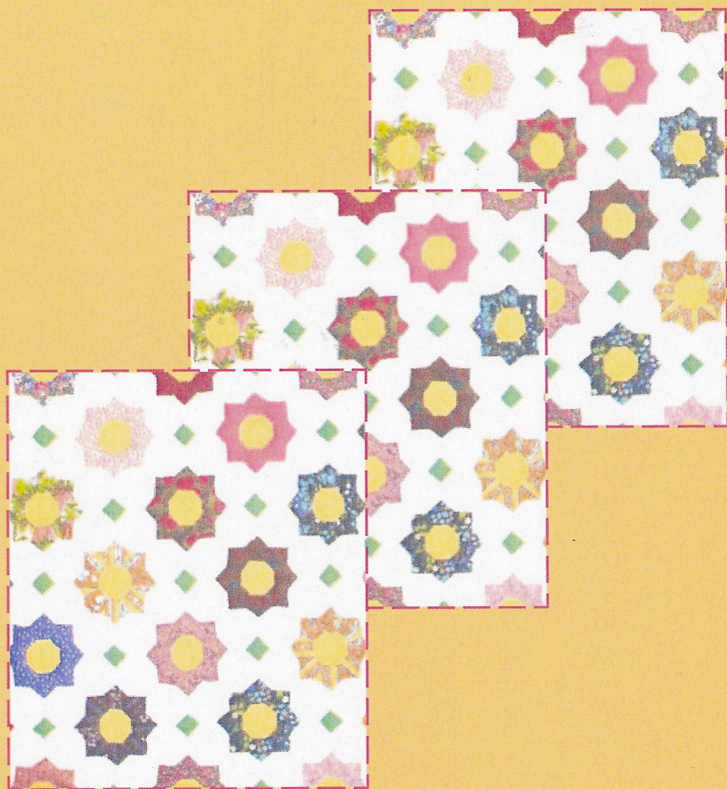


# Grannie Annie



*Vol. I*

Selections from the 2006

**Grannie Annie Family Story Celebration**

A Writing Contest for *One-of-a-Kind Kids*



## *The Grannie Annie*

*A Family Story Celebration*

The mission of The Grannie Annie is to celebrate family stories! Students in U.S. grades 4-8 and homeschool or international students ages 9-14 were invited to interview their family storykeepers and write a story based on their interview. They were encouraged to share their story with their family, school, community, and The Grannie Annie. Twelve stories from each of two age categories, chosen to represent the stories received this year, are included in this first annual edition of *Grannie Annie*.

The Grannie Annie mission—to discover, share, and celebrate family stories—springs from a belief in the transformative power of “story.” The simple and very personal family stories in this book can help us connect with people in today’s world and people from times past. In unexplainable ways, these stories foster feelings of unity with people whose lives may seem very different from our own. Suddenly, gently, the world moves one step closer to peace.



# *Grannie Annie*

*Vol. I*

Selections from the 2006  
Grannie Annie Family Story Celebration  
A Writing Contest for *One-of-a-Kind* Kids

Thumbprint Press

Portico Books

Saint Louis, Missouri

Listening is an act of love.

—Dave Isay, *StoryCorps*

Because the stories in *Grannie Annie, Vol. I* were captured from the oral tradition, they represent a unique blend of history and legend. No claims of historical accuracy are guaranteed by the authors, sponsors, or publishers.

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In honor of  
Ann Guirrerri Cutler,  
who is passionate about saving family stories

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## *A Word from Grannie Annie*

Some Native American nations so valued their histories that they designated a tribal storykeeper. My mother has 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 has 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

## *Note to Parents and Educators*

The stories in *Grannie Annie, Vol. I* bring history to life, giving us vivid personal accounts of life in “the good old days.” The stories include humor, adventure, hardship, and triumph. They entertain us, teach us, and help define our identity.

The experiences that build our courage and our character, however, are often those experiences that provide our greatest challenges. Recognizing this reality, we have included stories of family members in conflict and stories in which the extreme circumstances of war or oppression necessitated difficult choices.

Please read the *Grannie Annie* stories yourself before sharing them with your children. Decide which stories you will share now and which, if any, would better be left for later. Think about how you will answer the challenging questions children are sure to ask after reading some of these stories—questions about right and wrong, justice and injustice, peace and violence.

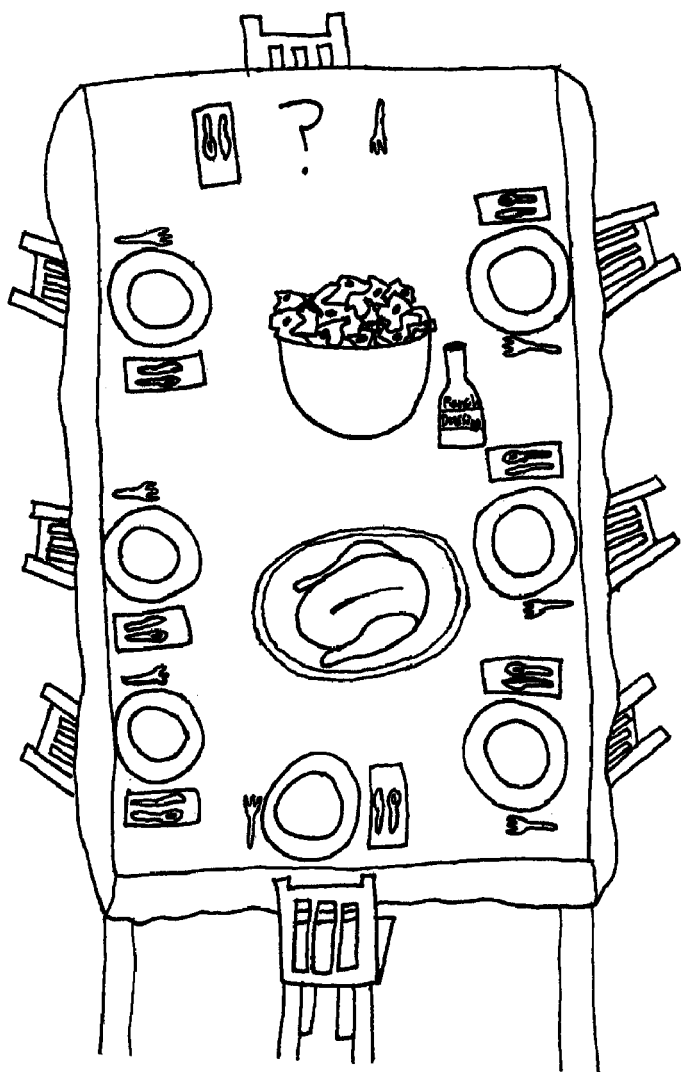
We believe that sharing these remarkable stories will help all of us to understand ourselves, and others, a little bit better. We believe that facing the reality of our past will help us to join hands and walk together into a more peaceful world, into the future that will create the next generation’s stories from the past.

Thank you for becoming an important part of this adventure. We hope you’ll join us again next year for The Grannie Annie—A Family Story Celebration.

Connie McIntyre and Fran Hamilton  
Sponsors of The Grannie Annie



*Grannie Annie, Vol. I*





## *The Family Reunion and the Missing Plate*

It was dinnertime at Grandma and Grandpa Doby's farm. It was a feast, but it wasn't Thanksgiving—or any special occasion. It was a beautiful summer day. They had chicken, mashed potatoes, gravy, green salad, stuffed celery, corn, and fruit salad. They sat at the table. Grandma passed the food around to Grandpa and their two girls. Hungrily Grandpa told them, "Looks larrupin'.\* I'm as hungry as a bear." They were having Sunday dinner together.

As soon as Grandpa picked up his fork, they heard a car drive up. Grandma opened the door, and in came Aunt Maud. "Come in, come in! You're just in time," Grandpa exclaimed. Then in came Aunt Dessie, and Grandma called, "No problem at all." Then in came Aunt Clara, friends, and family.

Grandpa always sat in the doorway to get some breeze. There was very little room in the kitchen behind his chair. So he got up and scooted his chair in so people could get through. But he thought to himself, *That was a mistake*, because his plate disappeared right before his eyes! He thought to himself again, while putting his fork down, *Well, there isn't much use for this anymore.*

\*larrupin' = delicious

Grandma tried to serve the kids cups of water, but Aunt Dessie told her, “We’ll take care of ourselves.” Then everyone started crowding around the sink and cupboard. They all passed drinks around, but even the parents couldn’t get enough. Grandpa told everyone, “The Texas water was so bad, it not only ate up natural teeth, it ate up dentures, too.”

Kids were as thirsty as they were hungry—and they were pretty hungry! There were lots of kids there. Grandma had enough food for four, not twenty-four! They still hadn’t figured out who took Grandpa’s plate.

