

True stories of

# FOODS

you'll never eat again

## Haggis

During the summer of 2004, I had the opportunity to travel to Scotland to participate in an exchange program and take a class at a university. Before I left for Scotland, I did some research on the country so I would know what to expect. I kept hearing and reading about a dish called haggis. I was curious. When I learned what haggis was I was pretty sure it was something I should not eat.

There are some variations, but typically, haggis is made of the lungs, heart, liver and kidneys of a sheep. These are chopped and may have onions, oatmeal and other seasonings added. Everything is then put into a sheep stomach, and the whole thing is boiled for hours.

I had a few opportunities to sample some haggis but always backed out. The last day I was there, I decided I could not spend a whole month in Scotland and leave without trying the haggis. So I tried it. At first, I did not think it was all that bad. After a few bites however, I decided that was enough. Although I can say I'll never eat haggis again, it was a wonderful opportunity to eat the national dish of a wonderful country.

Amanda Cox | Pilot Mountain | Surry-Yadkin EMC



Thanks to everyone who submitted stories about something you'll never eat again. You can see more at our Web site. Next month we'll publish your stories on "How I almost flunked." [Deadline was June 15.] For the remaining themes and rules in our "Nothing Could Be Finer" series, see page 14.

## Turnip greens

More than 50 years ago my cousin and I went to visit our grandmother. We got there Friday at supper time. We were given turnip greens for supper. Saturday we had turnip greens for lunch. Saturday supper, turnip greens again. Sunday lunch was turnip greens again.

I told my cousin, "I am going home to get something to eat besides turnip greens."

Betty B. Bollinger | Stanley | Rutherford EMC

## Salad at the tea party

There we were in the summer of 1951, four little 5-year-old girls having a tea party in the shade of the big oak tree in the backyard. We had borrowed Mama's prettiest tablecloth to spread on the ground, and we set our table with the little pink dishes Santa brought last Christmas.

As we poured our tea, we spied a beautiful three-leaved plant, all shiny and green. We filled our bowls full of this wonderful "salad" and ate every leaf. When Mama came outside, she forgot all about being mad at us for taking her good tablecloth because she realized we were eating poison oak! Mama grabbed us up and called the doctor. Back in those days, our doctor said the cure would be to wash our mouths out with Octagon soap.

Well, to tell the truth, I can't think of anything ever tasting as bad as that soap did. It probably really was a cure since I am here today to say, "I'll never eat poison oak again, no matter how fine the tablecloth or how pretty the little pink dishes are at the tea party!"

Ann Clayton | Asheville | Haywood EMC

## New York fried chicken

My toes gripped the handle of the cookie drawer to watch my Grandma knead dough for the dozen biscuits and two fresh homemade pies baked daily in the wood cook stove. Saturdays I waited patiently as my mother's biscuits baked in the electric oven. All were served hot with fresh churned melting butter spilling from inside.

As a 25-year trucker, I have eaten fresh lobster in Bangor, Maine, and pond-raised, corn-fed catfish in Odessa, Texas. In a state of serious hunger, I consumed an egg salad sandwich complete with shells in Miami, Florida.

I enjoyed my first taco omelet in Worthington, Minnesota, and Cajun gumbo in New Orleans. Broad River at the North Carolina/South Carolina border on I-85 is the home-cooking capital of the United States.

I married the self-proclaimed best cook ever. (No argument.) Her mother's creation, City Fried Chicken (Detroit), is the first thing gone at the family reunion, unless my son sees my sister's fried chicken.

But the \$13.85 honey-dipped "Southern" fried chicken at the travel plaza in Glens Falls, New York, I had in 1984 screams NEVER. The Adirondacks are beautiful, but don't eat the chicken.

*Eddie Dale Eddinger | Lexington | EnergyUnited*

## Green squash

My sister-in-law Betty Jean and I picked squash in her garden anticipating a great mess of the yellow vegetable for supper. One plant had slightly greenish squash, but we figured they were near enough ripe to add to the basket.

That afternoon I cooked the squash with onions to have with cornbread, tomatoes and butterbeans. We asked the blessing and I took the first bite.

Bitter! Oh my! "Don't eat the squash!" I yelled as I ran for the bathroom to rinse my mouth. About that time the phone rang. It was Betty Jean yelling, "Don't eat the squash!"

"Too late," I said. "But I didn't swallow. What happened? What is it?"

"It's a good thing you didn't swallow it," she said. "Those little greenish squash are actually gourds!"

Beware of small greenish squash.

*Judy Stewart | Swansboro | Carteret-Craven EC*

## The LBT sandwich

The worst thing I have ever eaten was a LBT sandwich.

