

# Man In The Kitchen

**LOU ANN GOOD**

**Lancaster Farming Staff**

**LEBANON (Lebanon Co.)** —

Sourdough rye bread, sweet rolls, home-canned spaghetti sauce, sauerkraut soup, and Moussake are a few of Joe Gonya's specialties.

The Lebanon Countian said that his interest in cooking began many years ago when paging through a magazine. When he asked his wife to make a recipe that was pictured, she challenged him to try it.

He did.

"It was great," he said.

After that, cooking became a regular Sunday activity.

For most people, cooking for a spouse and five children is much different than cooking for 60 people. But to Gonya, his reaction was if he could prepare a meal for six, he could do it for 60.

It wasn't many weeks after cooking for the first time that a cook was needed to prepare meals for 60 men attending a religious retreat sponsored by his church. Gonya volunteered.

His wife planned the menu and wrote instructions for the meals.

It was so successful that Gonya's been cooking for the church-sponsored event at least 50 times since the first event.

He also is part of a hunting camp for 10 men. It was a bit hectic for the men to hunt and then scramble to prepare a meal at the end of the day.

Gonya had a solution.

He said, "I like to hunt but I'd rather cook."

Consequently, Gonya cooks all day in the cabin while the others are hunting.

"Everything is made from scratch," Gonya proudly reports. Homemade bread, fasnachts, and whatever else appeals to Gonya, who prefers to experiment with new dishes.

"I follow recipes somewhat and then adjust them to my liking," said Gonya, who attributes his improvisations more to his impatience and dislike for following rules.

Gonya's wife Priscilla is a home economist and a nutritionist who follows recipes precisely and is an excellent cook.

Gonya said his cooking is some-

times a point of contention between the two, for which Gonya takes the blame. He is an impulsive cook who on the spur of the moment decides to stir up a dish — one that may use the sour cream for a menu his wife had planned to make. Her best-laid plans are often in disarray from Gonya's cooking experiences.

His wife does enjoy eating his cooking — sometimes. Because he improvises, the meal may taste wonderful but he can't duplicate it again because he doesn't know exactly how he made it. Sometimes, he painfully admits, his concoctions may turn out less than the best — a problem that could be avoided if he followed the recipe.

Gonya appeases his culinary urges by cooking spaghetti dinners for his church. At Easter, he makes 50 loaves of sourdough rye, which are eagerly purchased by friends at his church.

During the past years, the Gonyas have hosted 36 foreign exchange students who stay in their home for one year. Four are living with the family. Gonya enjoys sharing his cooking expertise with them and learning new dishes from them.

The Gonyas also enjoy traveling to other countries. Last year he and his wife taught English in Czechoslovakia and he came home with an extension collection of Slovakian recipes.

"Every place we go, I try to find some new recipes," said Gonya. Usually the cooks are happy to share their recipes with him.

Gonya is retired from a sales manager position in the steel industry. He has toyed with the idea of becoming a restaurant chef, but considers that he wouldn't want to be tied to a regular schedule.

He is also a Master Gardener with the Penn State Cooperative Extension. He has a large garden and preserves the produce from it. The combination of gardening and cooking work well as he preserves the produce from it.

Over the years, Gonya has compiled a looseleaf notebook of hundreds of recipes. Here are a few of his favorite recipes.

## MOUSSAKA

Serves 8

2 pounds lean ground beef  
1 teaspoon beef bouillion granules

1 large onion

Saute the onions lightly, then add meat and brown. Meat should be worked with a fork while browning.

Add:

½ teaspoon cinnamon

½ teaspoon nutmeg

1 cup tomato sauce

½ cup red wine

Mix thoroughly until even consistency.

Prepare:

4 medium zucchini, diced into one-inch cubes

1 cup black olives, chopped

Saute above in butter until onions are soft.

Prepare white sauce:

½ cup butter

½ cup flour

2 cups milk

1 cup sour cream

4 eggs, beaten

Mix butter, flour, milk, sour cream until well blended, then add beaten eggs and stir well. Heat sauce until it starts to thicken and hold aside.

Place zucchini mixture into baking dish, well greased.

Sprinkle with grated romano cheese, parsley flakes and cover lightly with grated mozzarella or pizza cheese.

Pour meat mixture over zucchini-cheese mix.

Pour white sauce over entire mix and top with light dusting of romano cheese. Cover with grated mozzarella cheese.

Bake in 300 degree oven for about one hour, then lower oven to 250 degrees until ready to serve.

## GULAS

½ pound meat per person (half pork, half beef)

½ pound onion for each pound meat

All of pork fat trimmed from pork

Two tablespoons lard

¼ green pepper per person

1 toe garlic per person

1 medium potato per person

1 whole canned tomato per two persons

1 small jalapeno pepper (for six or more people)

2 teaspoons marjoram per six people

Salt and pepper to taste

Cut meat into 1-inch cubes and trim fat from pork and save

Chop onions and peppers coarse

Cut potatoes in ¼-inch size pieces

In a large pot add two tablespoons lard and heat. Saute chopped onions until soft, not brown. Add pork fat, beef, jalapeno pepper, a little water to keep from getting dry, and chopped garlic. Cook for one hour, stirring so onions do not burn. Remove pork fat and add pork meat and cook another hour. Add chopped green peppers, tomatoes, marjoram, salt, and pepper, and continue cooking. Add a small amount of water to make liquid. One half hour before serving, add cut potatoes. Serve over biscuits or steamed bread.



Joe Gonya likes the challenge of trying new recipes, the harder the better.

## LAZY DAY STEW

Arrange two pounds raw beef cubes in pan large enough to hold them in a single layer. Do not brown meat.

Prepare potatoes, carrots, onions, and celery, in bite-sized chunks. Prepare enough to make a complete layer of each and place on top of the meat.

Mix one 8-ounce can tomato sauce with one can water, four tablespoons tapioca (for thickening the gravy) one tablespoon granulated beef bouillon, and one teaspoon sugar. Pour over vegetables and beef.

Salt and pepper to taste.

Cover with heavy aluminum foil and put in 325-degree oven for at least three hours. Cut back to 250 degrees. Stew should be ready by this time but can be held at 200 degrees for some length of time if necessary, and as long as left sealed with foil it will not dry out. The stew should have a delicious gravy in the bottom of the container. Prep time for the above is about one hour. It's a one-pot meal. Great when served with homemade bread or rolls. Use rolls to soak up the gravy.



A master gardener with the Penn State Cooperative Extension, Gonya considers tomatoes his specialty. He raises several varieties in his garden to can spaghetti sauce. He also answers gardening questions that callers phone into the Extension.



## Homestead Notes



Ivana Plinhova, an exchange student living with the Gonya family, helps prepare homemade tomato soup.