

# The Fun Of Cake Decorating

## Today's Hottest Hobby

Family Features

Hobbies offer a sense of accomplishment as well as many forms of expression. There's one hobby that has recently exploded as perhaps the sweetest option of all — cake decorating.

According to the Craft & Hobby Association Attitude & Usage Study, sales of cake decorating supplies grew 103 percent in 2009, the largest craft segment increase in the industry. In the list of the

Top Ten Crafts by U.S. household participation, cake decorating comes in third (14 percent), preceded by scrapbooking/memory crafts (17 percent) and crocheting (16 percent).

If you've ever wanted to try your hand at making fun or beautiful cake creations, a cake decorating course from Wilton can get you started on the way to a delicious new hobby. In-store classes can take you from the basics of cake decorating to helping you master the finer techniques used by the pros.

Here's a sampling of what you can learn.

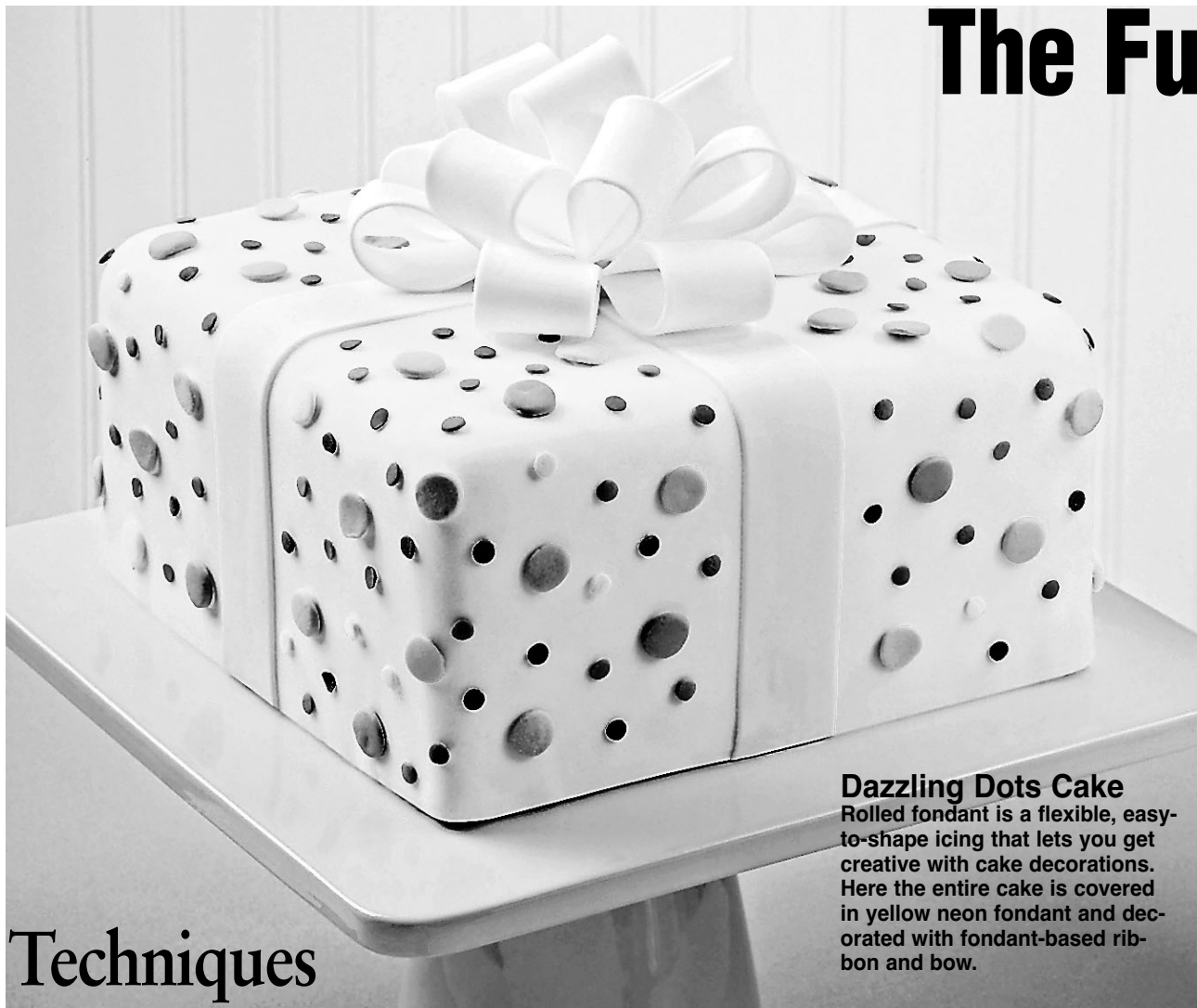
## What's In-Store For Cake Decorating?

