

Creative Cooking From The Chowan Herald Kitchen

The March winds may blow and we may even have snow but to the National Peanut Council, March is peanut munchin' month.

This has been true for several years. Even before Jimmy Carter started campaigning. However, now that "Jimmy Who" is President Jimmy Carter, the entire country is interested in peanuts and in Southern specialties.

The peanut is important to the economy of this state, especially to the eastern part of North Carolina and we take pride in the quality of peanuts we grow and market.

We also come up with various ways of using peanuts in the home. Let's talk about some different recipes such as Peanut Patch Bundt Cake. This one has a crunchy peanut-crusted outside with chopped dates and chocolate chips inside. It is tuned in to today's lifestyles which demand quick-and-easy-to-prepare foods. A yellow cake mix is the basis. Besides giving this cake its distinctive flavor, the peanut butter and peanuts provide a real protein punch not found in just every cake. So here is one sweet you don't have to withhold from the kids.

Peanut Patch Bundt Cake
Softened butter
1/2 cup finely chopped Peanuts
1 pkg. yellow cake mix
1 pkg. (3 3/4 ounces) instant vanilla pudding mix
1/2 cup vegetable oil

1 1/2 cups water
4 eggs
1 cup peanut butter
1 cup dates, cut up
1/2 cup chocolate chips
Generously grease a 10-inch Bundt pan with softened butter. Sprinkle one-half cup finely chopped peanuts in pan. Shake pan in order to coat surface with nuts. In mixing bowl beat cake and pudding mixes, oil, water and eggs until well blended or approximately four minutes on medium speed. Beat in peanut butter. Pour one-third batter into pan; sprinkle with a layer of dates and chocolate chips. Repeat. Pour remaining batter into pan and bake in a preheated 350-degree oven about 55 minutes or until cake tests done. Cool cake in pan for 10 minutes; turn out onto rack and cool.

Looking for a different kind of a dessert? This frozen Fluffy Peanut Butter Pie that tastes like ice cream is just that. The smooth blend of flavors is the delight of this dreamy dessert that can be made ahead of time and kept in the freezer until you are ready to treat the family and friends.

Peanut Butter Pie
1/2 cup peanut butter, smooth or crunchy
8 ounces cream cheese, softened
1 cup powdered sugar
1/2 cup milk
1 pkg. (9 oz.) frozen non-dairy topping, thawed
1 nine-inch graham cracker pie shell
1/4 cup chopped peanuts, optional

Whip cheese until soft and fluffy. Beat in peanut butter and sugar. Slowly add milk, blending thoroughly into mixture. Fold topping into mixture. Pour into prepared crust. Sprinkle with finely chopped peanuts, if desired. Freeze until firm and serve. For storage longer than four to six hours, wrap the pie well for freezing to prevent dehydration. Note: Use a nine-inch pastry shell, if desired.

This unusual Shouthern powder gets its creamy consistency not from a traditional white sauce but, would you believe, milk, water and rolled oats! The oats serve as the special thickener compatible with crunchy peanuts for Peanut Chowder. It is certainly a soul-satisfying soup, hearty enough to be used as a main course one of these windy, cool twilights.

Peanut Chowder
1/4 cup green onion slices
1 tablespoon bacon drippings or vegetable oil
3 cups milk
2 cups water
One-third cup uncooked oats
3/4 teaspoon salt

3/4 cup chopped peanuts
1/2 cup peanut butter
4 crisply cooked bacon slices, crumbled
Saute onion in drippings in three-quart saucepan. Add milk, water, oats and salt. Blend in peanuts and peanut butter. Bring mixture to a boil over medium heat, stirring occasionally. Reduce heat; simmer about 15 minutes, stirring frequently. Sprinkle with bacon and serve. Makes two quarts of soup. Additional milk may be added if soup becomes too thick upon standing.

How could we interest the little munchers without a cookie? Peanut Turtle cookies are an extra fun food for the children. Shaped like the animals that inspired their name they have peanuts on their underside and a top "shell" of yummy chocolate and peanut butter icing. Mix up a big batch of quick and easy Peanut Turtle Cookies for your clan of high-spirited youngsters.

