By Lori PankoninCo-Publisher

I needed to provide a couple desserts for a luncheon, so why not double the recipe to make it easier?

On second thought, my favorite recipe takes more time with separate layers so I'll make one Chocolate Butterfinger Delight and stir up some Frosted Pumpkin Bars during the waiting time.

The crust was baking so I began to mix the cream cheese and whipped cream layer.

The cream cheese was softened as needed in the bowl, but I rationalized that since the pumpkin bars would need baked, I'd go ahead and get them stirred up and ready to put in the oven.

Oil, sugar, eggs. The phone rang and I continued my task as I opened the can of pumpkin, dumping it onto the cream cheese in the bowl.

Cream cheese??!! The pumpkin doesn't go on the cream cheese!! That was for the other dessert. So I began scooping it off, leaving traces of the orangish substance on what was to be a white layer. No problem. Why not have a variation, making a Pumpkin Butterfinger Delight? But I still needed the pumpkin for the bars that were half mixed.

So I continued scraping what I could of the pumpkin and actually rinsed and shook the cream cheese in an attempt to dry it and bring it back to its white normal consistency. Well, close.

Back I went to the pumpkin mixture, measuring the dry ingredients. It was ready for baking. Voila!

Pleasant aroma from the bars filled the room as I finished the fifth layer on the other dessert. Now all that was left was to frost the bars in the morning.

As I cleaned up, it crossed my mind that my husband would be gone on his birthday. I should make his favorite, banana cream pie, to share at the office on press day. Should I start the crust now? No. I'd had enough for the night.

The desserts got delivered the next morning. Once again, I stayed longer than intended at the office after closing time. It's so much fun there, you know.

A call found me meeting my nephew at the boat dock to bring the boat back to town, accompanied by my grandson. It was so calm and beautiful, but darkness was upon us so we just loaded up and headed back home.

Oh. I still need to make those pies. The crusts rolled out rather easily this time and awaited the filling. What's nice about making something from scratch is we typically have the basic ingredients on hand. Flour, oil, eggs, sugar, milk and some cornstarch for the never-fail meringue. Oh, and bananas. Bananas! We don't have any bananas. Nothing like a banana-less banana cream pie.

Well, the crusts browned up nicely and I could get up early in the morning to cook the cream filling, heading off to the store for bananas to stir into the warm concoction.

Acting like I'm an organized person, I went ahead and separated the eggs, set whites aside for the meringue and the yolks for the filling. Gee. Might as well add the rest of the wet ingredients and refrigerate, then mix the dry ingredients in another bowl before hitting the hay. Everything is ready to simply mix together and cook.

Remembering that the cream mixture scorches easily if you cook it on too high of heat, I vowed to be patient and keep it on lower heat from the start.

Why is it that we women feel like we need to multi task? I actually grabbed the mop and mopped the kitchen floor, stopping every few glides to stir. Stir. Stir. Stir. Then I started

unloading the dishwasher, again stirring between reaches.

Whoa. This REALLY does require patience. Since I had doubled the ingredients, I looked back over the required measurements. Had I doubled the flour? Yes.

I sprinkled in more flour for thickening, causing clumps that needed stirred vigorously. Then I tasted it. Yuk. What is wrong with this? I glanced at the clock and couldn't believe how much time I'd spent stirring, to no avail.

Off I went to the office (without pies in hand). It was payday and that's just one task I don't dare put off until tomorrow. After I got to a certain point that I could take a break, I went to the store for bananas, determined to succeed at the pie plan. After all, there were crusts waiting.

I started cracking eggs. What is in this other bowl? Oh my gosh! There were the dry ingredients that I mixed the night before. Had I only imagined stirring the mix in with the milk, egg yolks and vanilla? No wonder it never thickened. And no wonder it had no sweetness. Now I knew the cause for the failure.

Stir. Stir. It did thicken up this time. The meringue turned out. And I did get back to the office. But by the time there was a break between press runs, it was lunch time. And the birthday boy had a lunch meeting. So those who were left took a quick moment of celebration. And off Russ went to his lunch meeting after his pie appetizer.

It certainly holds true that sometimes it's the thought that counts, even when it becomes a fiasco. Many more, Russ.