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TWENTY EIGHTH YEAR

June, 2010

NEWS LETTER

#119

**Gourmet Couples Schedule for 2010**

- June 27 – Restaurant Visit – Café Renaissance, Vienna, VA.
July 11 – Planning Party – 6:00 – 8:00 pm
August 7 – Dinner Party
August 14 – Alternate Dinner Party
September 11 – Virginia Winery
October 2 – Crab Feast, Paula and Joe host
October 17 – Planning Party, 4:00 – 6:00 pm
October 30 – Halloween Party, Mitzi and Bob, host
November 6– Dinner Party
November 13 – Alternate Dinner Party
December 5 – Restaurant Brunch – Location DC - TBA
January 8, 2011 – 12th Night Party

**Summer Restaurant Visit**

On Sunday, June 27, at 6:00 we'll get together for a fine dinner at Café Renaissance in Vienna, VA. Called "The Most Romantic Dinner in Fairfax County," they offer French, Italian, and Continental dishes. The cost for a choice among three appetizers, three entrees, and two desserts is \$42 per person, plus tax and tip, for a total of about \$54. A small Caesar Salad and coffee or tea are included. (Filet mignon will be \$3 extra.) Alcoholic drinks will be cash bar. Please fill in the reservation coupon, marking your choice of appetizer, entree, and dessert, and mail with your deposit of \$20 per person no later than June 15 to Jerry Make check payable to Gourmet Couples.

Directions to Café Renaissance. The restaurant is located in the heart of Vienna, VA, just off Maple Avenue (route 123). Coming from the Capital Beltway, head west on Rte 123 toward Vienna. Go about a mile and then watch for the Outback Steakhouse on the left. At that light turn left onto Glyndon Street. The restaurant is about a half block down on the right. Coming from the west, either take route 123 directly into Vienna, or take I-66 to Nutley Street, and exit toward Vienna. Go through three traffic lights, and turn right at the fourth light onto route 123. Go about 3/4 mile and watch for the Whole Foods market on the right. Turn right at the next light onto Glyndon Street. The restaurant is about a half block down on the right. Be careful to obey speed limits – the Vienna police are very diligent.

Planning Party for our third Dinner Party of 2010 is scheduled for July 11, 2010, from .6:00 - 8:00 P.M. If you are willing to host the Planning Party or one of the Dinner Parties, please contact Joan or Bob and let them know. If you plan to participate in the August Dinner Parties, fill out and mail the included coupon by July 1, 2010 to: Joan and Bob. The Dinner Party will be August 7, 2010, with an Alternate Dinner Party August 14, 2010.

**Army-Navy Club County Club**

The Army-Navy Country Club visit on May 15 was well attended with a special guest – Stephanie, Joan's sister, visiting from Oklahoma. We enjoyed wine and appetizers before going to the Sun Room with the its view of Washington, The prime rib and Chateaubriand were the most popular selections. Thanks to Dick and Anne for hosting this special event.

**Strawberry Brunch**

The June 7 strawberry brunch was once again a fun event. Coy's specialty is seafood and her shrimp appetizer was a particular favorite. The weather cooperated as it didn't start raining until about 3:00 p.m. That gave us the chance to enjoy the sunshine (and shade) in Linda and Shelly's backyard. When the rain threatened, we scurried inside and finished off a perfect day with dessert. Thanks to Linda and Shelly for once again hosting this popular event.

**Buttery Herb-Cheese Muffins**

(Prepared by Linda and Shelly)
Strawberries and Champagne Brunch, Sunday, June 6, 2010

- 2 Cups self-rising flour
1 Cup butter, melted
1 6.5 ounce package garlic-and-herb spreadable cheese, softened
1/2 Cup sour cream
Stir together all ingredients just until blended.
Spoon muffin batter into lightly greased miniature muffin pans, filling to the top.
Bake at 350 degrees F. for 25 minutes or until lightly browned.

Note: For testing purposes only, we used Alouette Garlic et Herbes Gourmet Spreadable Cheese. Makes 2-1/2 dozen.

### Ham and Cheddar Muffins

(Prepared by Linda and Shelly)

Strawberries and Champagne Brunch, Sunday, June 6, 2010

- 1-1/4 Cups all-purpose flour
- 1/4 Cup cornmeal
- 2-1/2 Teaspoons baking powder
- 1/2 Teaspoon baking soda
- 3 green onions, finely sliced
- 1/2 Cup shredded sharp Cheddar cheese
- 3/4 Cup diced country ham
- 1 Large egg
- 1 Cup milk
- 2 Tablespoons melted butter

Preheat oven to 375 degrees F.