Aunt Dessie helped Grandma set out more dishes and made a big vegetable salad. Grandma pressure-cooked sweet potatoes. It didn’t take five minutes. The girls tried to help, but Aunt Dessie told them that they best stay sitting at the table—that way they wouldn’t get trampled. Grandma added some canned fruit to the table and made vegetable broth stew, potatoes, gravy, and rolls. She filled everyone’s plate. Grandpa didn’t eat but sure enjoyed his friends and family.

There was a lot of laughter. No one had to wonder if they were having a good time. Everyone tried to outtalk each other. Everyone was extra happy!

The visitors announced their thank-yous. They told them, “Hate to eat and run!” They did their hugs and more good-byes outside. They took pictures outside.

Leaving was hard. People waved all the way to the fence. It wasn’t Thanksgiving, but it felt like it. Grandma was definitely proud to be part of the Doby family! It wasn’t Grandma’s best meal, but it was most

enjoyed. They never found out who ate Grandpa's plate or when he ate, but they did know that he enjoyed his family, and that was enough!

Sara Michelle Zachary  
Missouri

## *My Grandfather*

My grandfather Emil Andrew Dubas was born to Frank and Frances Dubas in 1931. Emil had eight brothers and four sisters. He had so many brothers and sisters that they had to have three or four children in a bed and they didn't have food for all.

My grandfather lived on a 160-acre farm. The farm was seventeen miles from Fullerton, Nebraska.

My grandfather ate a lot of chickens growing up. They raised chickens at the farm. One night some people went to my grandfather's house and stole most of my great-grandmother's chickens. When she realized that the chickens were stolen, she cried.

My grandfather also ate hogs growing up. They canned the meat. They had no freezer back then.

When my grandfather was four years old, he got kicked in the head by a horse. He was sitting in the horse's shade, the dog nipped the horse, and the horse kicked. His brothers Leo and Steve raced back to the house with him. My grandfather didn't see a doctor.

When my grandfather was little, he had chores like milking the cow. He had to chop sunflowers and cockleburs in the field. He thought the worst thing was cleaning the chicken coop. For other chores he had horses instead of tractors.

When my grandfather was eight years old, his

whole family survived scarlet fever. The doctor quarantined the house. No one could go in or out besides the doctor.

My grandfather spoke Polish until he started school. After he learned some English, he didn't want to speak any more Polish. Talking Polish made him feel different.

My grandfather had to walk one and a half miles to school. The government would give food to the school for the students to eat. They gave them fruit and peanut butter. They also gave them (my grandfather's favorite) pork and beans. All that my grandfather had to take was two pieces of bread for a peanut butter sandwich.

My grandfather was out of school when he was in the eighth grade—he was twelve years old. He was so smart at math. He took his exam to get out of school, and he got a 100 on it.

The family didn't go to church very often. The children had to take turns going because the car was way too small. The gas cost too much, and they lived seventeen miles away from church, so they didn't always go.

My grandfather is still alive. He is seventy-four and is cheerful talking about when he was growing up.

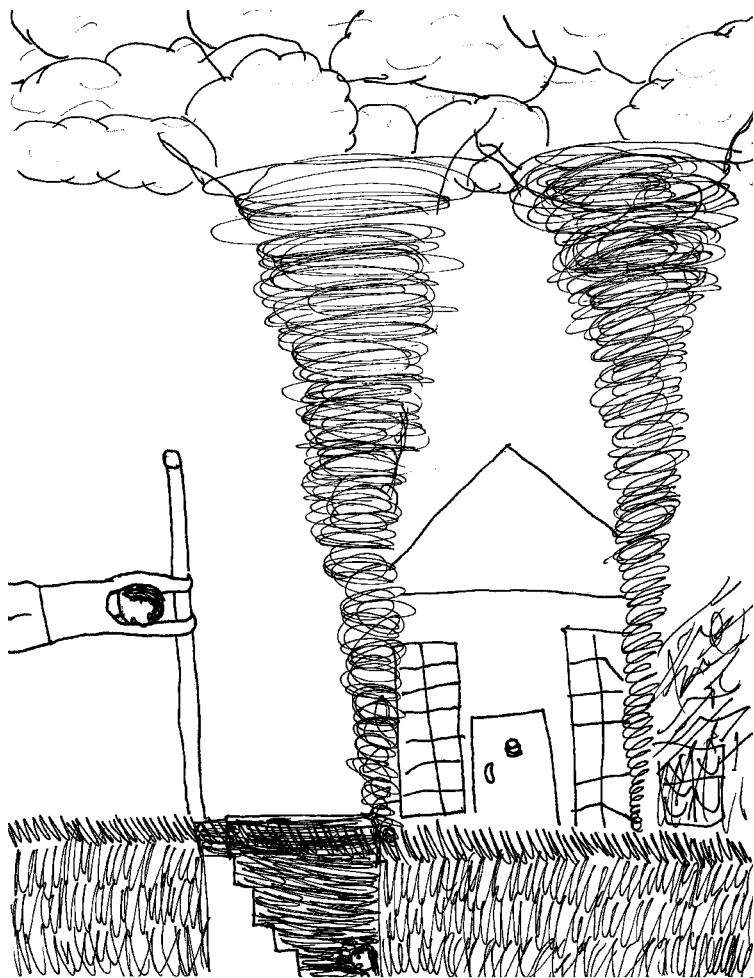
Kelly Steenson  
Nebraska

## *The Tornado*

A hot, humid day in June of 1972 started out to be normal, as normal is on a farm with five kids. But around 12:30 Grandpa turned on the television like always to catch the news. The TV said that there were two tornadoes on the ground and one more in the clouds forming. They all heard Grandpa yell, “Kids, get to the cellar!” But what he really meant was to get into the potato cellar about twenty feet from the house.

The TV beeped again and told people in the vicinity of Pibel Lake, where they lived, to take cover. All three tornadoes were down and would be there within minutes. Grandpa grabbed the blankets and followed the kids to the cellar door. Grandpa grabbed a rope that held the cellar door shut and tied it around his waist. This was to keep Grandpa from blowing out of the cellar. As soon as Grandpa shut the cellar door, the tornado hit.

The noise sounded like a train right on top of them. Grandpa was holding the door shut with all his might when the door flew open and Grandpa was tossed into the front yard. Grandma and the kids were far enough into the cellar that it didn’t suck them out. Grandpa reached out and grabbed the light pole that stood in the front yard. Grandpa heard something that sounded like a horse. As he looked up, he saw the family



horse, Petunia, flying through the air.

Within seconds Petunia was out of sight. The roof of the chicken coop out back was being tossed around and torn apart. Several boards off the chicken coop hit Grandpa as he held on for his life. The wind stopped for a few seconds, so he thought it was over, but as soon as he let go of the pole and took a few steps toward the cellar, he saw two tornadoes side by side behind the grove beside the house.

Grandpa knew he couldn't get back to the cellar, so he grabbed the pole again. These funnels came straight at the house and Grandpa. Just seconds before both tornadoes would have hit him, they went up into the sky. Things that had been sucked up into the tornadoes started falling around Grandpa. Grandpa ran to the cellar to check on Grandma and the kids. Grandpa pulled the door open, and as soon as they all came out, they started looking around. They could see things were a mess.

The chicken coop where Grandma had all her baby chicks was gone, and they found baby chicks all over the yard. There were even a few chickens in the house scattered on the floor. Grandpa told the family that he had seen the horse being blown away. They cleaned up for days after the storm. To their surprise, three days after the storm hit, a neighbor told them that he had found their horse, Petunia, in his pasture. She was alive! It took several days to clean up, but life was back to normal again on the farm.

Jeffrey Paul Duda  
Nebraska



## *Camping Can Be Fun*

When my mom was little, her family would go camping a lot. They would go camping in different places every time. They would camp by rivers and by lakes.

On one of the camping trips something very funny happened. They were camping at Kentucky Lake. It was two hours away from their house. After everyone unpacked the car, my grandpa was going to set up the tent. When he opened the bag that had the tent in it, he couldn't find the tent poles. At first he thought that they had fallen out of the tent bag, so he searched inside and outside of the car. Then he searched through all of the equipment. After looking for a very long time, he figured out that he had no poles to set the tent up with. He didn't know what he was going to do.

My grandpa asked my mom, my uncle, my aunt, and my grandma for an idea. Eventually they all came up with the idea to set the tent up using the car, a tree, and some ropes that he had.

