

He Likes Good Food, Conversation

By BERTHA SCOTT
Food Editor

William D. Smitherman is an easy person to talk to and an easy person to communicate with.

His enthusiasm about everything he's interested in is the key — whether it's soul food cooking, his position as assistant director of the Human Rights Commission, teaching a weekly class at the Opportunities Industrialization Center, playing golf at 6 a.m. Saturday morning or having friends in at least once a week for dinner.

"Food brings people together and that leads to food discussions stemming from mutual interests," he says, adding that he likes to bring together people with different backgrounds so they can learn something about each other.

"That's the way understanding comes between people," he explains.

His activities embrace the Urban League's news media committee, a WTLC Sunday radio program titled "Challenge," co-host with John Mosley on a talk show, Speedway Toastmasters' Club, board member of National Association for Advancement of Colored People and member of Southern Christian Leadership Conference.

While he teaches a Wednesday class on urban relations at the opportunities center, he's also enrolled at Indiana-Purdue University, Indianapolis, working towards a degree in business administration, with later plans for a master's degree in urban studies. He previously had 1½ years at the University of Louisville.

Getting along with people was learned early when he stayed with his grandparents, the Rev. and Mrs. William D. Edwards, and their eight children during the day while his mother worked. His mother, Mrs. Virginia Franklin, now is a nurse in the recovery room at Marion County General Hospital.

"Bill used to sit on the cabinet top to watch me cook," his grandmother recalls. Later, he stayed with them again during high school days. His grandfather is minister of Mt. Helm Baptist Church.

Much of the cooking in his own eastside apartment is planned around the kind of food his grandmother served but with his own embellishment. He's a creative cook and most of the recipes he's sharing are the ones he considers "originals." However, they include some of the tips and know-how gleaned from Mrs. Edwards.

The first recipe is for a meat loaf. It has overtones of depression days but to Smitherman, these economical additions add flavor as found in:

PINCH-BACK MEAT LOAF

Meat scraps (cooked leftovers: bacon, beef or pork if desired)

1½ pounds lean ground beef (freshly ground at home if possible)

1 egg
¼ cup finely-chopped green pepper

1 small white onion, finely-chopped

6 fresh mushrooms, chopped
¼ cup finely-chopped celery (optional)

Salt and pepper as desired
½ cup bread crumbs (leftover biscuits or anything

on hand, dried out in oven)

Milk
½ teaspoon Worcestershire sauce

1 tablespoon butter
1 teaspoon honey

Smitherman keeps a plastic bag in the freezer for leftover bacon, beef or pork scraps to add to dishes such as the meat loaf. "For assembly," he says, "thaw leftover meats, and combine with ground beef. Prepare vegetables as directed. Dry bread or leftover biscuits in oven, crumble in bowl; add just enough milk to bind, but leave mixture slightly dry. Place in small skillet. Add Worcestershire sauce, butter and honey. (Crumbs can be frozen at this step for later use.)

Layer leftover ground meats and ground beef in buttered casserole. Combine egg, vegetables and thawed bread crumbs (if frozen). Alternate layers until two mixtures are used up. Shape into loaf. Using the five fingers, pinch up center which, according to Smitherman, gives the loaf its name.

This also provides an "eye" to check when loaf is done. Bake at 325 to 350 degrees for 1 hour and 15 minutes. He says, "A straw also can be put in the loaf. When it's brown, the loaf is done." Note: Baste loaf with pan juices every 15 minutes or so; add catsup or honey the last 8 to 12 minutes.

Another of his soul-food recipes is:

EXTREME YAMS

4 yams, parboiled
¼ stick butter or margarine

3 tablespoons honey or dark molasses

Salt and pepper as desired
Half and half or whole cream

Parboil yams until half done. Slice open; remove potato. Add butter, honey or dark molasses, salt, pepper and cream. Beat until smooth. While doing this, dry skins in oven at 275 degrees to hold shape, or wrap in foil. Bake for 15 minutes at 325 degrees.

Smitherman is the kind of cook who thinks nothing of going out of his way to find the greens he likes to serve, such as the outside market on Southeastern, the Farmer's Market, Lagrotte's Village Market and the City Market. "These places usually have a good supply of the hard-to-find greens," he advises. He prefers the loose type of greens.

His soul food recipe follows for:

MUSTARD, TURNIP OR KALE

½ pound turnip greens
1 pound mustard greens or kale

¼ pound salt pork, jowl or ½ cup bacon drippings
Cayenne pepper to taste

Freshly ground black pepper
Salt to taste
Pat of butter

6 turnips, whole or quartered

Wash greens and break into pieces. Bring salt pork or jowl to boil separately; simmer slowly for 15 minutes. If desired, cut jowl or salt pork into strips. (If rind on bottom is hard, cut off and throw away.) Add greens to broth. Bring to a boil. Cook slowly for 1½ to 2 hours. If leaving turnips whole, add at same time, add later if quartered.

Core out center of whole turnip when tender. Add butter to center. When serving, place turnips on top of



One of William D. Smitherman's favorite ways of entertaining is preparing his "Yum" Chops for an evening of good food and good conversation.—The NEWS Photo, Gary Moore.

greens. Serve with baked or fried cornbread. Serves 6.

Other recipes that go with good conversation follow.