Combine flour, cornmeal, baking powder and soda, sliced onions, cheese, and the country ham.

In another bowl, whisk milk with egg and melted butter. Blend milk and egg mixture into the dry ingredients, mixing until all dry ingredients are moistened. Fill muffin cups about to 3/4 full. Bake for 25 to 30 minutes. Makes about 10 to 12 muffins, depending on size.

### Lemon Tea Bread

(Prepared by Linda and Shelly)

Strawberries and Champagne Brunch, Sunday, June 6, 2010

Makes 1 (8-inch) loaf

- 1/2 Cup butter, softened
- 1 Cup granulated sugar
- 2 Large eggs
- 1-1/2 Cups all-purpose flour
- 1 Teaspoon baking powder
- 1/2 Teaspoon salt
- 1/2 Cup milk
- 2 Tablespoons lemon rind, divided
- 1 Cup powdered sugar
- 2 Tablespoons fresh lemon juice
- 1 Tablespoon granulated sugar

Beat softened butter at medium speed with an electric mixer until creamy. Gradually add 1 cup granulated sugar, beating until light and fluffy. Add eggs, 1 at a time, beating just until blended after each addition.

Stir together flour, baking powder, and salt; add to butter mixture alternately with milk, beating at low speed just until blended, beginning and ending with flour mixture. Stir in 1 tablespoon lemon rind. Spoon batter into greased and floured 8- x 4-inch loaf pan.

Bake at 350 degrees F. for 1 hour or until a wooden pick inserted in center of bread comes out clean. Let cool in pan 10 minutes. Remove bread from pan, and cool completely on a wire rack.

Stir together powdered sugar and lemon juice until smooth; spoon evenly over top of bread, letting excess drip down sides. Stir together remaining 1 tablespoon lemon rind and 1 tablespoon granulated sugar; sprinkle on top of bread.

Lemon-Almond Tea Bread: Stir 1/2 teaspoon almond extract into batter. Proceed as directed.

### Coy's Shrimp Mold

(Prepared by Coy and Dutee)

Strawberries and Champagne Brunch, Sunday, June 6, 2010

- 1 Package gelatin
- 1/4 Cup water
- 1 Can heated tomato soup
- 1 8 ounce package low cal cream cheese
- 1 Cup Mayonnaise
- 1 Tablespoon lemon juice
- 1/4 Teaspoon Tabasco
- 1 Teaspoon garlic salt
- 1 Teaspoon salt
- 1 Cup chopped celery
- 3/4 Cup chopped onion
- 10 Ounces small frozen shrimp, cooked and chop if needed

Desolate gelatin in water and add heated tomato soup.

Mix cream cheese with mayonnaise. Add lemon juice, Tabasco, salt, garlic salt, chopped celery, and chopped onion.

Mix all the above together, then add the shrimp.

Pour in greased dish and chill.

Serve with crackers.

### Chicken Salad with Cucumber, Red Pepper, and Honey-Mustard Dressing

(Prepared by Fran and Jerry)

Strawberries and Champagne Brunch, Sunday, June 6, 2010

For the Dressing:

- 2 Tablespoons lime juice
- 1 Tablespoon mayonnaise 2 teaspoons honey mustard
- 1/2 Cup olive oil
- 1/2 Teaspoon dried tarragon
- 1/4 Teaspoon sugar

For the Salad:

- 2 Cups diced cooked chicken
- 1 Cucumber, peeled, halved lengthwise, seeded, cut into 1/4-inch dice
- 1 Red bell pepper, cut into 1/4-inch dice
- 2 Tablespoons finely chopped red onion
- 1 Large mango, peeled and sliced (optional)
- 2 Teaspoons chopped fresh tarragon, chives, or basil
- 1/2 Pound mixed salad greens

### FOR THE DRESSING:

In a large glass or stainless-steel bowl, whisk together the lime juice, mayonnaise, and mustard. Gradually whisk in the oil slowly. Season dressing to taste with salt and pepper.

## FOR THE SALAD:

In a medium bowl, toss the chicken, cucumber, bell pepper, onion, mango, tarragon and half the dressing. Toss the greens into the remaining dressing. Put the greens on plates and top with the chicken salad.