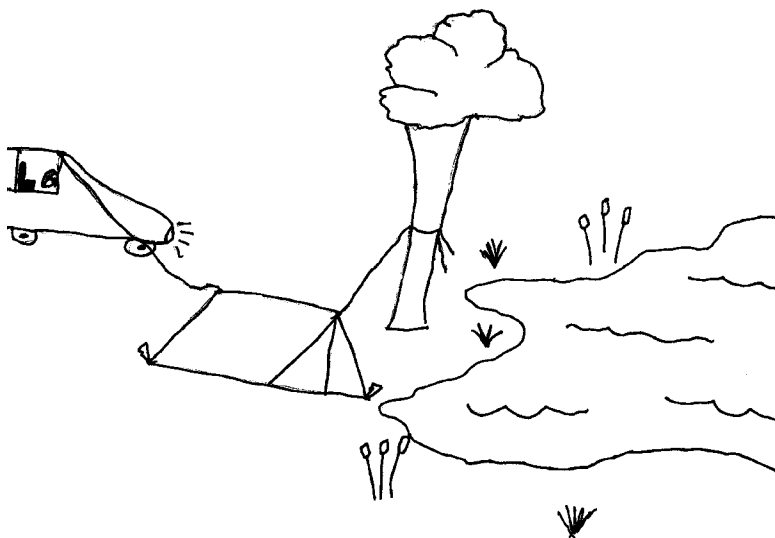
The first thing that he did was tie the rope to a tree. Then he tied the rope to the ski rack on top of the car. Then he strung the ropes through the pockets on the tent where the pole should have been. After that, it got hard. Everyone had to look for sharp rocks to use as stakes.

Everyone worked very hard to put the tent

together. It was the middle of the summer, and it was very hot. When they were collecting the materials, they got very hungry. After they finally set the tent up, my mom said, “Let’s go into town and get some ice cream. It is so hot, and I am starving.”

My grandpa couldn’t believe it—after all of the hard work, they had to undo the tent to go into town. Because everyone had worked so hard and as a team, my grandpa decided to take everyone for ice cream.

Andrew Lux  
Missouri



## *The River*

One summer day in China almost all of the boys in Keming's (my dad's) class went to the river to swim. It was a big river. In the summertime the river was as big as the Mississippi River. There was lots of turbulence. There were whirlpools as big as bathtubs.

All of the boys were hesitant to go into the river. They were intimidated by the turbulence. Several boys started a contest: who could go into the river first. After a while a couple of boys volunteered. They jumped into the water and immediately followed the current. They seemed to have fun, so a few more boys jumped in. Everything was fine.

After the boys swam 200 yards or so, they wanted to come back, but they couldn't. There was a huge rock between where the boys were and the shore. One person was caught in the current. He went under the water two times. He started screaming for help. He was staying still in the water, not moving because he was stuck between two currents going against each other. His face was very pale because he was very scared.

The people on the shore (including Keming) didn't know what to do. Most of them were kind of scared because they knew the water was dangerous. Then one person shouted, "We have to do something!" Without

thinking what he was doing, Keming just jumped into the water. Another boy followed him. They both swam to the person who was caught in the current.

Suddenly my dad felt his legs being dragged down. The current almost choked him. There was panic in his heart. He suddenly remembered to get flat on the surface. When he got flat, he turned the person who was caught in the current face up so that he could breathe. He was half conscious. Keming and his companion dragged the person who had been caught in the current towards the middle of the river because the current wasn't as strong there. They swam downstream for about half a mile. Then they came back to the shore where the water was running slow. The three of them were really shocked and tired. Now my dad knows what it feels like to be in a rushing river.

Luke Felix Song  
Missouri

## *Grandpa's Newspaper Adventure*

In the 1920s there were two brothers named Victor and Richard Vollrath. They lived in Irvington, Indiana, which is now a part of Indianapolis. They came from a large family of six kids and had to earn money to help their family during the Depression. They had a dog, a German shepherd, named Fite because he always liked to fight other dogs. They also had a pony named Dandy.

Victor, my grandpa, and his brother Dick were paperboys. Their dog Fite was eight years old, and the pony Dandy was five years old. Grandpa was twelve and Uncle Dick seven. The pony and the dog were trained to go on the paper route.

The pony was hitched to a cart. Grandpa drove the cart, and Uncle Dick folded the papers and gave them to Fite. The dog would take the paper and deliver it to the door, and the pony would pull the wagon, which was full of the evening paper, the *Indianapolis News*. The boys called their service Direct Door Dog Delivery.

The brothers had to keep the pony clean and well groomed. They did it by currying the pony every day. The curry brush had teeth in it. They stroked the pony, and the brush went through its hair.

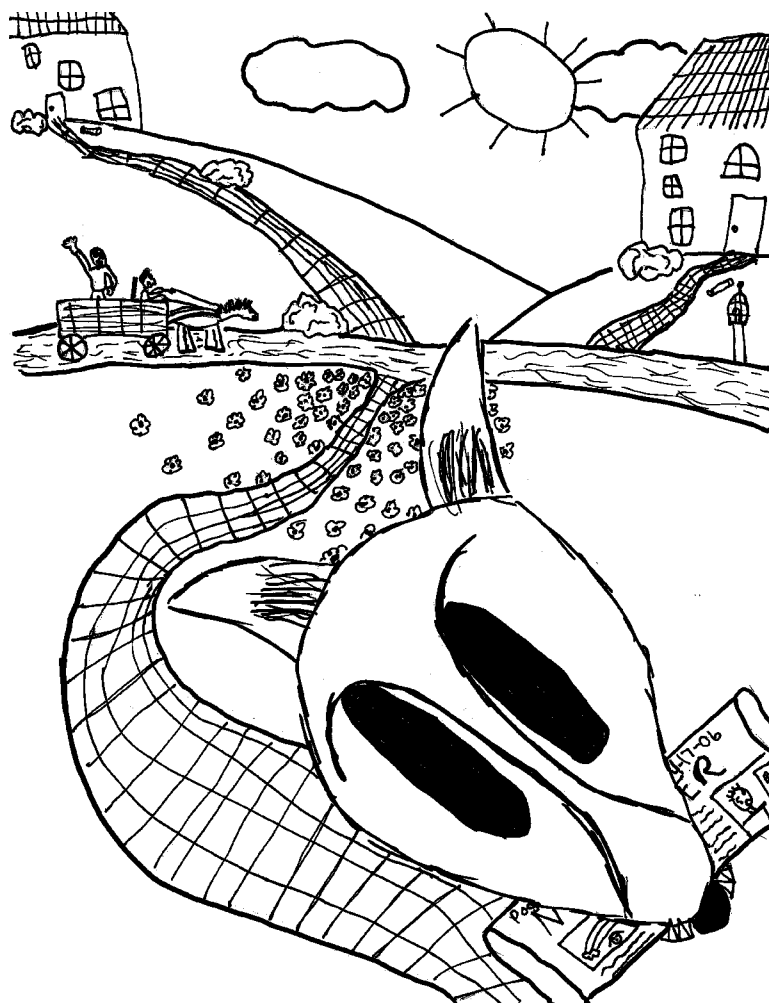
They had about eighty customers. One of the customers was never home, and so he never paid his bill for the paper. One day Uncle Dick went up to the door

and started pounding, and Grandpa walked up to the door, too. He heard a truck come by, and right when it passed by, it honked at the pony. It was a loud horn, and the pony got scared. Dandy ran away.

Some animals, like horses for example, have compasses in their heads. So the pony ran all the way home. When he went into the driveway, the cart flipped over on its side and broke off some pieces.

Delivering newspapers with his brother and pets is one of my grandpa's favorite memories. It is also one of my favorite stories.

Greg Taylor  
Indiana



## *Escaping from Germany*

“Hi, Dad,” I said.

“Do you want me to tell you a story?”

“Sure,” I said.

“Here is how it starts. It was around twenty years ago. I was a kid. *My* dad started to tell *me* a story. It is about when my dad, Alex, was growing up.”

*Alex Schindler lived in Munich, Germany. He was twelve years old. It was the late 1930s. Hitler had just come to power.*

*“Bye, Dad,” Alex said very sadly. His dad was leaving. He didn’t think Hitler was a good ruler, so he was leaving his family and moving to a different country. Alex’s mom didn’t think that there was anything bad about Hitler, and her business was there, so she didn’t want to leave. Alex didn’t care about Hitler. Little did they know they should’ve gone with Alex’s dad. . . .*

*Alex was still upset his dad had left. That night, November 9, 1938, a little bit after Alex went to bed, Nazis invaded the town and destroyed most of the Jewish stores in the town. They shattered the windows of every shop owned by Jews, and all their synagogues. All the Jewish stores had glass lying all over. Mrs. Schindler finally realized her husband was right, and*



*she realized what was going on. First, Alex's friends stopped talking to him and all of the other Jews in the school. Now Kristallnacht\*—they had to somehow get out of Germany! Hitler was bad. When Alex's mom said that they were going to go live with his dad, Alex immediately wanted to leave. Alex missed his dad very much. They packed some clothes, toys, money, and other items. They really wanted to get out of Germany. They were going to escape to Switzerland. They wanted to leave because they knew Kristallnacht wasn't the worst thing that would happen. . . .*

*Alex's mom didn't know how she was going to get out of Germany. It was illegal for Jews to escape. That is why she disguised Alex as a Catholic boy before he got on the train. Awhile after Alex left, his mom came up with an idea. A forest guide owed her money, so she went to the guide to ask if he could take her to Switzerland. He agreed. They ventured through the woods. It was extremely nice because it was illegal to smuggle Jews out of the country. She was very thankful the guide was there and she had made that loan.*

*When Alex's mom got to Switzerland, she went to the train station to look for Alex. She found him. They were both glad they were out of Germany and safe from the Nazis.*

*"So that was how I escaped from Germany," Alex said around fifty years later.*

*"Cool! That must've been very hard," I said.*

\*Kristallnacht = Night of Broken Glass

*“Yes, I’m glad it is over.”*

“So that is the story *your* dad told you when *you* were a kid?” I asked.

