

**Category 7, Judah, Sarah, Grace and Tom Memorial: 1st prize**

*Poet's note:*

This poem was inspired by the words of Anne Shelby in "What's Not So Funny About Redneck Jokes," printed in *Backtalk From Appalachia*. Shelby says, "I know how I feel when I...see yet another tired hillbilly stereotype on...television. I do not know the effect these have on the millions of children in the region...but I worry about it. ...stereotypes are attacks upon the human spirit. They find their mark, and no good comes of it."

Sixty-four years ago, I was an eight-year-old who daily read the comics. The one I remember is *Little Abner*.

I WAS EIGHT AND KNEW THEY MEANT ME

Daisy Mae, Little Abner  
Deliverance, Jed Clampett  
Snuffy Smith, Granny, Sadie Hawkins  
welfare mother, briar-hopper  
banjo picking Happy Pappy

Ignorant, stump-jumping  
snaggle-toothed  
cousin-marrying  
ridge-running hillbilly

barefoot and pregnant  
surprisingly smart  
born with a ticket to Cincinnati in the hand

coon hunting moon-shining bootlegger  
one short leg, feuding snake-handler  
bottom of the gene pool clod-hopper  
washing machine on the porch  
dogs under the porch  
illiterate creeker  
sorry son of an inbred.

Did you wear shoes before you came up here?

E. Gail Chandler