

A yummy phone call to grandma

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What's Cookin

Gerry is writing today

Somewhere along the way in our lives, our reaction to hearing the telephone ring changes dramatically. I remember as a teenager hoping the phone was for me. Maybe my best girlfriend calling when she arrived home from school, after just dropping me off or better yet, that boy that you both were giggling about all day because you think he looked your way.

Then in our business lives, a ringing phone generally meant more business and was a good sound. But in retirement, now, often when the phone rings, it's who's that and what do they want from me? Especially if I happen to be curled up with a good book and enjoying the tranquil calm of some alone time in my home.

Well, now that I've said that, last week we got a much welcomed phone call from a grandchild. Even better, he was inviting us to a food event. The call was from our youngest grandchild, Michael, who is attending his second year at Niagara College for the Culinary Program. He invited us for lunch after a barbecue lab (cooking class). Twenty-four students that morning had prepared a long list of barbecue style foods that were then presented to

invited friends, other students, family and teachers to sample and enjoy.

Each pod of eight students displayed their skills in a very professional, but casual atmosphere. Among the choices were ribs with three sauces, sausages, wings, baked beans, deep fried mac n cheese balls, apple slaw, coleslaw, pulled pork, tea biscuits, corn muffins, succotash and more that I have forgotten.

What a delight to see these fresh, young, eager students nearing the start of their working careers, so proud and comfortable in their chef's attire and their kitchen environment. Interestingly though, the food presentations were unique in each of the three stations.

Michael then gave us a tour of their well-equipped kitchen and his work station, then a quick tour to see some other labs in progress and his next class location - wine tasting!

It was a delightful experience. I am waiting now for the next phone call to see what new adventure that may bring. Maybe I'll revert back to hoping the phone is for me. Beats an email any day!

Have fun and keep cooking!

Bread Pudding with Caramel Sauce

Serves 8

INGREDIENTS

- 4 cups stale bread cubes (egg bread, raisin bread or cinnamon buns are great)
- 4 eggs, beaten
- 2 and 1/4 cups milk
- 1/2 cup sugar
- 1/2 tsp cinnamon
- 1 tsp vanilla
- 1/2 cup dried cranberries, apricots or raisins

METHOD

1. In a greased casserole dish, toss bread with dried fruit.
2. Mix eggs, milk, sugar, vanilla and cinnamon. Pour over bread. Press down with your hand to moisten all bread.

3. Bake uncovered at 350 degrees F for 45 minutes. Serve with caramel sauce or custard.

Caramel Sauce

INGREDIENTS

- 1/2 cup butter
- 1/2 cup brown sugar
- pinch of salt
- 1/3 cup 35% cream

METHOD

1. Add butter, sugar and salt to a pot. Bring to a boil. Simmer one minute.
2. Being careful, add 35% cream. (It will bubble up).
3. Simmer while stirring one minute.



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