“Yes. That’s the story he told me many years ago.”

Stella Schindler  
Missouri

## *She Was the First*

Ethel Callahan was born in Brayton, Nebraska, in 1911. Ethel Callahan grew to be only 5 feet 1 inch tall. She graduated from Greeley High School in Greeley, Nebraska, and she went to college to become a teacher. She taught at Brayton and in Colorado for a few years.

When she was finishing her years of teaching, World War II started. Ethel needed more money, and America needed air traffic controllers, so she went to school to learn to be an air traffic controller. She got a job at Oklahoma International Airport. When she got the job, she became the first woman ever to be an air traffic controller. In Oklahoma City all of her work partners named her Kelly. She later was offered a job in Hawaii, so she moved to Honolulu, Hawaii, where she finished out her years of being an air traffic controller.

In Hawaii it was ninety-nine steps up to the control room where she would direct multi-thousand-pound airplanes to land and take off. She would tell them if they could land, where to land, and if they could cross a runway. She worked eight-hour day shifts with three other people. When she worked the eight-hour night shifts, there were only two people. There were not as many planes coming in at nighttime. Every day Ethel would handle 175 to 200 airplanes taking off and coming in for a landing.

When she would come back to see her family on holidays, she would always bring gifts for her nephews and nieces. Everyone liked it when she visited because she would bring unusual presents for them, like hula skirts and pictures of volcanoes erupting. She retired and moved to California, where she died in June of 2000. She is buried in the cemetery in O'Connor, Nebraska.

Ethel Callahan was my great-aunt. My family is very proud of her. She was a remarkable person, and a great role model for both girls and boys. I'm glad that I'm related to her. She was the first.

Benjamin Martin Callahan  
Nebraska

## *Behind the Walls*

John Beard was a real live part of the Underground Railroad. He was also my great-great-great-great-grandfather. This is his story, as told to me by my grandfather, who was named after him.

The Underground Railroad was a “train” of houses that hid fugitive slaves on their way to Canada. Most of the people who helped this cause were Quakers who were peacemakers and thought slavery was wrong. What is amazing is how dedicated these people were to helping others. If found out, they would go to prison or die. These people, including my great-great-great-great-grandfather, were very courageous.

Have you ever wondered why the Underground Railroad is called the “Underground Railroad”? Well, it is actually a “fake” name. Slave hunters could only track runaway slaves up to Cincinnati. Once when two Underground Railroad participants were talking, a slave hunter demanded to know how the slaves left without a trace. So the two men took him to an old unfinished railroad to Canada. They told him that as soon as the slaves got to Cincinnati, they got on this “train” and then they were gone. This fooled the slave hunter, and that is how the Underground Railroad got its name.

On October 15, 1813, in Guilford County, North Carolina, a new baby boy was born to William and Rachel

Beard. His name was John, and he was the third child and the first boy.

In 1816 John's family immigrated to what is now Union County, Indiana. This is where John met Catherine Dubois, whom he married in 1836.

The Beard House was a main stop on the Underground Railroad. It had false walls to hide the slaves. The house had a cupboard with a false top that when pulled off caused a rope ladder to fall down. The slaves could climb up, hide, and look out two small windows to make sure no one was coming. If someone *was*, they escaped through an opening that led outside. The woods that surrounded the house kept the slaves from being seen. The Beard House was built sometime between 1816 and 1822. The house is still standing today, with all the compartments still in it.

John and his father were very kind to the slaves. They kept them well hidden and gave them plenty of food and water. Twice John was chosen to collect and take supplies to Canada to be given to the slaves who had made it there. He rode horseback *all the way* from what is now Union County, Indiana, to Canada *and* back. He and his father were respected men.

John Beard died on August 29, 1893. He was dedicated and courageous to risk his life for these people. As you can see, my great-great-great-great-grandfather helped out a lot of people in the Underground Railroad, just because he knew it was right.

Sarah Marie Line  
Indiana

## *Root Beer Rascals*

Pop-pop and his family used to make homemade root beer. The root beer contained yeast. This meant that the longer the root beer sat, the more fizzy and powerful it became. Pop-pop's sister, my great-aunt Beryl, obviously did not take this into consideration when she took six bottles of it and hid them in the basement for herself.

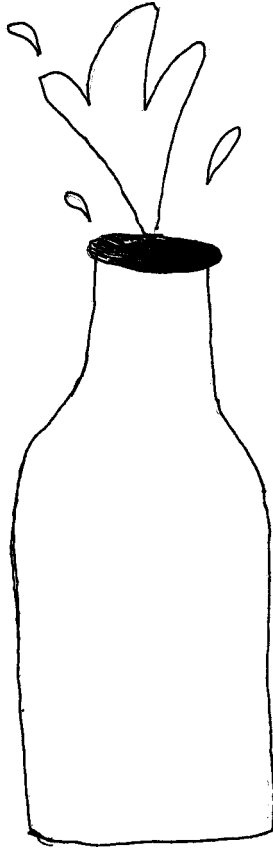
Pop-pop was twelve years old and was home alone. He had decided to go explore the basement. On a shelf he found Beryl's stash of hidden root beer.

Pop-pop's first thought was, *Now why on earth would there be six bottles of root beer on a cluttered shelf in the basement?* Then it hit him. *Someone must be hiding it down here! Beryl must have done it. She's the only one as mischievous as me.*

He took the bottles upstairs. He put five in the fridge. The other one he opened.

***Whoosh!*** Root beer was flying all over the kitchen. This was not good. There was root beer on the ceiling, root beer on the floor, root beer on the windows, root beer on the door. And the root beer was still spraying out of the bottle like Old Faithful. This was not good at all.

Pop-pop looked around. He felt like screaming. Root beer was all over the floor. It clung to the walls.



There was even root beer dripping from the ceiling. This was going to be a *long* day.

A half-hour later Pop-pop had mopped the floor, cleaned the counters, and gotten *most* of the root beer cleaned up. Only the ceiling was left. He was just going to get the stepladder when he heard his older sister, Beryl, and her friend outside.

“... and the best part is, no one knows about our little stash of root beer!”



Pop-pop got an evil look in his eyes. He quickly shook up each bottle until each one was about to burst. Just as he shut the fridge, the girls burst into the kitchen, bubbling over with excitement.

“I found your ‘secret stash’ of root beer,” he said, casually leaning against the refrigerator. “The bottles are in the fridge.” Beryl angrily shoved Pop-pop out of the way and threw open the refrigerator door. Pop-pop tiptoed away.

“They’re here,” said my aunt Beryl with a sigh of relief. The tone of her voice changed to one of disgust. “Frank must’ve drank one though. Let’s have a drink, Juanita.”

As Beryl was opening the bottle, Juanita noticed the ceiling. “STOP!” she screamed, but she was too late. **Whoosh!** Root beer was flying all over the kitchen. Again.

When Pop-pop’s mom got home and saw the kitchen, she made my aunt Beryl clean up every last bit of the mess, and Pop-pop didn’t get in any trouble at all.

Timothy Andrew Metcalf  
Tennessee

## *My Ancestor Philippe DuTrieux*

Not too long ago Emily and her mother were on Manhattan Island. Emily was very young and didn't know that some of her ancestors had lived right where she was playing. Manhattan Island was once called New Amsterdam when it was owned by the Dutch. Philippe DuTrieux and his wife, Susanna, moved to New Amsterdam with their two children. The children's names were Marie and Philippe Junior.

Their story is very thrilling. It started in the Netherlands, in Europe. They sailed on a ship called the *New Netherlands*. They landed and lived in New Amsterdam. A family's American story now begins.

Philippe was trying to support his family in the New World. He was a carpenter and a color-dyer. He built buildings and furniture. He also learned how to dye cloth for clothing. It was a difficult life for the DuTrieux family. They left the Netherlands to seek a better life. Originally they were Huguenots and had fled France to avoid religious persecution. They did not speak English. They spoke Dutch and French.

Because of the conditions in New Amsterdam, people were often sick and many died very young. Still, they all had hope and faith that they were building a new life in a new land. They had hope for their future.

One day Philippe took his children to a spot by

the sea. It was a beautiful spot. New Amsterdam was still largely covered with forests. He pointed to a small flower, which was still budding. It was a bright pink flower, different from the other blue and yellow flowers around it.

