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Local woman becomes published chef



Sarah Brubeck
Staff Intern

The aroma of Denise Musgrave's Grandmother Gracie's lemon cake has been filling her families kitchen since she was a young girl, and now the sweet cake is filling the mouths of families across the country.

Denise Musgrave stands in her kitchen next to a Sellers cabinet that belonged to her grandmother, Grace Lusk, who passed it down to her before she died. **Dayla Thurston**

Musgrave's recipe, which belonged to her grandmother, Grace Lusk, was published in a Gooseberry Patch cookbook titled "Grandma's Kitchen" about eight years ago, and this year, the recipe was chosen for "101 Homestyle Favorites Cookbook."

"Every time we went to Grandma's house, she had lemon cake and lemon cookies," Musgrave said. "My kids love it, and so do my grandkids. She loved sweets. I guess I took after her."

The books are sold throughout the country at various retail stores, including Cracker Barrel, and can be bought online. In other Gooseberry Patch books which Musgrave owns, pictures are drawn of each recipe, but in the "101 Homestyle Favorites Cookbook," colored photographs accompany each recipe.

Gooseberry Patch publishes four to five hardcover cookbooks and several soft-cover books throughout the year with themes for autumn, Christmas, summer, kids and gifts and crafts. Since 1984, the company has published over 100 cookbooks, filled with recipes sent in by the people who use them.

"This is really my favorite one," Musgrave said of the "101 Homestyle Favorites Cookbook." "All the recipes are really good. I have a shelf behind my stove, and it's filled with (Gooseberry Patch cookbooks). I know quite a few people who have them. My oldest daughter has almost every one."

Her daughter, Sarah Mohr, owns about 30 Gooseberry Cookbooks and cooks her grandmother's lemon cake on a regular basis.

"It's easy to make. It's neat that Mom entered it," Mohr said.

Musgrave's grandchildren also have a sweet tooth and share her love for cooking.

Musgrave submitted recipes in the past, but her grandmother's lemon cake is her only published recipe.



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Food was always plentiful during visits with her grandmother, Musgrave remembers, with sweets, fried chicken or noodles always around for family members to munch on. Now, with two daughters of her own and four grandchildren, Musgrave still loves to cook, and she and her husband rarely go out for dinner.

"We're into cobblers and pies more than we do cakes," Musgrave said of her family's eating habits. "I like chocolate cake with white icing. That's my favorite."

Musgrave's small orchard of about six peach trees supplies the main ingredient of her pies and cobblers.

As a cafeteria worker at Shelbyville High School, Musgrave has used her cooking skills to bake more than 2,240 cookies a week in past years for the Shelbyville Central Schools.

"I have some kids who just pick my line and come talk to me. They get attached to you," she said.

Though Musgrave received a free copy of the Gooseberry Patch cookbooks when she was published, she plans to buy copies for her family members. The book - "101 Homestyle Favorites" - was published in July and can be bought online for \$14.95 at www.gooseberrypatch.com.

If others are interested in submitting recipes for Gooseberry Patch cookbooks, they may also visit the Web site.

Grandma Gracie's Lemon Cake (from "101 Homestyle Favorites Cookbook")

18-1/4 ounce package yellow cake mix

3.4 ounce package instant lemon pudding mix

3/4 cup oil

3/4 cup water

4 eggs, beaten

Garnish: powdered sugar

Combine all ingredients and mix well.

Pour into a greased 13-by-9-inch baking pan.

Bake at 350 degrees for 35 to 40 minutes or until a toothpick inserted in the center comes out clean.

Immediately poke holes through the cake with a fork; pour glaze over the cake.

Dust with powdered sugar.

Serves 10 to 12.

Glaze:

2 cups powdered sugar

2 tablespoons butter, melted

2 tablespoons water

1/3 cup lemon juice

Combine all ingredients; stir until smooth.

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