

That'll Teach You!

Lessons learned when your back was turned

Introduction to agriculture

In the 50s I was in elementary school at Biscoe High School in Montgomery County. All the grades were in the same school during those years. This is the era before drugs and alcohol became rampant, so the pranks had to be homespun.

On the day after Halloween, as my bus started up the school drive, we saw all the trees were in full bloom with toilet tissue. On the roof of a flat-roofed building that housed two classes along with the girls' and boys' locker rooms someone had put a local farmer's wagon. The farmer's cow was upstairs in the library with a full stomach and a good dose of laxatives.

As soon as we went into the classrooms, the school officials sent us back home. There wasn't much damage, and the high school boys were blamed, but no one was ever caught. I don't know if it was the cow pies or the lack of toilet paper that gave us the day off.

Dorothy Davis, Eagle Springs, Randolph EMC

"I just can't take it anymore!"

Seventh-period history was the last class of the school day for many of us high school seniors. Mr. Felmet couldn't tolerate us talking among ourselves during class, but his punishment was never more than just a threat to stay after school.

On the last day of class in 1971, my always-mischievous friend, Bob, decided that he would get caught talking in class one last time and use the opportunity to pull one final prank on Mr. Felmet. So just before class started—when Mr. Felmet always walked down to the end of the hall to the water fountain to get a drink—Bob quickly made his way into the classroom. He sat down at his desk by the five floor-to-ceiling windows and tied a 10-foot length of rope tightly to the radiator base. He had already threaded the other end of the rope through the belt loops on his jeans with a secure knot. He then coiled up the rope and hid as much of it as he could under the radiator. When I asked him what he was doing, he whispered, "Just play along when I start talking to you once class starts, and then you'll see!"

When the bell rang, Mr. Felmet returned to his podium at the front of the classroom and prepared to deliver his final lesson to us. Bob turned around at his desk by the big windows and began talking to me since I sat directly behind him. It was early June; our school had no air conditioning at that time, so all of the windows were fully open and had no screens on them. When Mr. Felmet chastised Bob for talking to me during class, Bob jumped up and yelled, "You're always picking on me, Mr. Felmet, and I just can't take it anymore!" and he immediately jumped out the big window beside his desk in our third-floor classroom.

The entire class started screaming and crying, but I jumped up and ran to the window and looked down. The rope had caught Bob exactly as he planned, and he was crouched down on the concrete ledge about four feet below our third-floor row of windows, hiding from view with a huge grin on his face.

Mr. Felmet had slumped back into his chair and was gasping for breath, trying to tell two other students to run get the principal and the school nurse. I couldn't hold it any longer and started laughing so hard that I had to bite on my arm in order to stop.

Needless to say, once Mr. Felmet caught his breath and discovered the prank that had just been played on him, Bob and I had some serious explaining to do in the principal's office before we were allowed to go home that afternoon. Our parents somehow couldn't see the humor in this situation even though it was our last day of high school.

Jon Gibson, Raleigh, Wake Electric

Thanks to everyone who sent us stories about classroom pranks you'll always remember. You can see more of them on our Web site. Next month we'll publish your favorite photos from North Carolina fairs and festivals. [Deadline was July 15.] For more themes and



rules in our "Nothing Could Be Finer" series, see page 18.



Fixer-upper for sale

I went to Charlotte High School in Punta Gorda, Fla. The main building on our campus was three stories high, over 50 years old and showing its age. The third floor Spanish classroom had a hole in the floor looking down into the second floor Algebra classroom.

A week or two before graduation, I decided to “sell” my school. I placed an ad in our local newspaper describing the fixer-upper and put the principal’s home phone number and wrote “ask for Ray.” Well, the calls started, thanks to a few of my friends’ parents. My principal was not happy. He called the paper, but they refused to release the name of the ad writer. The next day the paper put the ad on the front page—sans phone number.