“You see, children, this flower is just like us. It is working hard to survive. There are many sorts of flowers here, and there are many sorts of people in New Amsterdam. But we will all work together. This pretty pink flower will grow up here, and so will we.”

Now it is 2005. Emily is playing in a park with her mother. She is looking at the pink flowers and playing in the grass. Most of the trees on Manhattan Island are in parks now, and there are many tall buildings.

Emily came to a complete halt. “Mommy, what is this statue here?”

“I don’t believe it,” said Emily’s mother.

“What is it, Mommy?”

“This is a statue remembering the Dutch people who came here on the ship the *New Netherlands*.”

“What is so special about a ship?” Emily asked.

“It’s special, Emily, because one of your ancestors came here on that ship in 1626.”

Emily knew what *ancestor* meant. She quickly added up some numbers in her head. Then she exclaimed, “Mommy, you’re 480 years old?”

“No, Sweetie, your ancestor Philippe DuTrieux came to America in 1626. I am not that old.”

“All right, Mommy. Can you tell me the story of Philippe DuTrieux?”

“Yes,” said Emily’s mother. “It’s a wonderful story.” And then Emily and her mother walked off into the sunset while the story began again.

Emily M. Esther  
Missouri

## *Nose Rings*

Beijing, Tiger, Dog (Wenhua's close friends), and Wenhua (my dad) went to get their cows. The four boys decided to race down the path to determine who was fastest. Wenhua was sure that he would win. As it turned out, it was a tie. When they got there, the adults were already waiting for the four boys. Wenhua found his way to his own cow. Wenhua took his cow by the nose ring and the day came back to his mind. . . .

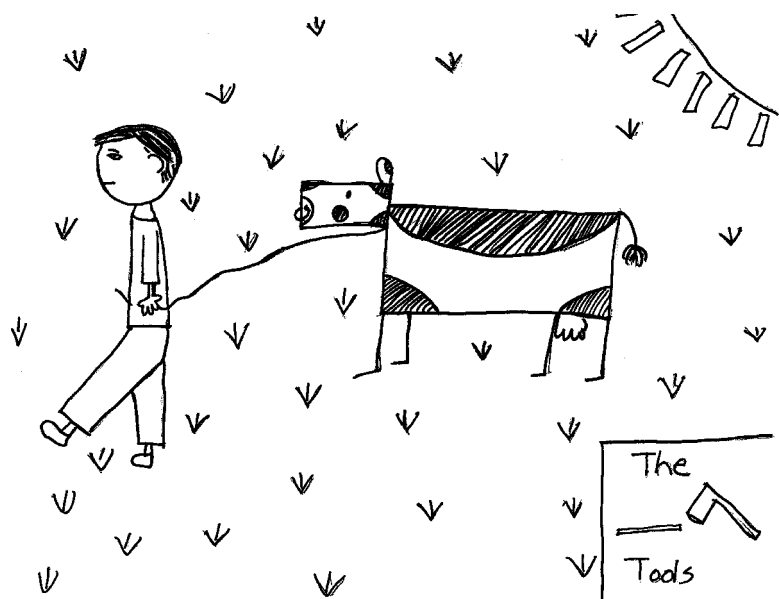
“Moouooooooooo!!!!” Beijing's cow jumped. That made Wenhua jump, too. Dog and Tiger also jumped. Beijing just stood there watching his cow. The day had finally come. The boys' cows were old enough to get their nose rings. Wenhua's dad came over with a hammer and a metal stick. The cow saw this and tried to run away. Beijing's dad held tighter. Wenhua's dad walked to the cow and aimed the metal stick at the center of the cow's nostril. The cow jumped again. Wenhua's dad put the metal stick back into place. BAM!!! “Moouooooooooooooooooooooo!!!!” Beijing's cow jumped and splattered blood everywhere. Wenhua's dad had just hammered the metal stick through the cow's nose, which was now bleeding. Tiger's dad had the ring ready and inserted it through the cow's nose. The cow looked like it was in *a lot* of pain. Tiger's dad reached down and picked up some medicine and smothered it on the cow's

nose. Wenhua's dad took Beijing's cow away, and when he returned he had Wenhua's cow with him.

Wenhua was excited to see his own cow get its own ring. Now he could join the adults and help take the cows to the hill. Wenhua's cow was a little calmer. His dad aimed the stick at the center of the nostril. BAM!!! "Moouoooooooooooooooooooo!!!" Wenhua's cow leaped into the air, which splattered blood onto the ground. Luckily Beijing's dad saw the cow jump and held tight to the cow while Tiger's dad inserted the nose ring. Seeing the blood on the ground, Wenhua was thankful that he hadn't been born a cow. Tiger's dad took the medicine and slopped it on the cow's nose. Once again Wenhua's dad took the cow away and came back with Tiger's cow.

Tiger's cow walked nervously up to the dads. Wenhua thought that the cow could sense what was coming up. It stopped and stared at the metal stick and hammer in Wenhua's dad's hand. Wenhua's dad aimed the metal stick through the center of its nostril. BAM, BAM, BAM!!! Somehow it took three pounds to get the stick through. "Moouoooooooooooooooooooo!!!" Tiger's cow jumped up and splurged blood everywhere. Wenhua felt sick by now from seeing all the blood. . . .

"Hurry up, Wenhua!" Tiger shouted. Wenhua became startled from Tiger's shouting. He suddenly realized that he had been daydreaming about the day his cow got its nose ring. His cow became impatient and started mooing. Wenhua tugged on the nose ring of his cow and joined his friends.



## *The Day That Changed My Life Forever*

In 1910 when I was a young boy, my father, John, took me to school in Humphrey every day with our horse and wagon. I remember my mom saying, “Have a good day in school, Emil.” My father and I left the farm as we had done so many times before. But today would be different. As my dad and I rode along, we talked about the school day ahead of me.

Dad asked, “What did your mother pack you for lunch?”

“Leftovers from supper, an apple, and a piece of cake,” I replied.

“Sounds good to me!” Dad said. Just then, we met a car on the road. We didn’t see very many cars since few people had them. I was always excited when I saw one. However, our horse wasn’t. Not today anyway. I’m still not sure how it happened, but the car must have spooked the horse. He reared up. Dad yelled, “Jump, Emil!” I leaped as far as I could and landed on the ground. I was crying because my whole body hurt. As I lifted my body off the ground, I saw that the wagon had tipped over.

I called for my father. “Daddy! Where are you?” At first I heard nothing. Then I saw my father lying on the ground in a pool of blood. The man who had been driving the car was kneeling beside my father.



I screamed, “Daddy! Daddy!”

“We need to get him back to your house,” explained the man.

As we approached my house, my mother came out. She didn’t get many visitors, especially someone coming by car. She saw me and knew something was wrong.

“Emil, what happened?” she exclaimed.

The man explained, “The car must have spooked your horse. When the wagon tipped over, your husband couldn’t get out of the way in time and was scalped. We need to try to stop this bleeding and get him to a doctor right away.”

“Go out to the barn and get some manure,” my mother told me. I quickly did. I watched my mom pack the fresh manure on my father’s scalp. We loaded my father into the car and went to the doctor. As we rode along, my mom asked, “Are you okay, Emil?”

I wanted to tell her how scared I was, but instead just said, “Yeah, Mom, I’m fine.”

The doctor cleaned off the manure and then stitched my father’s head as best he could. We went home, where my mom tried to nurse my father back to health. But he got infection in the wound and later died.

I was six years old when we buried my dad. I still remember him and the day that changed my life forever.

Megan Michelle Stromp, Nebraska  
(great-granddaughter of Emil)



## *Get Out of My Shower*

It was the morning after Easter Sunday, 5:00 a.m., 1970. Not a creature was stirring at the Hurster household (well, maybe a mouse). Tom, the oldest Hurster child, was in the basement. Bob (sixteen years old), Jim (fourteen), Suz (twelve), and my dad, Steven (ten), were upstairs, and Thomas and Patty were in the master bedroom.

Tom woke up, tired and dreary-eyed. On his way to the bathroom he found . . . FIRE! The basement was on fire! He ran up the stairs and into the master bedroom yelling, “FIRE!” His parents shot up with a frantic look on their faces. Thomas jumped out of bed and ran downstairs to see if he could extinguish the fire. Patty sped upstairs to wake the others. Once they had reached the front door, Patty counted heads. One, two, three, four—where was Steven!? “Jim!” she yelled forcefully. “Go get Steven!” Jim darted up the stairs and grabbed Steven out of bed.

When the children were going out the front door, they heard an ear-splitting scream come from the basement. Their father was still down there. They later found out that while he was making his way up the stairs, a backdraft or wind caused the fire to grow, and it had struck Thomas square on the back. He raced up the stairs. When he got out the door, none of his family was

there, but safely at a neighbor's house. Thomas was then reminded of the excruciating pain from the burns on his blazing back. The forty-three-year-old man ran faster than he ever had in his life. He ran straight onto the front porch of the Chapmans, neighbors he did not know very well. He didn't bother to stop and knock, but just ran inside. Once inside, a panicked Thomas frantically looked for the bathroom. As soon as he saw it, he turned on the shower as cold as it could get. His nightclothes were tattered and burned.

