

AROUND TOWN

North Canton woman bakes her way to Food Network

By **Necole Sims**
The Canton Repository

Stark County has made quite an impression on the Food Network.

Add Cheryl Henderson to the list of bakers who have competed on one of its shows.

Henderson, of North Canton, is an associate creative director at Innis Maggiore by day and master baker at night. She also owns Little Tooth Unique Sweets.

Henderson's specialty is decorated sugar cookies, which makes sense. She appeared on the network's "Christmas Cookie Challenge." Filming took place in Los Angeles, and the results recently aired. Her judges were Ree Drummond, Aarti Sequeira and Gesnina Prado. Host is former NFL player Eddie Jackson.

Henderson's husband, Mark, accompanied her to California. However, he was not permitted in the studio, so he explored the area as a tourist.

When asked about her most memorable moment on the show, Henderson cited the competition itself.

"Being on the show was completely surreal, because I'm a Food Network superfan!" Henderson said. "I got



■ Contestant Cheryl Henderson and host Eddie Jackson during the first challenge, as seen on Christmas Cookie Challenge, Season 3.

pretty choked up walking into that gorgeous kitchen for the first time because I just couldn't believe it was actually happening! My favorite parts were the two rounds of competition. It was one of the most stressful things I've ever done, but also one of the most fun. My interactions with Eddie Jackson were hilarious, and he really helped us all feel at ease during the filming. I became (accurately) known as the 'crazy cat lady' on set, and at one point, Eddie brought out a laser pointer and started shining it on my counter as if playing with a cat

while I was working." Henderson also said the shooting process was exciting, with cameras everywhere. She says the production runs like a well-oiled machine and that she loved every moment.

The nicest judge, according to Henderson, was Ree Drummond. "When I told (the judges) about a dumb mistake I had made during the second challenge, Ree laughed and said, 'That sounds like something I would do,' which made me feel a whole lot less stupid! My other favorite comment she made was,

"You're just the kind of dork we love!"

Henderson is a stage 4 cancer survivor. She was told in 2012 that she had no chance of survival because her cancer was so aggressive.

She said that her experience on the show was fulfilling, despite not winning.

"Even though I didn't win the \$10,000, I'm incredibly proud I was brave enough to put myself out there and take on the challenge," she said. "I would encourage everyone to dream big dreams ... and go after them. I am living proof

that anything is possible!" Henderson's episode, "Christmas Traditions," will air again at 7 p.m. Dec. 15; 8 p.m. Dec. 24; and 3 a.m. Dec. 25. The episode is also available on several streaming platforms and Amazon Prime.

The McKinley High School Band and Rotary Club of Canton are sponsoring their third annual food drive 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Dec. 19 in the parking lot of the Zimmermann Symphony Center, 2331 17th St. NW.

Members of the community can donate non-perishable food items, new clothing and hygiene supplies. All items collected will be given to families in the Canton City School District over the holiday break.

For more information, call 330-452-2882.

En-RICH-Ment will have its first Fine Arts Awards Gala at 5 p.m. Dec. 28 at the Cultural Center for the Arts, 1001 Market Ave. N.

The event will recognize those who have supported En-RICH-Ment in the past seven years. Awards to be presented are: the O'Jay's Music Award, Macy Gray Rising Star Award, Ayani Joy Buckmon Music Educator's

Award, Cindy Lazor-Community Advocate Award, as well as awards in theater, dance, instrumentalist and art.

The evening will feature dinner, live entertainment and conclude with dancing.

Tickets are \$40 and available at en-richment.ticketleap.com/awards-gala.

Ohio Billing is once again supporting the students of the Tuscarawas Valley Local School District by participating in the annual Gift of Warmth program.

The community is asked to stop by the office at 10911 state Route 212 in Bolivar, between 8 a.m. and 2 p.m. Monday through Friday and hang an item on their tree.

"We are proud to work with Tusky Valley schools to do our part to give back to the community," said President and CEO Terri Davis. "We encourage the public to stop by our office to join us as we participate in the season of giving."

Items can be dropped off through Dec. 23. They will be distributed to the students in need after Christmas break.

For more information contact Michaela Madison at madison@ohiobilling.com.

NUTCRACKER

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because "it was the hardest" dance. "Ballet is such a challenge," he said, but he loves that it combines athleticism and artistry. Corbin's grandmother

was a professional singer, and his father played pro football, so maybe he is a natural, although he does practice several hours a day.

He is now able to turn seven or eight pirouettes — full turns on one foot — regularly and

competes in international competitions.

"Talent like Corbin's comes along every 20 to 30 years," said Lorraine Spiegler of CityDance, where Corbin is a student.

Adley Strider said she "found my love for ballet" at age 6 or 7. "I wasn't the

best at it," the Spotsylvania, Virginia, sixth-grader said, "but I just kept progressing. You never give up."

Now 11, Adley will be in two dances in Moscow Ballet's Fairfax, Virginia, shows Dec. 10 and 11. In one scene, she must dance

on just the tips of her toes ("on pointe," in ballet language). "It can be kind of scary at first," she said, "but you get used to it."

Adley and Corbin think other kids will enjoy "The Nutcracker."

"It's really entertaining, with a lot of acting

and movement going on," Corbin said.

"It's a very beautiful dance to watch," said Adley. "The story is easy to figure out even if you've never seen it before."

Just beware of the Mouse King.

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