

The second attempt was like the first, as the saying goes: second verse, same as the first. Applesauce cake for dessert will have to wait. A third attempt may be in the making near Thanksgiving Day.

Sometimes being “in harmony with the earth” is off by a minute degree. Nothing goes right when that happens. The cakes have been lacking luster. Each cake lovingly homemade was as heavy as a shot-put, solid as lead and probably indigestible if they were even able to be bitten into, chewed and swallowed. Who would want to try? Usually, my baking is good enough to eat. Not the past month, though.

Preparation was good for the second attempt. Following the first tasteless cake calamity my method changed. Clean the oven, change the reflector pans on the range, wash down the countertops, and choose a new recipe for Applesauce Cake. Changing the homemaker-baker was not optional.

No problem. Harmony comes with cleanliness. Right? The second attempt should be a success. The apples were handpicked (by a friend with good karma) hand peeled quartered and plunked down in a couple cups of water where they were carefully simmered with love and a smidgen of cinnamon. Each two cups were cooled, cooed and coded. The freezer did its bit. And then the microwave counteracted the freezers’ frosty kiss, thawing the sauce.

The problem with the second attempt was the misreading of the new recipe. The baking soda was left out of the equation. The cakes (batter put in two pans) did not rise to the occasion. How could they, with no soda to spur them to the proper height? But then, having to spice things up by substituting ground cloves for allspice was not really the way to a dessert delight, anyway.

So, out with the second attempt. Not even the birds would dine-in on this second attempt of a bakers’ delight. The squirrels and the bunnies just scampered and hopped away respectively, noses in the air. I didn’t blame those critters. So, the cakes joined the other trash with a thud. The garbage truck sauntered by nonchalantly as the mechanical arms reached out to hug and lift the green plastic container. Two heavy applesauce cakes weigh a ton. “What?” the arms seemed to holler as they struggled to capture its hold. Tipping the load into the truck was a lot more difficult as the arms slipped here and there as the lid of the canister opened to dump the dessert. Landing the empty container was easy as the arms released their hold. The dessert was dealt a dastardly death.

So, now I wait for Feng Shui to settle in and lead the way to a better baking binge. Perhaps, I should start my new baking career with dark chocolate chip cookies, rice cereal treats, pudding. Begin again with the basics. Leave the applesauce delights to the more sophisticated holiday artists.

And if lucky my applesauce cake desserts will be gifts from friends always in harmony with the earth, those that can read a recipe, and those that do not forget an ingredient, those with a workable light in the kitchen oven.

Ah, I’m going with that! My kitchen oven light is out and so, therefore, is my creative karma. This little light of mine needs to shine. Only then will I create.

Lana Russ