



“Everybody knows I cook.

And everybody in our family cooks. My great-great grandmother, she cooked anything and everything. All from scratch. Then my grandmother could cook too. She used to win blue ribbons when they had the cooking contests in Downtown Florence during Labor Day. She would win it every year. She would say ‘It’s my ribbon’ and we would ask her how she knew she was going to win this year and she would just say ‘Oh, I know. I’m sure.’ She had a locker at the end of her bed full of those blue ribbons.

I learned to cook from all of them and my mom, Shirley. My mom always said that when I was growing up that I liked to sample the food she made. Even if I was full, I just couldn’t stop myself from trying some. And my mom would say ‘Didn’t I just feed her? Why is she eating again?’

I guess what I was doing was tasting it to try and figure out how she made it.

I started cooking all the time and then when my husband joined the military, I cooked for them for fifteen years. I had other cooking jobs along the way, and I found that I just really enjoyed cooking. When I get bored, I just go cook. And it’s like people could smell the food because they would be pulling up at our door asking what I was making.

When I make something really good, I’ll call family members and say, ‘Oh my god, you gotta come over now!’ And they’ll say it’s not that serious and I’ll say ‘It is that serious! You gotta come over here and try this!’ Then they’ll come over and try it and say ‘...this is good.’

Sometimes I wish there was an eighth day in the week with all the cooking I do, but I cannot see someone not eating. My mother always said, ‘If you see somebody who’s hungry, give them something to eat.’ Even if they don’t have the money, we still feed them because it’s out of love. You have to give back that same love people give you.

And that’s what food is to me, it’s love.”

- **Wilhelmina Lowery and her son, Terrell Mack, owners and cooks of Dash-N-Dogz**