

Feeling Awkward

By Suzy Hopkins

Desperate to have my own money to spend I obtained working papers in 1962 at the age of 15.5. I got the first job I applied for as a waitress at the large restaurant in my home town of Lexington, Massachusetts, the location of the first battle of the American Revolution. Summer was the busy tourist season and the restaurant was staffing up for the crowds who usually stopped to eat lunch or dinner at the locally famous restaurant.

One day I had a table for eight. They all ordered pasta dishes. Trying to keep track of who got what was impossible for me but the diners usually helped me serve everyone their order. But, I can barely speak of it even today, I spilled an entire glass of root beer into one of the pasta dishes. I brought it back to the kitchen. Now all of the customers at that table sat and waited for the ruined pasta order to reappear while their meals were getting colder by the minute.

At the end of my shift that day I was fired. Embarrassing? You bet.

I now have a healthy respect for waiters or waitresses who handle many tables, some with large groups.