

Let's Go... Way Back to School

By Erin Wold

It's the most wonderful time of the year! Kids across the country and here at Fort Bragg may disagree. But to parents, back to school time is a little pain (school shopping)... followed by freedom. Now that all the supply lists have been purchased and double checked for last minute additions, new wardrobes are pressed and ready for a year of wear and the kids are safely on their way to school...it's time to take a breath, and remember. Remember that somewhere among the endless complaints and bargaining for the coolest folder or fad school supply, you did the exact same thing to your parents. So now it's time to go "way" back to school.

And so we start our journey... Back to school in the 50s ... My dad remembers watching Davy Crocket on TV and all the kids wanting a coon skin cap to look like Davy. Everyone wanted transistor radios (portable and battery operated). They took six D batteries, weighed about five pounds and were the size of large cereal boxes. There were only high top Converse All-Star shoes that took about ten minutes to lace up. When they had to buy a suit for dressing up, they always looked for suits with two pair of pants. He also had a pair of cowboy boots with spurs he constantly tripped on.

Steve remembers going shopping for school clothes with his mom and three sisters (that usually meant 4-5 hours of wandering around in the department stores). He was not allowed to pick out what he wanted to wear. His mom always chose what she considered 'good reusable clothing.' Polyester, double knit pants in odd colors and long-sleeve 'dress' shirts. Steve always wanted the Levi's, rock band t-shirts and Keds Red Ball high top tennis shoes. After all, everyone wanted those Keds Red Ball high tops back in the 60s. Once he started working and had money to spend, he bought what he wanted. But then work started dictating his clothing styles!

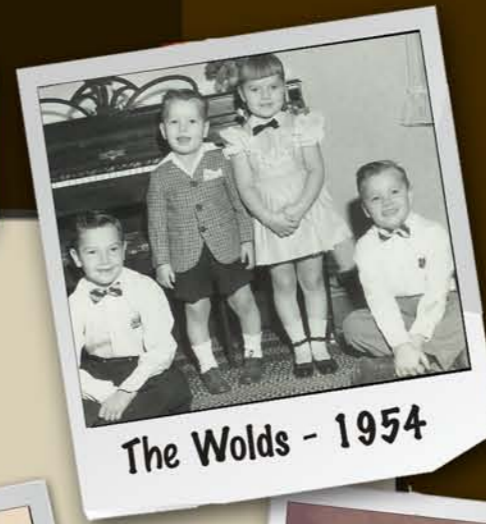
And now we venture back to the time of Saturday Night Fever and Greased Lightning. Yes, I speak of

the 70s. Lori remembers wanting earth shoes, but ending up with black and white saddle shoes. For Lily, Pro Keds were the shoes she had to have. Pencil boxes were the school supply everyone wanted. It was a treat to stay up late and watch the Donnie and Marie show. Satin jackets hit the streets a little later on, after the movie Grease came out. On the radio, nobody could beat Neil Diamond and Englebert Humperdink wafted through the halls of many a home. And everyone had the "Spirit of '76" shirts, celebrating the nation's bi-centennial.

School shopping for me, in the '80s and early '90s, was always a family affair, especially for clothes. Usually it took more than one trip too. One trip was with mom, and one with grandma (always more fun with grandma). My sister once negotiated a pair of \$80 Girbaud jeans with grandma (I'm still a little jealous!). I remember banana clips and the ponytail holders with the plastic balls on them. Among my favorite clothes in middle school was a pair of purple jeans and my Minnesota State Screaming Eagles sweatshirt (the T.V. show "Coach"). My Trapper Keeper and my jelly shoes were my prized possessions.

How about the late '90s and into the new millennium? Deandra recalls having her clothes chosen by her parents. She would always want to dress myself in bright, mismatched colors. In elementary school, around 3rd and 4th grade, you started to see flared jeans on the girls, and baggy jeans on the guys. 2008 saw the outbreak of skinny jeans. Then came the more sophisticated styles like high-waisted skirts, heels, polo shirts, slacks, etc.

From shoes to shirts and everything in between, there has always been the thing that everyone "has" to have for back to school. And once the kids are on the bus and on their way, parents go back into their silent houses and start thinking about next year.



The Wolds - 1954



Lily - 1980



Steve - 1969



Lori - 1973



Heather - 1981



Leoni - 1965



Erin - 1992



Oscar - 2006



DeeDee - 1991