GREEN BEANS AND POTATOES

1½ pounds fresh string beans

¼ to ½ pound jowl, cubed
1 medium mild onion, chopped

1 tablespoon salt to taste
Bacon scraps and drippings
1 bay leaf

Black pepper, freshly ground to taste

4 medium size potatoes, cut in halves or quarters

Wash beans and cut ends; break into halves or thirds. Cook jowl in water until three-fourths done. Add

beans, onion, seasonings, bacon scraps and drippings to jowl broth. Cook for 3 to 5 minutes. Add potatoes to pot. Cook at medium heat until beans and potatoes are fork tender. Serves 4 to 5.

NANA'S HOT WATER CORNBREAD

1½ cups cornmeal
Pinch of salt

1 teaspoon sugar
¾ cup boiling water
1 heaping teaspoon shortening

In medium mixing bowl, blend cornmeal, salt and sugar. Pour measured three-fourths cup boiling water into ingredients. Stir until batter is slightly thick. Pour batter into preheated and greased medium-size iron skillet making three to four patties. Fry until done, using medium low heat. Serves 4.

Smitherman has a favorite pork chop recipe which he terms:

"YUM" CHOPS

4 lean pork chops (for a special meal purchase 1-inch chops)

3 teaspoons flour
3 teaspoons butter or margarine

1 cup half and half
2 tablespoons wine (your own choice)

Salt and pepper to taste or 4 pinches salt and 6 pinches pepper

1 small bunch green onions, chopped
1 small green pepper, finely chopped

1 bay leaf
1 teaspoon dried parsley flakes
Lemon slices

Smitherman says: "How to get it on!" Shake pork chops one at a time, in combination of flour, salt and pepper in No. 10 size brown paper bag. Shake until each is thoroughly coated. Place chops into preheated 10-inch skillet, greased with a little butter. At low heat, brown chops 8 to 12 minutes.

Pour half and half into skillet along with wine, salt and pepper, finely-chopped green onions including up to last two inches of stems, green pepper, bay leaf and parsley. Dip-stir ingredients to blend. Cover and let simmer 20 minutes slowly until gravy is thick, dip-stirring occasionally. Serve with lemon slices. Serves 4.

GRACE FOR THE TABLE

The brown hand, the white hand

Worked hard to produce this food.

Let us join a white hand with a brown hand in giving thanks

That people over this land

Are working together for goals That are good. Amen.



This Week's Best Buys

MEATS, POULTRY, SEAFOOD

There are few good buys, and it's almost cheaper to eat money, but at least the price on poultry is lower than last week.

Hen turkeys remain reasonable compared to other meat prices, as do whole fryers, cut-up fryers, split broilers and baking hens. Family pack frying chicken is a very economical buy at several outlets.

In pork, the selection is semi-boneless, shank portion and canned hams. Also quartered pork loin pork chops, mixed end and center chops; pork steaks, country style pork steaks and spare ribs; loin portion pork roast; link, tube liver and polish sausage, are available.

Whole or half leg o' lamb and lamb chops are also advertised.

Specialty items are chop suey meat, skinless wieners, sliced and whole bologna, sliced bacon, luncheon meats and braunschweiger.

For those who can afford beef, offerings will be Swiss, round, sirloin, T-bone, porterhouse, rib and chuck steaks; arm, rump, blade cut chuck and rib roasts; corned beef, short ribs, ground chuck and stewing beef.

According to one seafood supplier, the demand for fish is high and the supply is low. Available are ocean perch, Boston scrod, filet of sole, striped bass, Florida red snapper, grouper filets, Lake Superior boneless herring, white fish and trout; channel catfish, Idaho rainbow trout, walleyed pike, buffalo fish, smelts, fresh large and medium oysters, cherry stone clams, bluepoints on the halfshell and live lobster. There's some shrimp, but it is scarce and high in price.

FRESH FRUITS, VEGETABLES

Fruit stands reflect autumn colors with California seedless oranges, Tokay grapes, Jumbo California honey dew melons, peaches, bananas, Grimes Golden, Delicious and Jonathan apples; plums, nectarines and Bartlett pears.

Fresh vegetables include carrots, yams, turnips, endive, romaine, escarole and head lettuce; yellow and Spanish onions; green peppers, celery, tomatoes, Indiana white potatoes, fresh cauliflower, broccoli, kale and spinach.

Dinner Bell

SUNDAY

Roast Turkey with Dressing, Whipped Potatoes with Gravy, Peas with Pearl Onions, Molded Cranberry Salad, Lime Sherbet, Beverage.

MONDAY

*Pinch Back Meat Loaf, *Extreme Yams, *Mustard, Turnip, Kale or Spinach, Sliced Tomatoes, Apple Pie, Beverage.

TUESDAY

Turkey a la King on Rice, Buttered Broccoli, Tossed Salad, Fruit Cocktail, Beverage.

WEDNESDAY

*Yum Chops, *Green Beans and Potatoes, Stewed Tomatoes, Pineapple and Cream Cheese Salad, Chocolate Sundaes, Beverage.

THURSDAY

Chili Con Carne, *Nana's Hot Water Cornbread, Relish Tray, Sliced Peaches, Beverage.

FRIDAY

Broiled Halibut, French Fried Potatoes, Green Beans with Onions, Tomato and Cottage Cheese Salad, Pumpkin Tarts, Beverage.

SATURDAY

Beef Tacos, Chilled Guacamole Salad, Refried Peas, Potato Wedges, Beverage.