

TRASH TALK
GRETCHEN STADLER

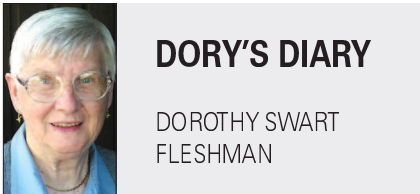
Recycling options, post-China

The news of China no longer accepting the world's recycling and Baker Sanitary no longer collecting our local mixed plastic and paper was depressing; it felt as if we were moving backward in time. But talking with David Henry, the president of Baker Sanitary Service, has given me new hope.

Like Baker City Trash Talk members, he is interested in diverting waste from our landfill and helping our community move forward. David clarified which materials we can recycle right now and identified how we can work together with other Baker residents, businesses and government to expand the types of materials we recycle in the future. As a community, we still need to focus on the entire Reduce-Reuse-Recycle process to decrease our waste, but recycling more of our plastic and paper now means we are doing the best we can while we work on becoming more conscientious consumers.

Earlier in December every resident received a flier from Baker Sanitary outlining what can be turned in at the Campbell Street recycling depot. It raised a lot of questions for me so I was happy to get clarification about what is included in each recycling category and to learn about possibilities for recycling additional materials in 2019.

See **Recycling** / Page 2B



DORY'S DIARY
DOROTHY SWART
FLESHMAN

The shifting sands of time

Were you surprised to find my column in the paper last Monday, Jan. 7, 2019? Editor Jayson Jacoby gave the high-sign to run it weekly if my writing remains wanted by the readership, so you might let him know at jjacoby@bakercityherald.com (or write the Herald) if you want to see it here. In the meantime we move on.

We talk about how fast months and years go by. Since they are run by seconds and minutes, I decided to make an experiment. The opportunity came recently.

It is interesting to find that time clicks away at a faster or slower pace within a given hour and yet ends up at the same point for everyone.

It should be within your own power to determine how quickly or slowly the minute hand moves from number to number.

Somehow you find that you have the same number of minutes within the hour regardless of how slow or how fast you personally move them.

Someone else can move their own minutes in a different manner; all fast or all slow perhaps, and yet when you compare notes, you have both spent your time within the given hour; no more, no less.

I discovered how this works one night because I had time to think about it with my minutes on the slow mode. I didn't know why I was given this exact time to study this phenomenon when I would rather have been involved in working on one of my many projects, but since I had been allotted the unscheduled time, I may as well make the best use of it.

In order to judge the movement of the minute hand for myself, I needed to open and close my eyes at different chosen moments to see if I could push the automatic clock ahead faster or slow it down at will.

See **Dory** / Page 2B

Making More From A Common Kitchen Implement

MUFFIN TIN MAGIC

By Daniel Neman
St. Louis Post-Dispatch

Sometimes, you just don't want to bother with pots and pans.

Sometimes, you want small portions, like tapas. Sometimes, you just want a change.

It is for all of these times that muffin tins were made. Sure, you can use them to make muffins or cupcakes or, best of all, Yorkshire pudding. But an actual trend these days is to use them to make dinner or at least party appetizers.

I set out to explore the limits of muffin tinning by making four radically different types of entrees. One is a breakfast, because breakfast is the most important meal of the day and also because breakfasts are fun to make. If the breakfasts can be eaten with your fingers, so much the better.

One of the dishes I made is a muffin-tin version of macaroni and cheese, because, frankly, it's macaroni and cheese. No further explanation is needed, right? Another dish just uses the muffin tin to make exceptionally clever buns for muffin-sized sliders.

And one violates my own principle against using prepared doughs (such as puff pastry or biscuit dough) in the muffin tin because I simply couldn't resist the concept: miniature chicken pot pies with store-bought crescent-roll dough as the crust.

The Chicken Pot Pie Cups, as they are called, do take some work. If you are tempted to believe that meals — or at least appetizers — cooked in muffin tins are easier to make or less time-consuming than their full-sized siblings, you would be mistaken. To make Chicken Pot Pie Cups, you begin by making chicken pot pie.

That means a fair amount of chopping and dicing, and the making of a roux. And because I did not have any cooked chicken on hand, I also had to cook some chicken.

The only part that is simpler than regular chicken pot pie is the use of refrigerated crescent-roll dough in place of homemade puff pastry. If you use store-bought puff pastry, then there is little difference at all — at least in the process of making it.

The real difference is in the eating. These little two-or-three-bite-sized cups are delightful simply by virtue of being small and portable. They are like ordinary chicken pot pies, but more fun.

Fun is key to enjoying Mac and Cheese Cups, too. This dish also requires doing it the hard way by making your own macaroni and cheese, but it is a simple, pared-down version.

No Worcestershire sauce, no ground mustard, no eggs. This mac and cheese is just the basics: butter, flour (OK, you do make a roux), milk, cheese and macaroni.

Once you make it, you bake it — in a muffin tin, of course. The point is to get the macaroni and cheese to set, so you can eat it with your fingers. You get all the wonderful flavor of mac and cheese, without any of the cheese goo.

Next up were Ramen Sliders, which are only partially made in muffin tins.

The slider part is especially creative: you mix ground beef with the seasoning packet from a package of beef or pork ramen and chopped scallions. You cook it in tiny burgers and top it with a slice of hard-cooked egg, a squirt of sriracha and, if you're



Johanna Huckeba/St. Louis Post-Dispatch-TNS

Mac and cheese cups

adventurous that way, a piece of kimchi.

