

# Cheap ways to make life extra special: banana bread, other treats

By CATHY KRAFVE

Special to Bullard Banner News

"Do you like banana bread," asked my young, bubbly friend.

Is this a trick question, I thought.

"I'm baking those tiny banana bread loaves for all the people I love on Saturday," she explained.

"Really?" I asked, amazed at my good fortune, "You would put me on your 'people I love' list? Awww!"

The bread...mighty good. Being on her list...oh-so-delicious!

What a nice way to make my life extra special.

Which got me to thinking about all the thoughtful ways there are to make people's lives extra special. And the effort doesn't have to break

the bank, either.

-Give something away. Go through your closet or jewelry box. Open up your tool box or your tackle box. Find something you haven't used in awhile and give it to a friend for no reason at all. You'll make their day. Plus, nothing makes you feel rich like realizing you have more than you need.

-Bring some nature indoors. Make a flower arrangement with whatever is growing in your yard. Or pick up a little natural science; a rock, a pinecone, and a feather make a great focal point and a conversation starter on a plate on your coffee table.

-Say something affirming. So your boss fusses at you? Whatever. Instead of complaining to everyone else, say something affirming to him or her. Maybe your boss is just fishing for some

encouragement. Yeah, in a dysfunctional way, but who cares?

-Create a scavenger hunt around collecting road side trash. Give everyone a plastic garbage bag. Give the first person to return with a full bag a gag prize. Make it a party.

-Give a good ole hug- an extra long, purposeful hug- to someone who is worn-out, having a rough day, or recovering from an illness.

-Spend a few minutes listening to a younger person. Personally, I think it's a good idea to adopt a fifty-year-old, but there are plenty of youngsters a lot younger than me who would love a new friend. Young folks these days just love a friend who listens well, especially a grandparent-type person.

-Call a friend, just cus.

-Write a real note and put a stamp on it.

For less than fifty cents, you can give a friend the thrill of receiving something in the mailbox that is not a bill.

-Recycle.

-Plant some annuals. Okay, I'm the ultimate perennial girl because nothing appeals to my cheap, efficient side like knowing my flowers will come up again next year for free. Planting a few annuals is an extravagance, but why not?

-Learn an old-fashioned craft, like knitting or crochet. Or better yet, teach it to a young friend.

And share banana bread.

Cathy Primer Krafve, aka Checklist Charlie, lives and writes with a Texas twang. Comments are invited at <http://checklistcharlie.blogspot.com> or [cathykrafve@gmail.com](mailto:cathykrafve@gmail.com).

# History they didn't teach you in school: Courthouse Tragedy

By BRUCE STANTON

Special to Bullard Banner News

"I don't think I'll go to the meeting. I've heard enough speeches," Tom told his sister Sue and brother John.

"Come on, Let's go. It will be the quietest one we've had," John convinced him.

Bad idea. Just because Hempstead, Texas won the election to keep the town from selling alcohol didn't mean the bloodshed was over. Sue saw her brothers to the door; little knowing it would be the last time the three were ever together. In her 62 years, this would be the saddest day of her life. She'd filled her time on this earth pursuing writing, with little success. Their mother died when they were very young so she assumed her mother's role and taught them to be strong and ambitious. Her novels dealt with love that overcomes death and glorifying death more than life. Born in 1843, she never traveled extensively, except in her imagination. Sue came by her views of life and death honestly. Her own father migrated to Texas from South Carolina after a duel he didn't want. He landed in Waller County. In 1848, she returned to Charleston to be educated. Upon coming back to Texas, her unhappiness didn't reside behind a poker face. So she hid her sorrow by becoming a bookworm and eventually an author. Sue did fall in love, once, to Groce Lawrence, whom everyone knew, drank too much.

"I'd rather see Sue in her coffin than married to Groce", her own father said.

Groce did ask her to elope with him, but she would never disgrace her father by not obeying his wishes. Groce Lawrence never came back from the Civil War so Sue's father never had to be a father-in-law to him. Groce lived on in her writing, as a hero galloping alongside General Rober E. Lee. Sue never considered another lover the rest of her life. She took up the role of nursemaid to her father who became an invalid because of an injury from the duel that brought him to Texas. Besides John and Tom, she also raised two more brothers, Tucker and Robert. Sue did have a powerful effect on her siblings, for John and Tom both became lawyers because of her encouragement. Hempstead, Texas was a good place to be a lawyer, due to its lawless nature.

"This slice of pie is rotten"; one restaurant patron informed its owner. The businessman responded by putting a pistol to the complainer's head, and squeezing the trigger.

This is the environment that Miss Sue Pinckney and her brothers grew up in. Brother Robert became an officer of the law. John used his lawyer's office as a stepping stone to become District Attorney, then County Judge and finally a member of Congress. While she visited him in Washington, their brother Tucker was murdered.

At the same time that Tucker's murderers were being tried, Hempstead came under siege by the Prohibition League to remain dry and not bow down to Demon Rum. The Loyal Temperance Union added their two-cents-worth by using children to play upon emotions. Even though alcohol couldn't be bought or sold legally that didn't stop the bootleggers from producing rotgut that could blind and even kill a man. Winos reveled it its glory.

John's stand against alcohol got him elected to another term in Congress. Miss Sue got to take her second tour of Washington with him. Upon their return, the wet-dry war had reached crescendo-pitch. One night, back in Hempstead,

Mrs. Zehner, with her one good lung, rallied the teetotalers. "Show me the man who squanders his money on booze..." she shouted. Obedient drunks stood to their feet.

"I would wade up to my knees in blood for Prohibition!", one old biddy proclaimed.

She almost got her wish. Texas Rangers came to town to keep the Wets and Drys from making the town run red from bloodshed.

April 5, 1905 was to be the last meeting held on this subject. And it certainly was, at least for John and Tom Pinckney. Old Captain Brown showed up for the Wets, already tipsy. Every time someone stood up to speak for the Drys, he interrupted and heckled. The old man's rowdiness started a riot. Another Dry, John Mills died outright. Tom Pinckney, shot twice, died the next morning. Old Captain Brown, who started it all, caught a bullet in the back, killing him on the spot. John Pinckney, who convinced Tom to be at the meeting, took four shots and didn't live a minute longer. Young Roland Brown, the Old Captain's son was wounded. Mills and John Pinckney both were unarmed, and never had a chance.

Miss Sue Pinckney lost three brothers within eight

months, including John, her favorite. She never regained her will to live and died in Houston, November 23, 1909. She didn't

personally die the day her brothers did, because of the courthouse tragedy, but she might as well have.

Source: Ten Texas Fueds, C. L. Sonnichsen, University of New Mexico Press, 1957.



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