Spiced Pumpkin Bread

Makes 4 small or 2 large loaves

From Dishing Up Maryland; recipe from Butler’s Orchard

¾ c. butter, softened

2 c. sugar

4 eggs

2 c. pumpkin puree

2/3 c. orange juice

2 Tbsp. molasses

3 1/3 c. all-purpose flour

1 ¼ tsp. salt

1 tsp. baking powder

1 tsp. baking soda

1 tsp. ground cinnamon

1 tsp. ground cloves

1 c. raisins

1 c. chopped pecans

1 ½ tsp. vanilla extract

Preheat the oven to 350 degrees F. Grease and flour two 9- by 5- inch loaf pans or four 7- by 3 ½ - by 2 – inch loaf pans, and set aside. Beat the butter in a large bowl with an electric mixer at medium speed. Gradually add the sugar. Add the eggs, one at a time, and mix to incorporate. Blend in the pumpkin, orange juice, and molasses.

In a separate bowl, combine the flour, salt, baking powder, baking soda, cinnamon, and cloves. Add the dry ingredients to the creamed mixture. Stir in the raisins, pecans, and vanilla.

Spoon the batter into the prepared baking pans. Bake for 50 to 55 minutes in the larger loaf pans or 25 to 30 minutes in the smaller pans; a wooden toothpick inserted into the center of one of the loaves should come out clean. Cool in pans 10 minutes; remove from pans and let cool completely on a wire rack.