



the **MAYTAG** store.

Linda Schmidt of Kawkawlin captures first place at 2018 Cookie Bake-off

Here are the recipes from the Dec. 12 competition featuring seven local bakers

BAY CITY – Linda Schmidt of Kawkawlin won first place during the 2018 Cookie Bake-off held Wednesday, Dec. 12, at The Maytag Store in Saginaw. Schmidt’s “Let’s Have a Party Tarts” bested six other cookies prepared by local bakers in the competition, which was sponsored by Michigan Sugar Company, WSGW and The Maytag Store.

Second place went to Diane Selich of Vassar for her “Chocolate Gift Wrap Cookies” and Tim Donovan of Saginaw captured third place with his “Dulce de Leche and Cinnamon Sandwich Cookies.”

Also competing were:

- Janet Kurecka of Saginaw (“My Aunt Irene’s Date Bars from her Friend Betty”).
- Amy Bates of Merrill (“Chocolate Cherry Chewies”).
- Joan Gerhardt of Saginaw (“Raspberry Almond Shortbread Bar Cookies”).
- Regina Provenzano of Saginaw Township (“Viscotta Italian Cookie”).

The first-, second- and third-place winners took home cash prizes provided by The Maytag Store.





The Recipes

Here are all the recipes, including one from Carol Socier of Bay City, who was unable to compete in the contest, but submitted a recipe.

My Aunt Irene's Date Bars From Her Friend Betty

By Janet Kurecka, Saginaw

Ingredients

2 eggs, beaten
1 cup Pioneer light brown sugar
 $\frac{3}{4}$ cup sifted flour
 $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon salt
1 teaspoon baking powder
1 cup dates
1 cup cut up nut meats
1 teaspoon vanilla

Directions

- Mix eggs and sugar, add flour, salt and baking powder sifted together. Add dates, nuts and vanilla.
- Pour into greased 9x13-inch pan, lined with wax paper.
- Bake at 350 degrees for 30-35 minutes. Remove wax paper and dust with Pioneer powdered sugar.

Santa's Holiday Macadamia Nut Cookies

By Carol Socier, Bay City

Ingredients

½ cup plus 2 tablespoons unsalted butter, softened
1 ½ cups packed Pioneer light brown sugar
2 teaspoon vanilla extract
2 large eggs, lightly beaten
2 cups all-purpose flour
1 ½ teaspoons baking powder
¼ teaspoon baking soda
¼ teaspoon salt
1 ½ cups white chocolate chunks
1 cup sprinkles
1 ½ cups coarsely chopped macadamia nuts
1 ½ cups coarse chopped pecans

Vanilla Glaze

½ cup Pioneer powdered sugar
1 tablespoon milk
½ teaspoon vanilla

Directions

- In a large mixing bowl, cream butter, sugar and vanilla. Add beaten eggs. Combine flour, baking powder, baking soda and salt in another bowl. Add to creamed mixture, mixing well. Fold in white chocolate chunks and nuts. Drop by tablespoons 2 inches apart on parchment lined baking sheets. Top with sprinkles.
- Bake at 350 degrees for 12-14 minutes or until golden. Cool on wire racks.

- Meanwhile, in a small bowl, mix powdered sugar, milk and vanilla with whisk until smooth. Drizzle over tops of cookies. Garnish with anything else if desired.

Let's Have a Party Tart

By Linda Schmidt

Ingredients & Directions

Pastry:

6 oz. cream cheese, softened
2 sticks oleo, softened
2 cups all-purpose flour

- Mix above like pie crust. Roll into approximately 48 walnut-size balls. Spray miniature cupcake pans with Pam. Pat one ball into miniature cupcake pans. Set aside.

Filling:

1 ½ cups Pioneer light brown sugar
2 tablespoons melted butter
2 extra-large eggs
2 pinches salt
2 teaspoons vanilla
2 cups ground walnuts
Stir well.

- Heat oven to 350 degrees.
- Place heaping teaspoon of filling into pastry.
- Bake at 350 degrees for 23-25 minutes.
- Remove from oven and remove tarts from miniature cupcake pans. Place on cooling racks and cool for 10 minutes.
- Sprinkle tops of tarts with Pioneer powdered sugar.

Dulce de Leche and Cinnamon Sandwich Cookies

By Tim Donovan of Saginaw

Ingredients

Cookies:

2 cups flour
1 teaspoon baking soda
½ teaspoon salt
½ teaspoon ground anise
2 sticks unsalted butter, softened
1 cup Pioneer sugar
½ cup Pioneer sugar for rolling
1 large egg
1 teaspoon vanilla
1 teaspoon cinnamon

Filling:

1 tablespoon unsalted butter
½ teaspoon cinnamon
½ teaspoon ground anise
1 ¼ cups Dulce de Leche

Directions

Cookies:

- Adjust oven rack to middle position. Heat oven to 350 degrees. Line baking sheet with parchment paper.
- Mix flour, baking soda and salt.
- Using stand mixer with paddle, beat butter and 1 cup sugar on medium high until pale and fluffy. Add egg and vanilla. Beat until combined. Reduce speed to low and add flour mixture in three stages until just combined.
- Combine cinnamon and remaining ½ cup sugar in shallow dish and set aside.
- Working with 2 teaspoons dough, roll in 16 balls and space them 2 inches apart on three baking sheets (48 cookies total). Bake until edges are firm (about 10 minutes) rotating the pan after 5 minutes.
- Let cookies cool 1 minute on sheet before placing them in cinnamon sugar, turning them to coat completely.
- Transfer to wire rack and cool completely.

