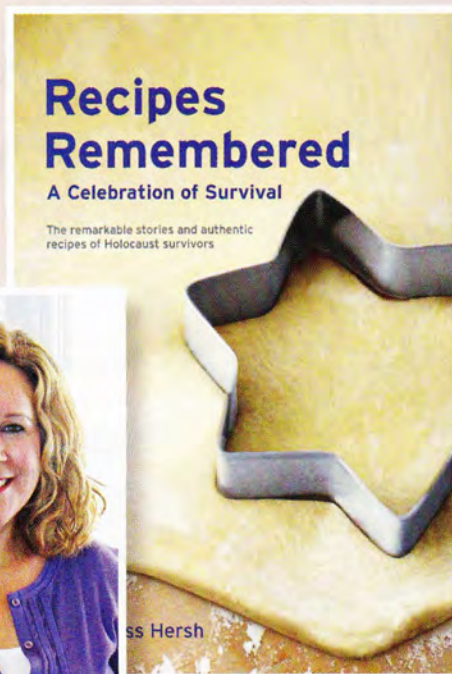




June &amp; Edie

## BookShelf

BY EDIE TOLCHIN & JUNE HERSH



### Recipes Research Brings Inspiration and Innovation

**Edie:** I first learned about June Hersh when I received an e-mail invitation to a book-signing event at a synagogue near where I used to live in Orange County, NY. The book seemed fascinating – and you all know how I love to do book reviews and interviews for this magazine. I had a few weeks to Google the author, and found out, coincidentally,



Braised short ribs: Celebrity chef Gale Gand scheduled book signing, and we found out we had quite a bit in common. June and I became e-mail buddies prior to the event. Normally, when I am preparing an article and I begin an interview, I ask my subjects typical questions such as, "What inspired you?" "What obstacles did you encounter?" or even "Do you have any words or wisdom for our readers?" While I did initially send

that June Hersh – in addition to being a cook-book author, is indeed an INVENTOR! I contacted

June before the

some questions and guidelines to her for this article, I thought it was best for June to tell her story, in her own words, and would encourage you to read her book, *Recipes Remembered, a Celebration of Survival*, first because the stories are remarkable, second because the recipes are tasty, and third because you will see how cooking can inspire creativity in the kitchen.

**June:** At a time when many women my age savor quieting things down, I decided to ramp it up. In 2008, I found myself in an enviable position. Having sold our family business, I now had the time and luxury to feed my passions. My first was philanthropy, the hunger to give back. The second tapped into my creative gene; I relish developing new ideas and innovations. And the third might be obvious if you paid attention to the food references I used above. I love to cook! Over the past years these three interests became intertwined as I found a project that would be charitable, creative and food based.

I wrote my first cookbook, *Recipes Remembered, a Celebration of Survival* in association with the Museum of Jewish Heritage. My concept was to interview Holocaust survivors and retell their stories while recreating their cherished recipes. Published in

May 2011 by Ruder Finn Press, we have since sold close to 20,000 copies with all the book's proceeds going to charity. In writing the book I was exposed to recipes that have nourished and nurtured generations. Over the course of one year I tested and wrote 170 recipes; both

my cholesterol level and waistband can attest to that. I found that innovative cooking tools were unknown to this mainly Eastern European population (Holocaust survivors), as all they needed was a bowl, a stiff spoon and a strong arm. But, I was a 21st century cook, and there were challenges in preparing buttery dough, labor-intensive crusts and slow simmering stews that I wanted to address.

This exposure to new recipes and old techniques spurred an interest in developing products that would make these and other tasks in the kitchen effortless. I come by my inventing gene naturally. My grandmother was a born entrepreneur and revolutionary woman. When my father was in the Navy during WWII she created a better way to make a lampshade and began selling them locally. Her cottage industry blossomed after the war as my father returned and took the helm. He grew the business

to include all forms of lighting and used my grandmother's resourcefulness to great advantage. He too had the inventing gene, as I remember him patenting two innovations when I was a child. One was for a lampshade that could fold so that it was easy to store



Brisket & Kasha - Judith Ginsburg, Poland

and less costly to ship. The other was for a Christmas tree ornament that had a built-in smoke alarm. While neither proved profitable, they did imbue in me an interest in improving products and designing new ones. Even my younger daughter caught this bug, as she holds a patent for a food allergy testing strip - an item she developed as a high school student involved in the Westinghouse Science competition. Over the years, she and I have worked on band aids made for any skin tone, washing machines that would also dry your clothes and a basting system for home ovens. We didn't know where to turn or how to implement our ideas, so they remained ours and went nowhere.

That was until a few months ago when I discovered Edison Nation. For someone such as myself who thinks of ideas routinely, but doesn't know how to build them or launch them, this website became my salvation. As routinely as you change your undergarments, I think of new inventions. I run them by my family members who critique their viability and either nudge me to move on or encourage me to move forward. Most of these ideas are centered in the kitchen, the center of my home. As a professional home cook, and cookbook author of now two books, I see clearly how gadgets and appliances can

be improved upon with simple tweaks. During my promotion of *Recipes Remembered*, I was a featured guest on QVC's wildly popular show, *In the Kitchen with David*. There I was exposed to so many diverse and creative products that were conceived by someone such as myself. That was empowering. However, I don't hold an engineering degree so inventing



Linzer Tarts - Mary Mayer, Hungary

something from scratch would probably not be my forte. That's one of the great strengths of Edison Nation. They don't require you to invent, they equally celebrate innovation - the ability to improve upon what's already out there.

