



*The Grannie Annie  
Family Story Celebration*

#18

# **The Grannie Annie's 18<sup>th</sup> Collection**

Historical Family Stories from  
The Grannie Annie Family Story Celebration  
Written by Young People

Saint Louis, Missouri

## **The Grannie Annie Family Story Celebration**

Welcome to the 2022/2023 Grannie Annie celebration of family stories! Students in U.S. grades 4 through 8, and homeschooled or international students 9 through 14 years of age, are invited to interview their family storykeepers and write a story from their family's history. The Grannie Annie experience leads young people to strengthen family and community bonds, encounter history in a personal way, and polish their writing skills. Students are encouraged to share their work with their family, school, community, and The Grannie Annie.

The works of sixteen young authors, chosen to represent the submissions received this year, are included in this eighteenth annual collection of Grannie Annie family stories. This year's stories are published on The Grannie Annie's website and in this complimentary PDF, and will be shared on social media throughout the year.

The Grannie Annie mission — to inspire young people to discover, write, and share historical family stories — springs from a belief in the transformative power of “story.” The simple, genuine family stories in this collection can help us connect with people in today's world and with people from times past. In unexplainable ways, these stories foster feelings of unity with people whose lives may seem very different from our own. Quietly, surely, the world moves one step closer to peace.

Published by The Grannie Annie Family Story Celebration, P.O. Box 6094, Chesterfield, Missouri 63006.

The Grannie Annie welcomes — and desires to receive and publish — family stories from students of every race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, and creed.

Because the stories in The Grannie Annie's eighteenth collection were captured from the oral tradition, they represent a unique blend of history, legend, and opinion. Accuracy — historical or otherwise — is not guaranteed, and the views represented are not necessarily those of the authors, directors, or publishers.

Particular thanks to fiber artist Elda Miller.

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Your tax-deductible donation will enable more young people to take part in The Grannie Annie, and will make the remarkable Grannie Annie published stories more widely available. Please mail your donation to the address at the top of this page or visit the donation page of The Grannie Annie's website: [TheGrannieAnnie.org/DonatetoTheGrannieAnnie.html](https://TheGrannieAnnie.org/DonatetoTheGrannieAnnie.html)

In memory of  
Ann Guirrerri Cutler,  
whose passion for saving family stories  
inspired The Grannie Annie  
1944–2007

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Invitation to Participate

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\* The time setting of each story is noted in parentheses here and also on the story pages. A notation of "c." (circa) indicates that the year is approximate.

## Story Settings Map, International

Numbers on map are story numbers.



## Story Settings Map, United States

Numbers on map are story numbers.



## **A Word from Grannie Annie**

Some Native American nations so valued their histories that they designated a tribal storykeeper. My mother filled that role in our family for decades, and before that, our family storykeeper was Mom's mother, my grandmother Randazzo.

Gramma Randazzo lived with us when I was a child. She didn't speak English well; however, at an early age I learned to say "Tell me a story about the Old Country" or "Tell me again the story about the baker's daughter who had dough under her fingernails." Then she would begin, in her broken English that made the stories even more fascinating to me. She told me stories about the olive groves on the family estate in Italy, about Grampa Randazzo's brothers and all their escapades, and about the family's early years as immigrants in Brooklyn. Mom carried on the tradition with her own repertoire of stories — about teaching in a one-room school, about blizzards and floods on the farm, and about rolling up the rug and inviting the neighbors over to dance.

I was fascinated by their tales and still am. I have written down many of their stories, saved them in keepsake books so they won't be lost. They're a treasure to read now, just as I had hoped, but I find I saved more than the stories themselves. Listening had been a way to be close to Gramma Randazzo. When I read Gramma's stories now, I remember sitting near her, hearing the stories from Gramma herself. When I read Mom's stories now, I remember aunts and uncles and cousins gathering around the kitchen table to listen. By sharing their stories, Gramma and Mom created a sense of family, a sense of closeness and security, that will stay with me forever.

Ann Guirrerri Cutler, *The Original Grannie Annie*, April 2006



## **What Are Your Stories About Today's World?**

Have you been recording your thoughts, feelings, and observations about this unique time in history? Preserving your experience of today's challenges and celebrations will be a priceless gift for future generations — and may someday inspire a Grannie Annie story!

## **Note to Parents and Educators**

The sixteen stories in The Grannie Annie's eighteenth collection, represent the 155 submissions received this year from young authors in five U.S. states. The published stories took place on three continents and two islands over a span of nearly 100 years. Some stories involve historic events; others vividly depict everyday life from earlier times. Many stories show family members seeking a better life — perhaps struggling simply to survive — and trying to improve the lives of others. Readers can draw enjoyment and inspiration from these stories, each of which has a definite connection to our own experiences in today's world.

Our volunteer readers chose these stories with you and your family in mind, yet you may want to preview the stories before sharing them with young or sensitive readers.

We're so pleased that you've joined us! We encourage you to discover and preserve some stories from your *own* family's history. And we hope that you'll join us again next year for The Grannie Annie Family Story Celebration.

Connie McIntyre and Fran Hamilton, Directors of The Grannie Annie

Listening is an act of love.

—Dave Isay, StoryCorps

**The Grannie Annie's 18<sup>th</sup> Collection  
of Historical Family Stories**

# 1. The Ship That Never Came In

1912; Falkenberg, Sweden; rural Wolbach, Nebraska, USA<sup>1</sup>

The year was 1912, and the *Titanic* was ready to set sail. This was no ordinary ship. It had fabulous amenities and luxuries never heard of before. It was known around the world as the “unsinkable ship.”

My great-great-grandparents Anna Lovisa Larson and Anders Larson, who had been born in Sweden, were hoping to make a new life in Wolbach, Nebraska, after having visited there in 1891. When they were back home in Sweden, they purchased *Titanic* tickets, anxious to return to Nebraska to start life on a farm near the small town of Wolbach.

On April 10, 1912, they packed their bags and headed to the port. When they got there, they were completely disappointed to hear that the *Titanic* was overbooked and there wasn't room for them. They were forced to wait for the next ship.

The *Titanic* set sail, and pretty soon the next ship arrived. My great-great-grandparents were ready to head west to the United States. This was a very long and difficult journey. Throughout the trip they were experiencing very rough waters, leaving them sick in bed. They jumped with joy when the Statue of Liberty came into sight. Then they rode a train to Omaha, Nebraska. They could not have been more excited to be off the ship and to begin their new life in Wolbach, Nebraska.

