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CF Ocala conducts 3rd Annual Holiday Bake-Off



Danielle Doty (left) and Lois Brauckmuller confer before the start of the judging.

Story and Photos

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OCALA – Thirteen people entered 18 baked desserts for 10 judges to evaluate Thursday Dec. 7) in the College of Central Florida’s 3rd Annual Holiday Bake-Off.

Director Marketing and Public Relations Lois Brauckmuller and CF Manager of Community Relations Danielle Doty were among the staff and volunteers who assured each judge was well-equipped with forks, plates, napkins, beverages, instructions and forms.

While the matters at hand may not have risen to the level of rocket science, the fate of some number of villagers somewhere in the world may have rested on the relative baking skills on one contestant.

And there could be even more than a million other stories from this event reaching the point of qualifying as an annual event. Yes the first-ever Holiday Bake-Off and the subsequent second-ever event have now reached the point where journalists everywhere qualify something as the “annual” whatever.

“An event cannot be described as annual until it has been held in at least two successive years,” according to one of the notations on page 15 of *The Associated Press Stylebook And Libel Manual* (© 1988). “Do not use the term first annual. Instead, note that sponsors plan to hold an event annually.”

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One table of cakes is seen here.



This is a cake that looks like a snowman.

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These are some of the bars that were in the competition.

Now, let's get back to the goat and the villagers.

Brauckmuller mentioned during the event to one judge that one of the bakers said that he or she would buy a goat if that entry won the \$110 top prize in one of the three categories.

Apparently there is a charity that allows individuals to buy goats for impoverished villages.

Judging the entrees, however, was not based on what a winner might do with his or her cash.

The three categories this year were Cakes, Cookies and Bars.

The first place winner in each of the three categories was awarded a certificate and \$110. The second and third place finalists went home with certificates.

The awards were announced and presented at a holiday party Thursday afternoon.

Judges ranked each item from 1 through 5.

Just so the judges were clear about what "1" through "5" meant, there were words next to each number. Those words from lowest to highest were "Yuck!", "Not So Great," "Okay," "Good" and "Amazing."

The 3rd Annual CF Holiday Bake Off attracted many CF employees who were willing to compete with each other in the baked dessert competition.

Room 107 of the CF Ewers Century Center had tables of homemade cakes, cookies and bars. The first year, there were also homemade candies and pies. The second year, there were also pies.

This year, there were the three categories, which gave one wordsmith a chance to have fun with the word "bars." Interestingly, of the four entrants for the bar contest, one set the bar.

The scoring sheets showed judges had to evaluate on "Presentation," "Appropriate

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Texture,” “Flavor/Taste” and “Overall Impression.” In those four realms, there was a scale of one to five as noted earlier in this year’s story. So the highest score to be earned from one judge for one item was 20 points.

Judges were armed with forks, paper plates and napkins, as well as pens and the scoring sheets. Judges had access to water or coffee to cleanse their palates as they carefully checked each wonderful treat.

The judging took place in the College of Central Florida’s Ewers Century Center, in Ocala, in Room 102.

One of the judges – Jeff M. Hardison – owns a daily online news website that focuses primarily on Levy, Dixie and Gilchrist counties; however coverage can be anywhere – and anywhere includes Marion, Alachua, Citrus and other Florida counties, as well as any state or nation on the planet.

The CF Holiday Bake Off masterpieces served as the centerpiece in a magnificently decorated room for the CF Holiday Party, which was that afternoon

Without a doubt, the treats were all so delicious that each judge was hard-pressed and had to take great time and effort to evaluate each item.

The information about the winners will be added to this story at some point in the future, if the information becomes available.

WINNERS

Cakes

- 1st place – Susan Dagg (CF Printing & Postal Services) – Coconut Rum Crème Cake
- 2nd place – Kelly Besser (Student Success) – Winter Wonderland Chocolate Cake
- 3rd place – Jo-anne Holleran (Student Success/Academic Advising) – Snowman

Cake

Cookies

- 1st place – Judy Menadier (Institutional Effectiveness) – Scottish Empire Biscuits
- 2nd place – Cindy Baldwin (Criminal Justice) – Peanut Butter Kiss Cookies
- 3rd place – Linda Sagendorph (Learning Support Center) – Pumpkin Spice Cookies

Bars

- 1st place – Melissa Alling (Communications Faculty) – Raspberry Crumble Bars
- 2nd place – Susan Dagg (CF Printing & Postal Services) – Raspberry Raisin Walnut

Bars

- 3rd place – Lynn Ruis (Financial Operations) – Holiday Mint Brownies

Hardison said he was honored to be invited for the third time to judge baked goods in competition at the College of Central Florida for its employees’ Third Annual Holiday Bake-Off.

"Once again," Hardison said, "it was a hoot!"