

Holidays Around
the
World

REGIONAL SPONSOR ASSOCIATION
NSA
ILLINOIS

Thank you to all who joined us for the Holidays Around the World 2021!

NSA-IL is a richer chapter because we truly celebrate what each individual brings to the table. This event of sharing tradition, food, and culture is just one example of how our members provide community and connection with one another.

DEI and Outreach are not just a set of words. It's a commitment to actions.

Speaking professionals have important messages to share. Our goal is to provide an inclusive and welcoming environment so each person feels supported and encouraged to share their message in ways that will change the world!

My sincere thanks to the Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Outreach Committee and Chair Shanita Akintonde for their leadership in our goals.

Enjoy these recipes! And I hope to welcome you to an NSA-IL event soon.

Warmly,

Jeannie Walters

NSA-IL Chapter President, 2021-2022



Nothing says it's Holiday Season like FOOD—as in home-cooked, GOOD grub. I speak from edible experience. I am the great-granddaughter, granddaughter, niece, and daughter of some of the BEST soul food cooks on the planet. Lucille, Helen, Catherine, Willie Mae, and Mary Catherine were their names. Specialties included chopping, slicing, stuffing, and piling was their game. They cooked like a mother. Dining Deities stood by the stove to #SLAYDaily for their loved ones long before it became a Beyonce-endorsed hashtag. This culinary cohort put the “SO” in SOUL food, as in SO MUCH LOVE.

I remember when my culinary queens placed their encrusted cooking crown on my head. That was a tall moment. My election as the FIRST NSA-IL DEI & Outreach Director was another. Both roles entail the labor of love.

Holidays Around the World is the first iteration of that vision. This cookbook serves as a recipe for success. It's a collaborative effort from chapter members who openly share their experiences, customs, hopes, and stories of what has special meaning in their lives, especially during the holiday season.

I hope that you will cherish this publication as I do. Try a few recipes. Read all the stories. Above all, use it to remind yourself that good things can happen when people share a meal--together regardless of background or beliefs.

Shanita Baraka Akintonde

NSA-IL DEI & Outreach Director



Shanita Baraka Akintonde

President, ShanitaSpeaks, LLC

NSA-IL Diversity, Equity & Inclusion and Outreach Director

Speaker topics: Selling the Sizzle, Front Porch Leadership and Hear Us ROARR!

Linkedin: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/shanitaakintonde>

Email: ShanitaSpeaks@sbcglobal.net

My Story:

Great Grand is my maternal grandmother. She was born Lucille or Ceely but considering that everything she did in my eyes was both “Great” and “Grand” the title “Great Grand” was the one I bestowed upon her.

She lived in a small town in Arkansas called Brinkley and my family and I would travel from Chicago every summer to visit from my pre-Barbie to post-boys age.

During each visit, Great Grand would cook for the family and one of her signature dishes was GREENS. Whenever I inquired how she knew exactly how much seasoning to add to her “other side of heaven” mustard and collards magical mixture, she told me:

“When you’ve been cooking as long as I have, the only measuring cup you need is right here.” She then illustrated this statement by pointing to her hand which she cupped like a scooping device before she extended her fingers and placed them over her heart. It gives me great pleasure to share some of that same love with my all of you.

Great Grand's Greens

INGREDIENTS:

½-1 pounds Collard Greens	2 cans Chicken Broth
½-1 pounds Mustard Greens	5 chicken broth Bouillon Cubes
1 large white onion	2 tablespoons Lawry's Season Salt
Minced Garlic	1 tablespoon Coarse Black Pepper
Red Pepper Flakes	2 pinches Coarse Salt
4 Smoked Turkey Drums	2 tablespoons Sylvia's Greens Seasoning
Three (3) cups of water	

INSTRUCTIONS:

Season turkey drums with Lawry's Season Salt, black pepper, a sprinkle of salt. Cover with minced garlic and sliced onions. Place in Tupperware container and allow to sit two hours, or when time permitting, refrigerate overnight.

Soak and thoroughly clean greens. Be sure to clear all debris from the leaves. Place aside.

In a steel pan, combine chicken broth, two (2) cups of water, chicken bouillon cubes, and a pinch of salt. Bring to a low simmer. Remove turkey drums from the Tupperware dish, leaving ½ of the sliced onion and garlic mixture inside the container. Place carefully in the steel pot. Allow to slowly marinate for about ten minutes. Add the last cup of water around the edges of the meat and liquid mixture.