When they arrived at their new home, they were shocked to learn that the *Titanic* had sunk and their neighbor had lost his life. This was the beginning of some very difficult times for them — one being that the only available space they could find for a home on their land was a dugout<sup>2</sup> on the side of a hill. This was a huge adaptation, considering that they'd had a very large home in Sweden. They lived in the dugout for one whole year — until they bought a house from a Sears catalog.<sup>3</sup>

Pretty soon they were known for having one of the largest and fanciest homes in Greeley County at that time. They then had three kids — Ellen, Harry, and Alfred. In the end, they could not have been more thankful that they had missed their seats on the *Titanic*.

Taylor Rosander; Nebraska, USA

1. The setting of each story is noted below its title. In cases where the exact date isn't known, “c.” (circa) indicates that the year given is approximate.

2. A dugout home is made by digging a hole into a hillside, then adding a front wall made of logs, or bricks of dirt. A door, and sometimes windows, are added to the front wall.

3. For about a hundred years, the popular Sears catalog offered clothing, household goods, tools, and many other items for sale. In the early 1900s customers could also order house kits.

## 2. Teacher for Life

1927–2019; Casablanca, Morocco; Addis Ababa, Ethiopia; and Brooklyn, New York, USA

Imagine growing up in Morocco speaking eight languages and having to flee your home because of a Nazi invasion. That is just part of the life story of my great-grandma Rosette Moskowitz, affectionately known to us as “Mémé.”<sup>1</sup>

The youngest of seven children, Mémé was always at her mother’s side growing up. Her mother was an exceptional cook. Mémé’s father was Morocco’s first Minister of Education. One evening the king of Morocco came to dinner at Mémé’s house. The king was dumbfounded at how delicious the meal tasted. He insisted that my great-great-grandmother become his personal chef. Of course, one cannot deny the king’s request.

Mémé watched attentively as her mother cooked for the king. Mémé learned to cook without measuring ingredients. She always cooked to taste, based on what she learned as a little girl in the king’s palace. Besides being a fantastic cook, Mémé also learned how to make her own clothes. Mémé was also the first female valedictorian to graduate high school in her hometown of Casablanca.

Unfortunately, while Mémé was a teenager, World War II broke out, and the Nazis invaded northern Africa. Her family was forced to flee Morocco. They emigrated to France, Spain, and Canada. Mémé, however, met an American soldier, Peter Moskowitz, from Brooklyn, New York. They fell in love and married after the war ended.

Before going to the United States, they lived in Ethiopia for several years. This is where Mémé learned to speak Swahili, a Bantu language widely spoken in East Africa. During this time, she also learned how to speak Yiddish, a language used by Jewish people in Central Europe before the Holocaust. My great-grandfather’s family spoke Yiddish at home.

After moving to the United States, my great-grandparents raised three children. Mémé began teaching French at the local high school.

Sometime later, Mémé became the first certified Swahili teacher in New Jersey. Her class was extremely popular, and students loved learning about African culture and language. She became one of the first teachers to help organize fundraisers for student overseas trips. Experiencing firsthand the culture Mémé had taught about in her Swahili class created lasting memories that her students never forgot.

Many of Mémé’s pupils became her lifelong friends. Former students visited her decades after graduation. Mémé continued to teach until she was seventy-three years old. She would have retired sooner, but she wanted to help her oldest grandson, my dad, pay for medical school. Mémé always believed that education was the key to prosperity and success. Consequently, Mémé was an avid supporter of lifelong learning.

Sadly, Mémé passed away four years ago at the ripe old age of ninety-three. She lived a fantastically full life of travel, friendship, and family. Her dedication to her students and to her own children is a testament to the love she had for the world and to the love the world had for her.

Colt Davis; North Carolina, USA

1. Mémé (pronounced MAY-may) is an affectionate French name for “grandma.”

### 3. The Men in the Mountains

1937; Bee, Virginia, USA

My great-great-grandpa Samuel Patton Edwards, Senior, was born in 1879. He lived in the Appalachian Mountains in Virginia. He was a horseback postman and owned a tobacco farm in the mountains. Between 1903 and 1929 Samuel and his wife had ten children. They had a small home on Sage Mountain. Their two youngest children were my great-great-uncle June (short for “Junior”) and my great-grandpa Gene. This story is about these two brothers.

When June and Gene were eleven and eight years old, their parents passed away. Many of the older siblings had already moved out of the house, which left Gene and June to fend for themselves. The boys often had to skip school to find food and run the farm. They were very poor and usually had to hunt for their food. They would eat things like squirrels, raccoons, opossums, and rabbits.

One day Gene and June skipped school to find food. Their older sister Eura (YER-uh) was their teacher at the one-room schoolhouse five miles away. Gene and June went to hunt for squirrels and decided to split up to cover more ground. BOOM! Gene heard a gunshot and jumped; he thought his older brother must have already found dinner. Then he heard June’s frantic screaming. Gene ran straight toward June, following the screams. He found June lying in the rocky terrain, gushing blood. He realized that June must have accidentally shot himself, and his life was in jeopardy.

Gene knew he had to be strong and brave for his brother, so he picked June up and tried his best to carry him back toward the house. Eventually Gene couldn’t take it any longer; June was too heavy and was gushing too much blood. Gene laid June under a shade tree and promised him that he would be back with help as soon as possible.

Gene ran five miles into town to find Eura. He knew she had a car and could help by driving June to the nearest hospital. He explained that June had accidentally shot himself in the stomach while they were hunting for food. Eura immediately canceled the rest of the school day and sent all the students home. Eura and Gene jumped into her car and headed back to Sage Mountain. They loaded June into the car and drove as fast as they could to the nearest hospital, which was very far away.

June had to stay thirty-three days in the hospital. He explained to the doctors that the gun was leaning on a rock ledge and slipped, firing at his stomach. The shot left thirteen holes in his intestines. June eventually recovered but spent the rest of his life on the farm. He continued to run the tobacco farm for money. He never married or had kids. He died in August 2009 from heart issues and Alzheimer’s disease. He is buried in the cemetery located on the farm where he grew up.

Matthew Pierce; Missouri, USA



## 4. Freedom with a Price

1944–1945; Sopiki, Albania; Ioannina, Greece

In 1944, I was fourteen years old. The Germans were sending the Nazis into Albania. Albania was ruled by Italy at the time, and Italy was friendly with Germany, which was led by Adolph Hitler.<sup>1</sup> There was much talk in Albania about Hitler drastically kidnapping the Jews and putting them in what they called “concentration camps.”<sup>2</sup> My family did not want to go to war, because we would have to kill innocent people.

