**Festive Holiday Scones**

Courtesy of celebrated local baker Leslie Norris, adapted from *Cook's Illustrated Baking Book*

**Ingredients**

- 2 cups (10 ounces) all-purpose flour
- 3 tablespoons sugar
- 1 tablespoon baking powder
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 5 tablespoons cold butter, cut into 1/4 inch pieces  
  (note: recipe calls for unsalted, but I use salted just fine)
- 1/2 cup dried currants (optional - see variations)
- 1 cup heavy cream

**Directions** – you can put these together either way (by hand or food processor) and have great success.

Preheat oven to 425 degrees. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper.

**By Hand:**

1. Whisk flour, sugar, baking powder and salt together in medium bowl.
2. Cut in cold butter with either pastry blender or two knives until mixture resembles coarse meal with some slightly larger pieces.
3. Add currants or other variations for flavor, if desired, and stir to combine.
4. Stir in cream until dough forms.

**Food Processor:**

1. Pulse flour, sugar, baking powder and salt in food processor to combine, about 3 pulses.
2. Scatter butter over the top of the mixture and pulse until mixture resembles coarse meal with some slightly larger pieces.
3. Transfer mixture to medium bowl, add currants or other flavor variations and whisk or stir to combine.
4. Stir in cream until dough forms.

**Next steps:**

1. Turn dough and floury bits onto floured counter and knead briefly until rough, sticky ball forms, about 5-10 seconds. Pat dough into 9" round and cut into 8 pieces (another easy way to get a consistent circle is to pat the dough into an 8" or 9" cake pan, then turn it upside down onto the counter and cut into 8 pieces.
2. Place wedges onto prepared baking sheet, spacing about 2" apart. Bake until tops are golden, rotating pan about halfway through, for a total of 12-15 minutes.
3. Transfer to wire rack to cool for about 10 minutes before serving. Serve warm or at room temperature.

**Flavor variations:**

Instead of currants, you can use raisins, dried cranberries, mini-chocolate chips, candied ginger, diced dried fruit, etc. Just be sure to add them to the flour/butter mixture before the cream. For a savory variation, 1-2 tsp of dried rosemary and 1/4 cup of shredded parmesan is delicious. Use your imagination and enjoy!