Peanut Turtle Cookies
1 1/2 cups flour
1/4 teaspoon soda
1/4 teaspoon salt
1/2 cup butter
1 cup firmly packed light

brown sugar
1 egg
1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract
1 cup cocktail peanuts
Stir together flour, soda and salt; set aside. In mixing bowl cream butter and brown sugar; beat in egg and vanilla. Mix in dry ingredients until blended. Cover and chill for ease of handling. Shape dough into balls using about one tablespoon dough each. Press each ball into one teaspoon cocktail peanuts on baking sheet. Bake at 350-degrees 10 to 12 minutes or until cookies are done; cool and frost. To prepare frosting: Over low heat, melt one ounce unsweetened chocolate with one-third cup milk, stirring occasionally until blended. Stir in one cup confectioners' sugar and three-fourth teaspoon vanilla; heat to boiling; blend in one-fourth cup peanut butter. Keep frosting warm over hot water while frosting cookies.

Heavy cream seasoned with vinegar and sugar makes an old-fashioned and still delicious dressing for shredded raw cabbage. The cream may be used plain or whipped.



SOUTHERN SPECIALTY—Peanut Patch Bundt Cake is tuned to today's lifestyle which demands quick-and-easy preparation of foods. Cake mix is the basis for this delicious dessert with a crunchy peanut-crusted outside and dates with chocolate bits inside.

Centralized Lunch Menus

Centralized menus in cafeterias of Edenton-Chowan Schools for the next week include:

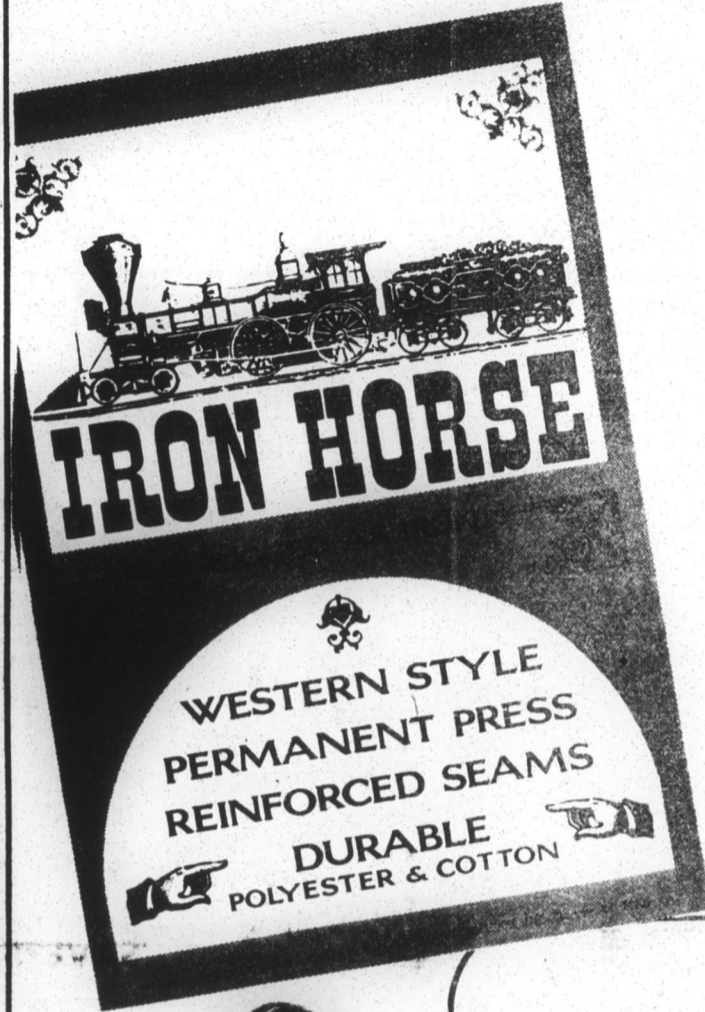
- Friday — Pizza, carrot strips, green beans, peanuts, gingerbread with whipped topping and milk.
- Monday — Manager's choice.
- Tuesday — Ham and cheese on bun, french fries, ketchup and mustard, tossed salad, cookies and milk.
- Wednesday — Sloppy joe on bun, french fries, ketchup, pears and milk.
- Thursday — Fried chicken, potato salad, green beans, cranberry sauce, gelatin with fruit, rolls and milk.