My father told me that he didn’t want me in Albania with the war going on. He would stay with my sister, mother, and two brothers. “Gus, my son,” my father told me, “if you get free, I will die a happy man.”

When the war got out of hand, my father told me to flee to Greece. “Gus, when you get free, use the name ‘Victoria Mitza’ to write to me.” My mother was crying the most. I knew I had to stay strong.

The next night I left. I had to go through the mountains to get to Greece. I went with my two friends, Louie and Mashos (MAH-SHOHZ), so I wouldn’t be alone. When we took off for Greece, I was scared thinking about my family. I told myself, “I have to be very careful.”

About an hour into our journey we started to hear gunshots. We panicked and decided to hide in a cave for safety. Our first night we slept in the cave. We used our resources and ate anything we could find. We ate dandelions and dirt, and had to conserve our water. I never would have imagined that I would be in that position.

The next morning we began walking again. On our way to Greece we had to go down many treacherous trails and steep paths that had drop-offs of thousands of feet. It took a whole year to walk and fight our way through the mountains.

Near the end of our journey I heard a shot that stunned me. I turned around to see that Mashos had been shot, but Louie was nowhere to be seen. I decided to continue my journey alone, scared for my life after what I had seen.

Two days later I finally made it to Greece — at the age of fifteen. Right when I arrived, I wrote to my father as he had asked: “Hello, Mr. Mares,” I wrote. “I just wanted to let you know that I am okay and that I came to Greece for a visit. I will write to you again very soon. Victoria Mitza.” I had to use a code name, because if the Albanian government had known that I was the one writing the letters, they would have instantly killed my whole family.

We wrote back and forth using my code name — until I didn’t get a reply. I never got to see my family again. Had I not made that incredible journey across those mountains, my life may have ended just as my parents’ lives did.

Adriana Xenos, great-granddaughter of Gus; Missouri, USA

1. This was during World War II, in which Germany, Italy, and Japan were opposed by the United States, the United Kingdom, France, and the Soviet Union (USSR). Each side included additional countries.

2. A concentration camp is a place where large groups of people are forced to live under harsh conditions because a government sees them as undesirable.

## 5. The Secret Basement

1945, Manila, Philippines; c. 1970, New York, New York, USA

How would you feel if you had to watch your people get tortured and killed? How would you feel if your life were in danger and you didn't know what would come next? This is what my great-grandmother Dinah Collins had to experience in the Philippines in February of 1945.

It was the Battle of Manila during World War II. Japanese troops, which had occupied Manila for more than three years, fought against the Americans to prevent the use of the Philippines as a base of operations by the American forces. During this battle, the Japanese soldiers randomly sniped civilians, used them as human shields, and burst into their homes to torture and kill them.<sup>1</sup> Because of this, many Filipino<sup>2</sup> women and children would roam around to look for safety.

My great-grandma Dinah was thirty-four years of age at the time of this event. Her family owned a house with a secret basement, which was not typical of a Filipino home. The house had a hatch that led underground. Someone going to the basement would need to lift up a piece of wood and climb down a ladder. The basement was where my great-grandma stored her family's antiques and heirlooms. But during this time, they used the basement to save people. Whenever there was an opportunity, my great-grandma would peek out her window to see if there were any women and children seeking shelter. Then she would take them to the safety of her family's basement.

With the help of her mother, Zedra, and her brother, Loy, they provided food, since it was so hard to find food outside. While trying her best to keep these people safe and alive, my great-grandma felt very scared, but she had to stay strong to protect other people while also trying to protect herself. After a month of this living nightmare, the battle was finally over. Thankfully, everyone had been able to make it out of my great-grandma's house alive.

Twenty-five years later, my great-grandma's daughter, Sally, who was twenty-four years old, traveled to New York. While my grandma Sally was there, she met a Filipino woman named Linda, who was kind enough to help out struggling new immigrants to settle in. My grandma Sally offered to help Linda, and along the way, as they continued to get to know each other, Linda found out that my grandma Sally was my great-grandma Dinah's daughter! Apparently Linda and her mother were two of the people who had taken shelter in the secret basement of my great-grandma's home in 1945.

The harrowing experience greatly affected my great-grandma Dinah throughout the rest of her life. She didn't want to leave the Philippines, because that was her "safe place." Through some of the people she had helped during the war, the impact of her kindness had eventually reached New York, USA. My great-grandma couldn't believe it!

It is a great legacy to have people recognize your actions and start doing good deeds to pay it forward. It is through the Lord that great things happen, and in this case he used my great-grandma Dinah.

Chloe Belen; Missouri, USA

1. The Battle of Manila involved the worst urban fighting that U.S. troops experienced in the Asia-Pacific area during World War II. During this one month, more than 100,000 civilians were killed, and the city of Manila was completely devastated.
2. A Filipino (pronounced fil-i-PEE-noh) is a native or citizen of the Philippines.

## 6. The Miracle

1949; St. Louis, Missouri, USA

A baby born before twenty-eight weeks<sup>1</sup> in 1949 was not likely to survive. Born at week twenty-three, my grandpa and his twin brother made it with the help of diligent and skilled doctors and nurses. If the doctors and nurses had not been there, I probably would not be here.

Right after my grandpa and his twin were born at St. Mary's Hospital, the doctors rushed them down the street to Cardinal Glennon Children's Hospital. The doctors got them there so fast that they were practically flying! When they got to the hospital, doctors and nurses came to meet the two babies' needs. The doctors hooked them up to wires and put them together in one incubator.<sup>2</sup> After that, the doctors started to run some tests.

When the doctors were done running the tests, they had some news. The babies would have to live in an incubator for five months, until they developed enough to survive outside the incubator. One thing that helped the babies grow was pure oxygen, which is highly flammable. All those months pure oxygen was accumulating in my grandpa's eyes, but not in his twin brother's eyes, because his brother's eyes were not facing the oxygen pump.

The oxygen burnt my grandpa's optic nerves and his retinas. A few years later, when my grandpa was a toddler, his blindness was discovered. Around that same time, news was coming out that babies born as premature as my grandpa were blind. Just imagine — if the doctors had not used pure oxygen, all of those kids would not have been blind.

But my grandpa did not let his blindness stop him from living a good life. My grandpa went to college at SEMO (Southeast Missouri State University) for a year. He stopped going to SEMO because he got married and had children. After that, he started going to junior colleges, which led him to going to Lindenwood University. At Lindenwood he majored in computer programming.

