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DISHING IT UP

Northeast Culinary Arts students have 60 minutes to create a full meal, and don't have advanced equipment with which to work

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SEAN STEFFEN/THE MORNING SUN

Northeast High School Culinary Arts students who participated in a ProStart food preparation competition are from left Morgan Stokes, Andrea Ashbacher, Peyton Bartelli, Gage Cowan, Shane Lowe, Samantha Cunningham, Kayla Lundberg Heather Harryman, and Mason McCarly

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By **NIKKI PATRICK**

The Morning Sun

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ARMA — On the popular "Iron Chef" program on the Food Channel, top chefs compete to see who can cook the most delicious, creative and appealing dishes.

They wage their culinary battle in Kitchen Stadium, which is equipped with every possible food preparation gadget from convection ovens to blast chillers.

Taking part in a ProStart food preparation competition is something like that for Northeast High School Culinary Arts students. They too have 60 minutes to create a full meal, but they don't have such advanced equipment with which to work.

"We have two butane burners and no running water," Kayla Lundberg, an NEHS senior who has competed twice, said. "We have a clean-up bucket to put the dishes in."

Taking part in competitions is only a portion of what they do in their Culinary Arts program.

"We use the ProStart curriculum, which is set by the National Restaurant Association Foundation, which is designed for high school students who are interested in pursuing a career in the foodservice industry," said Susan Cole, program instructor.

In their most recent competition, NEHS students prepared filet mignon, potatoes with sundried tomatoes, a German salad with honey Dijon dressing, steamed broccoli and rice pudding.

"The students also had to 'cost out' the menu and determine how they would price the meal in a restaurant," Cole said. "We've got food service and sanitation down, too, but now we'll be working a little more on presentation, how

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the food appears on the plate.”
 “The judges at the last contest said we didn’t have enough height on our plates,” Lundberg said.
 Most program students are already working in food service jobs.
 “Many people, even if they don’t intend to make a career in the foodservice industry, start their working careers in some type of foodservice job,” Cole said. “The job skills they learn there will carry over into whatever else they may do.”
 Students who successfully complete the program and pass two examinations will receive a National Certificate of Completion from the National Restaurant Association.
 “This is a pretty prestigious thing to earn, and looks good

on a resume,” Cole said.

Right now the students are working on a dinner program, to be presented at 7 p.m. Nov. 8 at the school. Theme will be “Comedy Club.” Cost will be \$10 per person, and those wishing tickets may call the school at 620-347-4115.
 “This is a cross-curriculum effort,” Cole said. “Not only will Culinary Arts students be involved, but so will vocal and instrumental music students and some forensics students.”
 She added that the program students are also available to do catering for local events. Anyone interested in having an event catered may contact Cole at Northeast High School.

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