

“Scuse Me, Go Ahead” People

I love the food! This state is full of mom-and-pop or family-owned restaurants with some of the best food around. In these places, the food is made with so much passion for tradition and love of cooking that it comes out in every bite. I have relatives that constantly ask if I can ship barbecue from a particular place or that dessert they're dying for. And I'm lucky enough to live here and give in to my indulgences on a whim. WOW, what a great place to live!

— Karla Comer, Greensboro

The greatest television show ever produced is “The Andy Griffith Show.” I attended Mayberry Days in Mount Airy several times. Twice I even perched on a convertible as the Potato Queen and tossed out tubers during the parade. (Some former Miss North Carolinas just can't move on.)

Tourists poured into town for the weekends. We lined up to eat porkchop sandwiches at Snappy Lunch and crowded into the movie theater to hear a cockatiel named Chipper whistle the theme song from the show. Getting through the song took a little time because Chipper wasn't a deep thinker. If he stopped anywhere during the song, he couldn't go back and pick up where he left off. If anyone coughed or shuffled feet, sure enough, Chipper stopped whistling and snapped his little head in the direction of the noise. After that, he had to take it from the top.

When Chipper finally made it through the song, many of us moseyed over to the jail to see a goat that was tied up out front. It's amazing how long people will watch a goat chew grass. I was just relieved he wasn't eating dynamite. Blewey!

One store proprietor stands out in my mind. I commented to him that we were having fun, and he said, “Oh, we love the Mayberry crowd. You're so polite. Actually, I call y'all the ‘Scuse Me, Go Ahead’ people.”

“The what?”

“It's just something I've noticed. When Mayberry Days people arrive at the door at the same time, they always stop, smile, and say, ‘Scuse me. Go ahead.’”

I'll be the first to admit that North Carolina has its share of unfriendly old goats whom we'd like to tie up somewhere. But my travels throughout our state for 45 years tell me that the majority of North Carolinians are nice, polite, friendly, “Scuse Me, Go Ahead” people.

And living right here “amongst them,” as they would say in Mayberry, is one of the reasons I love North Carolina.

Jeanne Swanner Robertson is an award-winning speaker and humorist. She and her husband, Jerry (a.k.a. Left Brain), live in Burlington.