Because he couldn't read books, the state provided him with a scanner that would read the books to him. The way my grandpa did this was interesting. He would take out the spine of the book he bought and put the page in front of the scanner, which would read the page to him. If my grandpa maintained good grades, the state would let him keep the scanner, but if not, the scanner would be taken away. My grandpa maintained good grades; he graduated from Lindenwood and got a job in Information Technology.

In the end it's a miracle that my grandpa survived being born seventeen weeks early in 1949. Also, he did not let his blindness get in his way. He kept on trying in everything and is still living a good life.

Liam Heath; Missouri, USA

1. The time period given is the length of the mother's pregnancy. Typically a human baby is born after a pregnancy of about forty weeks.

2. An incubator is a machine with an enclosed space where the environment (temperature, humidity, etc.) can be controlled. Incubators are often used to help meet the physical needs of babies who are born prematurely.

## 7. The Trashy Treasure

c. 1952; Chicago, Illinois, USA

“Julia, come over here!” Nana, my maternal grandma, called to me.

“Yes?” I responded, sitting down next to her on the couch.

“Have I ever told you about my favorite Christmas gift that I ever received?” she asked.

“No!” I exclaimed. “But I would love to hear about it!”

“Well,” she began, “as you know, your great-grandfather, my dad, co-owned a trash truck company with his father. This company was named John Dyke and Sons.”

“Why?” I interrupted. “Why did he choose to be a garbage man?”

“He immigrated to the United States from Holland. Most Dutch immigrants worked as sanitary workers or teachers,” she explained. “Now, back to my story. My dad was an extremely hard worker. He drove his own garbage truck through his route during the day, and when he finally got home, he had to repair that old truck, because it was always breaking down. You could tell how hard he worked just by looking at his hands. There were always calluses on his hands and soot underneath his fingernails — so much so that he had to stand at our kitchen sink for at least half an hour, scrubbing at the grime under his nails just because he wanted to make a good impression at church.

“Despite him working so hard to provide for our family of ten, it seemed we only had just enough. Christmas time was no exception. I’m sure it was very hard for my parents to find the money to buy Christmas presents for all eight kids.

“There was one Christmas in particular when my parents didn’t have enough money for Christmas gifts. They didn’t tell us kids that, though. One chilly winter day, as my dad was on his route through Chicago, he found a small beat-up doll that someone had discarded in their trash. He decided to take the doll home, thinking it might make for a good present for me. That night when he came home, he sat down in the garage and tried to fix up the doll. He took those big worn hands and worked magic on the doll. With some paint here and some patching there, she was as good as new.

“A few weeks later, Christmas morning finally rolled around. I scurried out of bed and slid around a corner, and then I saw it — a small little present sitting under the tree with my name on it! I hastily opened it and found a perfect doll waiting for me. I loved her and played with her for years. It wasn’t until later that I found out my dad had found it in the garbage!”

She smiled at the memory of her father and that special doll. I knew she would never forget that crazy Christmas gift. I guess it really is the thought that counts!

Julia Brasfield; Missouri, USA

## 8. The Not-So-Funny Prank

c. 1955; Brentwood, Missouri, USA

My gam was nearly ten years old in 1955 when her parents, her aunt, and her uncle went out of town for the day to visit her grandmother. They left Gam with her two older sisters and her cousin Mary Anne. Her parents had also arranged for their longtime adult babysitter, Patsy Ruth, to come over. The older girls were told to help Patsy Ruth watch Gam's four younger siblings.

Gam lived in Brentwood, Missouri, in a spacious, but charming, house. It was always full of activity with her parents and the seven kids living under one roof. Her cousins visited often from their homes nearby. Gam's parents always told her and her sisters, "Don't do anything you wouldn't do if we were here" and "Don't follow Mary Anne!" Cousin Mary Anne was adventuresome and fun but tended to come up with ideas that were not always well thought out.

The four girls, led by Mary Anne, came up with a wonderful plan for a practical joke on Patsy Ruth, who was their favorite babysitter and loved them very much. They knew that Patsy Ruth loved to buy tickets for the Irish Hospitals' Sweepstake (possibly the biggest lottery in the world at the time). Her dream would be to win it, and the girls thought it would be a fun idea to make her think she had won the grand prize.

The girls took a check from their parents' checkbook and made it out to Patsy Ruth for thousands of dollars and then wrote her a letter from the address of the Irish Sweepstake congratulating her for being a big winner. Patsy Ruth didn't fall for it.

Then Cousin Mary Anne had a brilliant idea — to call her friend whose grandfather had a reputation as a jokester, to see if he would be willing to help out. Without much need for convincing, Mr. Osterholt called the house to verify that Patsy Ruth had truly won.

When the phone at the Tlapek house rang, Patsy Ruth answered, and a man with an Irish accent asked for Patsy. "Hi, I am calling from the Office of the Irish Hospitals' Sweepstake. Patsy, are you standing up or sitting down?" Then he paused and said, "You had better sit down, because you have just won the Irish Sweepstake!"

Patsy Ruth started screaming, jumping up and down, and thanking Jesus. As soon as she got off the phone with the man, she called all her friends and told them how much she was giving to her church and to each of them.

The more people she called, the sicker it made Mary Anne, my gam, and her sisters. The longer it went on, the more scared they got, realizing what they had done. The prank had gone too far. The girls spent the rest of the day trying to convince Patsy Ruth that it was all a joke and wound up getting in big trouble when their parents got home. It was probably the last joke they ever played.

Mackenzie Mullen; Missouri, USA



## 9. Buried Alive

1960; near Greeley, Nebraska, USA

One humid summer day in 1960 my grandpa Gerald was out on the farm finishing his chores. He was only five years old, and he had just gotten a new dog. His new companion had gone missing while Gerald was doing his chores. Scared that his new friend was lost, Gerald went to look for him.

When Gerald found his dog roaming around, he followed him under their rusty old shack. Gerald shimmied under the nails and found that his new dog had just had three beautiful puppies! Gerald played with them for hours, until dark.

Suddenly he heard his dad calling for him. He shouted back, but his soft voice wasn't strong enough to reach his dad. Knowing that he needed to go home, Gerald tried to crawl out. That's when he noticed that he was trapped. If he tried to crawl out, he would have a back full of nails. He sat there trembling in the dark for two hours, wondering what to do.

