



### **For Immediate Release**

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## **Morris Press Cookbooks Announces Contest Winners**

KEARNEY, NE (February 3, 2010) – Scott Morris, president of Morris Press Cookbooks in Kearney, Nebraska, announced the national winners of the 10th Annual Morris Community Cookbook Awards. Morris Press Cookbooks, the leading publisher of community cookbooks, publishes millions of cookbooks every year as keepsakes and fundraisers for churches, schools, organizations, and families. The awards recognize organizations that created cookbooks in 2008 or 2009 as fundraisers for worthy causes. Since the contest's inception 10 years ago, over \$75,000 has been awarded to groups for their outstanding cookbooks and fundraising efforts.

The **first-place winner of \$5,000** is *A. Lincoln Cookbook – A Cookbook of Epic Portions*, created by the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum in Springfield, Illinois. The cookbook includes over 600 recipes, with an entire section devoted to Lincoln-era dishes. Along with delicious modern dishes, the judges were impressed with the cookbook's cover and dividers, which feature artifacts from the Lincoln family kitchen. Judge Dawn Saxton, Co-Founder and VP of Product Development of Specialty's Cafe & Bakery commented, "I really love the ongoing use of cutlery and place setting to reinforce the themes of each section." Gross sales of over \$60,000 benefit the museum's Volunteer Services Department.

Winning the **\$2,000 second-place award** is *Paws to Celebrate* from the Greater Birmingham Humane Society Auxiliary of Birmingham, Alabama. The bold, fun-loving artwork on the cover and dividers easily caught the judges' attention, while the recipes, including treats for pets, held their interest. "Being a pet owner myself, I really like this cookbook," said judge Robert Cano from Le Cordon Bleu Cooking School. "I made the 'Bacon Bow Wows' for my dog – he loved them." Judge Mark Aker, Corporate Executive Chef for Swiss Chalet Fine Foods/Haco Swiss, said, "My kids love animals – this is a great book for them." Grossing over \$30,000, *Paws to Celebrate* proceeds continue to support the humane society.

The **third-place winner of \$1,000** is *Culinary Classics*, created by the Penn State Milton S. Hershey Medical Center Association of Faculty & Friends in Hershey, Pennsylvania. With over 500 tasty recipes, *Culinary Classics* easily lives up to its name. Judges enjoyed the variety of recipes, including the many gourmet, comfort food, and international dishes. The cover features a sunflower as the symbol for palliative care. Judge Diana McMillen, Senior Food Editor for *Midwest Living* magazine, said, "The bright, colorful cover grabs your attention, and people would like the recipe collection. It's very approachable." Cookbook profits of over \$29,000 support the medical center's Palliative Care Department.

"This was an exceptional year for our contest," said Tamara Omtvedt, Director of Marketing & Development at Morris Press Cookbooks. "We received a great number of outstanding cookbooks, and the hard work and dedication of each group was apparent with every entry. We wish to congratulate every group on their fundraising success. They are all winners!" To learn more about the annual cookbook contest and the 2009 winners and finalists, visit [www.cookbookawards.com](http://www.cookbookawards.com) and [www.morriscookbooks.com](http://www.morriscookbooks.com). Sample recipes from this year's award winners follow.

## First-Place Winner

### ***A. Lincoln Cookbook – A Cookbook of Epic Portions***

#### **Lincoln's Favorite White Cake**

from Poppy Cannon & Patricia Brooks, *The Presidents' Cookbook*

##### **Cake Batter:**

2 c. sugar	1 c. milk
1 c. butter	1¼ c. blanched almonds, finely chopped
3 c. flour	6 egg whites
1 T. baking powder	1 tsp. vanilla or almond extract

In a large bowl, cream sugar and butter. In another bowl, sift flour and baking powder three times. Add the flour mixture to the butter mixture, alternating with milk. Stir in the almonds. In a medium bowl, beat egg whites until stiff; fold into the batter. Stir in the extract. Pour batter into a greased and floured angel food cake pan. Bake at 350° for approximately 1 hour. Turn out cake on wire rack to cool.

