

Bobby Ray

My brother Ray is 19 months younger than I and we grew up like twins. We looked alike mainly because of the white blond hair and I was small for my age, so Ray was about my size. I don't think Mom dressed us alike on purpose but it was easier just to buy two pair of jeans and two shirts that looked alike rather than having an argument over who gets what. We were best friends, but we argued and fought all of the time. I was the blabber mouth and Ray was the silent type. I used to tell him everything about my hopes and dreams and all of the things kids talk about. Ray never did tell me a whole lot but I think he told me more than he told anyone else.

My cousin Don Bingham said he was grown before he knew that we were two people. My Dad would call us by saying "Bobby Ray". If he wanted wood chopped he would say "Bobby Ray go chop some wood and bring it in for your Mom" or he would say as he was going to work "Bobby Ray get the yard mowed today". Unless you knew us it would be easy to think we were the same guy, if you saw us separately.

One night I got into a fight with a kid at the Grand Theater. He was getting the best of me so I yelled "Jump him Ray". Ray said "One on one is fair". I got beat up that night.

I was two years ahead of Ray in school but we would walk to school together. Neither of us had any great aspirations. I wanted to be a truck driver and I am not sure Ray ever told me what he wanted to be.

We played with rubber guns, which were an L shaped piece of wood with a clothes-pin attached, then we would cut up an old inner tube to make large rubber bands. If you got hit at close range it could really hurt.

I joined the Air Force right after my 17th birthday. Ray was 15 at the time. We haven't spent much time together since then as I lived so far away and we only saw each other when I was on vacation.

Ray became a body builder and is still in real good shape. He is quite an artist and has entered his paintings in the County Fairs. My brother Dave has written short stories and has had some published. My brother Bill is a poet and has published several books on poetry. My claim to fame is my beautiful wife, four prosperous children, ten wonderful grand children and two terrific great grand children.