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jobs got me to a place where I can cook full-time.”

Before living in Seattle, Medford grew up in North Carolina near the Appalachian Mountains.

Medford created Idlewild about four years ago. The name Idlewild is derived from Idlewild Avenue, which is in Medford’s hometown of Raleigh, North Carolina.

Medford’s Idlewild creations honor his southern roots while incorporating baking lessons he’s learned in the Pacific Northwest.

Since Medford’s moved to Astoria, Daniel and Heidi Dlubac, owners of Good to Go, have allowed Medford to use the shop’s kitchen and sell his goods there.

When he isn’t making a treat for Idlewild, Medford can often be found

teaching a class. He teaches about eight classes per month at the Pantry in Seattle, a community kitchen.

“If people eat what I bake and enjoy it, that’s fantastic,” Medford said. “But if they go home and make something I taught them, that absolutely delights me.”

Medford also occasionally teaches at the North Coast Food Web in Astoria. He’ll teach a class on biscuits on March 14 and another in the summer on cakes.

“He thinks about the whole food system; where all of our ingredients are coming from, and who played a part in getting them into our kitchens and on our plates,” said Caitlin Seyfried, the food web’s program manager.

Medford embodies bringing people together to share what they love about food and cooking, Seyfried said.

“Food is love,” Medford said. “It’s not just about feeding people but connecting

with them. Asking ‘Are you hungry?’ is the ultimate way to tell someone you love them.”

Cooking from the heart

Medford’s grandma taught him just about everything he knows about cooking.

“My cooking is a love letter to her,” Medford said. “Most of my memories of her are food-related. I want to replicate that.”

Medford inherited his grandma’s wooden spoons and pots. He regularly uses them.

“They’re the best thing I own,” Medford said.

While living in Seattle, Medford honed his baking skills under the guidance of Rachael Coyle, owner of Coyle’s Bakeshop.

“It’s been really neat to see him go



Brian Medford places biscuits on a sheet before baking them.

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Brian Medford coats freshly baked biscuits with melted butter.

Photos by Alyssa Evans

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