the juice from the lemon over the fillets and to be fancy, you can slice the lemon and place over the fish. Cover with aluminum foil and bake at 375° for about 8-10 minutes (until the internal temperature of the fish reaches 145°). Serve with grilled mushrooms and simply sautéed Swiss chard.

Prep. time: 5 minutes

Cooking time: 10 minutes

Serves: 2

Nutritional Information: Servings 2; Serving Size 1 fillet (193g); Calories 370; Calories from fat 230; Total fat 26g; Cholesterol 120mg; Sodium 340mg; Carbohydrate 1g; Dietary Fiber <1g; Sugars 1g; Protein 35g.



Cauliflower Smash Up

Carmen Romano shares the tastiest way to sneak an extra serving of vegetables to the entire family.

- 1½ lbs. small potatoes (Carmen uses yellow)
- ½ head cauliflower
- ½ Cup milk
- 2 TB. butter
- ½ Cup shredded cheese of choice (Carmen likes the 5 Italian cheese blend available in most grocery stores)
- 1 TB. BRADY STREET CHEESE SPRINKLE
- ¼-½ tsp. GRANULATED or ROASTED GARLIC, to taste
- ¼ tsp. FROZEN PIZZA SEASONING optional
- ¼-½ tsp. PENZEYS FRESHLY GROUND PEPPER, to taste

In a pot on high heat, bring salted water to a boil. Quarter potatoes and peel if desired. Add the potatoes to the boiling water. Chop or break the cauliflower into florets and add to the pot on top of the potatoes. After 8-10 minutes (or when cauliflower is knife tender), remove the cauliflower and set aside in a bowl. After another, 5-7 minutes (when potatoes are knife tender), turn the heat to low and drain off the excess water. Add the cauliflower, milk, butter, BRADY STREET, GARLIC, FROZEN PIZZA SEASONING (if using) and PEPPER to the pot with the potatoes. Mash to your preferred consistency (my husband likes his chunky), then stir in the cheese. Serve while hot and enjoy the fact that you tricked them into eating more veggies!

Prep time: less than 5 minutes

Cooking time: about 15 minutes

Serves: 4-6

Nutritional Information: Servings 5; Serving Size 1 cup (231g); Calories 210; Calories from fat 70; Total fat 8g; Cholesterol 25mg; Sodium 190mg; Carbohydrate 28g; Dietary Fiber 4g; Sugars 4g; Protein 8g.





Mary Jackson (holding Roscoe) is shown with son Kyle and husband Jeff.

Mary and Jeff

I remember the first recipe box I did,” says Mary Jackson, who lives in Fishers, Indiana. “My niece Sarah—she’s my goddaughter—was the first niece to get married.

“I gave it to her at a wedding shower. I wrote a letter and listed all the people who shared recipes, because it was from all the people who loved her.

“When she opened it, she had tears in her eyes and I had tears in my eyes,” Mary recalls.

A tradition was born.

“Now when one of my nieces or

nephews gets married, one of their gifts is a recipe box filled with old family recipes,” she says. “It’s a gift that keeps giving again and again. It’s absolutely a box of love from so many people.

“I have a niece getting married this December and I have already started on her recipe box. I spoke with her future mother-in-law and sent them recipe cards for recipes from her fiancé’s family, his aunts and uncles and grandparents. And I will write a special note to her and tell her that these are all recipes from people who love her very much.”

For Mary, the old family favorites nourish in a way that something random off the Internet never can, especially during the holidays. That’s another reason to share her Grandma Estelle Steger’s Refrigerator Cookies.

“In some small way, I keep their memory alive with wonderful recipes passed down from generation to generation,” she says. “Some of the in-laws have started to do the same thing for their families and they want some of the same recipes, too.

“I know times are changing, but there’s something about handwritten recipes or a recipe card from someone special. There is something about having a recipe that’s been used over and over again, stained with butter, oil, vanilla. It looks all loved

and worn, just like a good book.”

Her work life involves caring for others, too. Mary is a mammography technologist, working in the field for 30 years.

“It’s cliché, but it’s a very rewarding job,” she says. “It takes a lot of TLC to get patients through the tests, and when I call them with their biopsy results. Every time a patient steps in our facility, their life may change forever. I treat them like they are my own sisters or mother when they’re in my care.”