Filling:

- Melt butter in small sauce pan over medium heat. Whisk in cinnamon and anise and cook until fragrant (about 1 minute).
- Off heat, stir in Dulce de Leche until incorporated.
- Spread 1 ½ teaspoons on 24 cookies. Top with remaining cookies to form a sandwich.

Chocolate Cherry Chewies

By Amy Bates of Merrill

Ingredients

1 ¼ cups all-purpose flour
¼ cup unsweetened baking cocoa
½ teaspoon baking powder
½ cup butter, cut into pieces
1 ½ cups dark chocolate chips
1 cup Pioneer sugar
2 eggs
1 teaspoon vanilla
¾ cup chopped maraschino cherries, drained, patted dry

Directions

- Heat oven to 350 degrees. In small bowl, mix flour, cocoa, baking powder and salt. Set aside.
- In 2-quart saucepan, heat butter and 1 cup of the chocolate chips over low heat, stirring occasionally until melted. Remove from heat and stir in sugar. Pour into large bowl. Beat in eggs one at a time until blended. Beat in vanilla. Stir in flour mixture until well blended. Stir in 1 cup of the chocolate chips and the cherries. Cover and refrigerate 30 minutes.
- Shape dough into balls. Lightly butter hands if dough is sticky when shaping. Place 2 inches apart on an ungreased cookie sheet and flatten each ball to 1 ½-inch circle.
- Bake 7-9 minutes or until edges are set. Cool for 2 minutes on the sheets then remove from cookie sheets to cooling rack. Cool completely for about 30 minutes.
- In small, microwavable bowl, microwave remaining ½ cup of chocolate chips uncovered on high for 30-60 seconds, stirring halfway through until chips can be stirred smooth. Spoon into food-storage bag and partially seal the bag. Cut a small tip from the corner of the bag and drizzle chocolate over the top of cookies.
- Let stand for about 2 hours or until chocolate is set.

Chocolate Gift Wrap Cookies

By Diane Selich of Vassar

Ingredients

1 ¼ cup of margarine
2 cups Pioneer sugar
2 large eggs
1 teaspoon almond extract
2 cups flour
¾ cup baking cocoa
1 teaspoon baking soda
1 teaspoon cinnamon
1 16-ounce can of cherry pie filling
1 8-ounce package of cream cheese
1 teaspoon clear vanilla
6 tablespoons Pioneer powdered sugar (3 tablespoons for the cream cheese)
¼ pound of green fondant
1 package cinnamon red hots
¼ cup chocolate chips for melting

Directions

- In a large bowl, cream the margarine, sugar, eggs and almond flavoring. Sift together the flour, cocoa, soda and cinnamon. Add to the creamed mixture. Mix until well blended.
- Using a small ice cream scoop, place 12 cookies on a lined baking sheet. Bake at 350 degrees for 8-10 minutes.
- Once the cookies are cooled, cream together the cream cheese, vanilla and 3 tablespoons of powdered sugar. Spread a heaping amount on half of the cookies.
- Place a tablespoon of cherry pie filling on top of the cream cheese mixture. Place another tablespoon on top of each of the remaining cookies. Put the two halves of each cookie together.
- Roll out the fondant on a small amount of powdered sugar and cut into eight 1/2-inch wide strips. Wrap a strip around the entire cookie sandwich and another strip the other way around the entire cookie sandwich.
- Use the remaining fondant to form bows on each cookie sandwich.
- Melt the chocolate chips in the microwave and using a toothpick, place a small amount in the middle of the bow and place a red hot candy on the chocolate.



Raspberry Almond Shortbread Bar Cookies

By Joan Gerhardt of Saginaw

Ingredients

1 cup unsalted baking sticks
½ cup Pioneer powdered sugar
2 teaspoons vanilla extract or ½ teaspoon almond extract
2 cups all-purpose flour
¾ teaspoon salt
½ cup seedless raspberry jam
½ cup sliced almonds

Directions

- Heat oven to 350 degrees. Line a 9-inch baking pan with foil leaving a 2-inch overhang and grease foil.
- Beat baking sticks in a large bowl with electric mixer until fluffy (about 3 minutes). Add sugar and extract and beat until pale and fluffy (about 2 minutes).
- Gradually add flour and salt and beat on low until blended.
- Reserve about ½ cup dough. Press remaining dough into pan, spread with jam to about ½ inch of edges. Crumble the rest of the dough over the jam and top with almonds.
- Bake for 45 minutes or until golden. Cool for 15 minutes in pan. Using foil overhang, transfer to wire rack to cool completely.
- Cut into bars and sprinkle with additional powdered sugar.

Viscotta Italian Cookie

By Regina Provenzano of Saginaw Township

Ingredients & Directions

Cookies:

5 pounds of flour
6 heaping tablespoons baking powder
1 pound margarine
1 pound butter Crisco
2 cups Pioneer sugar
1 dozen eggs
2 cups of milk
1 tablespoon cinnamon oil
3 tablespoons vanilla

- Mix with hands and then use a cookie press to make shapes. Or, roll out in a rope and make lines, "s" shape or wreath shape.
- Bake at 375 degrees for five minutes on bottom rack and then for 6 minutes on the top rack. Cool and frost.

Frosting:

2 pounds Pioneer powdered sugar
1 tablespoon butter
½ cup milk

- Mix all together and sprinkle Italian cinnamon on top or bake with candy cherry.