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Anniston cooks learn how Prudence Hilburn prepares a couple of her favorite holiday season treats

By Bill Edwards
Staff Writer

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A warm November Thursday morning found some fourscore hearthside cooks in the fellowship hall of First Presbyterian Church in Anniston to learn how Prudence Hilburn prepares a couple of her favorite Thanksgiving and Christmas season treats.



Prudence Hilburn teaches how to a prepare a dish Thursday at Anniston's First Presbyterian Church as part of a Calhoun County Extension Office program. Photo: Stephen Gross/The Anniston Star

The Calhoun County Extension Office featured Hilburn — who has introduced fine home cooking to thousands of northeast Alabama homes through her Anniston Star "Gourmet Touch" column — and several other cooks at the agency's annual holiday cooking school.

"I don't know how many years I've done this, but I always look forward to it," said Hilburn, a cookbook author, six-time Pillsbury Cook-off finalist and instructor at Jacksonville State University.

Although urban regional extension agent Marchale Burton said she often emphasizes cooking for healthy eating, Hilburn conceded that's not always her own specialty.

"I'm not the best on cooking healthy ... this first recipe, I don't see any way you're going to cut calories."

That first recipe, Crispy Christmas Crescents, is made using refrigerated pie crust dough and melted butter so that the sugar will stick where it's supposed to.

Hilburn also recommended parchment paper for spreading out on the cooking sheet to make cookie removal easy after baking.

The menfolk were not left out of the mix. Ezell Dickerson, a security guard in the County Administration Building and highly regarded for his cooking and cleanup skills, demonstrated the preparation of lemon baked chicken.

"I always teach my kids hygiene when cooking chicken," Dickerson said, adding that it's important to always leave the kitchen clean and sanitary at the end of the meal.

Also represented in the scheduled demonstrations were recipes from Marchale Burton, Marilyn Lawson, Dorothy Duncan, Carol Headrick, Elizabeth Williams, Doris Shears, Myrus Weaver and Sheila Gaddy.

Theirs and many other recipes are available for public consumption in the extension service's holiday cookbook, available for \$2 from the extension office at 17th and Noble streets.

About Bill Edwards

Bill Edwards edits the daily TV pages, Coffee Break, Today In History for The Anniston Star.

Contact Bill Edwards

Phone: 256-235-3563
256-241-1991

Fax: bedwards@annistonstar.com

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