

Thanks, Margaret

Jerry borrows an award-winning recipe to share

By Jerry Marlowe
Special to the T-R

Heartfelt greetings to all you very kind readers. I was scrambling around today hoping to come up with a food article that you might enjoy. Well by golly I picked up the Oct. 16 edition of The Times-Reporter paper and guess who should be featured in Lee Elliott's Savvy Seniors column on page A6? Well I have the answer and it is the one and only 97-year-old Margaret Blakely.

Over the years of my ongoing efforts of enjoying fine food and its preparation, I many times was able to interact with her for help and advice. It was most often in the pursuit of solving a recipe that challenged me. Margaret's secret to a long and successful life she shared with Lee Elliot in the column follows. "Keep all parts of you moving. Exercise your body and your brain, work hard and love harder. And if you have to slow down a little, read everything you can get your hands on."

Wow!

So how does this all fit into today's desperate attempt to satiate your appetites with a very edible recipe? My wife Willi and I are now living very close by to Margaret and she was kind enough to share her recipe from the 45th National Chicken Cooking Contest. This was her winner for Ohio. The title is Chili Chicken Salad with Pumpkin Seed Salsa. And away we go!

Mix together 1 tsp fresh ground pepper, ½ tsp paprika, 1 tsp crushed garlic, and a tsp of lemon

pepper seasoning and sprinkle it over four boneless skinless chicken breast halves. In a large frying pan over medium high heat, place a tbs each butter and canola oil. Add the four boneless chicken breast halves and cook about four minutes on each side until golden brown. In a small bowl mix together one 4.5 oz can of diced green chilies and 1 cup shredded Cheddar cheese. Remove the chicken from heat and top it with the chili cheese mixture. Cover and let it sit two minutes until the cheese melts. Place 3 cups shredded romaine lettuce on a platter. To one cup of the salsa, add 2 tbs sour cream; drizzle over the lettuce and arrange the chicken on top. Spoon the remaining thicker salsa in the center. This will make four servings.

Now for the Pumpkin Seed Salsa: In a food processor, mix together ¾ cup of canned vegetable juice like V-8, ½ cup pumpkin seeds, ½ cup chopped onion, ¼ cup seedless raisins; 2 tbs peanut butter; 2 cloves garlic, minced; 2 jalapeño chilies, seeded, and 1 tbs flour. Puree all that. Now in a saucepan, place mixture and add ½ cup chicken broth. Cook that over low heat, stirring for about 10 minutes, until thickened. Be sure to present your phenomenal plated dinner and credit Margaret for it.

Congratulations, Margaret Blakely, for the winning Ohio entry in that very prestigious 45th National Chicken Cooking Contest. You are a remarkable chef and a tribute to the culinary arts in our community.