

Who's Who In The Kitchen

Lincolnton Teacher Lothell Ramseur Loves Pickles Any Way You Slice 'Em

By Audrey C. Lodato
Post Staff Writer

Pickles are what Lothell Ramseur likes best when it comes to food. "After I started teaching, I became a pickle lover," the 30-year classroom veteran recalls. "All the other teachers gave me pickles. I could do without other foods, just as long as I got my pickles. I'm still that way," she laughs.

One of her featured hors d'oeuvres for a New Year's gathering she hosted was—what else?—sweet baby pickles wrapped up in bread and sliced thin.

Curiously, though, she's never made her own pickles. "I just never got into that," she remarks.

Mrs. Ramseur grew up in Chester, S.C., and graduated from Johnson C. Smith University ready to guide young minds. Her first job was in Lincolnton, and she's been there ever since—30 years. And no, she's not about to retire yet, either!

The veteran teacher spent her career in the second grade until two years ago, when she switched to the Chapter I reading program. It was shortly after she began teaching at Lincolnton's Oaklawn Elementary School that she met her husband-to-be, Charles Ramseur. His favorite dishes, the educator reveals, are fried chicken and T-bone steaks. Their son, Monty, favors her homemade spaghetti.

Spaghetti, as it turns out, is also Mrs. Ramseur's favorite dish to prepare because "it's easy to do!"

Her grandparents were good cooks, she recalls. "I remember my grandmother's chicken, rice, and gravy, and her cornbread. My grandfather would buy fish every Saturday—it was so good!"

She learned to cook by watching a cousin in Chester.

The Ramseurs enjoy entertaining. Lothell's favorite form of entertainment, she laughs, is "watching J.B. Rose of Kannapolis and Bill Johnson (Post Publisher) play pool. They make Charles feel so bad because they beat him."

Mrs. Ramseur says she hasn't



Pickle Rolls are a favorite of Mrs. Ramseur, shown also with spinach dip and tomato salad. (Photo by Audrey Lodato)

mind the commute to Lincolnton all these years, and she still enjoys teaching as much as ever, despite all the changes that have taken place in education since 1955.

Students, she says, "have changed quite a bit due to the fact that we are not allowed to spank children and they know that. We didn't have as many behavior problems with students when I started."

But children aren't the only ones who've changed. "There's been a big change in teachers, too. There

are some things we did when I first started that some teachers wouldn't do now," Mrs. Ramseur states.

The teacher, who recently celebrated her birthday (I didn't ask which one!), tried to get her son to follow in her footsteps, but such was not to be. Monty, a senior at A&T in Greensboro, is an art design major.

Mrs. Ramseur has a plaque in her home honoring her contributions to Gethsemane AME Zion Church, where she has served as hostess for more than 30 years. Her duties are to read the announcements and welcome visitors. "I might go on for another 30 years," she smiles.

At Gethsemane, she is also a member of Circle No. 5 and the Home Mission Circle.

Her hobbies include collecting jewelry, tending houseplants, stenciling, writing, and walking.

"People give me a lot of jewelry as gifts," she says. "They know I love jewelry."

Cheese Puffs Make A Nutritious Breakfast

Breakfast is the place to start healthy dining. A nutritious breakfast will make each calorie go to work for you. Before you start exercising, combine a light mixture of eggs, cottage cheese, and Florida orange juice, add a delicious blend of herbs, place in individual soufflé

ORANGE

COTTAGE CHEESE PUFFS

- 3 eggs, separated
- 1 c. creamed cottage cheese
- 2 tsp. grated onion
- ½ c. Florida orange juice
- ¼ tsp. grated orange peel
- ¼ tsp. dry mustard
- ¼ tsp. dried leaf tarragon, crumbled
- ¼ tsp. salt
- ¼ tsp. pepper
- ¼ tsp. cream of tartar

In small bowl mix egg yolks, cottage cheese, onion, orange juice, orange peel, dry mustard, tarragon, salt, and pepper. In medium bowl beat egg whites with cream of tartar until stiff but not dry. Fold yolk mixture into egg whites. Spoon 1 c. into each of four 10-ounce casseroles or soufflé dishes. Bake in a 350 oven 20 to 30 minutes, or until top is puffed and slightly browned, and tip of knife inserted in center comes out clean. Makes 4 servings; 135 calories each.

dishes and pop into the oven. After you've finished stretching and your muscles have been awakened, Orange Cottage Cheese Puffs will dazzle your palate with sheer delight at a mere 135 calories per serving. Serve with a healthful glass of Florida orange juice to add a wallop of vitamin C to your day.

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Of her plants and flowers, Mrs. Ramseur says, "My den is loaded with them. I guess I have a green thumb."

She also enjoys stenciling and making paper designs, both for home and school. "I like to change my bulletin boards at school every month," she relates.

Oh, and Mrs. Ramseur also loves her goldfish—she has about 40 in her dining room and den.

The teacher-hostess-churchworker-hobbyist-cook hopes you enjoy the recipes she shares here with you—including one of her pickle specialties.

CHILLED TOMATO SALAD

- 1 qt. tomatoes, drained
- ½ c. chopped onions
- ½ c. chopped green pepper
- 1 Tbsp. sugar
- ¼ tsp. salt
- ¼ c. vinegar
- 1 Tbsp. prepared mustard

Mix all ingredients and chill (best if overnight). This is good with green vegetables, meat, or in a green salad

PICKLE ROLLS

- 1 (8 oz.) pkg. cream cheese
- 2 Tbsp. salad dressing
- 2 Tbsp. Worcestershire sauce
- 1-2 loaves fresh white bread
- 1 large jar sweet pickles

Mix cream cheese, salad dressing, and Worcestershire sauce. Trim crusts from bread and spread slices with mixture. Place pickle on bread and roll. (Bread will roll best if soft and at room temperature.) Refrigerate rolls in airtight container overnight. When ready to serve, slice about ¼-½" thick. (Don't slice right after rolling the pickles or the bread will tear.)

SPINACH DIP

- 1 (10 oz.) pkg. frozen chopped spinach
- 1 c. mayonnaise
- 1 c. sour cream
- 1 med. onion, chopped
- 1 pkg. vegetable soup mix
- 1 (8 oz.) can water chestnuts, chopped

Thaw spinach; press out water until barely moist. Combine with remaining ingredients and stir well. Cover and chill several hours. Serve with raw vegetables or crackers. Makes 3 cups.

PEAS 'N PECANS

- 1 can green peas, refrigerated
- ¼ c. chopped pecans
- 2 Tbsp. fresh minced onions
- Mayonnaise

Drain peas and fold in pecans and onion. Toss lightly with enough mayonnaise to hold together. Good with ham or on lettuce.

POPEYE DRESSING

- 2 c. sugar
- 2 c. oil
- 2 c. vinegar
- 2 Tbsp. salt
- 1 tsp. celery seeds
- 1 tsp. black pepper

Mix well and serve on salads. Makes a large jar and will keep a long time in the refrigerator.

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