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pressway there was a corn field. At the corner of what is now Cadillac and Mayfield were a couple of old wooden towers used by skeet shooters. The west side of Power south of what is now Cadillac, was solid woods and a creek that still runs about halfway between Colfax and Cadillac, across Pow-

er. Neither Cadillac nor Mayfield existed then. It was solid woods. There used to be a sawdust pile back in the woods where the creek ran through, which was all that remained of an old sawmill, evidence of past history. The sawdust pile was full of blue racer snakes and baby snakes.

Blue racer snakes were common in the neighborhood in those days. Some of them were six feet long and besides seeing them on the ground, were said to be seen jumping through tree branches. My dad used to pick them up by their tails and give them a hard snap, like snapping a whip. Their heads would fly off. Once when he snapped a head off a snake it hit my cousin Harold right in the teeth. My dad thought it was funny, but Harold didn't.

What is now Flanders subdivision northeast of Eight Mile and Farmington roads, used to be a farm. I used to chase the big work horses that grazed in the field of the farm, with my pinto pony, Tony.

When my mom and dad first bought the acre of land where we lived on Powers, there was nothing there but a tiny wooden real estate office which had been moved there. Dad added onto it a couple of times. It looked like a long shed. I remember we had a wood and coal heating stove that used to get red hot. Later, Dad hired a man from down the street, Mr. Denamore, to use a motor to accomplish the ground for a basement. Dad built the cement block basement and shell for the house from cement blocks he bought from Mr. Harry. Harry down the street, who made cement blocks in his barn.

We lived in the basement for a long time. We had electricity, but no indoor plumbing. Just an outhouse and a hand pump for water. Dad worked in factories, driving a coal truck and later owning a business as a cement and mason contractor, which he did until he died in 1954. At that time he was president of the Farmington Lions Club.

I was never very close to dad. He was so busy working all the time, supporting his seven children and an endless stream of relatives living with us. I never got to know him very well. He was 6 feet tall, powerfully built and weighed about 200 pounds. His very presence seemed to command re-

spect, even though he never finished the eighth grade.

He told me that his mother died when he was very young and the only thing he remembered about her was her slapping him around. He said he left home early and worked as a logger in his teens in the woods. Both he and my mother were working in a plywood factory in Wisconsin when they met. They married when he was 19 and she 17. My mother is 88, somewhat forgetful, loving dad forever.

We had a garden, raised chickens, ducks, cows, pigs and rabbits. I remember dad butchering a pig, soaking it in a barrel of boiling water after which the entire family would use paring knives to scrape off hair. He hung a hatched pig from a pole in the winter, freezing it, going out and cutting off portions for food as we needed it.

Mom worked just as hard or harder than dad and was stronger than most men. She did laundry for our family, my cousins who lived with us as well as my dad's dad and her own mother. She had all the usual housework, as well as work in the vegetable garden and she always maintained beautiful flower gardens. When we kids got old enough, we took much of the load off mom.

There were two Farmington school buildings side by side on School Street just off Grand River in town. They were made of red brick. One building was for grades kindergarten through sixth and the other for seventh through 12th. I don't remember the year I started first grade, but when I was in grade school the cement steps on the hill behind the high school were installed to make it easier to get to the football field and baseball diamond on Shifnawsee.

There were two cops in those days, Chief Joe DeVos and Sgt. Floyd Sallow. They were in the city offices right in town on Grand River. If there were others, I never saw them until later.

We never locked our doors because there was no crime. Once someone stole a car battery my dad left sitting on a trailer in the yard. About the worst things that would happen was to get bitten by a dog or kids fighting.

I can't remember all the kids' names from grade school. But some of them were: Mike Ferrante, Dean Quick, Smoky Ashenbrenner, Rita Piron, Fern Smith, Jane Qulsenberry, Fred Stelnkopf, Dick Alexander, Dick Yukum, Charlie Lahser and Jean Martindale. Please don't fault me for not remembering more. It's been over 50 years since I graduated from elementary school.

Kenneth Kemp is a 62-year Farmington resident.

Dance lessons, show benefit St. Jude Hospital

St. Jude Children's Research Hospital will receive all proceeds from Princess Madhia's Annual Dance Benefit 8 p.m. Saturday at the Botsford Inn in Farmington Hills.

The event attracts dancers from throughout the Midwest and will feature more than 30 dancers performing

in a variety of international dance styles including Middle Eastern, African, Flamenco and Hula.

The doors open at 9 a.m., warm-ups begin at 9:40 a.m., dance sessions are between 10 a.m. and 4:30 p.m.

The concert is at 6:15 p.m., an ap-

petizer buffet will begin at 7 p.m. and the concert begins at 8 p.m.

Tickets for the dance workshop and night performance are \$15. Tickets for the night performance only are \$10.

For more information call Susan Peeler at 541-3193.

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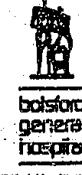
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