My principal was highly annoyed until the ad was on the local news the next evening and even picked up by the Associated Press after that. By the time he figured out it was me, the publicity our school had received greatly eased his anger. And I was allowed to graduate.

Kim Guereschi, Washington, Tideland EMC

Recycled daffodils

It was a beautiful spring day many years ago, and our fifth grade class was enjoying recess on the school ball field.

One classmate, “Bob” (not his real name), stood out from the other boys, because he was very humble and highly intelligent. Also, he was known to be very obliging. The class bullies took Bob to the side of the ball field where bright yellow daffodils grew along the chain link fence.

“To belong to our club you must eat at least three of these,” they told him. It was not easy, but Bob completed his assignment by the end of recess.

Later, we all began to notice our friend was in a complete daze. The teacher became concerned when he did not respond to a question and instead just stared at her. Eventually he blurted out, “I need to go to my mama’s room. I’m sick!” His mother taught at the end of the hall, so Bob and our teacher left the room hurriedly. The entire class rushed to the doorway just in time to see “recycled” daffodils line the hallway.

When our teacher got the rest of the story we didn’t see any daffodils on the ball field for awhile.

Ann Kennedy, Pink Hill, Tri-County EMC

A lesson in disguise

A substitute teacher usually meant plenty of jabbering and trouble-making. Not this time! The pudgy woman plodded into the room like a drunken penguin, dark sunglasses pressed against the bridge of her nose.

“Hello, class.” She spoke as though 50 moth balls filled the inside of her cheeks. We all nodded, like any other roomful of fourth graders would. She surprised us by asking questions about Mrs. Trainer, our regular teacher. Despite Mrs. Trainer being a firm but fair instructor, we were more than happy to offer complaints. Looking back, I guess that’s the way kids are. They want the “fair” without the “firm.”

I went home feeling guilty about complaining, like I’d turned on someone who trusted me. I wondered all night if the other kids felt the same.

What happened the next morning proved that Mrs. Trainer would be the best teacher I’d ever have. She didn’t hesitate to explain that talking negatively about

others was immoral and would lead to fewer friends in the future. She also went on to reveal that she had been the substitute in disguise.

Unlike most class pranks, the joke was on us, as well as a lesson I would remember and value forever.

Dan Moskowitz, Huntersville, EnergyUnited

Caught napping

One of my favorite teachers, Mrs. Jones, was a wonderful, patient teacher with a bit of a mischievous streak.

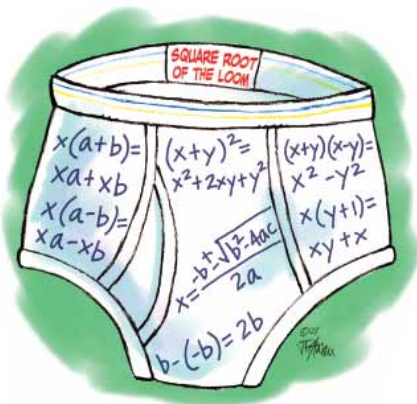
One of the boys in class, who evidently wasn’t overly enthused by the course, would regularly fall asleep in class and just as regularly be awakened. Since this didn’t seem to bother him enough to end the habit, Mrs. Jones decided one day to try a new tactic. While he was peacefully dozing with his head on his book she quietly snuck the entire class out into the hall. When he finally woke up to an empty classroom (not knowing we were all standing in the hallway, quietly listening) he was totally panicked—probably thinking that he had missed the final bell and his bus home.

When he came flying out of the classroom we were all waiting in the hallway laughing. I don’t believe he ever fell asleep in class again.

Marcie Roper, High Point, EnergyUnited

continued on page 18





Hidden homework

I was a middle school math/science/algebra teacher for 19 years in New Bern. One year I was fortunate to have an absolutely delightful, creative, responsible and personable class of about 30 students in pre-algebra. We related well. And as many teachers do, we often took side roads of discussions. I told them some of the pranks I did while in high school.

