

Color, sweets rule this bakery

Creative 4-H youth recipes win ribbons

BY LISA ALLMENDINGER

Billy's World Famous Blue Raspberry Muffins were one of the most colorful concoctions entered in Wednesday's Jiffy Mix baking contest at the Washtenaw County Youth Show.

Even more important, perhaps, was that Billy Poet, 11, of Bridgewater Township, had a blast concocting his unique, bright blue baked goods.

"I like raspberries and I like oatmeal, and to make it more funny, I added blue dye," Poet said.

The member of the Country Sunrise 4-H Club said Wednesday's competition was his first time participating in the fun contest, which attracted more than 40 entries to the Youth Show held at the Washtenaw County Farm Council Grounds near Saline.

Both Bill and his cousin, Kristen Meade of Livonia, had fun with food coloring. She made Country Surprise, ruby red corn muffins for the baking contest.

The rules stated that 4-Hers must use one of the many flavors of Jiffy Mix sold in grocery stores and then enhance it. The front panel from the box and the actual recipe were displayed with the baked goods that spanned two long tables.

Each participant took home a free box of fudge brownie mix as well.

The baking contest is in its third year at the 4-H show and was the culinary creation of the 4-H Still Exhibit Committee.

Chocolate chip cookies were baked the first year, and sugar cookies to the cake last year. The theme from the Chelsea-based Jiffy Mix was chosen for the 2006 contest, which was judged by Peggy Hines, a former Washtenaw County clerk and 4-Her, and by Peter di Lorenzi, from the MSU foods and nutrition department.

"I think every one of these deserves a blue ribbon," said Hines a former 4-Her who entered muffins, flowers and photography in past 4-H fairs.

Said di Lorenzi: "There was a really good balance and use of fruits. Lots of thought went into them."

Elaine Feldkamp, a 4-J program assistant, explained the recipes would be put to good use.

"We're going to collect all the recipes and will make a cookbook out of them," she said. "We're looking for seed money to help pay the printing costs, and then we'll use it as a 4-H fundraiser."

The Seto family of Chelsea will be well-represented in the cookbook. Both Christ Seto, 11, and his sister, Katy Seto, 14, will have their recipes included.

Chris, 11 entered Peppermint Mushroom Surprise, made of devil's food Jiffy cake mix, crushed-up peppermints and coconut. But the secret to his cake was "the baking in" of the marshmallows, thus the mushroom shape.

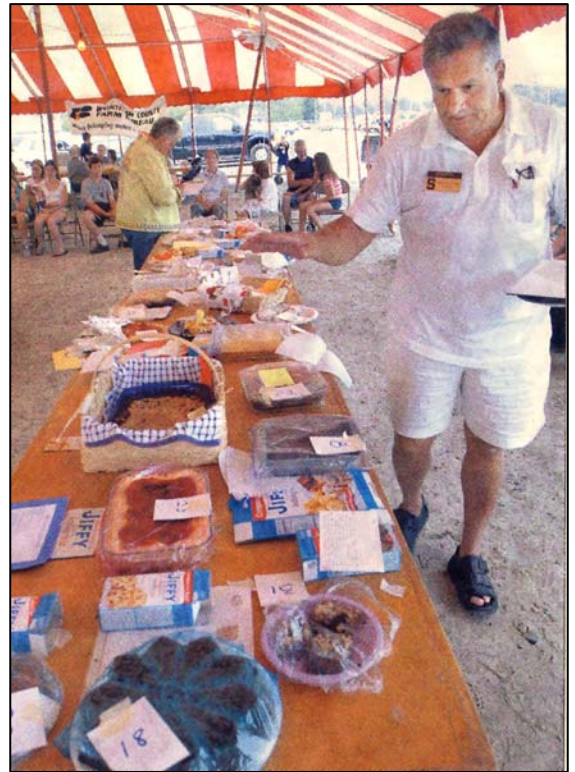
"There really aren't any real mushrooms in it," he said.

Katy Seto, on the other hand, made an apple cinnamon cake and added apple sauce to the mix, topping the creation with giant meal-away mint-like candy.

Both brother and sister are members of the Poison Ivies 4-H Club of Ann Arbor, a new club that first entered the competition this year.

Melanie Burchett, 14, also of Chelsea and a member of the Double LL Llama club of Manchester, said she made Jiffy Cheesecake Breakfast Bars, utilizing a big box of Jiffy baking mix.

Six winners were chosen and given certificates for their baked creations. Best cake went to Melany Mioduszewski of Dexter. Best pie or pastry went to Luke Sowash of Whitmore Lake. Best cookie went to Catherine Ehnis; best bread to Korbyn Koerner of Saline. Ken Mallonen of Ypsilanti was awarded best fruit. The most creative presentation was given to Coty Bentley of Stockbridge. The 4-h show continues through Friday night at the Washtenaw County Fair Council Grounds at 5055 Ann Arbor Saline Road from 8 am to 9 pm.



Peter di Lorenzi from the Washtenaw County MSU extension, right, looks over a row of baked goods he was judging at the 4-H Youth Show at the Washtenaw Farm Council Grounds on Wednesday afternoon. In background left is the second judge, Peggy Haines, a former clerk of Washtenaw County.