

# I Remember...



Being the youngest wasn't much fun.

## Life in Blackberry

I grew up on a big farm in the Blackberry community along with my parents and siblings. Being the youngest wasn't much fun.

We all had to pitch in and help out any way we could. Life was hard but we had loving parents and a good Christian home. I remember when we got our first electricity. I was 10 years old when Mom got her first Maytag wringer washer.

We grew almost all our food on our farm. Dad would take corn to Winebarger Mill in Meat Camp. He would have some ground for feed and cornmeal. We always grew buckwheat for those good ol' pancakes, and we sold a lot of buckwheat flour. In the winter the neighborhood children would come to our house to sleigh ride. But really I think it was for Mom's buckwheat pancakes for lunch.

*Edith Story Arnette, Lenoir, Blue Ridge Electric*

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### Guidelines:

1. Approximately 200 words.
2. Digital photos must be at least 600kb or 1200 by 800 pixels.
3. No deadline, but only one entry per household per month.
4. Send a self-addressed, stamped envelope if you want yours returned.
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Looking at this picture, who would ever guess that both would become millionaires one day.

## Pulling weeds

As you can see in the picture, my older brother's pants are a little long. That's to make sure he doesn't outgrow them too fast. The hole and the patch on the knees tell me I probably got hand-me-downs. Those are crabapples in our hands. We were so poor back then, we went barefooted a lot.

We grew up on the farm, pulling weeds. Pickup potatoes and cabbage always had to be weeded about two weeks before school started. We usually did pickup potatoes early morning and late afternoon so that the potatoes didn't get sunburn. In the middle of day, we were resting. We would start weeding at 6 a.m. We would get a load of dirt in morning and one in afternoon, all loaded and unloaded by hand shovels. Usually we would stop at 6 p.m., but sometimes later. I remember stopping at 6:15 one time. My daddy wanted to know why we were stopping so early. Well, we had 15 minutes to eat supper and to get to football practice. (We had very tired legs at bedtime.)

After all that work, the two years I spent in the army seem like a vacation to me.

*Louis Talmadge Meads, Elizabeth City, Albemarle EMC*



Mama setting out on her pop calls.



### Mama's pop calls

As a third grader in 1946 until I graduated in 1957, I would see on the kitchen table Mama's hand-scribbled note saying, "I'm making pop calls."

She'd made them before I was born. Her pop calls were unannounced visits with relatives or friends along one of two predictable paths out of Snow Hill in eastern North Carolina.

The path to Goldsboro might include pop calls to church friends between the two towns on her way to drop in on her mother or two sisters.

Mama's second path was "through the country" and ultimately to my grandparents' house in Kenansville. Often that route included surprising an elderly cousin, who wasn't a cousin at all but was still included in the family folklore. If Grandma was out playing bridge, Mama might even proceed to Wilmington to visit any number of relatives: Daddy's cousin Helen, Granddaddy's brother and his wife (both pushing 100), or Daddy's sister-in-law with the messiest house in the county (according to Grandma), or Mama's Aunt Pearl, whose silver dresser set I inherited.

Because of her pop calls, Mama knew both sides of the family.

*Linda Edwards, Morganton, Rutherford EMC*



Patti and me on the first day of school, 1964.

### Patti's march through school

In the fall of 1964 I entered third grade and my sister, Patti, was starting first grade at Mt. Pleasant Elementary School. To say that Patti disliked school is an understatement. Ask anyone who rode Bus 29 that year, and they will have a story about Patti and her first year of school. The kids waited fretfully every morning for Patti to take her seat because they knew what was coming. They asked, "How can a six-year-old make herself physically sick every morning as soon as she gets on the bus?"

In the 1960s, the first and second grade classrooms at MPES were about a mile from the third through 12th grades. The older students were dropped off first, and then the younger ones were taken to the elementary school. Patti decided one morning that she would try another strategy to skip school, since getting sick every morning wasn't working. She hid behind some shrubs until everyone went into the building. Then she slipped through the woods, walked a mile up Main Street, crossed Hwy. 49 and went to the hosiery mill where our mom worked. But she didn't avoid the poison ivy in the woods on her walk. Evidence of Patti's adventure that day is obvious in her first grade picture because her face is covered in a rash.

For someone who hated school in first grade, Patti couldn't be stopped once she graduated high school. She attended UNC Charlotte and graduated with a B.S. in nursing, then UNC Greensboro with a master's degree, and later from the University of South Carolina as a family nurse practitioner. So, for all you who have kids that dislike school, Patti is proof that there is hope! 🙌

*Sharon Sellers, Mount Pleasant, Union Power*