That's when a grain sack fell over and the grain quickly started falling through a small crack in the floor above him. The grain was flooding down on his frightened little body. When Gerald jolted up, gasping for air, a sharp rusty nail slit his back. Fortunately, the nail broke, and he was able to use the sharp end to dig a hole just deep enough for him to inch his way out.

Gerald darted home with his frightened dog behind him. His parents had been losing their minds wondering where he was. When he told them the story, they were astonished.

To this day, my grandpa is frightful of small spaces, but he still works on the same farm, making great memories every single day.

Drexon Dugan; Nebraska, USA

## 10. The Runaway Brother

1965; La Mirada, California, USA

“I do not wanna do that!” yells Tony.

My mom sighs.

“I am gonna run away!” Tony declares.

“Okay,” says my mother in a relaxed tone.

I look at her like she has three heads. She notices my facial expression and gives me a look telling me it will be okay. I could not believe that my mother just agreed to letting my six-year-old brother run away! We live really close to Disneyland, so he could just run away to Disneyland!

I follow my mom and Tony into the kitchen, still shocked from the agreement. Mom grabs a handkerchief from the counter. Then she opens the pantry and grabs an apple, peanut butter, jelly, and bread. She makes a peanut butter and jelly sandwich, lays the sandwich and the apple in the handkerchief, then ties the handkerchief to a stick. Finally, Mom hands Tony the makeshift bag and says, “There you go!”

“Hmph!” Tony pouts as he stomps out the door.

Mom and I watch Tony as he marches to the front yard. I get really nervous. What if he never comes back? What if he gets lost? I cannot let my brother just leave like that — he is part of our family.

My mom looks down at me, smiles, and says, “He will not be going that far.” Immediately, Mom tells me the whole plan of how we will follow Tony. After she soothes me, I get ready for our plan.

A few minutes later, Mom and I sneak outside, and we hide by the side of our house. Tony wanders around the front yard for a while before he sits down under our old bush there. I smile, realizing that Mom was right about Tony not going far.

She motions to me that we can go inside; I happily follow her. I race into my mom’s bedroom, plop down on the floor, and watch Tony’s every move. My mom finishes up with what she was doing; then she walks into her room and joins me by the window.

Around 4:00, Tony starts to snack on his apple and eat his sandwich. I stay by the window as my mom goes to make some dinner. I watch Tony as he sits out there, lonely and still. I walk into the kitchen and wonder out loud, “Do you think Tony will ever come back in?”

My mom smiles. She stops what she is doing and walks over to the door. She opens it wide and looks at Tony.

Tony sees the light of our house beaming on the grass; he turns around.

“Looks like you ate all of your apple and sandwich already,” my mom says, smiling.

Tony walks towards us and calmly says, “I’m ready to come home now.”

Mom chuckles and says, “Okay.” Then we all go inside.

My mom’s tough love of letting Tony run away helped him realize what good things my mom does for him that he takes for granted.

Madison Pohlman, whose grandmother was the ten-year-old narrator of this story; Missouri, USA

# 11. The Great Escape

1968; Budapest, Hungary

Back in 1968, eastern Europe was mostly full of Communist<sup>1</sup> countries, including Hungary, where twelve-year-old George lived with his family. Over the years, George had been living just like any other boy, attending school and socializing with friends.

But what nobody knew — not even his own parents — was that for months George and his two friends Laci (LOT-see) and Bela (BAY-luh) had been saving up money and planning their escape. Finally, after months of preparation, it was time for them to leave.

After gathering the money they had collected, George and his two friends bought food and two large rubber blow-up rafts. With only those things and their clothes, they set out on their journey.

They hiked miles through the dark, dirty, sticky woods to the main road. They then traveled more than a thousand miles by train and bus. Finally, they hitchhiked to the coast, inflatable boats in tow.

The only way to inflate the two huge rafts was to blow air into them manually. Winded and exhausted, they hauled the boats into the Adriatic Sea and climbed in.

With George and Bela in one boat and Laci and the luggage in the other, they set off with only a rope to keep the two boats together. The unsettled waters quickly turned violent. Through the waves, George and Bela couldn't keep track of Laci. All three boys were worried that the rope wouldn't be able to hold, and they were exactly right. The rope tore in half, and the two boats quickly drifted away from each other.

After a while, George and Bela washed up on the shore of Italy. Feeling tired, miserable, and unsure of where Laci could be — or if he was even alive — they instantly fell asleep on the sand.

A bit later, George woke up to Bela pacing back and forth. High above them was the main road, but to get up there, the two boys had to climb up and over the bluffs. Finally, after many failed attempts and bruises, they managed to make it up.

After finding a bank to exchange their foreign money for Italian currency, they hitched a ride to the police station for permission to stay in the refugee camp. The most incredible thing happened next. When George and Bela arrived at the refugee camp, their long-lost friend, Laci, was also there! They were all elated and in disbelief.

The following two days they spent in quarantine, in case they had any foreign diseases. Next they were interrogated for six whole weeks. Finally, after all of the protocols were complete, they stayed six months in the refugee camp before taking a plane all the way to New York, to Cleveland, then to St. Louis, where they all started a new life.

Isaiah Schiff, grandson of George; Missouri, USA

Afterword: When George reached the United States, he stayed with an uncle until he was able to become financially stable. He also contacted his parents after he arrived — he had needed to keep his plans secret before he left Hungary due to the restrictive Communist rule. After it was politically safe for George's parents to travel, they visited him in the United States.

1. A Communist is someone who believes in Communism, in which farms and businesses — and many other things — are controlled by the government rather than by individuals.

## 12. If It Weren't for You

1984; Peoria, Illinois, USA

It was just another normal winter day when my dad's family was on their way to Mass on an icy zigzag road. No one thought much of it, because they were in a rush to get to Mass on time. My grandma was doing her makeup in the car.

All of a sudden — scrrr! The car slammed into a light post and then rolled into a gully. Everyone but my dad, who was nine years old at the time, was unconscious.

My dad's front teeth were knocked out, but that didn't stop him from pushing through the pain and getting out of the car. He immediately dashed to the nearest house and told people there what had happened and to call an ambulance.

When the ambulance arrived, they got everyone out of the car, and everyone eventually woke up — except for my grandma. She was still out cold, fighting for her life. Everyone was scared and praying for her, just hoping that she would be all right.

As all this was happening, what was happening inside my grandma's head was a different story. She was in a tunnel of light, but it wasn't a normal tunnel of light; it was the most beautiful thing she had ever seen. It was filled with every color of flower you could imagine — and beautiful lights. My grandma didn't want to leave the tunnel.

