

# Gingerbread City Benefits Berks 4-H

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WYOMISSING (Berks Co.)** —

A gingerbread village of more than 47 houses and featuring an electric train traveling through them came and went one recent weekend in the Berkshire Mall.

The imaginatively decorated houses came in an astonishing variety of styles and degrees of architectural difficulty. One house was a contemporary-style, split-level wonder with a turret, whose entire roof was decorated with Twizzler licorice sticks. This house was one of three created by Tony Boulos, certified executive chef of the Holiday Inn in Fogelsville, Lehigh County.

Others looked like mansions of old, decorated with amazing configurations of candies. A couple of them even came with an outhouse. Still others were simple four walls with elaborate yards.

All, of course, were totally edible.

The houses were built by members of the American Culinary Federation Berks-Lehigh Chefs Association as part of their Chef and the Child Foundation efforts.

"They were all made in the past week," noted Kevin Eiche, a sous chef at the St. Isaac Novitiate in Wernersville, Berks County, who chaired the event.

About 20 chefs from Berks County participated in the raffle, with some making several houses for the event.

After expenses, part proceeds of

the raffle will be donated to the Chef and the Child Foundation and the other part to the Berks County 4-H club. Particularly, funds will go toward the foods and nutrition program of this 4-H group, noted Rick Kauffman, 4-H extension agent.

Proceeds from the raffle also help sponsor the annual day camp program in the summer, which many chefs in the area participate in by helping teach kids about nutrition and by helping the kids cook foods," Kauffman said.

"The chef's association has been really great to do this for us," Kauffman said. "With the money they've donated, the extension has had a 4-H food leader training session. Several area chefs came to the 4-H Community Center and showed the kids how to prepare certain foods."

Pat Golembiewski, a professional cake maker from Wyomissing and co-chair of the event, noted that each chef takes several days to construct the houses.

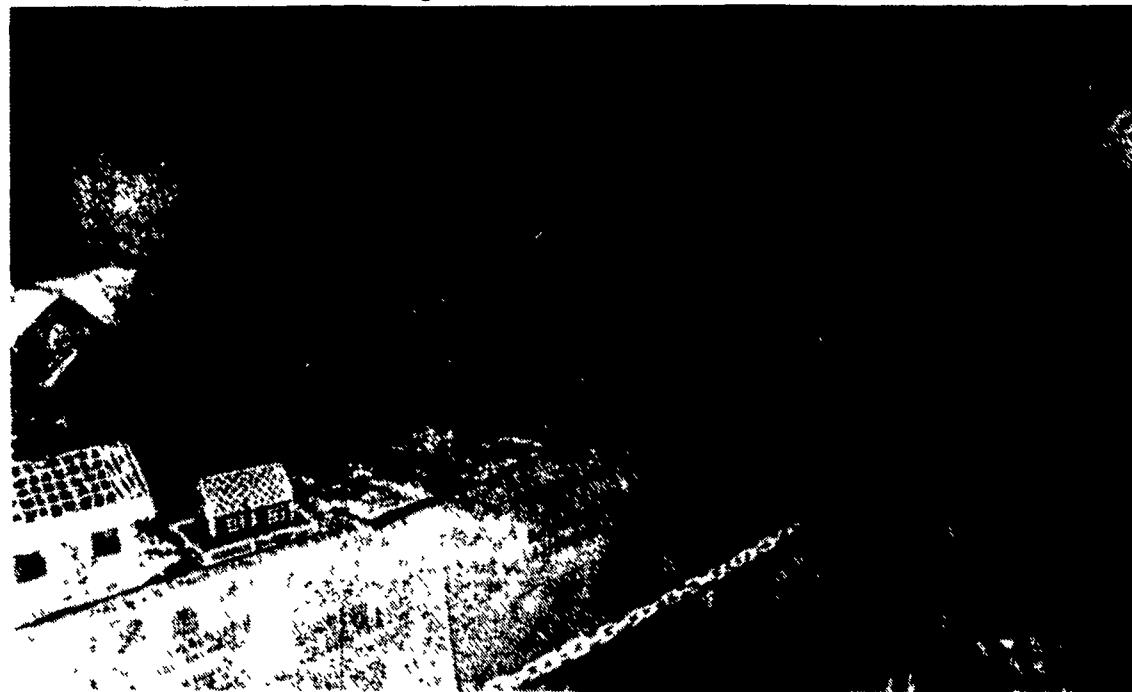
First the gingerbread has to be baked. After that, it must harden for a few days. Then the walls are constructed and also must harden in the icing for a day or two. The same must be done with the roof.

"You want the roof sturdy," Pat said. "You don't want to push and shove candy into the roof if it's not strong."

All the chefs paid for ingredients out of their pockets, Golembiewski said.



Pat Golembiewski, left, co-chair of the raffle, and Kevin Eiche, chair of the raffle, hold a plaque commemorating the raffle's contribution to the Berks County 4-H.



Elaborate gingerbread houses created by chefs in Berks and Lehigh counties cause a lot of "ooohs" and "aaahs" at the Berkshire Mall in Wyomissing.



Some gingerbread, an assortment of candy and a lot of imagination and time is all it takes to create fanciful gingerbread houses.



Catherine Farley, 4, and Alec Farley, 6, of Boyertown, are delighted with the gingerbread house that Tony Boulos, certified executive chef for Holiday Inn of Lehigh County, presents to them during the raffle.

## Guidelines For Nursing Home Visit

**HONESDALE (Wayne Co.)** — If you have a loved one in a nursing home, Debra Bryant, Penn State Extension Agent, reminds us the most precious gift we can give, is our presence. Don't expect that visits by you and other family members will necessarily improve family harmony or the patient's mental health. But, visits will provide some of the most enjoyable experiences a nursing home patient will have. Take cues about the length of the visit. If it's too short, you may not hear of concerns or the visit may be forgotten.

If it's too long, the resident may become tired. In addition to timing of visits, it's important to limit the number of people at one time. Several people at once may increase confusion or anxiety for the resident. Furthermore, nursing home space usually is limited. Bring children to visit. Tell them what to expect and answer questions on their level of understanding.

This is also cold and flu season. So if you aren't feeling well or have the sniffles, call rather than visiting in person.

*Make it Milk*