Mr. and Mrs. Chapman came bursting into the room. As soon as they saw Thomas's back, they quickly rushed him to the hospital, only to have the hospital release him saying that he only had second-degree burns that did not need to be treated by a doctor. The pain continued though, so later they took him to a different hospital, where they treated him for third-degree burns.

The Hurster family had to find a home and clothing for each child. The family was split up, each member at a different house for the first few days. Then each child had to accumulate new clothing, as all of theirs had been burned. They had to find a new house, and soon. Luckily one of the neighbors, the Wards, had a cousin who had an empty house nearby. They shortly moved into it and finished off the school year. When summer came, the Hurster family moved into a permanent house in a new area, with a new school district and a new beginning.

Leeanne K. Hurster  
Missouri

## *From Tragedy to Triumph*

This is a story about my savta and her older sister. *Savta* is a Hebrew word that means “grandmother.” Yes, my family is Jewish. My savta was born to Moshe and Reisel Lackner in 1939 in Romania. Their father owned a brush factory. Life was already becoming difficult for the Jews there. It was the beginning of a horrible tragedy, the Holocaust.

From 1938 to 1940 Romania came increasingly under German power. In September of 1941 the Jews in my savta’s town of Radautitz were given orders to leave. My savta’s family was deported to the concentration camp of Mogilev when my savta was two years old. She remained there from May 1941 to June 1944.

In the camp the Jews lived crammed together in small huts. The only food they had was called “potato soup,” potato peels in water. To obtain this “food” a family member had to wait in a lengthy line. My savta’s sister remembers taking her turn once on a wintry day. After waiting and filling her tin pail, she slipped on ice on her journey back to the hut. The soup spilled out, and on that night there was no food.

There were disease, forced labor, and hunger in the camp. But the saddest memory my savta has is losing her parents shortly after arriving at Mogilev. Her father was diabetic and succumbed to the illness. Her

mother passed away from an outbreak of influenza. Luckily they had Reisel's sister, Aunt Pearl, to help look after them.

One day the order came to pack up and proceed to a train. Aunt Pearl had a strong feeling they should not get on that train. She bribed the guard by giving him her last bit of gold jewelry. He allowed them to slip by. Sadly, the many Jews who did crowd onto the cattle cars went to their deaths at Auschwitz.

When my savta returned to her hometown in Romania, her home was destroyed and the factory was gone. Only 2,000 of the 8,000 Jews who had entered Mogilev had survived. From 1944 to 1947 Aunt Pearl worked hard making arrangements for my savta and her sister to travel to relatives in Canada. They were eight and twelve years old when they made the difficult and scary voyage along with 2,000 Jewish orphans aboard the SS *Sterges*, which transported them across the world to Halifax, Nova Scotia. It was there that a cousin named Noa Heinish and his wife, Sarah, took them into their home.

My savta had triumphed. She got to start a new and better life. She could now go to school (at age nine), eat real food, wear nice clothes, and enjoy the comforts of a home with a family. Although Aunt Pearl arrived in Canada a year later, Noa and Sarah thought it would be best if they adopted the girls. At last my savta was no longer an orphan, and she could call Sarah and Noa her mother and father.

Matan Halzel  
Tennessee

## *Moonlighting*

My dad grew up in a small town in China. This story happened thirty years ago when he was fourteen. His family didn't have a lot of money. My dad thought he was old enough to earn money for his family. He got a job as a watchman at a bridge construction site. His job was to stay in the temporary post made from hay from 6:00 p.m. to midnight and make sure nobody stole any construction materials or equipment.

One challenge of his job was to walk to his post and walk back home all by himself every night. There were no lampposts or houses on the way. Most of the time it was dark. In the winter night it was very cold also. He normally carried a lantern and had to walk forty minutes alone to his job and another forty minutes home when his shift was over. On his way home there were lots of loose dogs. The dogs didn't have leashes, so it was a small problem. Once he encountered a huge dog with green eyes and black fur. My dad was very scared and didn't move until the dog lost interest and walked away. That was why my dad loved the days when it rained, because he could carry an umbrella to scare away stray dogs.

When my dad got to his post, he was allowed to read or study by his lamp. That was what my dad did most of the time. One night a funny thing happened.

A group of punkish teens asked him very politely where the construction superintendent was. The construction superintendent lived in the temporary housing quarters not too far away. My dad was glad he could help them. When my dad and the teenagers got to the superintendent's room, one teenager threw a brick at the superintendent and ran out. The superintendent got knocked out for half an hour. The next day the policeman wanted my dad to identify the teenagers. It turned out the teenagers didn't like the superintendent because he had scolded them before. It took a week before the superintendent recovered. And when he did, everything went back to normal. My dad didn't get fired or yelled at. But he did learn to ask questions and not to trust anyone so blindly.

My dad kept this job for a year, until the bridge was done. He managed to keep good grades at the same time. My dad didn't encounter many events like this one on the construction site while he was a watchman, but the experience built his character.

Benjamin Gu  
Missouri



## *The Bird Who Liked the “Birdie”*

There is a quote that says “All’s well that ends well.” It was originally said by a writer/playwright named William Shakespeare. Apparently someone agrees with that quote—my grandma. In fact, my grandma has had a lot of crazy all’s-well-that-ends-well experiences in her life.

My grandma, my mother Susan, my aunt Emily, and my uncle Jonathon all lived at 222 Cedar Street when my mom and her siblings were kids. Grandma’s husband had died, so it was just the four of them. Cedar was a dead-end street and they “lived in the woods,” so any chance they had to play a sports game, like badminton, would be in the street. Since there were other people living on the street, they obviously couldn’t have a net, so instead they would make a chalk mark for a net and twigs for boundary lines. I think it’s pretty clever, if you ask me. When they all played badminton, the “sky was the limit,” and whenever Emily would have a birdie come to her, she would usually say, “I got it!”

One day the four of them were playing badminton, and one of the birdies was skyrocketed into the sky. Right then a real bird flew by and grabbed that birdie—and flew off! My grandma still says that they should have entered *Ripley’s Believe It or Not*. But she

also says that even in badminton, “All’s well that ends well.”

Audrey Jane Pennington  
Missouri

## *Hank and the Hog*

Paul and Hank Rother were taking a drive out in the country in their rickety old pickup. They had been drinking but were not intoxicated. They were driving past the Lowe house when Hank spotted a hog in the middle of the road. Paul saw it, too, and slammed on the brakes, but it was too late. He had hit the hog, and the hog was so big the truck got high-centered on it. Hank grabbed the jack, jumped out of the pickup, and began to jack it up. The Lowes ran from their house up to Uncle Paul and began to yell at him.

“You drunk! You killed my hog,” said the smaller Lowe.

“It ran right out in the middle of the road. If you would have closed the gate, it would have never gotten out in the first place,” said Uncle Paul.

“It doesn’t matter. You’re going to pay us for that hog,” said the bigger Lowe.

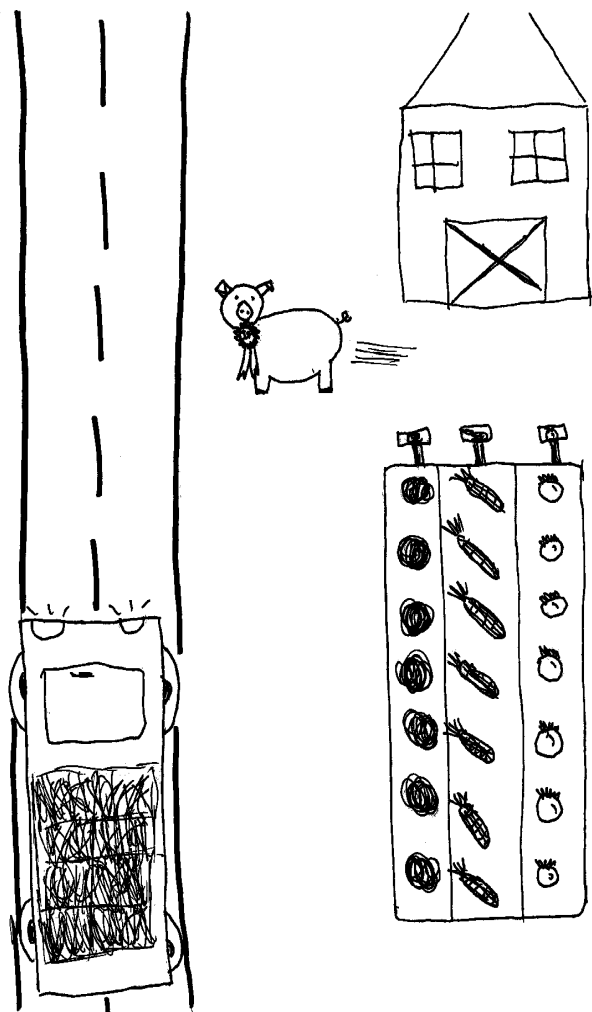
“I don’t think so,” said Uncle Paul.

