

Bake & Take Participants

Contributors in this year's Bake and Take month went above and beyond the norm in their efforts to celebrate the rewards of home baking with friends and family.

Bake and Take month is an invitation for home bakers of all ages to embrace the community spirit of baking. Participants in the annual event use their culinary skills to share baked goods with neighbors, friends, or people who may not be able to bake for themselves.

Pratt County 4-H members learned basic kitchen skills while baking cookies and cupcakes to take to local 4-H supporting business and cooked lunch for another local 4-H group. Other participants took food to housebound neighbors, senior citizens and busy young couples. One contributor took it upon herself to use her baking skills to help show condolences to families who had lost loved ones.

Mardi Traskowsky of the L Prospecta 4-H club in Dickinson County was the winner of the Bake and Take drawing. Mardi hosted a snow and ice party for friends and family. She baked cinnamon rolls and French bread for the group to enjoy and helped her mother provide a meal. Mardi says her favorite person to take baked goods to is her grandfather, and she is always happy to add in some sand plum jelly with the bread she takes.

As our drawing winner, Mardi receives a book basket featuring the Home Baking Association's popular "Baking with Friends" cookbook by Kansas authors Charlene Patton and Sharon Davis. Other books featured in the package include: "Exploring Plants," a Kansas Crop Educators' Guide sponsored by the Kansas Foundation for Agriculture in the Classroom; "Celebrate Wheat," a Kailey's Ag Adventure book from the Kansas Farm Bureau; and the Kansas Wheat Commission's "Kansas Gold," book, a 50-year history of the Kansas Wheat Commission complete with historical recipes.

Bake and Take day started as a community service project of the Kansas Wheathearts in 1970. The Kansas Wheathearts, an auxiliary organization of the Kansas Association of Wheat Growers set out to generate goodwill in their communities by sharing baked goods with family, friends, neighbors, and those in need. This idea became so successful that the Kansas Wheathearts created a nationwide Bake and Take day in 1973. Even though the Kansas Wheathearts disbanded in 2001, the tradition continues to be supported by the Kansas Wheat Commission and Kansas Association of Wheat Growers.

For some, this effort has grown to something more than just a community service project. Betty L. Legge, a participant from Topeka, shared how contributing to Bake and Take month brings light into the lives of others. Since her retirement she refuses to limit her Bake and Take endeavors to just one month a year.

"I have heard the saying 'you bring your own weather to the picnic'," she says. "So taking baked goods to friends, neighbors, and family-makes most of my days sunny."