Over the years, both amateur and professional cake decorators have relied on Wilton, the cake experts, and their long history of offering classes and products. The Wilton School of Cake Decorating and Confectionery Art, located in Darien, Ill., held its very first class in 1929, more than 80 years ago. In 1975, a curriculum was created for local craft and specialty stores nationwide, making The

Wilton Method classes more accessible to more people. These classes have attracted more than 4 million students.

This year, marking its 35th anniversary in stores, the original in-store curriculum has been refreshed to offer more techniques and more interaction.

Visit [www.wilton.com](http://www.wilton.com) for more decorating tips and ideas and to find classes near you.



**Dazzling Dots Cake**  
Rolled fondant is a flexible, easy-to-shape icing that lets you get creative with cake decorations. Here the entire cake is covered in yellow neon fondant and decorated with fondant-based ribbon and bow.

## Techniques

**Fondant** — Having originated in the mid-19th century, probably in France, fondant is now one of the most popular ways to finish and decorate a cake in America, even for amateurs.

These tiny cupped flowers can accent any dessert — just add buttercream or a tiny fondant ball to make a pretty center.

### FONDANT BLOSSOMS

#### Tools:

Roll & Cut Mat  
Perfect Height Rolling Pin  
Floral Collection Flower Making Set (Blossom cutter used)  
Confectionery Tool Set  
Foam square  
Tip: 2

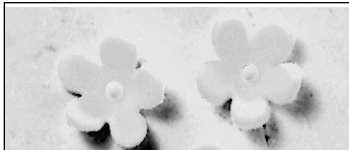
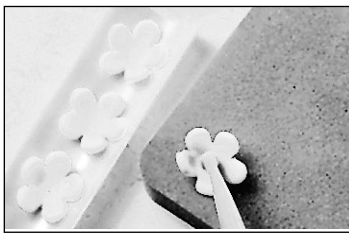
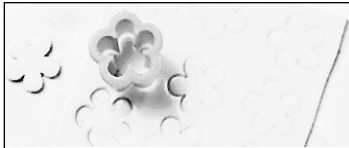
#### Ingredients:

Ready-To-Use White Rolled Fondant  
Icing Colors (to color fondant, as desired)  
Royal Icing

**Step 1.** Roll out fondant about 1/8 inch thick, on surface dusted with cornstarch. Cut with blossom cutter.

**Step 2.** Remove excess fondant around blossoms, transfer blossoms one at a time to foam square. Use ball tool from Confectionery Tool Set to make a cupped shape blossom, by depressing tool in center of flower.

**Step 3.** Pipe a Round Decorating Tip 2 dot flower center using thinned royal icing, or roll a tiny fondant ball and push into center.



### Using The Star Tip

Students learn how to use the Star Tip in the "Decorating Basics" class, the foundation for all Wilton Method courses. Use this versatile tip to add fun texture and captivating designs to cookies and cakes, make festive borders or to create beautiful drop flowers.



**Step 1.** Hold bag straight up; squeeze to form star.



**Step 2.** Stop pressure and pull tip straight up and away.



**Step 3.** A line of stars used to edge a cake is a Star Border.



**Step 4.** Covering a section or the entire cake surface with stars is a Star Fill-In.

## CUTS

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center in Yankton. Dunn said such a center remained a possibility in the future if the funding grew to needed levels.

Kloucek told the Press & Dakotan that the southeast region needs its own regional center.

"Southeast South Dakota has the most valuable ag land and the highest productivity in the state," he said. "Our area will be clearly underserved (without a regional center)."

Kloucek, a farmer, said he appreciated the Extension's continued support of 4-H and believes the changes hold great potential. However, he was concerned about the closure of some research labs and experiment stations around the state, which he described as "an unbiased source of information."

