

The Taste of a Memory *Comforting Cooking*

| Julie Yates

There is nothing quite like the sweet aroma of a favorite cookie baking or the mouthwatering savory smell of a special lasagna in the oven to bring back memories. For Center Grove resident Anne Halpin, this happy situation occurs often in her kitchen, thanks to a project she undertook to help her deal with the grief of a passing of a loved one.

In 2007, after the death of her mother, Mildred Boley, Anne was faced with a huge void in her life. Although she was working as a teacher and head of the Warsaw Community High School English Department at the time, she had talked with and helped care for her mother almost every day during her four-year illness. She redirected this energy by compiling recipes for a cookbook that not only honored her mother but her mother-in-law, Evelyn Halpin, as well.

As Anne was beginning the undertaking, she realized, "I wasn't the only person that had ever lost a mother." She had the idea to write other relatives and friends to ask them to submit recipes. The resulting

cookbook, *The Taste of a Memory*, contains over 400 recipes, and many include a brief explanation of why the recipe meant a lot to the contributor. For instance, one recipe, "Johnny Cake with Maple Syrup," was sent in from Canada along with the reminiscence of how a special mother always made this before horse shows.

The cookbook has a sprinkling of family pictures and plenty of traditional, delicious dishes like lasagna and nut ball cookies that are sometimes temporarily forgotten in our busy lives. Anne's husband, Louis, told her, "You always did well at cooking, but after the cookbook, you got really good!"

With help from her husband, Anne found a publisher and initially had 200 copies of the cookbook printed. She sent a book to all 100 people that contributed recipes and then sold the rest for \$21. The demand for the book was surprising; Anne sold many more copies than she thought she would. The Halpins had to print additional copies of the cookbook two more times, but they made sure they had plenty left for their grandchildren.

One recipe that Anne received from a friend living in the Indianapolis area provided a link that enabled her to oversee a second compilation cookbook a few years later. A former neighbor sent her a recipe along with a newsletter from Assistance League® of Indianapolis which serves underprivileged children and adults through several programs. After Anne moved to Center Grove, she joined the organization and used the expertise she learned from publishing *The Taste of a Memory* to compile a fundraising cookbook for Assistance League® named *Assistance in the Kitchen*.



Anne Halpin has overseen two compilation cookbooks



Aunt Paula's Lasagna

Brown 1 lb. ground beef with 1 diced onion. Drain and add 8 oz. tomato sauce, 28 oz. canned tomatoes, 1 t. salt, ½ t. oregano, ⅛ t. garlic powder and ⅛ t. pepper. Layer twice the sauce, cooked noodles, 1 c. cottage cheese, 1 c. mozzarella cheese, ¼ c. parmesan cheese, then finish with sauce and mozzarella. Bake at 350° for 50 minutes or until top is browned and bubbly.



Milly's Nut Ball Cookies

Cream 1 c. butter, ¼ c. sugar and 2 c. flour. Add 1 T. vanilla and 2 c. nuts. Roll into balls. Bake at 325° for 30 minutes. Roll in powdered sugar.

Mom's Brownies

Dissolve ⅔ c. cocoa into 1 c. melted shortening. Mix with 4 beaten eggs, 2 c. sugar and 1 t. sugar. Add 1 c. each flour and nuts. Bake at 350° for 30 minutes.

These days Anne is happily busy with volunteering and family, but she would encourage anyone to take on a project to help through the grieving process. She admits it was hard at first to go through her mother's recipes, but preserving the memories and the love was worth it. **cg**



Julie Yates is a former teacher and current food blogger, Yates Yummies. She enjoys sharing quick, easy, and healthy recipes with people who love to cook. Visit her blog at

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