

# Let visions of candy dance in their heads

BY SALLY BAIR  
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If your Christmas includes visions of sugarplum fairies or more ordinary confections, you should meet Nancy Fasolt, 2961 Kings Lane, Lancaster.

Nancy creates some of the most delicious looking (and tasting) candy you can imagine, and she is making a career of teaching others how easily they can do the same thing.

And she does make it sound easy! "You can learn to have professional results in just two hours, and when you give a gift of candy, people think you're a genius. The praise is overwhelming and it is great for morale," Nancy states.

She adds, "Making candy is

something women at home can do, or working women because it doesn't take a long time."

Candy-making is Nancy's favorite hobby, but she also creates other holiday goodies, turning ordinary cupcakes and other cakes into quite extraordinary holiday decorations.

Nancy has just completed a series of holiday candy and decorating classes offered through the Penn State Cooperative Extension Service, and she is delighted with the interest shown. She says, "It is really interesting to see the people sit down and see their interest grow as I talk. By the time they make something in the class some are really enthused."

Nancy has only been involved in candy making for the last few

years, her interest growing from a visit to a friend in Connecticut who made lollipop turkeys out of chocolate as favors for the children. Nancy became hooked, and says, "After that I started seeking out what was available around here."

Finding there was little available in the way of helpful classes or materials for making candy, Nancy began taking classes elsewhere. She traveled to the Country Kitchen in Fort Wayne, Indiana, for a candy making course and then attended one offered by a candy company in Frederick, Maryland as well as others offered by mold companies in Pittsburgh and Somerville, New Jersey.

She credits these classes with giving her hints for making candy, but adds, "You get a lot of information from talking with other people."

Nancy's first business venture was a partnership with a friend called the Cake and Candy Emporium. The two made candy and decorated cakes, operating a stand at the market at Park City. She adds, "It really came easily and I really enjoy it. I learned a lot from my partner."

Eventually, the partnership dissolved, but Nancy continued the business and now offers materials for candy making in the basement of her suburban home. She says, "I call it my hobby, not my business, because I don't keep regular hours." Nevertheless, she is available by a simple phone call to those who wish to purchase supplies for the goodies she teaches.

Nancy no longer makes the candy or decorates cakes for selling on a large scale, but admits, "I prefer making wedding cakes. They are big and a challenge. You spread the work out over several days."

Nancy explains why she decided to teach. "I was excited about it and it was not available, so I thought, 'Why not introduce it?'"

In addition to her teaching through Penn State Extension, Nancy also offers courses in her home, and will give any class with a minimum of five people. She asks for payment in advance, but will give a full refund with a week's notice. She also gives demonstrations, but prefers groups to come to her home where she has everything available.

Recently, Nancy held her first children's class and was delighted with the results. She said, "We dipped pretzels and marshmallows and made peanut butter cups."

Nancy also offers beginning classes in cake decorating which last six weeks. She says, "They are really fun, and it is easy. I teach them things they'll use."

Nancy sees several reasons for the interest in her courses, explaining, "There is a lot of satisfaction in it. Besides that it is delicious. It is really good candy. I tell my classes they can make candy themselves the way they remembered it." And when you're making your own, Nancy points out, you can proportion things like peanut butter cups to suit your fancy - either with lots of peanut butter or lots of chocolate.

Nancy adds, "It's always nice to be on the ground floor of something new, and candy-making is relatively new."

The economy may contribute to the interest too. She states, "When money gets tight people tend to do things at home. People take more pride in things they make,



Nancy Fasolt stirs the chocolate in her improvised double boiler, a glass jar in water in an electric fry pan. Nancy cautions that heat is one of chocolate's worst enemies and when melting chocolate a low temperature or hot water from the faucet should be used.

especially in tight times. And I think of candy-making as an art form. It is very creative. Your imagination just takes off."

In addition to the praise you receive when you give a gift of homemade candy, Nancy notes that you can also save money, up to fifty percent or more.