She finally made it to the end of the tunnel, and there, awaiting her, were her grandparents, sitting on a throne. All she wanted to do was hug them and tell them how much she loved them, but she couldn't. Her grandparents looked her in the eye and said, "It's not your time. You have a family to raise."

Right then and there my grandma's heart stopped beating, the world stopped spinning, and there was only sorrow. Each of her grandparents laid one arm on her heart and then — Gasp! My grandma woke up and told everyone about how she had seen heaven and her grandparents and the tunnel. After saying all this, she looked at my dad and said, "If it weren't for you, I could have died."

They were both crying, and they hugged as my dad said, "I love you, Mom."

Jude Joseph; Missouri, USA

## 13. The Jones Valley Twister

1989; Huntsville, Alabama, USA

Wednesday, November 15, 1989, was a day that citizens in Huntsville, Alabama, will never forget. That one Wednesday would impact my dad's life forever. There were thunderstorms on the weather forecast, but no one was prepared for what was going to happen next.

Every Wednesday night, my grandpa would make dinner for their church, and that Wednesday my dad was helping him. The dinner was baking when tornado warnings came on the radio. My grandma, grandpa, dad, and uncle all went to the church basement, but my aunt was at dance lessons. My grandparents were so worried.

My family had been down in the basement for about thirty minutes when the radio announced for people in their area to find shelter and keep waiting. So they did — for another hour and a half.

After it was safe to come out of the basement, they started hearing about all the damage. My dad found out that his entire elementary school had been destroyed by the tornado. He was devastated. He was only in first grade! One of his favorite places in the world had been demolished. Since the tornado hit around 4:30 p.m., most people had already left the school, but aftercare was still in session. Amazingly, nobody at the school died, but one of my dad's friend's fingers had to be amputated, since a large piece of rubble had fallen on him.

When the storm calmed down, my aunt got a ride to the church, and my grandma drove my dad, aunt, and uncle by their house. It was perfectly fine, but there was no power. So my grandma drove everyone to my great-grandparents' house to spend the night. Meanwhile, my grandpa took the food he and my dad had been making, and gave it to volunteers helping to clean up and save people from the debris.

Even though the storm lasted only thirty minutes, it was catastrophic! It was so serious that the army sent 700 soldiers to help with the cleanup, and the vice president's wife came to Huntsville to look at the damage.

All of the students from Jones Valley Elementary had to take a bus to a different school while their school was rebuilt. A few weeks after the tornado, a news reporter came to that school, Challenger Elementary, and my dad was one of the students interviewed. He told the reporter how sad he was and how much he was going to miss Jones Valley. One and a half years later, my dad's school was rebuilt. He got used to a new building (again) and loved being back.

This surprise attack took twenty-one lives, including the life of a seven-year-old. If you go to Huntsville, Alabama, today, you will see the names of those twenty-one people on a memorial for everyone who was hurt or injured. That day will be remembered for years to come.

Lyla Townsley; Missouri, USA

## 14. The Curious Russian

1991 to present; Krasnodar, Russia, USSR<sup>1</sup>

The year was 1991. My dad, Kostya, lived in a small apartment in Krasnodar, Russia. One day Kostya heard that the government was changing, due to the collapse of the Soviet Union. He was only fourteen years old, but he pondered ideas about how to change the future of his country, even through this difficult time.

Before the change in Russia's government, it was almost impossible for Russians like my dad to travel to, or learn about, America. Originally, Kostya had heard lies that America was not a good country, and that he should never visit there. Now the government was shifting, and he finally started learning the truth about America. One way Kostya learned about America was when his cousin Sergei brought him bubble gum and Monopoly. Sergei got these "cool" western treats from his dad, who was an engineer and traveled all around the world. Kostya's school also began to welcome American exchange students, who told Kostya their stories. These stories were nothing like what he had heard about America.

The wheels in Kostya's mind were turning. He saw, heard, and even experienced amazing things from America. He was still suspicious about what he had been told earlier — that he should never go to America — but he made a decision that would change his life forever. In fact, if he hadn't made this crucial decision, I wouldn't be here to tell the tale.

One day Kostya went to his school and saw a flyer for an exchange-student program. The program was a chance to learn in America! Kostya was immediately interested, so he applied to the exchange-student program to see America for himself. Fortunately for Kostya, a family in Wisconsin expressed interest in hosting him. When he was sixteen years old, he went on his first transatlantic flight, without his family, all the way to the United States.

As soon as Kostya arrived at the airport, he found that Americans acted much differently from what he expected, based on what he had learned when he was younger. The Americans were kind and friendly. Even when Kostya was having trouble speaking English, his host family was patient and helped him.

Kostya attended one year of high school in America. He enjoyed his experience and the opportunity to learn in America. He decided to stay for college, and got his first job in Chicago, Illinois! He met his wife and started a life in America, thousands of miles away from the country that had forbidden him to move in the first place.

Now in 2023, Kostya lives in St. Louis, Missouri. He has been having so much fun in America ever since he moved! He still hopes Russian kids can stay curious like he was.

Jakob Kekhaev; Missouri, USA

1. The Soviet Union (USSR) consisted of fifteen republics, of which Russia was by far the largest. After the USSR was dissolved in December 1991, the republics became independent countries.



## 15. A Royal Opportunity

1992; Castle Bromwich, England, United Kingdom

It was a gorgeous fall day when my grandpa Bob Ellis met Queen Elizabeth II. He had been to England many times for work, but this time was special. He worked for Johnson Controls, Inc., which made the seats for Jaguar Cars, which was big in England. Grandpa had traveled to Castle Bromwich,<sup>1</sup> England, for the grand opening of a new Jaguar auto assembly plant. The factory was going to supply thousands of jobs, so the queen herself was going to the grand opening.

A few months earlier, while my grandpa was still in Michigan, Jaguar had sent him a form for a background check as well as an incredibly thick packet about the proper protocol for meeting the queen. Information like how to address her, how to show proper respect for her, and other things like that were included in the packet.

When the time came to go to the grand opening, my grandpa and other employees from Johnson Controls went to the assembly plant, which was HUGE! They walked through the building and came to a large room. There were about two hundred people there in total, and Grandpa's group was only about eight. The people were arranged in two lines facing each other and stretching all the way across the room.

Grandpa's group was somewhere in the middle of one of the lines. Queen Elizabeth was greeting their line, and Prince Philip was greeting the other, which was made up mostly of assembly-plant workers. The queen looked very regal. She was wearing a dress of purple, pink, and blue, and a purple hat.