“Why, you low-down good-for-nothing . . . ,” yelled the smaller Lowe.

“It’s not my fault your stupid hog was in the road,” interrupted Uncle Paul.

“That was our best hog, and you’re going to pay for it,” yelled the bigger Lowe.

Now by this point Grandpa Hank, who was still



trying to jack up the pickup, was pretty angry. He got up, walked to the bigger Lowe, looked him in the eye, and said, "You know, the situation could get a lot worse, 'cause if you don't shut up, you're going to be under my pickup with that hog!"

Now the Lowes were big. Some would say huge. Grandpa Hank was anything but big, but if there was one thing Grandpa was, it was strong, and the Lowes knew that.

"I'd like to see you try to get me down," said the bigger Lowe.

"I won't even have to try," said Grandpa Hank.

"Let's see how cocky you are when you're unconscious," said the bigger Lowe.

Grandpa started to laugh, and the bigger Lowe, furious, swung at Grandpa Hank, who ducked under the punch, dove for his legs, and tackled him.

Uncle Paul pulled Grandpa off of the bigger Lowe and said, "How about we forget this whole thing ever happened and go get that hog butchered?"

The bigger Lowe got up and rubbed his huge black eye, and both quickly agreed.

Michael Joseph Rother  
Nebraska

## *Kidnapped by Indians*

If you go far enough back in time, you will see that I have a great-great-great-great-great-great-great-grandmother whose name was Hannah Duston. She was an American settler during the French and Indian War.

One day some Indians came and attacked her village, stealing things and taking a few prisoners. Among them were Hannah, her baby, and her neighbor, Mrs. Neff. The Indians made them walk a long way away from her home. During the trip the Indians killed Hannah's baby, which as you could imagine made her even more ready for an opportunity to get away.

After the Indians had gotten far enough away, they decided that it would be safe to sleep soundly with no watch set to guard the camp, but they were sadly mistaken, because most of them would never wake up from their sound sleep. The reason for this was that Hannah, Mrs. Neff, and a fourteen-year-old boy named Samuel had all gotten hatchets and hit the Indians somewhere around the head. They killed everybody except a badly hurt squaw and a boy. After that, Hannah, Samuel, and Mrs. Neff piled into a canoe but later came back to scalp the Indians so people would believe their story.

They all went to Boston because there was a

bounty on Indian scalps. In Boston they were paid for their service to the settlers. Hannah was paid a bounty of twenty-five pounds, and Mrs. Neff and Samuel were paid twelve pounds and ten shillings each. Also, Hannah Duston was the first woman to have a monument put up in her honor in the United States of America. And that is the story of Hannah Duston.

David N. Schmidt  
California

## *Aunt Gail's Haunted House*

During the Civil War the Union Army used the Rockville Bridge to transport supplies. This was the longest stone bridge in the world. The Confederate Army wanted to blow up this bridge to stop the supplies from getting to the Union Army. The Rockville Bridge crossed over the Susquehanna River in Pennsylvania and traveled east to west. It was heavily guarded, especially on the west side of the bridge. The Confederate Army just got close enough to see the bridge with their binoculars and realized that they could not get to the bridge directly. They came up with a plan.

Five Confederate soldiers dressed like civilians walked to Goldsborough on the west bank of the Susquehanna River. They took a boat across the river to the east bank and landed in Middletown. They did not realize it, but the day they arrived was Market Day. All the farmers were in town to sell their crops and food. Everyone at market knew everyone in the area. The farmers saw these five strangers and became suspicious that they might be spies. Since the Confederate soldiers were out of uniform, they could be shot on the spot as spies. A firefight broke out between the local people and the disguised soldiers. The Confederate soldiers were killed. Their bodies were taken to the blacksmith's shop because the Union Army gave a bounty for every



Confederate soldier caught behind the Union lines.

One of the farmers in town for Market Day was named William Schwartz. He realized that two of the soldiers were still alive. Though he sympathized with the Union and felt that slavery should be abolished, he did not believe that these men should be shot as spies. He put them in his wagon and took them home. When the Union soldiers came to collect the bodies at the blacksmith's shop, they realized two soldiers were missing. They conducted a house-to-house search. When they came to the Schwartz farmhouse, the two Confederate soldiers were tucked away in the attic. The Union soldiers searched everywhere but the attic because the attic was too cold. The brick farmhouse was three stories tall. There was no heating in the second floor or the attic.

There was a surprise winter storm. The Union soldiers had to stay in the farmhouse for three days until the storm broke. When the Union soldiers finally left, Mr. Schwartz hurried upstairs, only to find that the two soldiers were huddled together, frozen to death. Farmer Schwartz's oldest daughter, Anna, had fallen in love with one of the Confederate soldiers. She always loved him, even when he died, and she never married.

When the weather is very cold and you listen very carefully, you can hear furniture moving in the attic where the soldiers had huddled together for warmth. To this day, the attic still creaks and moans as if two soldiers are dragging chairs together to stay warm.

Gabe Salmon  
Arizona

## *Longest Attack of Hiccups*

My mother once told me a really amazing story about someone in our family who made it into the *Guinness Book of World Records*. This family member was actually my great-great-great-uncle on my mother's side of the family. His name was Charles Osborne. He is listed in the *Guinness Book of World Records* for having the *longest attack of hiccups*!

This story is so unbelievable to most people. When my mother wrote a paper about Charles Osborne for her junior high class, her teacher didn't believe her and graded her paper accordingly.

Charles Osborne was born in 1894. He lived on a farm in Anthon, Iowa, where he farmed and raised hogs. His hiccups began in 1922. Charles was attempting to weigh a hog just before he slaughtered it. As he wrestled with the hog, he got the case of hiccups. With a hiccup every second or so for over sixty-eight years, this means he hiccuped approximately 430 million times during those sixty-eight years! Charles Osborne traveled many places in an attempt to find a cure for this disturbing problem. Unfortunately a cure was never found for my great-great-great-uncle Charles.

There are several web sites on the Internet that describe this hiccup phenomenon. There is also a web site that mentions home remedies to cure the hiccups.

The web site even mentions my great-great-great-uncle Charles Osborne's name and states that it was too bad that he wasn't aware of the "sugar trick." According to this web site, if you have an attack of these annoying but *usually* completely normal hiccups, you are advised to try swallowing one teaspoon of dry sugar. Hiccups are not completely understood even today by medical physicians. Physicians and scientists do understand that hiccups are caused by an increase of carbon dioxide in the blood. Obviously my great-great-great-uncle's attack of the hiccups was one that simply could not be cured, possibly due to some difference in the physical makeup of his diaphragm or some other medical difference not found in most people.

Charles was a guest on *The Johnny Carson Show* when he was in his late eighties or nineties. He lived until the age of ninety-seven and basically led as normal a life as possible. He had two wives and fathered eight children. His diet did require a bit of an adjustment. He had to eat puréed foods, as his digestive system was unable to digest food the way most people do. His diet included baby food.

He finally found relief from these hiccups in 1990, just one year before he passed away. He just woke up one morning without them.

So the next time you get the hiccups, remember my great-great-great-uncle Charles Osborne and hope that one of the home remedies for these irritating hiccups works for you! No one wants to break Charles's world record for sixty-eight years of hiccups!

Madison Paige McIntyre  
Nebraska

## *The Best Dog in Town*

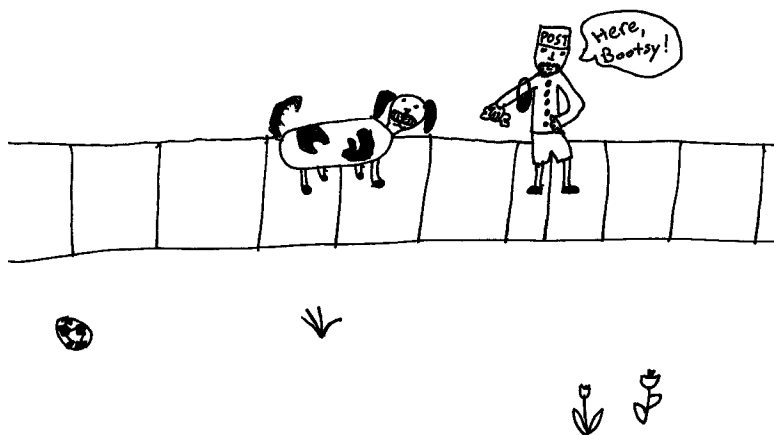
My grandmother grew up in a very small town in New Jersey. She said it was like Mayberry in *The Andy Griffith Show*. Everybody knew everybody; it was very safe. The only thing that my grandmother would have changed is that she didn't have any kids her age to play with. My grandmother's father, my great-grandfather, surprised her. He brought home a puppy. The puppy was a mutt, but it was very cute. All of its paws were black, and it looked like it had little boots on its paws. So my grandmother named it Bootsy, and they became the best of friends. My grandmother took Bootsy everywhere she went, except to school, of course. Everyone in the town knew Bootsy and loved him just as much as my grandmother did.