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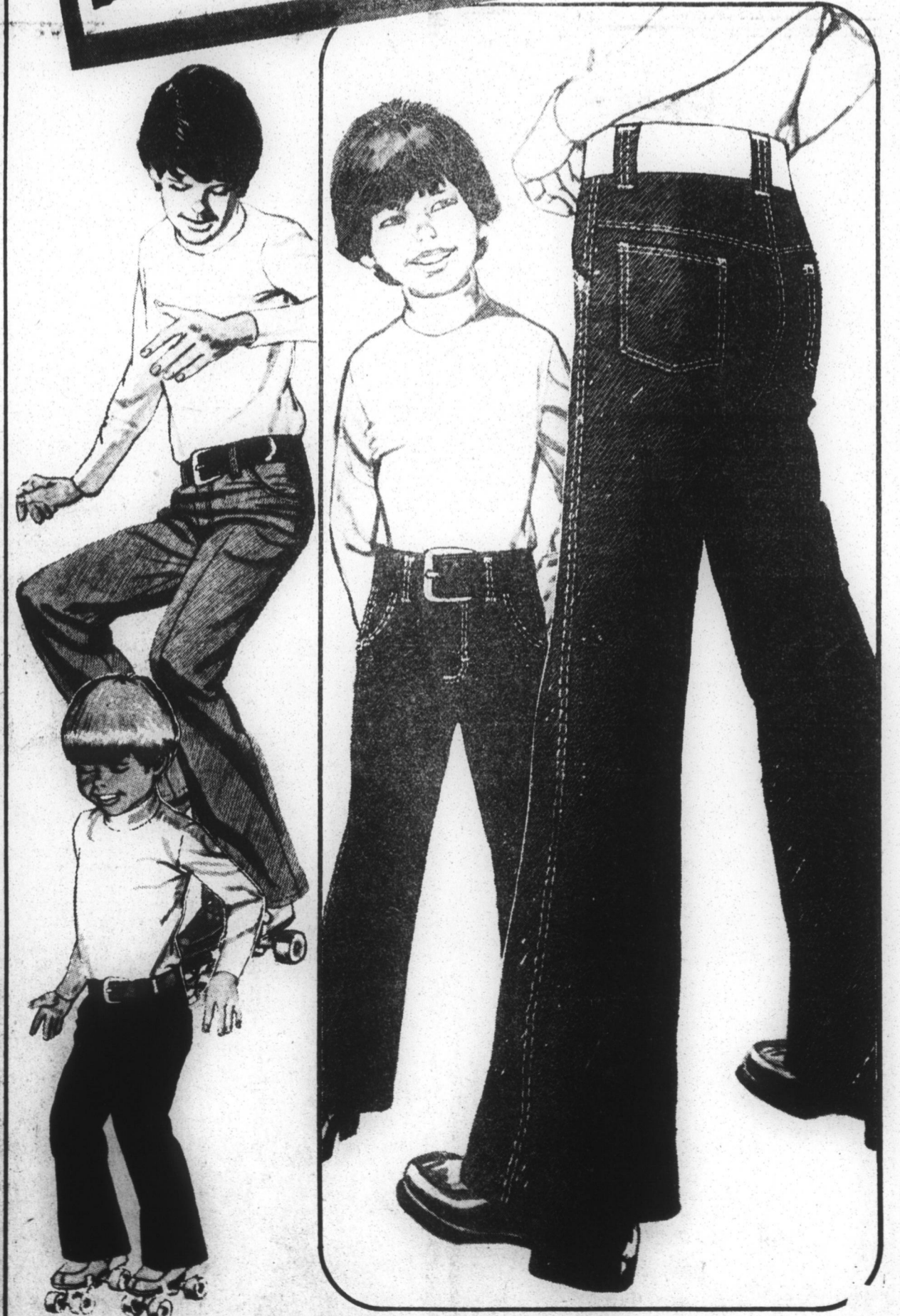
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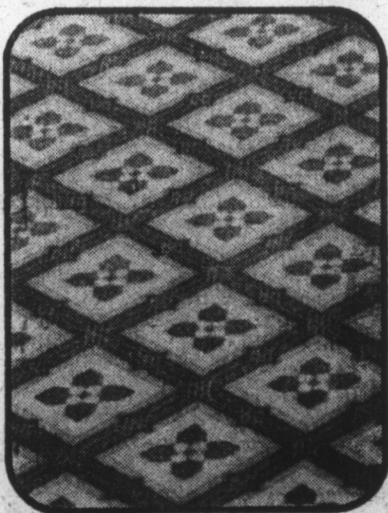
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