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Michigan Bakery Owner Sweeps Professional Division of 15th Annual APC/Crisco® National Pie Championships with “Tom’s Cheery Cherry Cherry Berry Pie”

*Owner of Sweetie-licious Pie Pantry
Named Pie in Honor of Ailing Brother-in-Law*

CHICAGO (April 30, 2009) – For bakery owner Linda Hundt from DeWitt, Michigan, winning Best of Show in the Professional division of the American Pie Council (APC)/Crisco® National Pie Championships was a bittersweet victory — her prize-winning pie, which topped nearly 130 other entries, was named in honor of her brother-in-law who passed away just one week before the competition.

Hundt, who won three first place awards in 2008 and one first place award in 2007, entered eight pies in this year’s competition, including “Tom’s Cheery Cherry Cherry Berry Pie.” Because her cherry pie fell in last year’s competition, she never expected that it would be the pie to take the top honors. She’s pretty sure the heavens were smiling down on her that day.

The owner of the Sweetie-licious Pie Pantry, a vintage-style bakery in downtown DeWitt, Hundt is known for her 50s-style dresses and aprons, her pearl necklaces and her pearls of “pie wisdom” including her mantra, “Eat Pie and Love Life.” After leaving her career in politics, Hundt started her pie business in 2002, selling pies to high-end restaurants and at farmer’s markets. Coming from a long line of pie bakers, Hundt names her award-winning pies in honor of the family members who have inspired her over the years. In her bakery and on her website, she tells the heartfelt and sometimes humorous stories behind each of her pies. Her brother-in-law Tom earned his pie, the Best of Show-winning “Tom’s Cheery Cherry Cherry Berry Pie,” by being a great supporter of Hundt’s dreams and a friend to everyone he met. Her “Mommy’s Pumpkin Pie” earned its name after a fire swept through Hundt’s mother’s home just before the holidays. Having to cook Christmas dinner at her daughter’s house in an unfamiliar oven, the normally wonderful cook burned the entire meal, except for the pumpkin pie. That fool-proof recipe earned the name “Mommy’s Pumpkin Pie.”

The APC/Crisco® National Pie Championships were held April 24-26, 2009 at the Ramada Orlando Celebration Resort and Convention Center in Celebration, Fla., in conjunction with the Great American Pie Festival. At the annual event, bakers of all skill levels, all ages, and all degrees of training, from all over the United States and Canada, compete in a bake-off to determine North America’s best Professional, Amateur and Commercial bakers as well as budding Junior Chefs.

As the winner of the Professional Division of the APC/Crisco® National Pie Championships, Hundt took home the prestigious Best of Show title as well as \$5,000, a Crisco gift basket and a new Sears Kenmore range. Professional bakers entered pies in eight categories: Apple, Citrus, Crisco® Classic Chocolate, Crisco® Classic Cherry, Fruit/Berry, Cream, Nut and Open. The Best of Show winner was chosen from among the eight first place winners.

“This was an amazing year at the National Pie Championships with more bakers and more pie entries than ever before,” said Linda Hoskins, APC’s Executive Director. “In these lean times, people are getting back to basics and looking for economical home-based meals and activities. Fortunately, making and eating pie fits both desires perfectly.”

This year, the competition attracted 138 bakers who baked 465 pies in the Commercial division, 130 pies in the Professional division and 266 pies in the Amateur division. Talented pie makers came from 28 states, from as far away as Washington, California and parts of Canada.

Pies were judged by 170 pie tasters, including professional chefs such as David Ramirez, Executive Pastry Chef at Rosen Shingle Creek in Orlando and 2009 captain of Team USA in the Coupe du Monde (World Pastry Cup) as well as the “Pie Guy,” John Michael Lerma, a cookbook author and former Food Network Pie Challenge Winner. The majority of judges, however, were everyday pie lovers who were selected through an application process. A complete list of winners is available at www.piecouncil.org.

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The American Pie Council offers individual membership for amateurs as well as professionals and commercial bakers. Pie lovers receive multiple benefits including the “Pie Times” e-newsletter, membership directory and member-only online “pie talk” access for idea exchange, pie recipes, coupons and discounted entry into the annual APC/Crisco® National Pie Championships.

The American Pie Council® is the only organization committed to maintaining America’s pie heritage, passing on the tradition of pie-making and promoting America’s love affair with pie. For more details, to become a member of the APC or to register for the National Pie Championships, visit www.piecouncil.org