The greens and take individual leaves and chop into ¾ inch pieces. Discard long stems Place sliced leaves into coriander. Once all leaves have been sliced and placed in the coriander, rinse a final time, shaking excess water out of the bottom of the device.

Move coriander over to now hot water. Add greens into pan, pushing down with each additional scoop. After all greens have been stuffed into the pot, return to the turkey drum container and scoop in remaining chopped onions and garlic on top of the greens. Top with Sylvia's Greens Seasoning and a sprinkle of Red Pepper Flakes. Increase heat to medium/low and simmer for about an hour and 30 minutes, stirring occasionally.

Resources:

Soule Restaurant
1931 W Chicago Avenue
Chicago, IL 60622

Virtue Restaurant
1462 E. 53rd St
Chicago, IL 60615
(773) 947-8831



Great Grand's



Calvin Gibbs, Jr.

President, Born 2 Speak 2 You, LLC

Committee Co-Chair - NSA-IL Diversity, Equity & Inclusion and Outreach

Find me on LinkedIn at Calvin Gibbs Jr., DTM2

Speaker topics: Goalsetting & Productivity, Discipline is the Bridge, etc!

Email: born2speak2you@mail.com

My Story:

Simply put, in my family you cannot have Thanksgiving dinner without stuffing aka dressing. The elders in the family have taken a back seat to let the next generation try some preparations...so this recipe I found online has been tweaked for a couple of years until it is now perfect... and it it's all mine! Enjoy!

Cornbread Stuffing with Sausage

INGREDIENTS:

**1 box Jiffy dry cornbread mix
(prepare according to package)**

**2/3 cup milk (also for the cornbread)
like)**

2 cups chopped celery

**5 cups Pepperidge Farm seasoned breadcrumbs
(do not use the cornbread flavored bread crumbs)**

2 cups chopped bell pepper

2 ¾ cups chicken broth

1 egg (for the cornbread)

**1 lb. sage sausage (or mild if you
like)**

2 large onions, chopped

1 ½ teaspoons poultry seasoning

1 teaspoon sage

Salt and pepper to taste

INSTRUCTIONS:

Step 1

Prepare Cornbread according to dry cornbread mix directions using the egg and milk. Put in 375 degrees oven and bake for 15-18 mins

Step 2

While cornbread is baking, place sausage, celery, onions, and peppers in a large, deep skillet. Cook over medium heat until evenly brown. Drain, crumble and set aside.

Step 3

When cornbread is done, let it set for a few minutes, then crumble in a large bowl. Be careful not to burn your fingerprints off. Set oven at 325 degrees F (165 degrees C)

In that same large bowl combine the sausage mixture with the breadcrumbs, chicken broth, poultry seasoning and sage. Mix well and transfer to a 9x12 inch baking dish.

Step 4

Bake covered for 45 minutes or until well set and cooked through. If a darker stuffing/dressing is preferred, then take the cover off for the last 10-12 minutes.

Jack and Jingle

INGREDIENTS:

1 oz Jack Daniel's Old No 7 Tennessee Whiskey

½ oz of Aperol (an Italian Orange liquor)

3 oz Cranberry juice

Splash of Winter Spiced Cranberry Sprite
(or use splash of Cranberry Ginger Ale)

Whole Cranberries and lemon twist

INSTRUCTIONS:

Into a shaker add a few ice cubes Pour in the Jack Daniel's, Aperol, cranberry juice Shake well and pour into glass Add a few ice cubes, a few whole cranberries, splash of spite (or ginger ale) S-r and add lemon twist.





My Story:

A full house is happiness for me. When my children were born, I took over the role of family holidays Diva Host. We had a full house of siblings, and aunts and uncles. My son and daughter are now the holiday Chefs and are better cooks and decorators. My fun now is making cookies with my grandchildren.

A great wine for Sangria is Albero Spanish Red Wine Monastrell from Trader Joe's. However, any fruity, full bodied, somewhat-dry red Spanish wine will do. You can also use your favorite wine, red, white, or rose, all of which work especially well for a holiday toast!