Kloucek called for dedicated state funding for Extension, experiment research stations and 4-H/youth programs.

"The budget cuts during the last three years have been asinine," he said.

Charles Mix County Commissioner Jack Soulek told the Press & Dakotan that the Extension changes, particularly for 4-H, could result in stronger programs.

"This should have happened a long time ago. You could see it coming," he said. "The counties and Extension need to step up to the plate. We need to start getting kids back in the 4-H and youth programs."

Soulek and Norm Uherka, a Charles Mix County Extension board member, were already holding discussions with other counties at Thursday's meeting.

"Charles Mix County has the population for our own 4-H advisor (under the Extension plan), but we want to work with other counties," he said. "We are bringing Douglas and Gregory counties to go with us. We want to help other counties and all work together."

At Thursday's meeting, Nielson explained the restructuring of the 4-H and youth programs.

"I don't want to maintain what we have — I want to grow it," he said.

Extension will create the position of 4-H advisor to assure the uninterrupted delivery of 4-H programs. Starting in October, these positions will be responsible for 4-H program activities, Achievement Days and 4-H at the State Fair.

South Dakota counties will be invited to participate in monetary

support that is appropriate for their budgets.

Under restructuring, SDSU Extension will provide 34 half-time 4-H advisors. Extension will fund one full-time equivalent (FTE) 4-H advisor in counties with greater than 10,000 youth (ages 18 and younger) and a half-time person per 2,500 youth in one or more counties.

Counties are asked to support SDSU Extension and 4-H programming by making a local investment. This support may range from funding the other half-time FTE to the formation of multi-county partnerships in counties with fewer than 2,500 youth, or choosing no additional support.

In the southeastern part of the state, Yankton, Union and Charles Mix counties fall between 2,500 and 10,000 youth and would receive a half-time 4-H advisor. Bon Homme, Clay, Douglas, Hutchinson and Turner counties have fewer than 2,500 youth and would need to form partnerships to reach the threshold for a half-time advisor.

If a county provides no additional support, Extension will provide access to 4-H activities as part of its mission but would not provide a 4-H advisor.

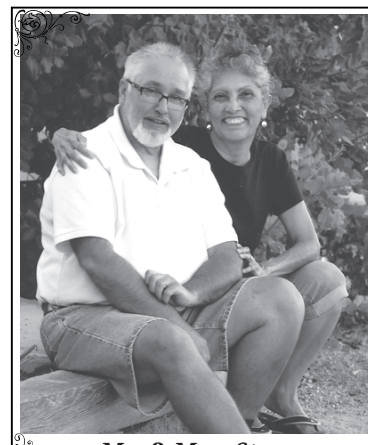
Each county, or group of counties, would decide how to run its 4-H activities and Achievement Days or county fair, Nold said.

"If two counties go together, I don't see why they couldn't each continue to have their own Achievement Day or have it together and make it work," she said, adding she has worked in states with multi-county 4-H arrangements.

However, some Extension educators are quitting their jobs because of the cuts, leaving counties without services before the Oct. 21 transition, Kloucek said.

"I know 10 or 12 (Extension) agents who have bailed already," he said. "What does that do to counties where agents bail early? How do you fill the gaps?"

The state will step in and help counties without Extension educators make it through the rest of the current 4-H year, Nielson said.



Mr. & Mrs. Stemper

Extension vacancies are nothing new, the SDSU officials said. One county has gone three years with an opening, while another has marked one year with an unfilled position, they said. Overall, the state currently has 12 Extension openings, they said.

One audience member said the switch to 4-H advisors stands to strengthen the program across the state.

"I think this could make for a lot better 4-H program," she said. "Before, there were Extension educators who didn't want to do 4-H, but it was part of their job description. Now, you will have people who are excited and want to do it. But it could get ugly during the time in between (the change)."

Dunn encouraged counties to support the Extension service financially, particularly the 4-H and youth programs.

"In 2010, net farm income was at an all-time high," he said. "For a county to provide \$8,500 a year for youth (activities) on a 400,000 acre county comes to 2 cents an acre."

