

Who's Who In The Kitchen

Career Keeps Alexander Out Of The Kitchen, Except For "Light Cooking"

By Audrey C. Lodato
Post Staff Writer

"A real challenge" is how WPEG's State Alexander describes his job as the radio station's News and Community Affairs Director and Assistant Station Manager, positions he has held since 1983.

With careers that keep both him and his wife, Carol, extremely busy, neither is able to spend much time in the kitchen. "I do some light cooking," Alexander notes, "breakfasts, lunches, steaks, baked potatoes, things I can get out of a box. Our schedules are such that we don't have the luxury to do a lot of cooking." Simple but tasty dishes, such as the Soy Chicken which follows, are a boon to the Alexander lifestyle. "We like a lot of seafood, gumbo, New Orleans style dishes," he adds.

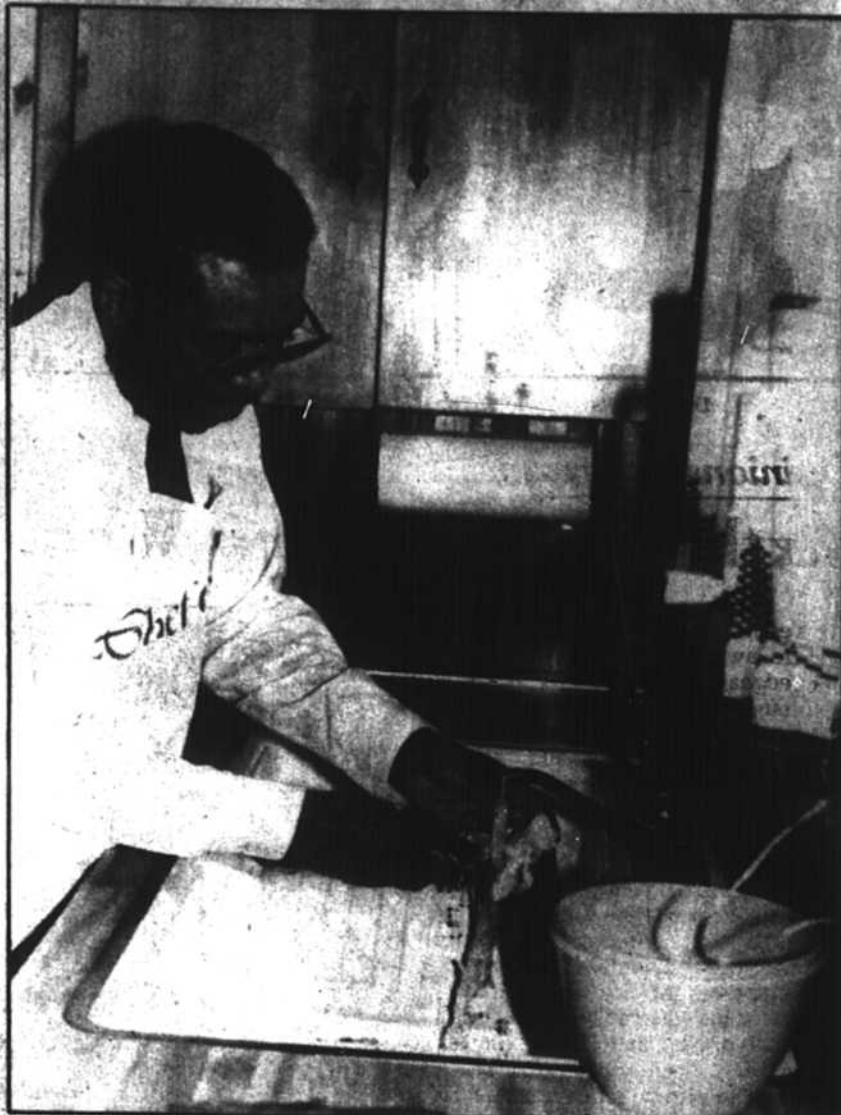
The news director acquired his taste for a variety of foods while in the Navy at Pensacola, Florida. "I learned a lot of different lifestyles in Pensacola," he declares. His Soy Chicken recipe came from a Samoan friend living there. And Pensacola is also where he met Carol. "I first saw her at a political rally," he recalls. Even then, schedules were heavy, and it was two weeks of telephone conversations before they were able to meet in person.

State Alexander grew up in Winston-Salem, but his mother was a native Charlottean, so he has been "in and out of Charlotte" most of his life. "I've spent almost as much time here as anywhere else," he relates. He attended Johnson C. Smith from 1967 to 1970, majoring in history and political science. His ambition at the time was to go into law. Following JCSU and a stint in the Navy, Alexander studied broadcast journalism at the University of West Florida in Pensacola. He worked for radio and television in Florida until 1980, when he returned to Winston-Salem to work for station WAAA.