Valerie Fuson

Chief Storytelling Strategist

NSA-IL Diversity, Equity & Inclusion and Outreach Communication Chair

Linkedin: <https://LinkedIn.com/in/valeriefuson>

Phone: 847-910-5300

Caprese Salad

INGREDIENTS:

Sliced Mozzarella Cheese

3-4 medium sliced ripe tomatoes on the vine or beefsteak

1 tsp. Oil Tap Caprese olive oil

Drizzle Oil Tap Caprese Aceto Balsamico di Modena Riserva

Drizzel Oil Tap Basil Agrumato Olive Oil

Fresh Basil leaves

INSTRUCTIONS:

Slice mozzarella cheese and medium ripe tomatoes cut in $\frac{1}{4}$ inch. Arrange alternating on dish, add salt and fresh pepper to taste. Drizzle Caprese oil and Balsamic Riserva oil from The Olive Tap.

Resources:

TheOilTree.com Tasting Emporium Long Grove, IL 888-642-5472 <https://vine-pair.com/articles/the-history-of-sangria/>



Caprese Salad

Holly Berry Sangria

INGREDIENTS:

1 (750-mL.) bottle red wine

1 orange, sliced

1 c. orange juice

1 apple, sliced or dice

1/2 c. brandy

1 c. blueberries

1/4 c. granulated sugar or brown sugar
(optional or reduce to your tasting)

1 c. sliced strawberries

1 (12-oz.) can seltzer

INSTRUCTIONS:

In a large pitcher, mix together wine, orange juice, brandy, and sugar then stir in oranges, apples, blueberries, and strawberries.

Refrigerate until ready to serve, preferably 2 hours. Top off with seltzer before serving.

The following fruits can be used for Sangria. Cranberries, Pomegranate, Pears, Pineapple, Lime

Sangria Wine ready to drink just add fruit: Binnys or Whole foods

Café Ba-Ba-Reeba!, Chicago

Lolea Sangria Red or White

Eppa Red Sangria or White

Glunz Del La Costa Red or White

Restaurants Tapas and Sangria

La Tasca, Arlington Heights





My Story:

Nothing speaks to the holidays like when you wake up and smell your roast cooking in the oven as early as 5 am. On Christmas eve, it is a tradition to wake up before the sun rises to slow cook the food you are serving that evening. I remember as a child, my mother who we call “Mami”, massaged her roast with a combination of different seasonings for about twenty minutes before putting it in the oven. The end result is a tender and juicy piece of meat, accompanied by rice, pasteles, and more. The same tradition continues today in my home where I cook the same meal my mother did decades ago for my own family.

Elizabeth Colón

Phone / 815.464.1423

Fax / 815.464.1747

Email / ecolon@metaphrasislcs.com

Web / www.metaphrasislcs.com

100% Women and Minority Owned Business

Arroz Con Gandules (Puerto Rican Rice with Pigeon Peas)

INGREDIENTS:

1 tablespoon olive oil

1/3 cup sofrito

1 ½ tsp Goya Brand Sazon con

3 cups water or low sodium chicken broth

1 cube chicken bouillon
(more if needed)

2 tbsp tomato paste or
1/3 cup tomato sauce

1 teaspoon dried Italian seasoning
or oregano either one works

1/4 cup fresh cilantro, chopped optional

2-3 bay leaves

2 tablespoons pimento stuffed olives

2 cups parboiled rice

15 ounce can Goya Brand Pigeon Peas
(Gandules), drained and rinsed or 2 cups
of fresh or frozen

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Heat your Caldero / Dutch oven to medium heat, and add your olive oil, bacon/ ham (if using) and sofrito. Stir constantly until fragrant and tender, but not browned, about 4 minutes.
2. Next add in the Sazon, tomato sauce or paste and chicken bouillon. Stir to combine.
3. Add in the drained pigeon peas, Italian seasoning or oregano, bay leaves, and water/broth. Add the cilantro and/or olives, if using. Allow the liquid to come up to a boil and taste it for salt. If it needs more saltiness, add in another chicken bouillon cube. You want this liquid to be highly seasoned, as it will determine the final seasoning of the rice.
4. Once the mixture is boiling, add the rice. Stir the rice to get it submerged and distribute the pigeon peas throughout.
5. Cover and allow the rice to absorb all the visible liquid. Once most of the visible surface liquid is absorbed, stir the rice, and cover again. Lower the flame to low and allow it to steam for 20-25 minutes. It's done when all the liquid is absorbed, and the grains are fluffy and fully cooked.



