COCONUT CREAM CAKE

A faithful standby of creamy coconut joy that's even better if made the day before serving! It can also be made in a 9x13x2-inch pan and can be stored in the freezer for up to a month.

1 box yellow cake mix
Eggs, water and oil for cake mix
1 box small coconut cream pudding mix (not instant), divided in half

FROSTING:
1 (8 oz.) pkg. cream cheese, room temp.
1/2 cup powdered sugar
1/2 box small coconut cream pudding mix (not instant),
remaining half
1/4 cup milk
1 Tbsp. lemon juice
1 tsp. coconut flavoring
1 tsp. vanilla extract
1 pinch salt (tiny pinch)
1 (12 oz.) tub Cool Whip, thawed
1 cup shredded coconut (for between layers)
2 cups shredded coconut (for coating outside of cake)

Add eggs, water and oil to cake mix according to package directions along with 1/2 package of dry pudding mix (reserve other half for frosting). Bake into 2 8-inch layers; cool.

Prepare frosting by combining cream cheese, sugar, remaining 1/2 package of dry pudding mix, milk, lemon juice, coconut flavoring, vanilla extract and salt with an electric mixer until smooth. Gently fold in whipped topping with a spatula; chill until ready to frost cake.

Spread a generous layer of frosting between layers and sprinkle with 1 cup of coconut. Frost cake and coat with coconut (pressing it onto the top and sides of cake). Store cake in refrigerator until serving time.

For an extra special touch, cake layers may be split in half, spread with frosting and sprinkled with additional coconut. Cake may also be garnished with toasted coconut in addition to or in place of plain coconut.

Butter recipe or even chocolate cake mix may be substituted in place of yellow cake mix (prepare according to package directions).

Gail Ford Deese shared **Melissa Dommert's** **photo**.