### Mediterranean Caesar Salad

(Prepared by Barbara and Jim)

Strawberries and Champagne Brunch, Sunday, June 6, 2010

6 slices day-old nut or seed-and-grain bread, stale or dried at room temperature for several hours

8 strips bacon

3 to 4 small heads romaine lettuce

Citrus Caesar Dressing:

5 tablespoons fresh lemon juice

6-8 tablespoons olive oil

3 tablespoons orange juice

2 teaspoons Worcestershire sauce

2 garlic clove, minced

2 teaspoons dry mustard

2 teaspoon anchovy paste

Freshly ground black pepper

1-1/2 cup Mediterranean olives

1/2 cup shredded parmesan cheese

### To Make Croutons:

Preheat oven to 300 degrees F.

Remove crusts and cut bread into 1-to 1-1/2 inch cubes. Place on a baking sheet and bake for 10-20 minutes, tossing occasionally, until toasted and very dry.

### To prepare salad:

Cut bacon crosswise into 1 inch pieces. Place in microwave safe casserole, cover with paper towels, and microwave on high for 5 to 6 minutes, stirring every 2 minutes until crisp. With slotted spoon remove bacon to paper towels to drain. Wash lettuce, tear into bite size pieces and spin dry.

### To make dressing:

In a small bowl mix lemon juice, olive oil, orange juice Worcestershire sauce, garlic, mustard and anchovy paste. Add pepper to taste.

### To assemble:

In large bowl, toss lettuce with bacon, olives, parmesan, croutons and as much dressing as needed.

### Sausage and Mushroom Brunch Casserole

(Prepared by Ann and Dick)

Strawberries and Champagne Brunch, Sunday, June 6, 2010

2-1/4 Cups of seasoned croutons

1-1/2 Pounds of bulk sausage

4 Eggs beaten

2-1/4 Cups of milk

1 Can of creamed of mushroom soup

1 4 ounce can of sliced mushrooms drained

3/4 Teaspoon of dry mustard

2 Cups of shredded Cheddar cheese

Parsley sprigs (optional)

Spread the croutons in a highly greased 13 by 9 inch

baking pan.

Cook the sausage until brown, stirring to crumble. Drain well. Sprinkle over the croutons.

Combine the eggs, milk, soup, mushrooms and mustard and pour over the sausage. Cover and refrigerate overnight.

Remove from refrigerator, uncover, let stand 30 minutes, then bake at 325 degrees for 50 to 55 minutes.

Sprinkle cheese over the top, bake an additional 5 minutes or until the cheese melts. Garnish with parsley.

### Breakfast Casserole

(Prepared by Barbara and Jerry)

Strawberries and Champagne Brunch, Sunday, June 6, 2010

Prepare this breakfast casserole recipe the night before. All you have to do is pop it in the oven.

### Ingredients:

9 Large eggs

12 Slices bread, crusts removed, cut into cubes

1-1/2 Pounds sausage

1-1/2 Teaspoons dry mustard

1-1/2 Teaspoons salt

1/4 Teaspoon pepper

1-1/2 Cups shredded sharp Cheddar cheese

3 Cups milk

paprika

### Preparation:

Brown sausage; drain on paper towels and let cool. Beat eggs with milk; add salt, pepper, and mustard. Stir in bread cubes; add cheese and browned sausage. Pour mixture into a lightly buttered 9x13x2 inch glass baking dish.

Refrigerate overnight. Remove from the refrigerator 30 minutes before serving. Sprinkle with a little paprika.

Bake at 350 degrees F. for 45 minutes, or until set. Let stand 10 to 15 minutes before serving. Serve with sweet rolls or muffins and hot fruit. Serves 6.

### Apricot Bread Pudding

(Prepared by Mitzi and Bob)

Strawberries and Champagne Brunch, Sunday, June 6, 2010

Ingredients

4 Eggs

3-1/2 Cups milk

1/2 Cup sugar

1-1/2 Teaspoons vanilla

5 Cups torn dry bread pieces (6 to 7 slices)

12 Dried apricot halves, quartered

1/4 Cup currants

2 Tablespoons sugar

1/2 Teaspoon ground cardamom

1 Tablespoon margarine or butter, cut up

Maple syrup heated (optional)

In a medium mixing bowl beat together eggs, milk,

the 1/2 cup sugar, and vanilla. In a large mixing bowl combine bread pieces, apricots, and currants; place in a greased 2-quart rectangular baking dish. Pour milk mixture over bread mixture in casserole.

For topping, in a small mixing bowl stir together the 2 tablespoons sugar and cardamom. Sprinkle over casserole. Dot with margarine or butter.

