

# SUCO partners with Star for 2008 cook-off

## Categories added, format revamped for 48th annual cooking contest

Over the past half-century, The Daily Star's cook-off has undergone many changes. Since it debuted in 1960, the event has taken place in a high school, a shopping mall, a grocery store and an appliance center, among other sites.

Contestants have ranged from elementary school students to octogenarians, preparing dishes as simple as chocolate-chip cookies and rice pudding, and as sophisticated as frog legs and filet mignon.

This year, the cook-off took another step forward by entering into partnership with the State University College at Oneonta. Led by Carol Blazina, vice president for community relations at SUCO, intern Jennifer Fernandez did much of the work on the college's end, helping prepare for the March 14 event.

Fernandez, a senior, is a communications major and said she hopes to pursue a career in event planning. The cook-off was the first major event she planned through her internship at the college, and she said the event was a good learning experience.

"I definitely learned a lot about the planning process. After the event was over, it was a huge accomplishment — I saw it through from beginning to end," Fernandez said.

Although the event kept her busy, Fernandez said she enjoyed watching

the contestants strut their stuff.

"I think it went great. I love the Food Network, I love cooking, so I loved seeing (the contestants) in action," Fernandez said.

The college not only provided the physical location for the event — the Otsego Grille in the Morris Conference Center — but also promoted the event, provided refreshments throughout the day and staffed the cook-off with a camera and sound crew so that the event could be broadcast on local access television.

In addition to all these amenities, the large capacity of Otsego Grille allowed participants and spectators alike plenty of space to spread out.

The college's food service vendor, Sodexo, also arranged for some talented chefs to serve as judges.

Bryan Bennett, catering supervisor for Morris Conference Center, and Bill O'Donnell, unit manager and executive chef of Wilsbach Dining Hall at SUCO, represented Sodexo as two of the three judges.

They were joined by internationally known master chef Joseph Poon, a 1978 graduate of SUCO who was awarded an honorary doctorate by the college in 2006. Besides presiding over the cook-off, the judges reviewed all 79 eligible recipes submitted for the contest and selected the finalists.

Bennett and O'Donnell joined Poon for a garnish demonstration after the finalists were through. While O'Donnell began by creating birds of paradise out of apples and Bennett made a snowman from mushrooms, the two shared the benefit of their many years of experience and discussed the form and function of a proper garnish.



Daily Star publisher Tanya Shalor, at left, watches the 48th annual cook-off with State University College at Oneonta vice president for community relations Carol Blazina at SUCO on Friday, March 14.

Meanwhile, Poon was hard at work creating a tropical landscape out of leeks, carrot and bananas. As he peppered the audience with stories from his highly successful career, he deftly carved watermelon slices into landscapes and faces, including caricatures of Jay Leno, Elvis Presley and more.

Photos of the judges' demonstration can be found on Page 16.

The demonstration drew oohs, aahs and laughter from audience members, who quickly left their seats as soon as the demonstration was over so they could inspect the creations up close.

See **PARTNER** on Page 3

## BREADS

### FAVORITE ORANGE BREAD

Yumiko Scott  
Franklin

#### Ingredients:

Grated orange rind from 2 oranges  
1½ cups flour (can include wheat germ and ground flax seed)  
2 teaspoons baking powder or ½ teaspoon baking soda and 1 teaspoon cream of tartar  
1 cup oats  
½ teaspoon salt  
½ cup sugar  
½ cup raisins  
½ cup sunflower kernels  
½ cup milk  
½ cup orange juice  
1 egg  
½ cup oil

**Directions:** Mix dry ingredients in a large bowl. In a separate bowl, beat the egg and add milk, juice and oil.

Mix together and pour into a greased and floured 9-by-5-inch bread tin. Bake at 350 F for 50 to 60 minutes.

Cool 10 minutes and remove from tin to cool completely on a wire rack.

### BISCUITS SUPREME

Valane Bookhout  
Maryland

#### Ingredients:

2 cups flour  
4 teaspoons baking powder  
1 tablespoon sugar  
½ teaspoon cream of tartar  
¼ teaspoon salt  
½ cup shortening  
⅔ cup milk

**Directions:** Mix first 5 ingredients. Cut in shortening. Make a well in the mixture and pour all the milk into the well. Stir until it just holds.

Turn out on a floured surface and knead for 10 or 12 strokes. Pat to ½-inch thickness and cut straight down.

Bake on an ungreased sheet at 450 F for 10 to 12 minutes. Makes 12 2-inch biscuits.

### IRISH SODA BREAD

Caren M. Kelsey  
Hartwick

#### Ingredients:

5 cups all-purpose flour  
1 teaspoon baking soda  
1 teaspoon salt  
5 teaspoons baking powder  
1 stick butter, softened  
1¼ cups of raisins  
2 eggs, beaten  
¾ cups of sugar  
1½ to 2 cups buttermilk

**Directions:** Preheat oven to 375 F. In a large bowl, mix flour, soda, salt and baking powder.

Cut in butter with spoon. Add raisins, sugar and eggs; mix well. Add buttermilk.

Turn dough onto floured board. Knead 10 times. Cut dough in half and shape into two rounds loaves.

Grease cookie sheet with a thin layer of butter. Bake bread for 45-60 minutes. Cool before serving.

### EGGNOG-CHERRY NUT BREAD

Caren M. Kelsey  
Hartwick

#### Ingredients:

2½ cups flour  
¾ cups sugar  
1 tablespoon baking powder  
teaspoon salt  
1¼ cups eggnog  
1⅓ cup oil  
½ cup walnuts, chopped  
½ cup Maraschino cherries

**Directions:** In a mixing bowl, stir together flour, sugar, baking powder, and salt.

In a separate bowl, mix eggnog, egg and oil. Stir into dry ingredients, mixing well. Fold in nuts and cherries.

Turn into greased loaf pan. Bake at 350 F for 1 hour and 10 minutes.

Cool 10 minutes before removing from pan.

Serves 10.

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