

Christmas 1993
The Saga Continues

Dear Friends,

Bonnie commented that I had been easy on her this year so I decided to give the public what it wants and portray the seamier side of the Braden household - the one you never hear about when you watch "Lifestyles of the Rich and Famous." Naturally we're referring to the Bonnie's various sordid deeds.

The first of which is cooking for other people. Bonnie's motto is "nothing left unbaked." The objective is to use every pot, pan, bowl, spoon and cookie sheet in the house. She bakes for friends, relatives, MPs at the gate, the base firemen, troops in Somalia, Fellowship House (for soldiers of the 7th Transportation Group) and for the crew that picks up our recyclables. And, of course, all of these items must be delivered or mailed so the kitchen also resembles the local Mail Box Etc facility. If powdered sugar were a rationed item we would have been arrested a long time ago since no one family could be personally using forty pounds a week ... must be selling it.

But her propensity to collect baking goods is only overcome by her rabid devotion to recycling. Now I am much in favor of recycling because it is a two-way winner: saves the cost of trash and garbage collection and disposal while conserving resources. But Bonnie outdoes herself - you be the judge. Yes, she recycles aluminum, tin cans, glass, plastic and paper (five separate containers). Since only #2 plastic is accepted by the local recycling plant, we collect other miscellaneous plastic in various piles around the house for delivery to other locations. We go on picnics fifty miles away and bring the trash home. We stockpile mountains of paper bags, cardboard containers, paper towel inserts and newspapers inside the house from week to week because it might rain and the pick-up crew doesn't accept wet paper. If recycling were a pro sport then Bonnie would be the Franchise Player. "No can unclaimed."

And then there are the local animals. I wonder how they survived before Bonnie adopted them all. There is the salt lick for the deer, and the bird feeders for the cardinals. All kinds of food are put out in the yard for the squirrels and birds. Her following also includes a rather large opossum who has developed an affinity for pita bread and apples. Bonnie dumps so much money into food for these critters that I feel confident they can be claimed on my 1040. How about adding "no squirrel unfed" to her banner?

But overall this has been a good holiday season ... saw the dining room table yesterday for the first time since Thanksgiving. It had been buried under wrapping paper, Christmas crafts and decorations. And speaking of decorations, can you believe we have two live Christmas trees, three artificial trees, four ceramic trees and about a hundred miles of wreaths, lights and other seasonal displays in the house? Of course you can. But, then again, that's Bonnie. This also means "no tree untrimmed."

Happy holidays

Jay