

The Virginian-Pilot

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[\[Online Article, Link\]](#)

2010 Dream Team judges announced . . .

Can you hear the rolling pins thumping on countertops all across Tidewater?

Scores of local bakers are perfecting pies for The Pilot's annual Dream Team baking competition, which takes place next week.

Bakers will be bringing those pretty pies to our office to compete in 10 categories – from apple pie to coconut pie to blackberry pie – and first place winners will become part of The Pilot's 2010 Dream Team. (Sorry, the competition is only open to contestants and judges!)

In September, I'll have a big case of nerves as I drive their pies to the State Fair of Virginia just outside of Richmond, where they are sure to win big.

The Pilot's Dream Team has quite a record. In 2008, bakers brought home a bevy or ribbons, cutting through the competition with luscious cakes. Last year, they crushed the competition with cookies. This year, we aim to pummel competition from across the state with pies.

To determine the most scrumptious, fair-worthy pies, we have assembled a talented panel of judges for the competition. It includes well-known chefs, restaurateurs and accomplished home cooks.

Now, drum roll please The 2010 Dream Team judges are:

Chef Donald Averso, coordinator of [Tidewater Community College's culinary arts program](#). He joined TCC in 1999, teaching food preparation and food safety guidelines to U.S. Navy cooks. He has worked as a demonstrating chef for WHRO-TV, SYSCO Hampton Roads, Toque Theater and the Five Points Community Farmer's Market at MacArthur Center. **His judging assignment:** Cherry pie

Chef Steven Ciccone of Portsmouth, internationally-known cake decorator, is a graduate of the Culinary Institute of America in Hyde Park, NY. His avant-garde style of decorating has won him several



prestigious awards. His work has been featured in The Pilot and in many national magazines. He is the Chef Demonstrator for "Living the Life" on ABC Family. Locally, he teaches classes at Wine & Cake Hobbies, where he got his start. To see his cakes, click [here](#). **His judging assignment:** Chocolate pie

Judy Cowling of Virginia Beach is a self-employed artist, designer and food critic who loves to cook and entertain, but she lives for her sweets. Check out her creativity [here](#). **Her judging assignment:** Custard pie and pumpkin pie

Denis Finley, editor of The Pilot, was a pastry chef in a former life. With his best friend, he opened a restaurant called "The Mad Batter" in Cape May, N.J. in 1976 and he worked in Key West, Fla., in the early 80s. **His judging assignment:** Pecan pie and coconut pie

Chef Jeffrey Fleischman is an instructor at the [Culinary Institute of Virginia](#) in Norfolk. He has worked with Aramark food services in Reno, Vegas, Seattle, Baltimore and Philadelphia. While working in Lake Tahoe, he won "people's choice" in the 2008 Lake Tahoe Autumn Food and Wine Festival. At the Lake Tahoe Chocolate Fantasy Competition, his dessert was proclaimed "Most Decadent." **His judging assignment:** Custard pie and pumpkin pie

Carla Hesseltine is owner of [Just Cupcakes](#), a new, gourmet cupcakery in Virginia Beach. **Her judging assignment:** Pecan pie and coconut pie

C.C. Martinez is the owner of [Silver Spoon Bakery](#) and Gourmet Gifts in Portsmouth. She dreams up wedding cakes, cookies and confections and then makes the dreams come true in her beautiful bakery. Check out her bakery [here](#). **Her assignment:** Chocolate pie

Gail Milteer of Franklin works for the Virginia Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services as a marketing specialist and also works with the Virginia Grown and Virginia's Finest programs. Prior to VDACS she was a home economist with Virginia Cooperative Extension. She has judged many county fairs, including those in Southampton, Isle of Wight and Amelia. **Her judging assignment:** Apple pie **Chef Emi Ostrander** is a culinary arts teacher at [Tidewater Community College](#) and former pastry chef at TradeWinds in Virginia Beach. She graduated from Stratford University in Falls Church. **Her judging assignment:** Cherry pie



Victoria Snyder is an award-winning cook and certified state fair judge. **Her judging assignment:** Other flavored pies **Chef Jay Weinisch** is an instructor at the [Culinary Institute of Virginia](#) in Norfolk. He has more than 30 years of professional experience in cooking and baking in New York City, San Diego and Tidewater. He was a pastry chef with Sheraton Resorts for a decade, and has worked as production manager at the Sugar Plum Bakery in Virginia Beach. **His judging assignment:** Apple pie

Chef "To Be Announced" from [The International Culinary School at The Art Institute of Virginia Beach](#) **The assignment:** Other flavored pies