

Lakewood cooking up holiday treats

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Mike DiCarlo, co-owner of Jimmy's Food Store in East Dallas, chats with a customer who ordered a pack of the shop's famous Italian meatballs. Jimmy's reopened in November after a 2004 fire destroyed the shop.

Santa may have his little helpers, but what he doesn't know is Lakewood has elves of its own to help make the holidays less hectic. Here are some of my favorite elves who can help make your holidays merry and bright.

KYE R. LEE/DMN

First on my list is Lakewood neighbor Phil Civello, owner of Civello's Raviolismo. Phil and sister Chena Civello have been making handmade pasta, including 30 different kinds of ravioli, four types of lasagna, fresh tomato sauces and Italian sausage for 20 years at the family-owned business that has been around since 1950.

The crimini mushroom ravioli is my family's favorite. Let the Civelloes make your holiday shopping a little easier. Pick up a lasagna for dinner, and purchase a gift certificate for homemade Italian cuisine. It's open 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Monday through Friday at 1318 N. Peak St. Call 214-827-2989.

The next elf to help you with your holiday entertaining is neighbor and co-owner Paul DiCarlo of the recently reopened Jimmy's Food Store. The 40-year-old neighborhood mom-and-pop style grocery store specializes in imported Italian foods.

Jimmy's reopened in November after an October 2004 fire destroyed the store at Bryan Street and Fitzhugh Avenue.

Jimmy's famous Italian meatballs and Italian Christmas specialties would be a great gift for everyone on your list. It's at 4901 Bryan St. and is open 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. daily. Call 214-823-6180.

Grace Café, Lakewood's duo of Deb Crabb and Millie Winston, will help make your holidays less hectic by cooking up a meal from their neighborhood casserole club. They also offer gift certificates.

Call 214-543-4436 by Monday to place an order for next week's entree of fajitas, ready for pick up on Thursday.

Make a lasting impression on your holiday guests by adding a few Greek items to your holiday menu. Neighborhood resident Saki Labos, owner of Nick's Café since 1988, is a native of Nafpaktos, a Greek town on the

Corinthian gulf coast. The café is open daily for breakfast and lunch.

Nick's sells traditional Greek foods for takeout, such as spanikopita, a Greek spinach pie and baklava. The cafe is at 1733 Greenville Ave. Call 214-821-0561.

Shopping at Kuby's Sausage House during the holidays is like taking a European vacation without leaving Dallas. Let Lakewood resident Karl Kuby Jr. bring a little slice of Germany to your holiday table with German sausages and traditional German pastries. Kuby's is at 6601 Snider Plaza. Call 214-363-2231.

Take the hassle out of holiday baking by purchasing handmade toffee, hot nuts and sugared pecans from Judy's Nuts! Neighborhood resident Judy Deterding uses 100 percent natural Texas ingredients for her famous toffee and nuts. Judy's Nuts! can be purchased at neighborhood retailers Talullah Belle, Urban Flowers, Matthew Trent and Needless Necessities, or call 972-278-2250.

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