



**KELLEY LOVED** Easter but hated dressing up in the girlish outfit her mom picked out for her in 1969 (left). Wearing more casual attire during an outing with her parents in '67, she's all smiles (above).

## Girl vs. Dress

She refused to wear the frilly ensemble Mom picked out for Easter.

BY KELLEY JENT • PENDLETON, IN

**E**ver since I was little, I've hated dresses. My parents learned the true depth of my distaste on Easter weekend in 1969.

Mom wanted a little baby she could dress up however she liked, but I had just turned 3 and was starting to resist. Most days I went along with her fussing over my hair and clothes, but for this particular Easter, she bought me a complete nightmare of an outfit.

This wasn't just a dress. This was a head-to-toe ensemble—a white dress with blue embroidery and flowery accents, accompanied by a bonnet with a blue ribbon that tied under my chin. If that wasn't bad enough, the outfit also included a matching baby blue wool coat that felt as comfortable as the prickly broom we used to sweep the garage. To complete my getup, Mom added black patent-leather shoes, a mini purse and white gloves.

All I really wanted was my Easter basket, so I usually tolerated wearing a dress for a little while in order to get it. But with this over-the-top outfit, I drew the line—I would not give in. Unfortunately, Dad and Papaw wouldn't give an inch, either.

I ran around Mamaw and Papaw's living room like a panicked three-legged cat as Dad and Papaw wrestled with me for what seemed like forever. I kicked, screamed and cried, taking clothes off almost as fast as they struggled to put them back on me. In the end it took two grown men more than two hours to get me back into that outfit.

Of course, the pictures from that day are priceless. My face was all red and puffy from crying, and I'm scowling as Papaw tries to wipe my tears with his hanky.

"I don't care if she ever wears a dress again!" Dad declared that day. Mission accomplished.