In her own life and kitchen, Mary, 51, avoids spicy foods because she has Crohn’s disease.

“My husband, Jeff, likes spicy, so we’ll split batches and do a little bit of both, or he’ll add more when we’re done cooking,” Mary says. “I like to cook, but I guess I would say I enjoy baking more. I love to make homemade muffins and cakes and cookies, things like that.

“We have a son, Kyle,” she says. “When he was little, we would bake together. Now he’s 22 and in college, so he’ll call me and ask how to cook something... I do have a recipe box started for him. I’m very sentimental and it’s such a sentimental gift.”



Chicken Casserole

Mary Jackson reminisces, "This dish is guaranteed to have everyone asking for more! When my parents were alive I would make this for them all the time; they loved it!"

- 1/2 Cup butter or margarine (1 stick)
- 1-2 Cups diced celery (2-3 ribs)
- 1/2 Cup diced onion (1 small)
- 1/4 Cup diced green bell pepper (1/2 small)
- 1 Cup sliced fresh mushrooms
- 1 lb. chopped fresh broccoli
- 1 1/2 lbs. cooked chicken or turkey, cubed
- 1 tsp. MURAL OF FLAVOR or FROZEN PIZZA SEASONING
- 1/2 tsp. KOSHER-STYLE FLAKE SALT
- 1/2 tsp. PENZEYS FRESHLY GROUND PEPPER
- 1/4 tsp. GRANULATED or ROASTED GARLIC POWDER
- 1 8-oz. pkg. cream cheese (or Neufchâtel cheese)

Preheat oven to 350°. In a large frying pan, melt the butter over medium heat. Add the vegetables and cook, stirring occasionally, until tender, about 10 minutes. Add the chicken, MURAL OF FLAVOR or FROZEN PIZZA, SALT, PEPPER and GARLIC. Cut the cream cheese into several cubes and add to the pan. Reduce the heat to low and cook until the cheese is melted, stirring frequently. Pour the mixture into a buttered 3-quart casserole dish. Bake, uncovered, at 350° until the top is golden brown, approximately 20-30 minutes.

Prep. time: 15 minutes plus time to cook chicken or turkey

Cooking time: 45 minutes

Serves: 6-9

Nutritional Information: Servings 9; Serving Size 1 1/2 cups (208g); Calories 310; Calories from fat 160; Total fat 18g; Cholesterol 110mg; Sodium 360mg; Carbohydrate 8g; Dietary Fiber 2g; Sugars 3g; Protein 30g.



Mary likes to make recipe boxes—and memories—for special gifts. “It’s absolutely a box of love from so many people,” she says.



Refrigerator Cookies

According to Mary, “This recipe was handed down from my Grandma Estelle Steger.”

- 1/2 lb. butter (2 sticks)
- 1 egg + 1 egg yolk
- 1 1/4 Cups sugar
- 1 tsp. VANILLA SUGAR
- 1/2 tsp. PURE VANILLA EXTRACT
- 2 3/4 Cups flour
- 1/2 tsp. baking soda
- 1/4 tsp. PENZEYS CINNAMON, optional
- 1/4 tsp. KOSHER-STYLE FLAKE SALT
- 1/2 Cup finely chopped nuts

Cream together the butter, eggs, sugar, VANILLA SUGAR and VANILLA EXTRACT. Gradually add the flour, CINNAMON (if using) baking soda and SALT. Fold in the nuts. Roll the dough into a log about 1 1/2 inches in diameter and wrap in waxed paper. Freeze for 1 hour or refrigerate for several hours.

Preheat oven to 350°. Remove the dough from the freezer and thinly slice, about 1/4-inch thick. Place on ungreased cookie sheets and bake for 12-15 minutes. Let cool for 5 minutes and transfer to wire racks to cool completely.

Prep. time: 15 minutes plus chilling time.

Baking time: 12-15 minutes

Yield: 68 cookies

Nutritional Information: Servings 34; Serving Size 2 cookies (25g); Calories 120; Calories from fat 60; Total fat 6g; Cholesterol 25mg; Sodium 60mg; Carbohydrate 14g; Dietary Fiber 0g; Sugars 7g; Protein 2g.

