



## DORY'S DIARY

DOROTHY SWART  
FLESHMAN

## Thumbing my nose at Father Time

The year ends with the picture of old Father Time wearing a long white beard leaning on his scythe and giving up the old year.

How do I face the aging prospect?

Sometimes I get frustrated with being old in that I can no longer do the things with ease that I used to do, or be.

It takes more time and lacks opportunity when you are considered old and efforts aren't always entirely successful.

My hands try to do a certain task of which I have expected them to do as they always have. They try to obey but with varying results. Handwriting is one of them when a thought comes to mind that I wish to put down and my tablet is near, but often the effort produces scribbles that were never mine earlier. It's as though my fingers, hand, and arm all work on a different schedule.

It's sad.

A typewriter or computer keyboard often produce better results after corrections are made from fingers striking their own kind of spelling keys.

Yes, frustration applies there, too, but, you know, it also produces patience after frustration or angry thoughts and a mite slower approach to replace the hurry of youth. The idea is just to keep on.

The final result is more important than the speed with which it is accomplished. Maybe some day I will accept my own theory beyond trying to capture words or thoughts or ideas before they skiddle away into the dark hole of oblivion (skiddle — I like to make up my own words).

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## BETWEEN THE ROWS

WENDY SCHMIDT

## The promise in a packet of seeds

Seeds are life and hope, a plant primed to grow, just waiting for water and soil and care.

Seeds are a brand new beginning. It's nature's way of packaging brand new plants. You can have a small amount of seeds in your hand and have the equivalent of an entire garden. In the form of seeds, your garden is ultra portable and in the state of "hibernation," or "on hold" until a convenient time comes along for you to plant the garden.

A packet of seeds would be an appropriate symbol for the brand new year. A seed is life in a capsule, on hold waiting for soil and water to be added to magically start its heartbeat. A seed is a miracle willing to wait for the convenience of the proper conditions for growth. There are seeds discovered in ancient tombs that have still been able to grow into healthy plants. They were on hold in their seed form for eons.

The new year is a good time to think about ordering seed for the garden. Days are getting longer. Curling up in a comfy chair with a seed/nursery catalog, dreaming of summer days and growing gardens seems very pleasant when snow is on the ground. Gardening without leaving your house is not a reality, as you have to have potting mix and pots and you have to procure them from somewhere. Also, you need seeds or plant material. I'm proposing growing a sweet potato, or a pineapple top, or an avocado seed.

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## Greet 2019 By Making Fortune Cookies



Oksana Steplo/Dreamtime-TNS

If you're looking for a creative food contribution for a New Year's fete, these fortune cookies are the answer.

# FORTUNATE FOOD

By **Ligaya Figueras**

The Atlanta Journal-Constitution

Everyone wants to know their fortune. So why not have some fun by playing the messenger?

If you're looking for a creative food contribution for a New Year's fete, these fortune cookies are the answer. These treats will be the talk of the party as guests crack open the cookie to read their lot in life.

There are a few tricks to getting these cookies to turn out beautifully. First, spread the batter as thinly as possible on the baking sheet, using the backside of the spoon to smooth it out and into a wafer-thin round. If the cookie is too thick, it will be difficult to shape once baked.

Try to keep the cookie size to about 2½ inches. Larger than that and you risk the center of the cookie not baking all the way through, in which case it may stick to the fortune strips when the cookie is uncracked.

Also, be prepared to work quickly when you pull the cookies from the oven and shape them. They cool fast, and you need to insert the fortunes and fold them before they set. A second pair of hands can be helpful.

Finally, if the finished cookies become a bit soft before you serve them, just set them on a baking tray in a 200-degree oven for 10

minutes, then let cool until crisp.

## HAPPY NEW YEAR FORTUNE COOKIES

- 3 egg whites
- ¾ cup sugar
- 8 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted and cooled
- ¼ cup milk
- 3 tablespoons water
- ¼ teaspoon vanilla extract
- ¼ teaspoon almond extract
- 1 cup all-purpose flour
- Fortune cookie strips

Preheat the oven to 375 degrees. Line a baking sheet with a silicone pad or parchment paper.

Using a hand mixer, whip the egg whites and sugar in a large bowl on medium speed until the mixture is frothy. Add the melted butter and mix until combined. Add the milk, water, vanilla and almond extracts and mix until combined. Beat in the flour until combined.

Using a tablespoon, spoon the batter onto the baking sheet in 3 places, and spread each very thinly into a 2½-inch circle. (Only bake 3 cookies at a time. They set up very quickly, and

you need time to form the fortune cookies.) Bake the cookies for 8 minutes, until the edges are lightly browned. (Do not overbake, or they will be too brittle to form.)

Remove the baking sheet from the oven and loosen each cookie from the baking sheet by running a small spatula underneath. Place the fortune in the center of each cookie and fold over into a semicircle.

Quickly place 1 cookie over the edge of a mug and press down to shape into a fortune cookie shape, pressing the edges together and bending in the middle. Place the cookie in the cup of a muffin tin to help hold the shape until it has cooled and the shape has set. (A mini muffin tin works best for retaining a tighter shape.) Repeat with the remaining cookies. Makes 3 dozen cookies.

Per cookie, using 2 percent milk: 59 calories (percent of calories from fat, 43), 1 g protein, 7 g carbohydrates, trace fiber, 3 g fat (2 g saturated), 7 mg cholesterol, 6 mg sodium.

— From "Festive Holiday Recipes: 103 Must-Make Dishes for Thanksgiving, Christmas, and New Year's Eve Everyone Will Love." Copyright (c) 2018 by Addie Gundry and reprinted with permission from St. Martin's Press.

# Casseroles make breakfast easy

By **Susan Selasky**

Detroit Free Press

**Q:** What's the best way to make a breakfast casserole?

**A:** Breakfast casserole dishes, also called stratas, are culinary wonders, especially around the holidays. They're layered with ingredients, require little prep work and are time savers. They are also a set-it-and-forget-it type of dish.

Most feed a lot of people, so they're perfect for serving out-of-town guests or for a holiday breakfast. The casserole is assembled the night before, refrigerated and then popped in the oven in the morning.

Breakfast casseroles are everything you might eat at breakfast cooked together in one dish. Eggs get mixed with a liquid (milk or cream) to make a custardlike base.



Melanie Maxwell/Detroit Free Press-TNS

This breakfast casserole is made with eggs, whole milk, mini croissants, baby spinach, a touch of dijon mustard and fontina cheese.

