



Tam's Front Porch Ponderings
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I rummaged through the pantry last night, looking for the ingredients to make Bethel's Spice Tea. It just wouldn't be Christmas without it! Of course while I was trying to find my cheesecloth to steep the spices, I reflected on all the years I had spent growing up at Witt's Beauty Shop on Broadway. My goodness, I sure had some good times there!

I loved the turquoise dryer chairs and the huge pendulum clock that hung on the front wall next to the big window that looked out on the street. There was an umbrella stand as you walked into the entry that separated the Barber Shop from the Beauty Shop, it was an umbrella made of metal, turned upside down. The Coke ma-

Bethel's Spiced Tea

chine was on Albert's side of the building and I had to be real careful when I went to get a coke. Albert Witt loved to pull a prank on someone and he would be hiding behind the barber chair or the little half wall where he kept supplies then he would jump out at me and yell BOO! Sometimes he caught me off guard and would scare the living daylights out of me! My Mom started doing hair at Bethel and Albert's long before I was born so I have lots and lots of great memories but Christmas-time was always magical at Witt's Beauty Shop.

Bethel's tree was so neat, Albert would get her a Blue Spruce which she promptly sprayed with about a hundred cans of fake snow, the branches dripped with the stuff! When it was dry, she brought it into the Beauty Shop side of the building and placed it in front of the big window. She clustered red, glass ornaments three at a time, then slid a bobby pin through the loops and then bobby pinned the ornaments to the tree branches. I can't recall what the tree topper was, it seems to me it was a larger cluster of red ornaments or perhaps a red ribbon, but the tree was beautiful with its branches covered

in snow. I could sit and look at it for hours!

During the Holiday's, she always had platters of sausage balls and Christmas cookies for the customers. I can see them now---Jeweldene Welch, Martha Witt, Lorena Marcum, Lucy Hatfield, Mattie Murray, Agnes Dixon, Madge Brandenburg, Mildred Crouch, Mildred Cobb, Vivian Kaye Daugherty, Jean Brandenburg, Irma Spalding, Mrs. Carrie Mitchell (who lived to be over one hundred years old!) --on and on the list goes, so many faces I could name from my childhood. All of us there together, enjoying Christmas goodies and the best thing of all, SPICE TEA!

I looked forward to Christmas at the shop because Bethel made a wonderful concoction that she called Spice Tea. I don't know where she got the recipe, but it's a blend of spices, fresh oranges, fresh lemons, pineapple juice and tea. You mix it altogether and serve it hot. She kept hers in a crock pot so customers could serve themselves and I would get my cup, curl up in the dryer chair closest to the tree and enjoy the lively conversations. One year, the women decided they didn't like having

er while they were under the dryer. I can't recall who said they'd seen on TV a great idea for just such a problem, but before long the ladies under the dryer had straws in their ears. Somehow the straws aided in the silencing of dryer noise and made conversations more clear. I don't know how much it helped them hear one another, but it surely made for a comical sight!

Everyone stopped by for Spice Tea, the mailman, the UPS man, business people up and down the street would peep their head in for a minute to visit and grab a cup of cheer before they left. Irvine was just a hustling, bustling town of Christmas excitement back then! Ben Franklin had their windows filled with festive displays, the Jewel Box windows shined with diamonds and pearls, Witt Furniture tempted you with a comfortable couch and fireplace and Western Auto had sleds and bicycles wrapped with red bows. There were so many things to see and do in our little town, but you always had to stop by Bethel and Albert's when your shopping was finished and have a sip of Spiced Tea.

You too, can enjoy a sip of Bethel's Spiced Tea this Christmas by visiting Thyme on Broadway which now occupies the building where the Beauty Shop was. This Friday and Saturday the original recipe for Bethel's Spiced Tea will be served along with wonderful sandwiches and desserts. While there, you'll see the Witt Beauty Shop sign still hangs, but now it's above the fireplace and don't be surprised if out of the corner of your eye, you see a whisper of a girl, curled up in dryer chair, sipping tea right along with you!

