**PECAN STICKY BUNS**

Pecan-Caramel Topping

1 stick unsalted butter

1/3 cup brown sugar, firmly packed

2/3 cup toasted pecan pieces

Buns

½ package active baker’s yeast (1 ¼ teaspoons yeast)

1/8 teaspoon sugar

1 cup water, lukewarm

1/3 cup milk powder (or heated and then cooled milk)

1 tablespoon sugar

1 teaspoon salt

4 ½ teaspoons oil (or melted butter)

3 cups unbleached flour

Filling

4 tablespoons unsalted butter, softened

1/3 cup granulated sugar

1 teaspoon cinnamon

Grease an 8-9” square or round pan. Combine 7 tablespoons butter and the brown sugar in a small saucepan. Heat until the butter melts. Whisk the mixture until it is silky. Remove from heat and pour into the prepared pan, tilting to spread evenly. Sprinkle with the toasted pecans and press them down slightly. Let cool.

Add 1/8 teaspoon to 1/8 cup lukewarm water and stir to dissolve. Sprinkle yeast over water and let proof for 5 minutes. Mixture should rise and become bubbly (in a restrained way).

Mix together all ingredients, including the yeast mixture, using only 1 ½ cups of the flour and beat until smooth and elastic. Gradually stir in enough of the remaining flour to form a soft dough, using 2 ½ cups of flour altogether.

Sprinkle half of the 3rd cup of flour on the board. Turn dough onto the floured surface and allow to rest a minute. Knead dough, adding more flour as needed until the dough no longer sticks. (Total amount of flour will vary.) Use as little as needed to form a dough that is soft, but not overly sticky. Knead until the dough is smooth and shiny (about 10 minutes).

Turn into a greased bowl, turning to grease all sides. Cover with a damp tea towel or plastic wrap and allow to rise in a warm place until double in bulk, about 1 hour.

Roll out the dough on a floured board to a rectangle, roughly 10 x 13” and ½” thick. Spread butter over the dough, leaving a half inch margin all around. Mix the sugar and cinnamon together. Sprinkle the dough with the mixture, stopping 1” before long edge. Roll up jelly roll fashion into a long log. Pinch it gently along the seam side to seal it. Cut into 9 equal pieces, Lay the pieces cut side down on top of the cooled caramel nut topping in the baking pan.

Cover and let rise until double. Place the pan on an aluminum foil lined cookie sheet in case it turns over.

Bake at 400 degrees for 25-30 minutes. Let rest 5 minutes on a cookie rack and turn the pan upside down onto a large plate. Scrape out any hot caramel topping remaining in the pan over the sticky buns and serve.

Notes (from May):

For a 12 x 12” pan, double the recipe (or double the recipe and use 2 8-9” pans)

Once the rolls are in the pan, you can put them in the refrigerator to rise overnight and bake in the morning.

Filling amounts can be adjusted. I just smear the dough with butter and then sprinkle cinnamon and sugar on top without bothering to measure.