

## Kids Continued from Page 5B

one," she reassured, "otherwise some kids will be left out." She said this with a very calm, soothing voice and began to walk toward the cashier with the box of cards.

I knew there was to be no more discussion on the matter. I shoved my hands into the pockets of my corduroy pants, fumbled through some change, pulled out the dollar bill I had recently taken from my dad's dresser and paid for this demonic box from hell.

I stayed up late that night working on all my cards. I tried to print as neatly as I could. The cards for my best friends would all say something funny, usually a joke about the teacher or about the girls we all despised. The other cards would just say "Happy Valentine's Day," and have my name at the bottom.

The next day was Valentine's Day, and the teacher said we would take a break before lunch so we could pass out our Valentines. I was dreading the moment. Everyone was going to give out something special, something cool, and here I was with 25 cards in a paper lunch bag. It didn't get much worse than this.

I started to reach in my bag, pulling out a few cards at a time, and then began delivering them to their appropriate desks. I wasn't paying much attention to what everyone else was doing, I just delivered my cards as fast as possible and went back to my desk.

I approached my desk slowly, head held low,

eyes avoiding everyone else in the room. It would soon be over, I thought. The kids will get my lame cards and never speak to me again. At this point, life was most assuredly hellish.

The sight of my desk covered with cards from other kids was astounding. My head raised slowly as I watched the other desks all full with similar cards. What was this? Was everyone as stupid as me, or did they also have bossy mothers?

The kids were joyous as they ripped into the mountain of cards before them. After reading each card they would look for the person who gave it to them and wave across the room. This was incredible.

I sat and looked at the pile on my own desk. It was huge. I became caught up in the moment and began tearing into my cards just like the others were. It felt wonderful knowing that everyone else had given out the same cards. I was in pure bliss.

Looking back on these Valentine's Day memories is always comforting to me, as they remind me of the important things we often forget about on Valentine's Day. When we were young we were taught to love all people, and they in turn would love us, regardless of how well we would show our emotions.

Whether or not we have someone special on Valentine's Day, we should remember to show love for all the people in our lives.



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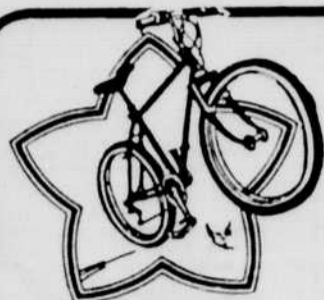
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