My first innovation was a revolving baking sheet that would have a programmable turntable to rotate your baked goods in the oven. While writing *Recipes Remembered* I tested dozens of cookie recipes. Every good baker worth her salt knows you need to rotate trays when baking so that your items brown evenly. My concept was to make this chore mechanical, so that the home baker would not have to pop out of their chair every 7 minutes as if they were sitting in an ejector seat. I submitted my idea to Edison Nation and became an Insider. I saw the definite advantages to that status, receiving their monthly Digest, saving cost with each submission and getting solid feedback on your ideas. I watched my success bar move forward on the Edison Nation dashboard taking me through their stages. However, at Stage 7 when I was on the threshold of my idea being presented to a manufacturer, it came to an abrupt and disheartening red X. As an Insider, I received important feedback from the Edison team. My product had merit, but the costs associated with it would be staggering. Undaunted, I then rethought the product, convinced I could make it happen with some fine-tuning. I have resubmitted the idea building on their valuable feedback and am presently tracking my green check marks.

One idea that I am thrilled to report reached Stage 7 and was presented to the search company relates to my iPad and its use as a camera. As a food blogger, Instagram addict (thanks to my older daughter who is a terrific photographer) and Twitter tweeter, I use my iPad constantly to photograph my food. I found what I felt was an obvious flaw in design and presented it to one of Edison Nation's specific searches. I was pleased when it flew thru the first 3 stages of pre-screening and initial review. These can go quickly, or take weeks depending on



Blueberry tart - Sabina Goldman, Poland

the search. I was joyful when I passed Stage 4, which seems to be pivotal in the evaluation phase. At Stage 5, final consideration, I was euphoric. By Stage 6, Final IP review, I was giddy, and when my green check lit up my screen as a Stage 7 finalist I fell off my chair with excitement. No matter the outcome, it shows me that my idea is viable and should it not be picked up by this manufacturer, I am encouraged to develop a prototype, source it and license it on my own.



Loukoumades (Honey donuts) - Luna Cohen, Greece

An idea can strike you when you are performing a simple, mundane, daily task. Everyone has "aha! Moments" nearly every day, but it is those people who take pen to paper (or fingers to keyboards) and expand and research those ideas that we call inventors.

They then need an outlet to test drive their concept; that's where Edison Nation comes in. When rolling dough, I think of a chilled rolling pin, which I discovered after much googling (something I suggest you do exhaustively) already exists. When donning my apron I envision improvements that would make it more functional; the resulting idea I call the Smart Smock. It needs some fine tuning, but I think there's

a better apron out there and hoping I'm the one to design it. Just yesterday I wondered if anyone had thought of a measuring cup that could serve as a sifter- they have, or a silpat mat designed solely for baking macaroons. I apparently was not the first to conceive of that product. Undeterred, I scoured my kitchen for gadgets that could use a modern update and wouldn't you know it, I found two. They are currently resting on Edison Nation's dashboard, and I am hoping to watch the check marks finally reach Stage 8.

There are ideas that seem so simple I call them simple stupid, but I'm sure whoever invented the spatula must have thought the same. Inventive people look at the world not as it is, but as it could be. If that's you, then find your passion and explore how to take experiences related to it, to a new level. A better

baking sheet, a more perfect food storage container, or an easier appliance to make dough is just around the corner waiting for the next innovator to prove its merit. You could easily be the next big thing.

Should you want to check out my book, *Recipes Remembered*, it is available through most on-line booksellers and through the Museum of Jewish Heritage. I always say that by supporting this book you can Eat Well - Do Good.

**Edie:** Enough said – it is a privilege to have met June Hersh. If you like to cook, or certainly like to eat, please pick up June's book. You'll be backing a worthwhile charity, trying some delicious recipes, learning about some very extraordinary people, and maybe even thinking about your own kitchen innovations! Enjoy!



Palatschinken (thin pancakes)  
Miriam Margulies, Austria



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# INVENTORS

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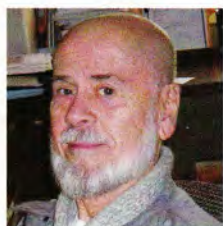
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**DHANA COHEN** Co-founder of The Women Inventorz Network and the newly created Inventorz(VIRTUAL)Network. Dhana knows a thing or two about great innovation, as an inventor herself she struggled with who to contact, and who truly had her best interest in mind. Luckily she stopped inventing after several products and took her background in marketing and partnered with Melinda Knight, together they have developed the right connections, education and marketing for the inventor community. The new (VIRTUAL) InventorzNetwork.com is the only platform out there in the inventor industry, think Match.com meets Angie's List for the inventor industry.



**EDIE TOLCHIN**, known as "The Sourcing Lady" (SM), "invented" EGT Global Trading in 1997, with a goal to link U.S. inventors with Asian manufacturers, to provide an exclusive import service for sourcing, quality control, production testing and safety issues, manufacturing, international financing, air/ocean shipping, customs clearance arrangements, and dock-to-door delivery. Website: [www.egtglobaltrading.com](http://www.egtglobaltrading.com)



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