

Check it Out Column for week of November 14 to 21

## Thanksgiving Made Easy

By Kathy Stutzman, WCPL Public Relations Manager

Not long ago I watched the movie, Julie and Julia. I laughed, I groaned, and I thought to myself, “No way am I going to go to all that work and expense for a dinner.”

Is it really asking too much to have a simple, delicious, yet inexpensive meal for Thanksgiving without exhausting myself or breaking the piggy bank? In addition, to having time to spend with my family and not be stuck in the kitchen all day?

I decided to carry out an experiment and began looking over the various food magazines WCPL carries. The sub titles sounded promising: “Dinner in 30 minutes or less!”, “Easy, Fall Suppers”, “75 recipes under 2 bucks!”, “Thanksgiving Made Easy”, “A Month of Easy Dinners”, and “Comfort Food”. The articles came from Everyday with Rachel Ray (I can see the calories already.), Real Simple (sounded promising), bon appetit (sooo Julia Child.), Simple and Delicious (another promising one), Vegetarian (hmmm...), and Taste of Home (we’ll see).

After flipping through the magazines, I came up with some possibilities. I just needed to purchase a few ingredients and I was ready to start trying out the recipes. I decided to try one each week. I narrowed the dishes down to herb-roasted turkey, pumpkin mousse (10 minutes.), pesto corn (It included cheese so it had to taste good! 10 minutes.), glazed carrots with pecans, cranberry sauce, and basil parmesan puffs (25 minutes).

So began my journey with my husband, Micheal, and the library staff serving as guinea pigs.

1<sup>st</sup> week: basil parmesan puffs. So good and so easy to make! Just remember to use “fresh” basil. Dried basil is too much! My husband and most of the library staff liked them. Got requests for recipe

2<sup>nd</sup> week: pumpkin mousse. A twist on your ordinary pumpkin pie. Try this recipe for a Pumpkin Pie Mousse and you may never go back. Despite the mistakes I made, most wanted seconds and the recipe. Nearly everyone said, “Yummy!” (Imagine how good it will taste when done right.) To save calories and money, I didn’t use the graham cracker shells. A lighter version can also be made using skim milk.

3<sup>rd</sup> week: pesto corn. Loved it! Can’t go wrong with this dish. Mix ingredients, pop into the microwave for 2 minutes and it’s done! Even a person who doesn’t like corn liked it. Several said they want to serve it at Thanksgiving.

4<sup>th</sup> week: I made two dishes this week. Heritage Lane Cranberry Sauce-Very easy to make. Loved the flavor. Could have made a meal out of it. Herb-roasted turkey-With

only two in the house, I substituted a big, whole chicken. Moistest chicken I've ever had with flavor throughout the chicken. The aroma will lure people into the kitchen.

5<sup>th</sup> week: glazed carrots with pecans. Wonderful taste! Should satisfy any sweet tooth. You might have to take the carrots out and reduce the glaze to prevent overcooking the carrots.

In the end, I was pleasantly surprised. Nearly everyone liked the dishes and pleaded for the recipes. I had tried some different types of dishes for a Thanksgiving meal and true to their words, they took limited time and ingredients. Just the right combination for a tight budget and a busy person.

You can find these recipes on [www.warsawlibrary.org](http://www.warsawlibrary.org). Just click, "WCPL News".