

## Ricky Knows Best

*by Christine Fowler Lipscomb*

I don't remember how I got the two dollars, but that part isn't important. What I do remember is what I did with it.

Ricky, my Irish twin, had his eye on my money and decided he knew best what to do with it. Shoeless and disheveled, we walked two or three blocks to Parramore's, a local family-owned corner store on 13th and French Avenue in Sanford, Florida.

In 1964, Mr. and Mrs. Parramore lived above the then old market. Us



neighborhood kids frequented the candy counter just about every Saturday and more often during the lazy, hot days of summer. My Mother had been called on the phone by Mrs. Parramore, more than once. Frustrated and fed up with the mess we'd leave behind, she'd phoned Mom hoping for some support.

"Mrs. Fowler, could you please speak to your children about their behavior while in our store?" she asked sounding rather irritated. "Could you get them to decide on exactly what they want before they leave your home? She asked.

Mom would tactfully say that she would discuss with us "proper candy buying etiquette" when we all sat down at the dining room table for supper that evening.

Mom shook her head and commented that this elderly couple had no children therefore they weren't very patient with our childlike behaviors.

Even at seven, I recall being easily influenced by Ricky and in awe of his elderly wisdom. After all, he was 364 days older than me. The dirty, wood floors squeaked as we paced back and forth discussing at length what our purchase would be.

Ricky persuaded me to buy forty Hershey Chocolate Bars with almonds at five cents apiece, a rather wise investment--or so I thought--for a kid my age. Mrs. Parramore smiled as her wrinkly hands gently placed the candy bars in a small bag. As we walked home, brown sack in hand, I had feelings of joy and contentment as I thought I'd have a candy bar a day for the next month or so. I was so proud and couldn't wait to show Mom my new purchase. I thought she'd be as delighted as I was.

Upon entering the kitchen, I shouted "Mom, look what I bought!"

She turned, wiping her hands on her bright purple muumuu.

"What?"

So excited, I answered, "Hershey Chocolate bars, and I got forty of them!"

She gasped. "There is no way you are going to eat all of those by yourself. You'll be sick."

I couldn't believe that she thought my purchase was a foolish one. Mom had a solution to what she saw as my problem. She bought the bars from me, returning my two dollars, and we had them for dessert after supper for the next couple of weeks.

To this day, I have a difficult time taking advice from Ricky when it comes to money.



Originally from the celery city of Sanford, Florida, I currently reside in Orlando with my husband of 27 years. Bob and I are enjoying the empty nest, traveling, and spending time with our two daughters, Jess (24) and Kelly (22). I cherish my part-time position at Park Maitland School, assisting the nurse and dispensing lots of tender loving care to the children. Someday, I shall finish enough stories to put together a book for my family. I am enjoying my Thursday nights, laughing, writing, and reading with my WYL friends!