Resource:
Ponce Restaurant
poncerestaurant.com

Coquito Coconut Eggnog

INGREDIENTS:

2 12-ounce cans Goya Brand Evaporated Milk

1 15-ounce can Goya Brand Cream of Coconut

1 13.5- ounce can Goya Brand Coconut Milk

½ cup Goya Brand Sweetened Condensed Milk

½ cup White Rum optional

1 teaspoon vanilla extract

½ teaspoon ground cinnamon plus more for garnish

Cinnamon Sticks per serving (optional)

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. In a blender, combine the evaporated milk, cream of coconut, coconut milk, sweetened condensed milk, rum (if using), vanilla extract and ground cinnamon. Blend on high until well combined, about 1 minute.
2. Pour the coconut mixture into a pitcher or large jars and cover. Refrigerate until chilled.
3. To serve, stir or shake the jars well to combine. Pour coquito into small glasses and garnish with a sprinkle of ground cinnamon and cinnamon sticks. Serve right away.



Resource:

Coquito Coconut Eggnog:

Coquito – Coconut Eggnog - Recipes | Goya Foods



Jenny Hamby
2021-22 Marketing Committee Chair
President of SeminarMarketingPro.com

My Story:

My mom, who passed away in August 2021, was ‘famous’ in our family for her twice-baked potatoes. She made them only on special occasions, such as Christmas or her wedding anniversary.

Now that I’ve carried on her tradition, I know why. They are a little bit of a pain to make – and they are not the healthiest. (But man, are they good!)

She used to get annoyed when guests would eat half their potatoes and throw the rest away. As a fix, she switched to putting the mashed potatoes into a casserole dish for their second baking vs. restuffing the potato skins. No matter how you serve them, these potatoes are a decadent treat!

Liz's Tasty Twice-Baked Taters

INGREDIENTS:

5 lbs. of baking potatoes	1 orange, sliced
8 ounces cream cheese (softened, cut into cubes)	½ c. half and half
1 tsp. onion salt	1 tsp. regular salt
1 tsp. Lawry's seasoned salt	¼ tsp. pepper

INSTRUCTIONS:

Clean and bake potatoes.

When potatoes are easily pierced with a fork, remove from oven. Cut a slice off the top of each potato.

Scoop out the interior of each potato, putting the potato "guts" into the bowl. Reserve the potato shells.

Mix until potatoes are mashed. (NOTE: do NOT let the potatoes cool off completely; they will get glue-like.)

Add the cream cheese and butter, and mix until all ingredients are blended.

Add the salts and pepper, and mix.

Stuff the potato shells with the mashed potatoes. (If desired, sprinkle the top with a bit of cheddar cheese.)

Bake at 350 degrees until the top of the potato is starting to turn brown, about 30-45 minutes.

Notes:

Potatoes may be made ahead and stored in the fridge until ready to bake. Rather than restuffing the potato skins, you can put the mashed potatoes into a greased casserole dish. If you prefer less salt, start with ½ or ¾ tsp. of each salt and adjust to taste. **Tip:** Turn the sliced potato tops into potato skins by topping with cheese, bacon bits, green onion, salt and pepper. Bake at 350 until cheese melts and potato skins are hot. Serve with sour cream.





Meg Bucaro
NSA-IL Membership Director
Owner, Meg Bucaro Communications
www.megbucaro.com
Phone: 847-691-8119

My Story:

Meg Bucaro Wojtas does not consider herself a 'baker' but, much like a one-trick pony, she bakes her three kiddos and their friends chocolate chip cookies regularly. What they don't know, is it is a great excuse for her to spend time chatting with them at the kitchen island, without teenage angst or sibling bickering. Her #1 taste tester is her youngest, 10 -year old, Luke, who asked to be first assistant during the NSA IL Holidays Around the World Celebration video.

While the recipe you will find on the back of the Nestlé Tollhouse package is Meg's go to recipe, she shares that the secret to the chewy chocolate chip cookies is melting the butter before it is added to the batter. ;-) If you have kids you'd like to attract, these are a no-fail excuse to circle around the kitchen together!