Granny's Yeast Rolls

Many of you have asked for my Granny Hicks' Old Time Roll recipe. Little did I know, this recipe dates back to the late 1800's. The Old Time Rolls recipe belonged to my Grandmother, Hazel Puckett Hicks who learned how to make them from her mother, Milly Hall Puckett who died in 1905, so this is a tried and true recipe. No matter how hard I try, they still don't taste like Granny's but here it is, taken straight from Granny's recipe box.

Do this first

- 1 Cake yeast
- 1 cup warm water
- 1 teaspoon sugar

Put the Cake yeast in the warm water with the sugar and let sit 1 hour. Sift 14 (yes fourteen) cups of plain flour.

Then add to it:

- 1 cup *PURE LARD (this ain't Crisco, PURE LARD)*
- 2 eggs
- 1 cup sugar
- 3 cups warm water
- 1 teaspoon salt

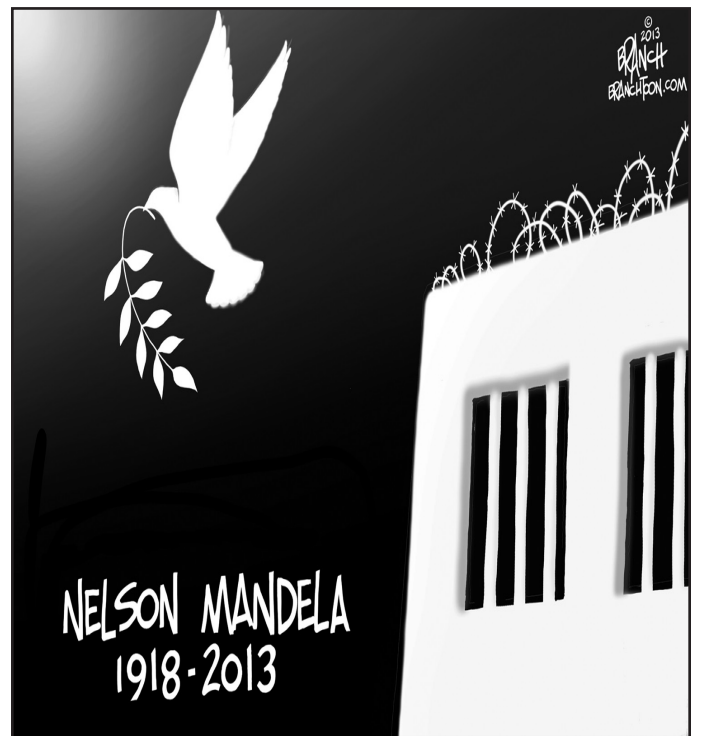
Grease your hands with LARD, work all together, then before putting dough in bowl, grease the entire dough ball with your hands and let sit overnight in a greased bowl in the refrigerator. Original recipe called for a tea cloth over it, but with today's self defrosting refrigerators, I suggest using plastic wrap instead of the tea cloth.

The next morning, after the dough raises, grease your hands really good with LARD, grease round cake pans bottom and sides, then roll dough between your hands to the size of an egg and place in greased pans. Place rolls all around the cake pans with one in the center, leave a little breathing room. Let rest at least 3 hours in a warm place with a tea cloth over them. Bake at 350 degrees until done.

And there you have it, Granny's yeast rolls!
Good luck and enjoy, Tammy Terry
Great granddaughter of Milly Hall Puckett 1878-1905



Congressman Andy Barr visited Marcum and Wallace Memorial Hospital (MWMH) on Monday, November 25 for a hospital tour. During the visit he met MWMH employees and also gave a Congressional update at the MWMH Board Meeting. Pictured (from right): Rodney Davis, MWMH Board Chairman; Congressman Andy Barr; Susan Starling, MWMH President/CEO, and Steven Grinnell, Regional CEO.



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