Speaking of his job at WPEG, Alexander comments, "It's a lot bigger job than I imagined at first. WPEG's scope is bigger than WAAA's." According to Alexander, the coverage area of the station extends into areas of South Carolina and up as far as Winston-Salem. "It's a real challenge in trying to bring to bear those stories that impact on citizens of those areas the most."

As Community Affairs Director, he acts as a liaison person between the station and the community. "I'm a go-between," he explains, "involving the station in community projects that people want some help with. It keeps me going."

What has been Alexander's most frustrating experience in that role? "Trying to help out Shakeeka Richardson, the three year old who needed a liver transplant. The more we tried to do, the shorter time got.



WPEG's News Director cleans chicken for one of his favorite dishes, "Soy Chicken."

It seemed the community responded very well to the effort but we couldn't move fast enough to save her. When I thought about her, I thought about my own little three year old. We just couldn't do enough to educate the community about organ transplants."

His most challenging experience, he recalls, was when Les Norman was shot and he had to respond to reporters while being a reporter himself.

For those interested in a career in broadcast journalism, Alexander has some advice: "You need a firm and solid background in English; interest in the community, people happenings, and world and national events; you need to be a good reader, write well, and type. Equip yourself for the job totally. The field is so fast and so vast that you need to have all those tools. Be prepared for the world of work. Be willing to go the extra mile in terms of learning whatever field you're going into."

He points out that there's a lot of behind-the-scenes work involved before people see or hear the finished product. "I spend at least an hour

preparing for a five minute newscast," he reveals.

But the work is rewarding. "The most rewarding thing for me," he remarks, "is the people I get to meet and talk with, that I probably wouldn't get the chance to meet if not for this job. My first interview as a senior was with Alex Haley." Meeting people with a "bigger than life presence" and "rubbing shoulders with the people who are making things happen, who make history" are exciting to the assistant station manager. However, he finds his contact with "everyday" people also rewarding. "In most ways they're just like those other folks," he comments. "They just don't have the name." He cites Mrs. Richardson, Shakeeka's mother, who went to Washington to try to get help for her child.

A member of Memorial Presbyterian Church, Alexander is active in community life. He is a member of the McCrorey YMCA Membership Committee, the Business and Industry Cluster at Barber-Scotia College, has been invited to sit on the board of Family Outreach and Counseling, and works closely with the United Negro College Fund.

Here, from State Alexander, are some "newsworthy" dishes to try for yourself.



After chicken is nearly done, Alexander adds cabbage and other ingredients. Stir 'til cabbage is tender, then steam an additional 5 minutes.

SOY CHICKEN

1 doz. chicken drumettes	Salt	Hot cooked rice
1 shredded cabbage	Pepper	
1 green pepper, sliced lengthwise	Soy sauce	
½ small onion, minced	¼ cup cooking oil	

Salt and pepper chicken to taste. Using a large skillet or wok, stir-fry drumettes until almost done at high heat. Add cabbage, peppers and onion. Add 1 cup water and soy sauce to taste. Stir continuously until cabbage is tender (5 min.) Cover and steam for 5 minutes more. Serve over rice.

SEAFOOD GUMBO

Roux for Stock (Prepare first)

6 cups water
5 tablespoons flour
Chicken Bouquet
1 lb. tomatoes
1 lb. bony chicken parts
Salt and pepper
2 lbs. shrimp, cleaned and deveined
2 lbs. crab meat
1 lb. oysters
File of gumbo
1 cup chopped onions
okra
corn
3 cups cooked rice

Combine flour and Chicken Bouquet in a cup. Mix until there are no lumps. Add water, chicken parts, salt, pepper. Boil for 1 hr. Add tomatoes. Boil until tomatoes are completely dissolved (about 1 hr.) Add File of gumbo, corn, onion, okra. Cook another 30 minutes. Add seafood. Boil another 15 minutes. Serve over hot rice.

CARROT CAKE

2 cups sugar
1½ cups oil
2 cups plain flour
1 teaspoon salt
2 teaspoons soda
2 teaspoons cinnamon
4 eggs, beaten
3 cups grated raw carrots
1 teaspoon vanilla

Blend together sugar and oil. Sift together dry ingredients and add to sugar mixture alternately with beaten eggs.

Fold in carrots and vanilla. Bake in 2 greased and floured 8-inch layer cake pans or in 3 9-inch layer pans. Cool and frost.