I made good grades, but to interrupt the monotony of a particular class, I was occasionally unconventional (or disruptive). I disliked my Latin teacher, so one night I did my homework on toilet paper. The teacher called me to the board, and I unrolled the toilet paper and proceeded to write the answers on the board. My Latin teacher did not see the humor in this, though my classmates did.

My math class thought this was funny and to me, it was forgotten. We proceeded with our class work. About a week later, when I asked my class to get out their homework from their book bags, each student pulled out a piece of underwear bearing their homework!

It took awhile for the laughter to subside. I gave each student an extra point on their homework grade for originality and creativity.

*Sandra Woods,
Newport, Carteret-Craven Electric*

Class clown

The best year for me in school was the seventh grade because of my teacher Mr. John Terry. He was a prankster himself. I was the class clown.

One day while he was teaching the sixth graders, the seventh graders were supposed to be studying. Everyone was...but me. I was sitting behind Mr. Terry. The sixth graders could see me,

but Mr. Terry couldn't. I started making funny faces at the sixth graders while he was teaching them.

They all started laughing at me. Mr. Terry turned around and looked at me. I looked at him so innocently, like, "What?" He turned back to teaching. I did it again. He looked at me again. This time I was smiling.

He got a paper bag and put it on my head. I said I couldn't breathe. So he put a hole in the bag. He started teaching again. I looked through the hole to make sure he wasn't looking. Then I stuck my tongue out through the hole. The whole class was laughing. Mr. Terry made me sit out in the hall. (I can't count the times I was put out in the hall.)

I learned more in Mr. Terry's class than any other because of his sense of humor. It was like he was one of us. Thank you, Mr. Terry!

Sharon Hardin, Rutherfordton, Rutherford EMC

Red thumb

My nephew was born missing his thumb on his right hand. This never bothered him a bit. One day in elementary school he had a substitute teacher. As he was eating lunch in the cafeteria, he squirted ketchup on his hand where the thumb wasn't. He then told the substitute teacher he accidentally cut his thumb off. When the teacher returned the next day, she enjoyed informing his mother of his prank. To this day, we still laugh about it.

Ellen Cooper, Cornelius, EnergyUnited

VW mechanics 101

When I was a senior in high school, I walked into English class to find a Volkswagen parked in the room. During the night, students had passed junkyard Volkswagen parts through a window and then reassembled them, piece by piece, in the classroom. The prank was in protest of an \$18 parking fee that had recently been imposed for the next year. Students considered the fee to be too much. Everyone, including the teachers, thought it was funny. The car was quickly dismantled and taken outside. Classes were not held that morning in the classroom with the Volkswagen in the middle of it. 🚗

Kim Huffman, Lenoir, Blue Ridge Electric



send us your best **EARN \$50**

Here are the themes in our "Nothing Could Be Finer" series. Send us your stories and pictures about these themes. If yours is chosen for publication, we'll send you \$50. You don't have to be the best writer. Just tell it from your heart.

October 2007

My Favorite Photo
North Carolina people and places. Digital photos must be high resolution.

Deadline: August 15

November 2007

Kid Craft
Your stories and photos of children's crafts.

Deadline: September 15

December 2007

Holiday Recipes
Recipes for your favorite holiday meals.

Deadline: October 15

The Rules

1. Approximately 200 words or less.
2. One entry per household per month.
3. Photos are welcome. Digital photos should be a minimum of 1200 by 800 pixels.
4. E-mailed or typed, if possible. Otherwise, make it legible.
5. Include your name, electric co-op, mailing address and phone number.
6. If you want your entry returned, please include a self-addressed, stamped envelope. (We will not return others.)
7. We pay \$50 for each submission published. We retain reprint rights.
8. We will post on our Web site more entries than we publish, but can't pay for those submissions. (Let us know if you don't agree to this.)
9. Send to: Nothing Finer, Carolina Country, 3400 Sumner Blvd., Raleigh, NC 27616 Or by e-mail: finer@carolinacountry.com Or online: www.carolinacountry.com