##### **Candied Fruit Frosting:**

2 egg whites	1 tsp. vanilla extract
2 c. sugar	½ c. diced, candied pineapple
1 c. water	½ c. crystallized cherries, cut in half

In a small bowl, beat egg whites until very stiff; set aside. In a medium saucepan, combine sugar and water and bring to a boil. Boil until the syrup spins a thread approximately 5 inches long; remove from heat. Add a few tablespoons of the egg whites, one spoonful at a time, into the syrup. Then, slowly add the remaining egg whites into the syrup, beating well until the icing forms peaks when dropped from a spoon. Add vanilla extract. Fold in candied pineapple and crystallized cherries. Ice the tops and sides of the cake.

**Note:** This noted cake was created by Monsieur Giron, a Lexington caterer, in honor of General Lafayette's visit to Lexington in 1825. The recipe became a favorite of the Todd family and they acquired it for family use. Versions of the cake vary slightly. Some references indicate the use of sour cream icing.

##### **For more information about *A. Lincoln Cookbook*, please contact:**

Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library and Museum

Linda Bee

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[www.alplm.org](http://www.alplm.org)

## Second-Place Winner

### *Paws to Celebrate*

#### Upside-Down Apple French Toast with Pecans

from Gail Batchelor

4 eggs	4 T. unsalted butter, cubed
1 c. whole milk	1 ¼ c. light brown sugar, divided
1 tsp. vanilla extract	¼ c. heavy cream
¼ tsp. cinnamon	½ c. chopped pecans
½ loaf challah bread, cut into 1-inch thick slices	4 Granny Smith apples, peeled, cored & halved
	Powdered sugar, as garnish

Preheat oven to 350°. In a flat dish, add eggs, milk, vanilla, and cinnamon; whisk until well combined. Dip challah slices in mixture; turn to help bread absorb the liquid. Place a 10-inch seasoned cast iron skillet over medium heat. Add butter and one cup of brown sugar, stirring constantly until sugar has melted and caramelized (about 8 minutes). Remove from heat and add heavy cream to pan; whisk together. Sprinkle the mixture with pecans and gently press in the apple halves, rounded side down. Lay the soaked slices of challah over the apples so they are completely covered with no gaps. Sprinkle the top with remaining ¼ cup brown sugar and place skillet in preheated oven. Bake on the middle rack for 40–45 minutes, or until the top is golden brown and puffy. Allow to cool for 5 minutes, then invert onto a large plate. Dust with powdered sugar and serve.

#### **For more information about *Paws to Celebrate*, please contact:**

The Greater Birmingham Humane Society Auxiliary

Robin King

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[www.gbhs.org](http://www.gbhs.org)

## Third-Place Winner

### *Culinary Classics*

#### Spinach Pie (Spanakopita)

from Betty Rigberg

3 (10-oz.) pkg. frozen, chopped spinach	3 T. olive oil
8 oz. crumbled Feta cheese	1 T. flour
2 (16-oz.) ctn. cottage cheese	Salt and pepper, to taste
4 eggs, beaten	15 sheets phyllo dough
1 onion, finely chopped	½ c. butter, melted

Defrost spinach and squeeze to drain liquid. In a large bowl, mix spinach, cheeses, eggs, onion, olive oil, flour, salt, and pepper; set aside. Brush the bottom of a 10 x 15-inch pan with melted butter. Place 9 sheets of phyllo dough in the pan, brushing each with butter as they are stacked. Spread the spinach mixture over the top. Cover with remaining 6 sheets of phyllo, again brushing each with melted butter. Using a very sharp knife, cut into the top 4 or 5 sheets of phyllo to outline the serving pieces. Bake at 350° for 45 minutes, or until top is golden brown.

**Note:** This recipe is from the “International” section of the cookbook. Judge Robert Cano tested it himself, noting in his comments that it is very delicious and easy to make.

**For more information about *Culinary Classics*, please contact:**

Penn State Milton S. Hershey Medical Center Association of Family & Friends  
[www.pennstatehershey.org/web/aff/home](http://www.pennstatehershey.org/web/aff/home)