



Living on the farm when I was growing up in my early grade school years, in the late 1930s and early 1940s, I was considered a "Tom boy." This was mainly because I liked to do boy things, such as climb the highest tree, climb the rafters in the barn or machine shed, or swing from the support beams in the corn crib. I also had a brother named Tom who was a year older than myself. We always played together and looked for interesting things to do.

One summer day we grew tired of our rope swing hanging from the tree, so we thought why not go to our one room country school and play on the swings and sliding board there. So we did that. Tiring of that, we decided to crawl through the window, which was never locked, into the basement coal bin of the school. Then we would just look around upstairs! While playing school with the real desks and blackboard, the telephone rang. Telephones in those days hung on the wall with a separate receiver and mouthpiece. A crank on the side sent a ring over the wire. Each phone was on a party line which consisted of about ten different homes or places, and everyone had their own distinct ring such as two long rings and one short ring. Everyone knew their own ring plus all others on the line. You could also listen in to the conversation of your neighbors. What a way to hear the gossip and the news.

Well, when the school's ring was heard we couldn't imagine who could be calling as there wasn't supposed to be anyone there as school was out for the summer. So we decided to lift the receiver and say "Hello." Bad mistake. The voice we heard was Mom's saying "You kids get home right now." Needless to say, we hightailed it out of that building and home real fast.

Just goes to show you that you always get caught when you do things that you aren't supposed to do; and moms are smarter than you think.

by Janice Zook