

The lesson today is healthy cooking



LYNN ALLEN

Elizabeth Drake Garand has written a cookbook with an emphasis on healthy eating.

Cooking up a good book

By MIKE CHAIKEN
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Elizabeth Drake Garand spent her adult life teaching.

And let the record show that she was one heckuva teacher. She was selected as Bristol's teacher of the year. She was selected as runner-up for Connecticut teacher of the year. She received several other honors throughout her teaching career.

Nowadays, the former Northeast Middle School teacher is retired. But that doesn't mean she's stopped being a teacher.

And the evidence is clear in a new book she put together called "Elizabeth's Healthy Home Cooking,"

which is published by Rayna Publication. She's teaching people how to live healthy and better lives.

The book was inspired by Garand's own experiences as a foods instructor at Northeast and by her own needs. You see, Garand has Crohn's Disease, and some of the recipes in the book were developed as a reaction to Garand's own needs.

What is Crohn's Disease? According to the Crohn's and Colitis Foundation of America (www.ccfa.org) "Crohn's disease is a chronic (ongoing) disorder that causes inflammation of the digestive or gastrointestinal (GI) tract."

Given the nature of the disease,

Garand had to change her own way of life to avoid causing flare ups. And she shares what she learned in the book, allowing her fellow Crohn's Disease sufferers to benefit from her experience.

"I know what people are going through," said Garand. "If I can make it better that's what I want to do."

The book also addresses the needs of diabetics, those with heart problems, and irritable bowel syndrome. The recipes, Garand said, also are great for someone who just wants to eat better.

"All the recipes in the book are healthy," Garand said. The book also

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Book: Retired teacher writes

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lists amount of carbohydrates and calories. "I analyzed every recipe."

Garand also prepared every recipe before she included it in the book. "I cooked everything you see...I made sure all the recipes taste good. Face it, if they don't taste good, no one's going to eat them anyway."

The photographs also were taken by local photographer Ray Gagnon under Garand's direction. "He did an excellent job," said Garand.

Not only has Garand become an author, but in the process of bringing "Elizabeth's Healthy Home Cooking" to market, she became a publisher.

Garand said when she tried to get the book published initially, she approached several publishers. But, she said, they wouldn't talk to her without a literary agent. But a literary agent would have taken half of her meager proceeds for himself.

So Garand did some research and she learned what it would take to establish her own publishing firm to bring "Elizabeth's Healthy Home Cooking" to market. Thus, Rayna Publications was born.

The book now is sold during her various personal appearances, including

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If you have a dream, follow your dream.

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Elizabeth Garand,
author of 'Elizabeth's Healthy Home Cooking'

some at Bristol's Price Chopper. "Elizabeth's Healthy Home Cooking" also is available at the library at Bristol Hospital and at the offices of Dr. Ronald Green in Bristol.

The book has sold about 300 copies in its first printing of 1,000, said Garand. Proceeds from the book will go toward helping research on Crohn's Disease and colitis. "Money is not my main concern."

If there was one message, Garand wanted people to take away from her experience, she said, "If you have a dream, follow your dream, if you believe in something enough it will happen. Nothing was going to stop me," said Garand.

"This is my contribution to society," said Garand. "This is my labor of love to help people feel better."

For more about Elizabeth Garand and her book, go to www.ElizabethsHealthyCooking.com.