The queen made her way down the line and finally got to Grandpa. The chairman of Jaguar Cars was with her and introduced her to Grandpa. "Your Majesty," he said, "this is Mr. Vanellis."

"How nice to meet you, Mr. Vanellis," replied the queen, maintaining perfect eye contact.

"Vanellis?" thought Grandpa. "My last name is 'Ellis,' and my middle name is 'Van.' They must have combined them." He wasn't about to correct the queen, but it was still funny. He tried not to laugh, and he bowed his head as he had been instructed in the protocol packet.

"Your Majesty, how do you do?" he said, instead of laughing.

The queen reached out her delicate gloved hand, and Grandpa gently shook it.

"Mr. Vanellis works for the company that makes the seats for our Jaguar vehicles," explained the chairman.

"Oh, the green seats in my Jaguar are very comfortable," the queen acknowledged.

"I'm so glad," replied Grandpa.

"It was very nice to meet you, Mr. Vanellis," the queen concluded. They took a picture, and she moved on.

The experience was short, but unforgettable: the dainty white gloves, how they got his name wrong, and how focused the queen was on the conversation — like they were the only ones in the room. He couldn't believe that he was one of only a handful of people that had met her. It truly was a royal opportunity.

Kaitlyn De Groot; Missouri, USA

1. Castle Bromwich is the name of a village about 115 miles northwest of London, England.

## 16. Romantic Clocks

2004; Trier, Germany

When you think of romance, you think of flowers and jewelry, but you probably don't think of a clock. Well, think again, because this is how my mom and dad's love story began.

In Germany in the spring of 2004, my dad, Brian Wood, and my mom, Maureen Patten, lived in the same apartment complex. Several of the tenants would go on trips together. One time the tenants went on a trip to the Black Forest. While there, they toured a little town called Trier (TREE-uh). The town had a small clock shop. The group went into the clock shop, because the Black Forest was known for its clocks.

While they were looking at the clocks, Brian asked Maureen to help him pick out a clock as a souvenir. Maureen agreed to the offer. She thought to herself, "Which one would I want if it were for my house?" There were a variety of clocks, from cuckoo clocks and wall clocks to grandfather clocks and extravagantly carved chime clocks. Even though the Black Forest was most widely known for cuckoo clocks, Maureen thought, "I wouldn't want a cuckoo clock in my house." As they were looking around, she saw a simple, but beautifully carved, wall clock. That was the one. It was beautiful but not overly carved. Maureen showed Brian, and he agreed with her. He purchased the clock.

A few weeks later they met each other for their first "date." Now they are married and have two children — me and my younger brother. To this day, that clock chimes through our house every fifteen minutes.

So do you think that romance is all flowers and jewelry, or have you changed your mind to think differently?

Brooklyn Wood; Illinois, USA

## Invitation to Participate

The Grannie Annie Family Story Celebration invites you to discover, write, and submit a story from your family's history. Your story can be humorous, tragic, inspirational — it can be about *anything* that happened in your family before you were born. The annual submission deadline is February 1. Complete details, including the guidelines and required submission form, are available on The Grannie Annie's website: [TheGrannieAnnie.org/SubmitStories.html](http://TheGrannieAnnie.org/SubmitStories.html)

## Praise for The Grannie Annie

Thank you so much for the opportunity to share family stories. My father has gotten so much joy from sharing his story, reading Matthew's drafts, and looking through his mom's old Bible and seeing family members' names, birth dates, and death dates written in her handwriting. The Grannie Annie is definitely more than a writing assignment. It is a bonding experience for everyone involved.

—Amy Pierce, Parent; Missouri, USA

As a writing instructor, I encourage my students to enter various contests throughout the year. They have submitted stories to The Grannie Annie every year for many years. Thank you for the writing prompt and for reading their submissions. I have enjoyed the remarkable stories that many students have uncovered.

—Janine Edwards, Instructor; New Jersey, USA

The Grannie Annie is a writing opportunity with meaning and purpose. As students discover and share their family's stories, they come to realize the power of their pen to connect members of their family, stir the imagination, and touch hearts.

—Martha Stegmaier, Grannie Annie Board member and volunteer extraordinaire; Missouri, USA

Thank you for this great honor to be included in The Grannie Annie Family Story Celebration. I took my daughters to South Korea this past summer to meet extended relatives like my grandmother, who is from North Korea. It is very special that the story of her family can be memorialized in this way so that Esther and her sisters can appreciate their heritage.

—Sandra Sohn, Parent; Ohio, USA

My family has really loved the whole Grannie Annie process — the interview, the research, the editing, and of course the honor of having our family's story selected for publication. It's been such a pivotal writing experience for Aidan, who has just finished fifth grade.

—Mindy McCoy, Parent; Missouri, USA

Participating in The Grannie Annie offers my students a wonderful opportunity to learn about their families' history by interviewing a family member, and an authentic audience for their writing.

—Kathy Lewis, Teacher; Missouri, USA

Thanks for such a great opportunity to write powerful stories and to showcase our work!

—Carol Fitzsimmons, Teacher; Missouri, USA

The Grannie Annie has brought all 51 children in my language arts classes closer to their families — and to each other. When they discuss their stories, they notice similarities between their own stories and their classmates' stories. The Grannie Annie is a valuable program that has provided my students and me with a powerful learning opportunity.

—Elie Bashevkin, Teacher; New York, USA

Perhaps the greatest value of the Grannie Annie stories is something not written in the book. When a child interviews an older relative, the child gets to know a person he or she may have taken for granted. The relative gets to tell a story that might have been lost. A bond is created or strengthened. A story is recorded for posterity. New memories are woven, and — just maybe — a writer is born.

—Lulu Delacre, Author/illustrator of *Salsa Stories*

My daughter, Sophia Rose, contacted my mother in Germany after her language arts teacher suggested that she write a story about my mother in World War II. The two had a wonderful e-mail and phone correspondence over a couple of weeks. When I saw the final draft of my daughter's writing, I read a story my mother had never told me. My daughter created a new memory of my mother's life through her writing. What an amazing gift The Grannie Annie gave our family!

—Petra Swidler, Parent; Missouri, USA

The Grannie Annie gives students and their parents a chance to reflect on the varied experiences that weave together their family's identity. Many people have brokenness in their family history, and by identifying and writing about hard experiences, our children learn to see the strength and restoration of our loved ones. We're grateful to The Grannie Annie for providing an opportunity to publicly show honor and respect to our family members who have persevered.