Private donations can play a crucial role for Extension, research, youth and economic development in South Dakota, said Jim Burg, a South Dakota 4-H Foundation board member from Wessington Springs.

That's particularly true of the generational transfer of assets, as many elderly residents give or will their resources to children living out of state, Burg said.

"If we don't show people how to keep dollars in their communities, all that wealth will leave (the area)," he said.

Dunn said he believes that South Dakotans will rise to the challenge of building a newer, stronger Extension model. He pointed to previous generations who went from burning corn cobs for fuel to creating a network of rural electric cooperatives.

"This is our turn," he said. "It's a tough time, but we have got to step up and make this work. There is no other way."

Mr. and Mrs. Lyle and Nellie Stemper of Mission Hill, SD, will celebrate their 40th wedding anniversary on April 17.

Their family requests a card shower. Cards may be sent to PO Box 123, Mission Hill, SD 57046.

They were married April 17, 1971, at Mitchell, SD.

They have 1 child: Chad Stemper, Yankton, SD, married to Jennifer — children are Zachary Stemper and Alisha Uhlir. The couple has 2 grandchildren and 1 great-grandchild.

## MMC

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the D-Day invasion of June 6, 1944.

Mount Marty history professor Dr. Rich Lofthus also went on the trip and has visited Europe a handful of times with Binder.

"It's hard to describe the privilege of traveling to Europe with someone who has been there as many times as she has," he said. "She's been to almost every place we visit at least once. She knows so much about the cultural background. She's really an expert on French literature and culture. It's like having a complete resource by your side."

While Binder hasn't been to Europe in each of the last 50 years, she has made it in most of those years — and sometimes twice in a year.

She can't pick a favorite coun-

try but is quick to say that Paris is her favorite city.

Binder long ago gave up planning the trips to Europe herself and now relies on a tour company to set the itinerary.

But she doesn't look forward to the day she will have to give up seeing student reactions to their first time in Europe.

"It opens them up," Binder said. "Students say they won't be the same again. It really sinks into their system. It gets in your blood, and then for the rest of your life, you're trying to figure out, 'How can I get back to Europe?'"

When in the Chicago airport on one of her student trips, Binder noticed a couple with two kids.

"The woman looked at me and yelled, 'I went to Europe with you 20 years ago!'" she recalled. "She recognized me, and she was so excited."

Many students come to Binder with doubts that their parents will help them go on a

trip that will cost several thousand dollars.

"I tell them to go home and talk to their parents," she said. "They'll often come back and say, 'They told me to go!'"

In many cases, the parents regret that they never had the chance to make such a journey and don't want their children to miss the opportunity, Binder explained.

At 76, Binder no longer teaches French and is cutting back on her English courses. However, she isn't hanging up her traveling shoes yet.

Next May, she and Lofthus will take a group of Mount Marty College students on a trip to Berlin, Warsaw, Krakow, Auschwitz and Prague to examine the Holocaust in Europe.

During her most recent trip to France, she questioned whether it would be her last. But it's not a question upon which she dwells.

"Well, what comes is what comes," Binder said.

## BUDGET

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said an administration statement.

The bipartisan votes belied a fierce struggle that preceded passage and only narrowly avoided a partial government shutdown a week ago.

The tally in the House was 260-167. Among the supporters were 60 of the 87 first-term Republicans, many of them elected with tea party support.

The Senate added its approval a short while later, 81-19, and

most of the opponents were conservatives who wanted deeper cuts.

Even before the final votes, House Republicans pointed eagerly toward a vote Friday on their next move against mounting deficits, a comprehensive budget that claims cuts measured in the trillions, rather than billions, over the next decade. That vote is expected to be as partisan as the spending bill was not.

The measure approved Thursday will finance the government through the Sept. 30 end of the budget year, chopping \$38 billion from current levels and \$78 billion from the president's request of more than a year ago.

Billions were saved by eliminating congressional earmarks, and billions more in funds from the Census Bureau, left over from the 2010 national head count, now finished.

The Environmental Protection Agency, one of the Republicans' favorite targets, took a \$1.6 billion cut. Spending for community health centers was reduced by \$600 million, and the Community Development Block Grant program favored by mayors by \$950 million more.

The bipartisan drive to cut federal spending reached into every corner of the government's sprawl of domestic programs.

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