

## Mrs. Crawley's Birthday Cake

My best friend in 5<sup>th</sup> grade was Jill. My mother would tell you that Jill and I were quite a pair (and I think I know what she means by that!) I am not sure how it started but Jill and I started spending our Saturday mornings baking birthday cakes to deliver to the local nursing home. We would get the names of the upcoming birthdays of residents, meet in the morning to bake and decorate the cakes and then on Saturday afternoon, we would deliver them. Each week we asked for the names of residents who did not have family so we could make them a cake and celebrate with them the following Saturday.

I cannot tell you where we got this idea or why we started doing this, I honestly do not remember. I do however remember Mrs. Crawley. Her room was the last one on a long hall. She was given this room because she was loud. Mrs. Crawley was blind and she would sit in her dark room, no teeth in her mouth, making loud and funny noises. Her birthday was coming and the nurses told us to not make her a cake. She wouldn't understand.

However, Jill and I made Mrs. Crawley a cake and we entered the dark room at the end of the hall. She was making her noises and we touched her. We tried to tell her we were visiting to celebrate her birthday but they were right, she did not understand. But we kept going back to see Mrs. Crawley. One day she stopped making her loud noises and started talking to us.

Jill and I spend many days after in her dark room and we asked her many questions. She told us about her "beaus", buggy rides, and her life as a young girl. I think we eventually stopped baking cakes and just visiting with Mrs. Crawley. Then in 6<sup>th</sup> grade Jill and I got out of school one day to attend her funeral.

I often wonder what caused Jill and I to start this activity on Saturdays. I just was not that good of a kid, so it was probably to get out of doing something (like cleaning) or doing something with my family since I was a big 11 year old and thrived on any independent activity I could find. I would like to think it was God leading me to a place to learn a lesson and build my character.

Whatever led me there, the result was a softened heart and knowing the feeling of doing something good for another that in turn made me feel good. Thank you Mrs. Crawley for this influence on my life.

Our little town offers many opportunities to give of ourselves and to be generous. The Greater Sabetha Community Foundation continues to gain partners, like Mary Cotton Library, Kansas Honor Flight and the Sabetha High School Alumni Association. These organizations depend on generous giving and dedicated people, who make things happen, create change and fulfill visions. So, whether you want to serve by baking a cake, or give so a veteran can visit Washington D.C., enhance our Public Library or establish a scholarship for SHS graduates, GSCF can help you feel good, just like Mrs. Crawley did for me many years ago.