—Christan Perona, Parent; Missouri, USA

Because of The Grannie Annie, I have been motivated to continue writing and am now working on my first novel!

—Aaron Schnoor, Author, *Grannie Annie, Vols. 5, 6, and 7*; Grannie Annie Selection Committee 2014 – 2017, and 2019; North Carolina, USA

When young people participate in The Grannie Annie and discover, and then reflect upon, their family's stories and the family stories of others, the experience can create in each of these young authors an enhanced sense of appreciation, understanding, and "connection." Thank you to The Grannie Annie for giving our communities young people who will see our diversity as an asset rather than a deficit, will recognize the sameness even in our differences, and will bring to our world a bit more compassion.

—Dr. Phil Hunsberger, Senior Partner, Educational Equity Consultants

This is my daughter's first time submitting her writing outside her school. It's very encouraging to her. She loves reading and writing. I believe this experience will have a great impact on her.

—Daniel Liu, Parent; New Jersey, USA

Year after year, my fifth-grade students are eager and excited to submit their work to The Grannie Annie. The experience of submitting a manuscript — with the hope of publishing — gives newfound meaning to their learning. The students stand taller when they become cognizant that the world is benefiting from their contribution.

—Rebecca Friedman, Teacher; Maryland, USA

The Grannie Annie challenged my students to go beyond their comfort zone, to write for a broader audience, and to see that learning goes beyond the four walls of a classroom.

—Ann-Marie Harris, Teacher; Maryland, USA

Thank you for starting such a heartwarming project where *all* the kids are winners, whether their stories are published or not.

—G-g Metzger, Teacher; Texas, USA

Publication of our daughter’s story is special to us for so many reasons. . . . Both my mother and grandmother passed away a few years ago. Growing up, I heard this story countless times from my grandmother. It’s wonderful seeing that story told through my daughter’s words.

—Andrea Rominger, Parent; Alabama, USA

Orion’s writing a family story was extremely important to his grandmother, who had a serious illness. When he called her to tell her that his story was going to be published, she was as happy as anyone had seen her in months. She read the story to anyone who would listen. I can’t even begin to tell you the positive impact that this has had on our family.

—Andrew Jones, Parent; Pennsylvania, USA

The Grannie Annie provides the perfect opportunity for students to start asking questions about their families’ past — not just the facts, but the stories. Then as they write, students begin to understand how *telling a story* differs from *writing a biography of facts*.

—Mark Futrell, Teacher; North Carolina, USA

I would like to thank you for giving Yifu such an encouragement, and working diligently to publish his first article! Our families in China are very happy to hear about this. It is an amazing experience to me that I witness that a part of my family heritage is being connected from my father to my son through the event you support! Thank you!

—Yuxing Feng, Parent; Missouri, USA

This book should be on the bookshelves in all elementary and junior high schools.

—The Reading Tub™, <https://thereadingtub.org>

My students were so excited to write their family stories! Since the stories were written during our immigration unit, the students had even more reason to ask their families questions. The stories really enriched our classroom discussions and helped the students to connect to the concepts being taught.

—Amy Del Coro, Teacher; New Jersey, USA

Since my mother died recently, I have been cleaning out her house and going through her things and wondering, “Who made this quilt? Who’s in this old photo?” Trying to remember the family stories that she told me has really driven home the need to preserve family history. It is so wonderful that The Grannie Annie encourages this continuity of memories.

—Beverly Miller, Teacher; Alabama, USA

The Grannie Annie is a good start for kids to get published. And I love the way The Grannie Annie helps people understand their family history. It also helps children get closer to their families.

—Andrew Malphurs, Author of the *Grannie Annie, Vol. 5*, story “Grandpa’s Saddle”; Georgia, USA

Our son's *oma* is overwhelmed that her "story" is in print in *Grannie Annie*. . . . Every family member and family friend has a signed copy.

—Karie Millard, Parent; Indiana, USA

Since first becoming involved with The Grannie Annie, we look forward every year to the truly unique and heartwarming stories each student brings to the classroom.

—Brian Billings and Laura Amburgey, Teachers; Ohio, USA

Although most students in our Eastern European village live next door to family members from earlier generations, The Grannie Annie prompted them to talk with their grandparents in new ways — and to discover the customs and challenges of times past. In addition, stories from the Grannie Annie books have given my students a glimpse of the world outside their village, where differences may abound but the underlying human condition remains the same.

—Martin Ellinger-Locke, Peace Corps volunteer in Glodeni, Moldova

Stories connect people in families and communities, giving them a common language and understanding of the present as well as the past. Through The Grannie Annie, generations connect as students take time to listen to the stories of their older relatives — and learn from them. Then, as the students write and share their stories, the connections multiply.

—Amy Glaser Gage; Children's author, writing teacher, and consultant to The Grannie Annie

When kids learn details about what life was like decades ago, the past comes alive for them. History becomes real — and they want to know more! The Grannie Annie provides an opportunity for kids to be inspired by their own family's history.

—Florrie Binford Kichler, Patria Press

The Grannie Annie is all about connection. As it hearkens back to the original Grannie Annie, it continues her tradition of oral storytelling to link generations and cultures. Grannie Annie family stories written by young people illuminate a long span of history, often revealing family values honed from adversity or triumph and tempered by humor and love.

—Janet Grace Riehl, Author of *Sightlines: A Family Love Story in Poetry & Music*

The Grannie Annie is remarkable in its goals and in its approach. Recording and sharing the stories of preceding generations goes to the heart of education — it teaches us who we are as family members, citizens, and members of human civilization.

—Matthew Lary, Co-author of *Victory Through Valor: A Collection of World War II Memoirs*

My son "harvested" several stories from my father, including one that appeared in *Grannie Annie, Vol. 1*. My father has since passed away, and I am forever grateful that my son recorded these stories before it was too late. I doubt he would have done so if it had not been for The Grannie Annie.

—Karen Metcalf, Parent; Tennessee, USA

Taking time away from your technology-filled life to join in The Grannie Annie is like trading fast food for Sunday dinner at Grandma's.

—Debra K. Shatoff, Ed.D., Family therapist and author of *In-Home Child Care: A Step-by-Step Guide to Quality, Affordable Care*



Teachers and parents, if you want to motivate students to love writing, ask them to write for The Grannie Annie.

—Bonnie M. Davis, Ph.D., Author of *How to Teach Students Who Don't Look Like You: Culturally Relevant Teaching Strategies*