So where does the muffin tin come in? They're how you make the bun. Only it isn't a bun, it's the cooked noodles from that package of ramen. Placed in the bottom of muffin tins and baked, the noodles become crisp and crunchy.

To be honest, the ramen buns are not the best-tasting thing in the world. They are not bad by any means, but the sliders might be better if they were served on actual buns.

The ramen buns are more of a novelty, a conversation starter. Still, I'm glad I made them. Once.

I saved breakfast for last, Hash Brown Cups. These are just what they sound like, shredded potatoes cooked inside a muffin tin and then filled with scrambled eggs.

The potatoes are baked, not fried, so you might think they would be relatively healthful. Alas, something is needed to hold the potatoes together, a glue of sorts, and that glue is four tablespoons of butter. That works out to a teaspoon of butter in each cup that is eaten in one, or no more than two, bites. No wonder they taste so good.

CHICKEN POT PIE CUPS

Yield: 24 servings

- 2 tablespoons butter
- 2 carrots, peeled and sliced
- 2 celery ribs, diced
- ½ large onion, chopped
- 2 teaspoons fresh thyme leaves (or ½ teaspoon dried)
- Salt, to taste
- Pepper, to taste
- 2 tablespoons all-purpose flour
- 2/3 cup chicken broth
- ½ cup heavy cream
- 2 cups diced chicken
- ½ cup frozen peas
- ½ cup frozen corn
- 2 tubes crescent roll dough

1. Preheat oven to 375 degrees Fahrenheit and grease 2 (12-cup) muffin tins with nonstick spray (or you can make them in

batches).

2. In a large skillet over medium heat, melt butter. Add carrots, celery, onion and thyme, and season with salt and pepper. Cook until softened, 3 minutes, then stir in flour and cook 1 minute. Stir in broth and cream, and bring to a boil. Immediately reduce heat and simmer, stirring occasionally, until thickened, about 5 minutes.

3. Stir in chicken, peas and corn, and simmer until warmed through. Remove from heat and set aside.

4. On a lightly floured surface, unroll crescent-roll doughs and pinch diagonal seams together. Cut each tube's worth of dough into 12 squares, and place squares in muffin tin slots, on the bottom and up the sides of each cup. Spoon heaping spoonfuls of chicken mixture into each crescent cup. Bake until the crescent is golden, about 15 minutes. Let cool slightly in muffin tin before serving.

— Adapted from *Delish*

MAC AND CHEESE CUPS

Yield: 12 servings

- 1½ cups elbow macaroni, uncooked
- 2 tablespoons butter
- 2 tablespoons all-purpose flour
- 2 cups milk
- 2 cups sharp cheddar cheese, shredded
- Salt and pepper
- 2 tablespoons Parmesan cheese, shredded

1. Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Place 12 liners in a muffin tin or tins, and grease or spray them with nonstick spray.

2. Cook the macaroni according to package directions; drain. Heat butter in a medium saucepan over medium heat. Whisk in flour until smooth. Gradually whisk in milk; bring to a boil. Add cheddar cheese, stirring until melted. Stir in the macaroni; season with salt and pepper. Divide among the muffin cups, sprinkle with Parmesan and bake until golden, 15 minutes.

See **Muffin** / Page 2B

Why you should consider hardscaping

When the snow is melting everywhere and water runs in rivulets taking a lot of your soil with it, you can just be glad the snow is going, or you could daydream about how you could stop the erosion in your yard.

Ancient Chinese and Peruvian peoples built elaborate terraces and drainage systems on even the steepest of hillsides. Land impossible to farm gradually began to yield sustainable crops and they could live permanently on lands that only nomads had known before.

Hardscaping your landscape can be as simple as putting a few bricks or rocks along a flower-bed for contrast, or as complex as digging a series of pools and



BETWEEN THE ROWS
WENDY SCHMIDT

waterfalls to mimic a natural wonder.

Hardscaping has to do with adding features to your garden that are of a more permanent nature. For example: changing the water drainage by sculpting the land; adding concrete or rock features such as a retaining wall, terraces, walkways, pools, fountains or waterfalls, fences, walls, buildings, or ornaments.

I visited the garden of a potter friend of mine on Vancouver Island. He had many items of

sculpture that he and potter friends had made as hardscape features. One thing was a walkway which was a river with ceramic koi set in it as tile among the flat rocks. It was like a river flowing along.

Another feature in his garden was a fence with round posts topped with finials which were wheel-thrown, glazed pointed and metallic-looking. He had some comic little crows in one area.

A garden can be an expression of yourself and you can have different areas of the garden showing your different moods. The garden on Vancouver Island was very large and beautiful. Unique features such as the gazebo made using an old huge

fiberglass satellite dish as its roof, and a long tunnel of woven lath overgrown with vines and all the little oaks and maples were special. The potter was originally from England and had been to Japan. He called this his Anglo-Japanadian garden.

There is a point to all of this. Visit gardens of your friends. Even if they are casual friends or mentors or people you idolize. They will not always be with you and their gardens will not always be accessible. I am glad I went to see that garden when I did and took pictures.

If you have garden questions or comments, please write: greengardencolumn@yahoo.com

Thanks for reading!