FROSTING

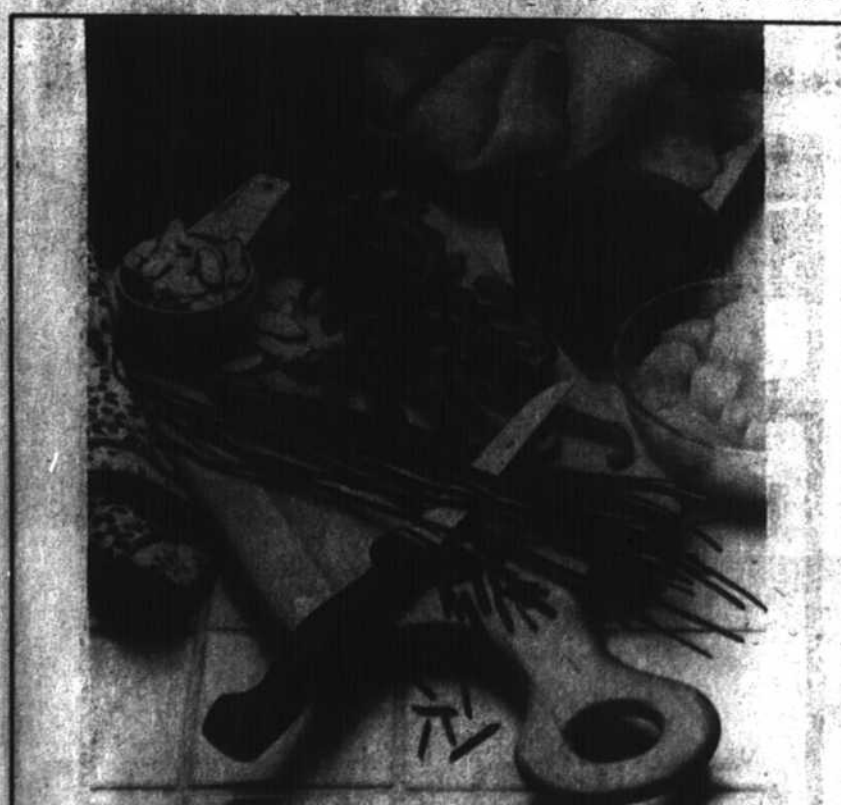
Blend together 1 pkg. (8 oz.) softened cream cheese, ½ stick margarine and a box (1 lb.) XXXX sugar; stir in ½ cup chopped nuts.

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Ingredients for "Hawaiian Filets" include pineapple, peppers, almonds and chives.

Try Change Of Pace Fish Dish

Does your family have cabin fever? Is the cold, snowy weather causing you to feel depressed? Well try a change-of-pace menu and transport your family to the South Seas where the warm sun shines and the tradewinds blow. A marvelous sweet-sour sauce graces your favorite fresh or frozen fish in this recipe from a Whirlpool microwave oven cookbook for Hawaiian Filets.

HAWAIIAN FILETS
(Cooking Time 19:30)

1 lb. fresh or frozen fish fillets
¼ c. packaged brown sugar
1 T. corn starch
1 8-oz. can pineapple chunks
¼ medium green pepper, cut into thin strips
¼ c. vinegar
1 T. soy sauce
1 tsp. snipped chives
Dash garlic powder
¼ c. toasted sliced almonds

par strips, vinegar, soy sauce, snipped chives, and the garlic powder. Place in microwave oven.

Cook brown sugar mixture at HIGH for 4½ minutes 'til thickened and bubbly, stirring every minute. Stir in pineapple chunks; set aside. Arrange thawed fish fillets in 12x7½x2-inch baking dish, placing thicker portions toward outside. Cover with waxed paper and place in the microwave oven.

Cook fish at HIGH for 3 minutes. Give dish a half turn and cook at HIGH for 3 minutes 'til fish flakes easily when tested with fork. With a slotted spoon, remove fish to serving platter. Spoon hot pineapple mixture over fish. Sprinkle fish with the toasted almonds. Makes 4 servings.

Martinique Bananas

Bananas are known as the "Fruit of Paradise" and when you taste Martinique Bananas, you'll know why. Choose firm bananas, or those with slightly green tips for Martinique Bananas; they're best for sauteeing.

MARTINIQUE BANANAS

4 firm, medium Dole bananas
3 T. butter
2 packages (3 oz. each) cream cheese, softened
½ c. packed brown sugar
1 T. grated lemon peel
1 c. dairy sour cream
¼ c. whipping cream
Almond Crunch Topping

Peel bananas and slice in half lengthwise. In a large skillet, saute bananas in butter until golden (about 2 minutes). Remove bananas to 9-inch gratin dish or 1½ quart shallow casserole dish. Beat cream cheese, brown sugar and lemon peel until light and fluffy. Beat in sour cream until smooth. Pour over bananas. Pour whipping cream over entire surface of cream cheese mixture. Bake in 350 degree F. oven 30 minutes or until golden. Cool 10 minutes. Spoon Almond Crunch Topping over just before serving. Makes 8 servings.



A crunchy banana dish

ALMOND CRUNCH TOPPING

2 T. butter
2 T. brown sugar
½ c. sliced almonds

Melt butter in small skillet. Stir in sugar until well blended and melted. Add almonds, stirring continuously until almonds are toasted and sugar begins to caramelize (about 3 to 4 minutes). Pour evenly onto light oiled surface to cool. When cooled, break into pieces.

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