Bake in a 325 degree F. oven for 55 to 60 minutes or until a knife inserted near center comes out clean. Serve warm with maple syrup, if desired. Makes 6 to 8 servings.

### **Blueberry Pie**

(Prepared by Joan and Bob)

Strawberries and Champagne Brunch, Sunday, June 6, 2010

- 4-1/2 Pint. baskets of fresh blueberries
- 3/4 Cup sugar
- 1/4 Cup flour
- 2 Tablespoon fresh lemon juice
- 1 Teaspoon grated lemon peel
- 1 Teaspoon vanilla extract

Mix above mixture and allow to stand for 15 minutes.

### **Prepare Pie Pastry:**

- 2 Cups all purpose flour
- 1 Teaspoon salt
- 2/3 Cup shortening (half butter and half shortening)
- 5 to 6 Tablespoons cold water

Place above mixture in Cuisinart. Pulse until mixture forms a ball. Divide in two balls, cover with plastic wrap, and chill in refrigerator for about 10 minutes.

Roll out bottom crust. Fill with berry mixture. Make and apply lattice top crust. Brush with egg wash.

Bake at 425 degrees F. for 5 – 10 minutes. Reduce heat to 350 degrees F. and bake about 40 to 45 minutes.

### **PINEAPPLE CREAM CHEESE SQUARES**

(Prepared by Barbara Piquet and Ron)

Strawberries and Champagne Brunch, Sunday, June 6, 2010

- 1-1/2 Sticks margarine
- 2/3 Cup brown sugar
- 2 Cups flour
- 1 Cup chopped walnuts
- 1/2 Cup sugar
- 2 8-ounce packages cream cheese, softened
- 3 Eggs
- 2 Tablespoons lemon juice.
- 1 Teaspoon vanilla
- 1 Small can crushed pineapple, undrained

Cream together margarine and brown sugar. Add flour and chopped walnuts, mix well. Press 3/4 of mixture into 13x9 inch pan (reserving remaining 1/4 for use later) and bake for 10 minutes at 350 degrees F. In the meantime, cream together sugar, cream cheese, eggs, lemon juice, vanilla and crushed pineapple (with juice). After removing crust

mixture from the oven, pour cheese mixture on top and sprinkle with remaining 1/4 of crust mixture on top. Continue to bake at 350 degrees F. for another 25 minutes. Cool thoroughly and cut in squares. Makes 24 squares.

### **Blueberry Pie**

(Prepared by Wendy and Mark)

Strawberries and Champagne Brunch, Sunday, June 6, 2010

Crust:

One double recipe for all butter pie crust dough

Filling ingredients:

- 6 Cups of fresh (or frozen) blueberries, rinsed and stems removed (if using frozen, defrost and drain first)
- 1/2 Teaspoon lemon zest
- 1 Tablespoon lemon juice
- 1/4 Cup all-purpose flour (for thickening)
- 1/2 Cup white granulated sugar
- 1/4 Teaspoon cinnamon
- 2 Tablespoons butter (unsalted), cut into small pieces

Egg wash ingredients:

- 1 Egg
- 1 Tablespoon milk

Prepare the crust. Roll out half of the dough to 1/8-inch-thick circle on a lightly floured work surface, about 13 inches in diameter. Fit the dough over a 9-inch pie pan, and trim the edges to a 1/2 inch over the edge all around the pan. Put into the refrigerator to chill for about 30 minutes,

Gently mix the blueberries, sugar, flour, cinnamon, lemon zest, and lemon juice in a large bowl. Transfer them to the chilled bottom crust of the pie pan. Dot with butter pieces. Roll out remaining dough to the same size and thickness as the first. Place on top of the berry filling. Tuck the top dough over and under the edge of the bottom dough, and crimp the edges with your fingers. Transfer the pie to the refrigerator to chill until the dough is firm, about 30 minutes. Heat oven to 425 degrees F.

Whisk egg and milk together to make an egg wash.

Remove the unbaked pie from refrigerator. Brush the top with egg wash. Score the pie on the top with 4 cuts (so steam can escape while cooking). Place the pie on the middle rack of the oven with a parchment paper or Silpat lined baking pan positioned on the lower rack to catch any filling that may bubble over. Bake for 20 minutes at 425 degrees F. Reduce heat to 350 degrees F and bake for 30 to 40 minutes more or until juices are bubbling and have thickened. Transfer to a wire rack to cool. Let cool completely before serving. Makes 8 servings.