True, there is an initial investment for molds, but in some cases that is saved in the first pound of candy you produce. Nancy gives the example of making non-pareils, which in fine stores can cost from \$6 to \$6.70 a pound. Chocolate from Nancy costs \$1.75 a pound, and non pareil seeds cost \$.98 for a half pound, which goes a long, long way. A funnel cost \$.49, so Nancy says, "You break even on your first pound." A further advantage of making your own is that they can be made any size, and with any color seeds or chocolate.

Furthermore, Nancy says, "The molds can be used over and over. You can do practically anything after the initial investment."

One reason Nancy makes the candy making sound so easy is that she uses a "professional" grade of chocolate for dipping and coating. This chocolate has a vegetable oil base, not a coconut oil base, and there is no need to temper it. "You just melt it," she says. "You can also save it and remelt it."

An important thing to remember when melting chocolate is that water and excess heat are

chocolate's two worst enemies. She recommends melting chocolate in the top of a double boiler or sauce pan over hot water out of the faucet. She says boiling water must never be used or the chocolate will become like a "mud ball" and nothing will make it suitable for coating and dipping.

An alternative method of melting chocolate, and one Nancy uses in her workshop, is to make your own double boiler by placing a wide mouth jar in water in an electric fry pan set an extremely low heat. Nancy notes that her chocolates melt at a very moderate temperature, 98 degrees.

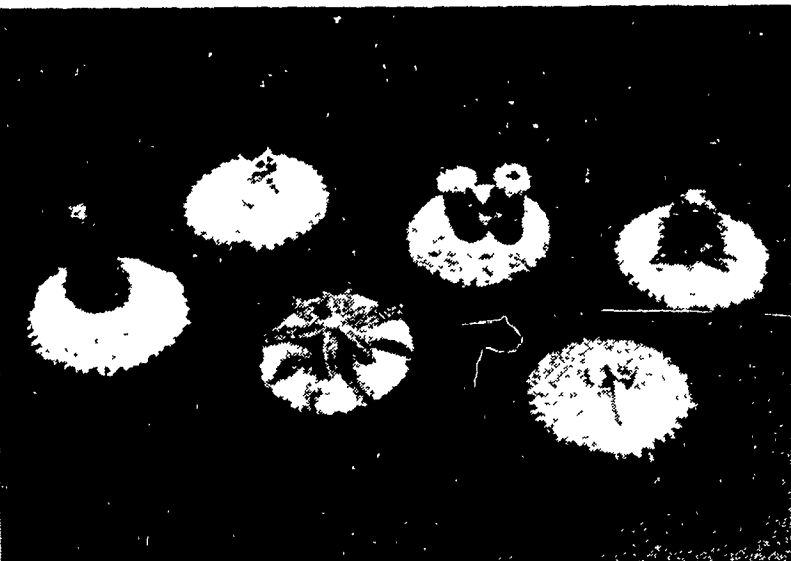
She points out that water, milk or other liquids should never be added to thin chocolate, or it will be ruined. In fact, white chocolate should be colored only with paste food colors as liquid colors will run the chocolate.

Nancy's family is very supportive of her - who wouldn't want to help a mother who makes such delicious goodies? Her husband, Terry, often helps carry the many boxes of materials she takes with her to her classes, and her girls enjoy helping to make some of the candies. They also like to help clean out the jars after her classes, and they make their own birthday treats out of candy. As for her husband, Nancy says, "He loves it." Carrie is 13 and Rebecca is 11.

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These candy lollipops offer unlimited possibilities for those with a sweet tooth, or for those who are looking for an unusual favor for the upcoming holidays.



These cupcakes are turned into something extraordinary by using a few decorator tips and your imagination. Boots, poinsettias, candles and pines are all possibilities.



This candle and Santa Claus will brighten up any youngster's Christmas. Both are made from cupcakes. The Santa also uses a marshmallow and colored icing.

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