Chocolate Chip Cookie Recipe

INGREDIENTS:

2 1/4 cups all-purpose flour

3/4 cup packed brown sugar

1 teaspoon baking soda

1 teaspoon vanilla extract

1 teaspoon salt

2 large eggs

1 cup (2 sticks) butter, softened

3/4 cup granulated sugar

2 cups (12-ounce package)

NESTLÉ® TOLL HOUSE®

Semi-Sweet Chocolate Morsels

INSTRUCTIONS:

Preheat oven to 375°.

Combine flour, baking soda and salt in small bowl. Beat (melted) butter, granulated sugar, brown sugar and vanilla extract in large mixer bowl until creamy. Add eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition. Gradually beat in flour mixture. Stir in morsels and nuts. Drop by rounded tablespoon onto ungreased baking sheets.



Allie Pletier

Speaker | Author | Coach

Author of over 50 published titles - 1.6 million books sold world wide

Creator of the Chunky Method

Writing Productivity Coach

National Speakers Association Illinois Chapter Past President

<https://alliepleiter.com>

630-742-8251

My Story:

We started making these when my children were small. It's simple enough that little ones can help and the results are delicious—and addictive! Given how they make all kinds of themed M&M's now, you can use this recipe throughout the year.

Super-Easy Holiday Snacks

INGREDIENTS:

1 bag Christmas M&Ms

Melting Candy (like Ghiradelli vanilla melting wafers or Almond Bark)

Circle-shaped pretzels or square “snaps”

Cookie Sheet

Parchment Paper

INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Line cookie sheet with parchment paper and lay out pretzels
2. Melt candy in the microwave until it's the consistency of honey
3. Dollop candy onto snaps pretzels or fill ring if using circle pretzels
4. Set an M&M on top of the square or in the circle
5. Let cool





Jeannie Walters

Founder and CEO, Experience Investigators
& Customer Experience Speaker

My Story:

My family believes this tradition of a frozen pie at the holidays (both Thanksgiving and Christmas) started when my aunt offered to make dessert but wasn't much of a cook! She brought this pie and everyone enjoyed it so much it's become a tradition. She has since passed away, so now we trade off who is responsible for making it for our family gatherings. In 2020, my nephew Jake made several and dropped them off for us when we couldn't get together. It meant so much to enjoy a grasshopper pie and know our family was still connected through this even when we couldn't be together.

We call it a recipe for patience. There is no actual cooking, but plenty of waiting! If you rush, it will either separate or have little bubbles in it. Take your time and it will turn out creamy and delicious!

If you like chocolate mint, you'll love this pie! Enjoy!

Grasshopper Pie

INGREDIENTS:

1/3 cup butter (melted)

2/3 cup milk

24 marshmallows (large)

2 oz. Green Creme De Menthe

1 oz. White Creme De Coca

1/2 pint Whipping Cream

Chocolate Cookie Wafers (by Nabisco)
or Oreo Chocolate Cookie Pie Crust

INSTRUCTIONS:

CRUST:

Mix 1 1/4 cup crushed Chocolate Cookie Wafers and 1/3 cup melted butter. Press into a 9" pie pan and chill.

FILLING:

Scald 2/3 cup milk. Add 24 marshmallows and melt slowly in a double boiler, stirring often.

Important!!

COOL TO ROOM TEMPERATURE!!!!!!!

Whip cream and fold into above with Creme De Menthe and Creme De Coca. Pour into crust and freeze.



Grasshopper Pie

About the NSA-IL DEI & Outreach Committee: The NSA-IL Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) & Outreach committee champions initiatives within the NSA-IL membership regarding DEI as well as community outreach and advocacy that meet both NSA-IL and NSA National mission and goals.

This is the FIRST year for the DEI & Outreach Committee and Holidays Around the World is the committee's FIRST event!

To learn more about the Committee leaders' DEI expertise and/or how you can join their efforts, feel free to reach out to the DEI & Outreach Committee Leadership team. Or contact Christy Moore, NSA-IL Executive Director, at Christy.Moore@Nsa-il.org.



Shanita Baraka Akintonde
NSA-IL Board Member
DEI & Outreach Director
Professor Shanita B. Akintonde



Calvin Gibbs
NSA-IL Member
DEI & Outreach
Co-Director



Valerie Fuson
NSA-IL Member
DEI & Outreach Communication
Chair



Elizabeth Colon
NSA-IL Member
DEI & Outreach Youth Committee
Chair