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## Morris Press Cookbooks Announces Contest Winners

KEARNEY, NE (February 2006) – Morris Press Cookbooks of Kearney, Nebr., a leading publisher of community cookbooks, has announced the winners of its 6th Annual Community Cookbook Awards. The awards recognize organizations that have created outstanding cookbooks as fundraisers for worthy causes. Morris Press Cookbooks publishes over 3 million cookbooks every year as keepsakes and fundraisers for churches, schools, organizations, and families. Visit [www.morriscookbooks.com](http://www.morriscookbooks.com) to view the award-winning cookbooks.

The **1st-place winner of \$3,000** is *Opening the Gates to Canal Cuisine – Preserving the American Era*, by the Panama Canal Museum of Seminole, Fla. Contest judges were impressed by the cookbook's professional appearance, cover and divider-page illustrations, historical flavor, and regional recipes. "In creating the cookbook, it was fun renewing old friendships and learning more about the history of the Panama Canal," said Sarah Finkelstein, chairman of the cookbook committee. Proceeds and the prize money will be used to benefit the Panama Canal Museum.

Winning the **\$1,500 2nd place** award is *Vixens' Fixens – Cuisine for Hunt Country Occasions*, by the Elkridge-Harford Hunt Club, Inc., of Monkton, Md. The cookbook received consistently high marks for its originality, artwork befitting the book's theme, and appealing recipes. Gloria Cameron, who headed up the project, said, "We organized our cookbook by occasion rather than food category, so it was fun how that evolved. It was also rewarding to reminisce and gather anecdotes from the different generations." Cookbook proceeds and prize money will be used for land conservation, historical preservation, and education.

The **third-place winner of \$750** is *Served With Honor – The Officer and Civilian Spouses' Club Cookbook*, by the Fort Rucker Officer and Civilian Spouses' Club of Fort Rucker, Ala. The judges especially liked the cookbook's vintage photographs, inside cover map, and "Fort Rucker Entertains" section. "The best aspect of compiling the cookbook was the opportunity for everyone to share their recipes," said Kimberly Blevins, chairperson. "They represent the various cultures and tastes of the diverse Army family." Several Fort Rucker military and civilian organizations will benefit from the club's cookbook profits and prize money.

The contest judges were Diana McMillen, food editor of *Midwest Living* magazine; Hsiao-Ching Chou, food writer for the *Seattle Post-Intelligencer* newspaper; Tricia Robinson-Pridemore, editor of *Cookbook Digest* magazine; and Joy Taylor, executive editor for the Meredith Corporation's *Family Food Collection*.

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Sample recipes from the winners follow:

## 1st Place Winner

### ***Opening the Gates to Canal Cuisine – Preserving the American Era***

#### **Johnny Mazzetti**

1 1/2 lbs. ground beef	2 c. stuffed olives, sliced
2 lbs. ground pork	2 (4-oz.) jars pimientos, chopped
4 T. oil	3 c. mushrooms with liquid
6 cloves garlic, minced	1 bunch parsley, chopped
3 c. onions, chopped	1 T. pepper
2 c. sweet peppers, sliced	3 bay leaves
5 c. celery, chopped	salt, to taste
2 (28-oz.) cans tomatoes	1 1/2 lbs. wide egg noodles
2 (6 3/4-oz.) cans tomato paste	6 eggs, hard-boiled & chopped
2 (10 3/4-oz.) cans tomato soup	5 c. American cheese, grated

In a large skillet, fry beef and pork in the oil. When it starts to brown, add garlic, onions, and sweet peppers. Fry a few minutes before adding celery, tomatoes, tomato paste, tomato soup, stuffed olives, pimientos, mushrooms, parsley, pepper, bay leaves, and salt; simmer. Cook noodles according to package directions; drain. Grease a large baking pan. Layer noodles, meat mixture, and eggs. Top with a layer of cheese. Bake in slow oven at 275° for 2 hours.

**Recipe note:** This dish is a gastronomic highlight of the construction day era – so popular it is considered by some to be a Panama Canal Zone invention. It’s an old family recipe of Mrs. Preston, who came from Baltimore to the Panama Canal Zone in the American Era.

## 2nd Place Winner

### ***Vixens’ Fixens – Cuisine for Hunt Country Occasions***

#### **Covert Crab Dip**

2 (8-oz.) pkgs. cream cheese	salt, to taste
1/2 pt. sour cream	1/4 c. sherry
3 T. light mayonnaise	1 lb. backfin crabmeat or 1/2 lb. crabmeat and
2 tsp. dry mustard	1/2 can chopped artichoke hearts
3 tsp. sugar	1 c. grated white cheddar cheese
juice of 1/2 lemon	paprika, to taste
1 tsp. Old Bay seasoning	

Heat cream cheese to soften. In a medium bowl, mix cream cheese, sour cream, mayonnaise, dry mustard, sugar, lemon juice, seasoning, salt, and sherry. Fold in crab meat and artichoke hearts, if using. Transfer to a baking pan; top with cheddar cheese and sprinkle with paprika. Bake at 300° for 1 hour.

**Recipe Note:** A covert is a patch of woods or brush where a fox might be found. This recipe is quadrupled to serve at Hunt parties and everyone hunts for it!

### **3rd Place Winner**

#### ***Served With Honor – The Officer and Civilian Spouses' Club***

##### **Virginia's Chicken**

1/4 c. margarine	1 (10 3/4-oz.) can cream of mushroom soup
4 boneless, skinless chicken breasts, diced	1/2 c. white wine
1 pkg. dry Good Season's Italian salad dressing mix	1 (4-oz.) pkg. cream cheese
	1/2 box sea-shell pasta

Melt margarine in skillet. Stir in the diced chicken and the dry Good Season's Italian Dressing mix. Cook chicken until tender. In same skillet, mix in soup, wine, and cream cheese. Continue to cook over heat until sauce is smooth. Meanwhile, cook pasta according to package directions; drain. Spread pasta in a greased 3-quart casserole and top with the chicken mixture. Bake at 350° for 30 minutes or until bubbly. Serves 6.