

Cranberry relish for the holidays

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By Kathryn Reed

St. Theresa's is known for many things – not all are religious in nature.

During the Angora Fire of summer 2007 a sense of community was even more evident at the Catholic church. By the end of the week more than 5,000 meals were cooked in its kitchen. Breakfast, lunch and dinner were available to anyone needing nourishment.

The Red Cross got its meals from the volunteers at the church, officials at the fire command post got food, meals were sent to hotels housing displaced locals. Restaurants and grocery stores donated food, the church pantry provided staples, financial donations allowed volunteers to shop for specific items.

Daunelle Wulstein and Robyn Smith got the burners fired up. Weldon Wulstein kept on top of supplies.

Diane Weidinger arrived that Tuesday when Gardner Mountain was most at risk and the number of displaced just kept growing.

"I cook at St. Theresa's for the Bread and Broth program so I know the kitchen very well and I knew what supplies we had," Weidinger said. "By midweek we got it down to a science. We knew how many meals we had to deliver outside the church hall. (Menus) were all based on what was donated and what was in our pantry."

According to Weidinger's friends, she is a phenomenal cook.

Accompanying her in the kitchen was a gaggle of professional and home schooled chefs. Jeannette Shippee and Hugo Lizaola from the county jail lent their expertise. So did Stephen Moise, Reds Regan and Bill Marchetti.

“With the onset of the Angora Fire, my buddy Reds Regan and I were perplexed: Where could we best offer our limited array of talents?” said Marchetti, former chef at Eagles’ Nest restaurant on Kingsbury Grade and current manager of the lounge there. “Perhaps it was divine intervention, but at that moment we drove by St. Theresa’s. Now, if there’s anything two Catholic boys would know about, it’s volunteerism and guilt.”

During that frightful experience 17 months ago, plenty of people stepped forward to donate time, money and resources to help their neighbors. Perhaps this Thanksgiving is another good opportunity to say thank you to everyone who fought the fire, as well as thank the countless volunteers who fought to provide stability, love and a sense of community to those who were touched by Angora.

The following recipe is one of the first dishes Marchetti learned to cook in culinary school in 1977. It’s also something he whipped up during the Angora Fire.

“This relish makes a delightful addition to mayonnaise for a tantalizing turkey sandwich,” Marchetti said.

Cranberry Orange Relish

4 cups fresh cranberries, rinsed

$\frac{3}{4}$ cup sugar

1 whole orange

$\frac{1}{2}$ tsp. fresh grated ginger

Blanch cranberries for five minutes, chill.

Peel the orange. Reserve the sections, remove the thick white pith and reserve the zest.

Combine the cranberries, sugar, orange zest and ginger. Pulse in a food processor until chunky. Chill and serve.