

What's Cookin' writers retire from column after 20 years

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After 20 years, the Independent and Free Press's What's Cookin' writers, Gerry Kentner and Lori Gysel, have decided to close the oven door on their recipe column.

This month's recipe is the last to be submitted by the mother-daughter team, and, although they have heavy hearts to be leaving the forum, they are left with fond memories and happy experiences with the public who read the column.

It all started back in 1998, when Lori Gysel and father, Coun. Dave Kentner, were sitting in the office of their family catering business, Kentner's Social Catering Ltd., when he came up with the idea that maybe she should write a column for the Independent and Free Press.

"I said, uh, OK," Gysel said.

So she rounded up her mother, Gerry Kentner, called the paper, and the editor at the time, John McGhie, said he wasn't interested at first. Then six months passed, and with the addition of a Friday paper, he told them he had some space.

Kentner recalls McGhie requiring a picture and a story to follow the recipe, and the hardest thing for the pair wasn't writing the column or remembering to take the picture (though that sometimes had its issues), it was cooking with a recipe in the first place.

"Neither one of us cooks with a recipe," Gysel said. "So the hardest thing was to discipline yourself when you're trying something new, you have to write it down, so when you're done, if it tastes any good, you can make it into a recipe for the paper."

"God forbid something turned out really well and

"If you look back at the columns and the recipes over the years, it follows the journey of our lives. There are times when there's lots of low-calorie stuff because I would be on a diet. Or we would be cutting out carbs because we're on the no-carb kick. Or my son becomes a vegetarian, then he becomes a vegan. Or you got yourself a new crockpot."

— Lori Gysel

it photographed well and you hadn't written it down," she said.

With the catering business the everyday focus of the family, Kentner was concerned about giving away all the recipes they used, thinking no one would use the service if they could do it themselves. Gysel was not con-

cerned, and eventually they started publishing their recipes.

"Just because somebody knows how to make your chicken with the white wine mushroom cream sauce does not mean they are going to cater their daughter's wedding," Gysel said.

The process of crafting

the recipe for the paper has changed over the years. Sometimes it starts with a little bit of inspiration, cooking for the family, or a frantic 'what's in the cupboard?' on a Tuesday night to make sure it's submitted on time. But the end result is always the same: delicious.

"Sometimes it's difficult coming up with a recipe, especially on short notice," Kentner said.

The pair had a filing system which helped them keep track of already-used recipes and the ones they haven't sent in yet.

Sometimes, when the two women are cooking for company, they will have multiple components to the meal, and submitted each one, easing the workload, and the deadline.

"What really sucks is when you forget to take the photo," Gysel laughed. "The rule is, don't drink while cooking, because you will forget to take the

photo and then you're left with an empty platter."

Sometimes, before it was too late to take the photo, bowls of the same dish would come together to form a complete one, so some of the photos they submitted had a bite out of the featured recipe.

Not every dish was a success: every once in a while, a photo wouldn't turn out, or they found the recipe not good enough to be shared among the community.

"We had a good variety of recipes over the years, because Lori and I are two different types of cooks," Kentner said. "I'm a different age, a different generation, different type of cooking. Lori is more experimental in cooking, and part of that comes from her job experiences."

Inspiration for each column stemmed from culinary questions or life ex-

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Happy Holidays

From our family to yours,
thanks for a great year.
We wish you all the best as
you embark on 2018.



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