I was home enjoying a delicious turkey and cheese sandwich. As I put the last of the tasty thing in my mouth, I realized I was chewing on something quite crunchy. At first I was calm, thinking it to be the hull of a kernel of popcorn, until it dawned on me that I hadn't had any popcorn with my sandwich, as I usually do.

So I opened my mouth and pulled out the crunchy morsel to investigate. Sitting on my fingertip, pretty as you please, was the half-chewed remains of a ladybug! (That's what the LB stands for.)

*Cestia Miller | Marshville | Pee Dee EMC*

## Possum

Carl and Sue, two old family friends, invited me to supper one evening. When I arrived, Carl began to tell me how he'd caught the possum driving home one night. Possums like to stare at car headlights. He explained that you had to put a possum up for a week or two because of all the junk and trash they eat.

About this time, Sue called us in to eat. When I walked in the dining room, it looked like there was a skinned rat in the middle of the table lying in grease with sweet potatoes decoratively placed around it. We also had greens and cornbread.

My grandma taught me in true Southern tradition that when you eat at someone's house you were to use your manners and clean your plate. Grandma would have been proud. I managed to eat it, say thank you, and leave.

Wouldn't you know it, the first thing I saw as I turned out of their driveway was a dead possum, a.k.a road kill. Needless to say, I lost my supper.

*Sylvia G. Crouch | Taylorsville | EnergyUnited*

## Pancakes and milk gravy

As a student at the University of Georgia in the late 1940s, I lived at Mrs. Benson's large boarding house. One weekend I was told that Mrs. Benson's daughter Frances would fix my breakfast Sunday morning—the family's favorite breakfast specialty—pancakes covered with milk gravy. Early Sunday morning I hurried down to the kitchen to see Frances already at the stove making stacks of golden pancakes.

"Great," she said. "You're right on time. Go ahead and eat while they're hot." I sat down and reached for a bowl of what I took to be milk gravy and covered my stack with a liberal helping. With the first bite I almost gagged. Not wanting to hurt the poor girl's feelings, I bravely choked down most of the rest.

Frances suddenly turned around with a perplexed look on her face and said, "Now where did I put my bowl of batter?" Then spotting it next to my plate, she stared at the remains of my mutilated pancakes and shrieked, "You didn't! Please tell me you didn't!"

Never again will I eat battered pancakes

*Howard Alley | Highlands | Haywood EMC*

## Lean, mean meat

Back in the 1950s, when you killed hogs, you cooked everything about it. You didn't let anything go to waste. I had a neighbor, Mitt Snow, who was one of the best cooks in Surry County.

One day I was down at her house on a visit. You didn't go visit Mitt unless you walked through her kitchen. She said, "I want you to taste this lean meat." I did, and she said, "Wasn't that good?" I said that it was.

Then she said, "You wouldn't believe that was hog's tongue, would you?" I didn't think I would get back home. I told myself that I would never eat lean meat unless I know what it is.

*Mary Ann Thomas | Dobson | Surry-Yadkin EMC*

## Marine Corps grapes

In February 1957, I joined the Marine Corps and was sent to Parris Island, S.C., for boot camp. As I was only 17 years old and had spent all of my young life on a small farm, I knew very little about the outside world. At lunchtime on my first day, I was going through the chow line and noticed a large bowl of purple grapes on the salad bar. I loved grapes, and since we very seldom had any on the farm I piled about a dozen on my tray. As soon as I sat down, I popped one into my mouth and just as quickly spat it out. "There are no grapes on earth that taste this bad," I thought to myself.

When I had finished the rest of my lunch, I got up and started to dump the "bad grapes" into the trash, but my drill instructor stopped me. He wanted to know why I did not like the Marine Corps food. It really upset him when I told him the grapes tasted sour. He made me sit down and eat every last one of them. When I had finished choking them down, he sent me to the barracks.

Later on that day, I told some of my more worldly city friends what had happened. After a good laugh, they explained that what I thought were grapes were actually olives. 📌

*Kenneth A. Rose / Morganton / Rutherford EMC*

## 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.

### September 2006

**My Finest Sports Moment**  
Send pictures, too.

*Deadline: July 15*

### October 2006

**My Favorite Halloween Costume**  
Send the story and photo.

*Deadline: August 15*

### November 2006

**My Favorite Photo**

North Carolina people or places.  
If they are digital: 300 dpi and actual printing size.

*Deadline: September 15*

### December 2006

**Regifting Mistakes**

I should not have given that away.

*Deadline: October 15*

### The Rules

1. Approximately 200 words or less.
2. One entry per household per month.
3. Photos are welcome. Digital photos must be 300 dpi and actual size.
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](mailto:finer@carolinacountry.com)  
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