My grandmother's backyard backed up against the post office. Every morning when the mailmen were loading up the mail, Bootsy would jump the fence and greet them. Sometimes the mailmen would have a treat for Bootsy. The post office was like Bootsy's second home. Sometimes Bootsy would follow the mailmen on their mail route. People along the way knew Bootsy. He was the friendliest dog in town!

About ten years went by. My grandmother was fourteen years old. It was a hot summer night. My grandmother was getting ready for bed and realized that

Bootsy wasn't home. She went outside to call him, but he didn't come. My great-grandfather helped my grandmother look for Bootsy. They walked around the neighborhood calling his name, but no Bootsy. Then my great-grandfather had an idea. He thought that maybe Bootsy was inside the post office. But the post office was closed for the night. He told my grandmother that everything would be okay and they would go to the post office first thing in the morning.

My grandmother was up at the crack of dawn with my great-grandfather. They went to the post office when it opened and asked if Bootsy was inside. The mailmen looked around, but no Bootsy. Then they looked in the vault, where they kept valuable things, and there was Bootsy. He was almost dead because there was very little oxygen in the vault. My grandmother was so sad. She and her dad carried Bootsy home.



My grandmother nursed him back to health. She gave him water and fed him like he was a baby. Very slowly Bootsy started getting better. But my grandmother realized that something was wrong. When Bootsy finally got up to walk, he started walking into things and walls. My great-grandfather took Bootsy to the vet, and they gave my grandmother the bad news: Bootsy was blind. My grandmother was heartbroken, but she took care of Bootsy. Soon Bootsy could get around inside the house because he knew where the furniture was. Bootsy only went outside to go to the bathroom.

The mailmen were also upset. They missed Bootsy and would stop by from time to time with treats for him. Bootsy always greeted them with a wagging tail. Bootsy's last years were quiet and comfortable. He became known as the best dog in town.

Drew Janoson  
Indiana

## *Pearl Harbor Day 1941*

My grandpa was seven years old when he was shot at by the Japanese on December 7, 1941.

My grandpa, Robert, lived in the middle of 48,000 acres of sugar cane on the island of Oahu with his mother, father, and dog. Sunday morning was the regular menu, pancakes. His dad was asleep, and Robert could hear him snoring from the other side of the house. He was sitting in the kitchen with his mom and could smell the delicious pancakes cooking. It seemed a long time to wait for breakfast.

Suddenly a huge buzzing noise interrupted their meal! The house was shaking, the dishes in the sink were rattling, and the dog was barking uncontrollably! Robert's mom said, "What are those flyboys doing flying over our house on a Sunday morning?" She thought it was their pilot friends from Hickam Field who always flew over their house on Friday afternoons to signal that they would arrive in about one hour for cocktails. "This is too much for a Sunday morning." As she picked up the phone and started calling a friend at the Air Force base, Robert ran outside barefoot and in his shorts to see his flyboy buddies.

What he saw changed his life forever.

A huge squadron of planes was flying low over the sugar cane fields. All the planes had a big red circle

painted on the underside of the wings. The planes were flying so low Robert could see the features of the pilots. The Japanese planes fired small bursts of machine-gun bullets into the sugar cane field as they swarmed over his house on their way to bomb Pearl Harbor ten minutes later.

Avalon Derlacki  
Oregon



## *Over the Years: A Story of My Grandfather*

Families all have stories to tell of their past. They all have different pasts, and when the past is revealed, so is an adventure.

My grandpa was in the Second World War in the Navy in the Pacific Theater, and he joined them in 1944. He was assigned to an LST, which stands for “Landing Ship Tank.” An LST took tanks to shore and back out to sea to the next destination. While my grandfather was in the Navy, his crewmates smoked cigarettes, and when some of his crewmates bought him a pack, he would trade them for some licorice.

During his service he served as a quartermaster to steer the rudder of the ship. To get to his post he had to go past three hatches and seal them, and he was asked by the captain himself not to open them if he was hit. During battles my grandfather could hear the Japanese torpedoes whizzing by him as he steered the ship to avoid them. The captain was communicating to my grandfather by a headphone set to tell him which way to go. When their ship would reach a destination, they would arrive at high tide and leave at low tide after the tanks and infantrymen were deployed.

When Japan surrendered, Grandpa and his crewmates were sent to China to clean up after World War II. My grandfather took some Japanese to China

on the LST. To get to a destination an LST took days, sometimes months. My grandfather's brother, Chester, was in the European Theater in the Army. Chester was in a tank along with three others rolling on the terrain when they ran directly over a land mine and were instantly killed.

After my grandfather's service in the Navy, he went back to Columbus, Indiana, in 1946 to work at a tool and die shop for two years. After those two years, he met my grandmother in June of 1948, and they later on married in August of 1948. My grandfather started college two years later at Indiana Central College, which is now the University of Indianapolis. He graduated in the year of 1954 then went on to seminary to become a minister. My grandfather said that it was his experiences in the war that encouraged him to become a minister. A few years later on, my grandfather founded Rosedale Hills United Methodist Church and became the head minister from 1958 to 1982.

My grandfather had a good life, but with some sorrows, too. Our grandparents can tell us stories like none we have ever heard and can influence us. Like my grandfather always told me, "Be careful of your words, they become your actions; be careful of your actions, they become your character; be careful of your character, it becomes your personality; and be careful of your personality, it becomes you."

Colin M. Kea  
Indiana





## *Honorable Mention Stories*

Alone in the Dark with the Dead

Gunnar Smith, Indiana

The Eureka Saga

Michael Clark, Warracknabeal, Australia

The Flood

Jacob Timothy Killinger, Nebraska

The Flying Golf Ball

Nina Bocchini, Missouri

The Grandpa That Got Away

Austin William Healy, Indiana

Growing Up in Maine

Lauren Elizabeth Deisley, Nebraska

The Happiest Family in Houston

Charlie Anthony Caspersen, Indiana

A Hard Life

Katrina Leigh Ondracek, Nebraska

Jumping Horses

Lacey Ann Smith, Missouri

My Interesting Ancestors

Ian James McQuinn, Indiana

Snowball

Robby Marshall, Missouri



## *Illustrators*

- p. 14 Lily Rose Gage, Missouri
- p. 21 Joy Rachel Gage, Missouri
- p. 24 Griffin Reed, Missouri
- p. 29 Andrea Rose Stiffelman, Missouri
- p. 38 Ellie Harrison, Missouri
- p. 45 Yunli Emily Chu, Missouri
- p. 48 Rebecca Michelle Stiffelman, Missouri
- p. 58 Alyssa Fritz and Ellie Harrison, Missouri
- p. 67 Griffin Reed, Missouri





## *Invitation to Participate*

Please join us for the 2007 Grannie Annie Family Story Celebration. The submission deadline for stories and art for *Grannie Annie, Vol. II* is February 14, 2007. Complete details, including the required entry form, are available at [www.TheGrannieAnnie.org](http://www.TheGrannieAnnie.org).

## *Praise for The Grannie Annie*

The Grannie Annie offers students real writing in a real setting. Teachers and parents, if you want to motivate students to love writing, ask them to write for The Grannie Annie. Students not only write their stories, they write their families into history—with a payoff of possible publication.

The Grannie Annie offers readers true stories that expose the human heart and create space for conversation about what truly matters in life. So give yourself a gift: Sit down with a copy of *Grannie Annie* and share these stories with your family.

Bonnie M. Davis, Ph.D.

Author of *How to Teach Students Who Don't Look Like You:*

*Culturally Relevant Teaching Strategies*, [www.a4achievement.net](http://www.a4achievement.net)

Folks coming together and getting to know one another can bring us all closer to a peaceful world. Sharing family stories helps people see what they have in common—and helps them discover their roots as well. Without a doubt, The Grannie Annie is a great idea.

Michael Terrien, President

Play for Peace

Thanks for offering The Grannie Annie Family Story Celebration. My daughter had so much fun talking to her grandmother about “the old days.”

Susan Pennington, Parent and English Teacher

St. Louis, Missouri

The Grannie Annie proved to be a valuable experience for the students in my school. The children's interviews with their parents or grandparents sparked some good conversation. When the children shared the stories, some students who are normally quiet or reserved got to shine because of something really neat that they wrote about.

Dianne Elson, Teacher  
Carmel, Indiana

The Grannie Annie—A Family Story Celebration takes us back to the old porch swing and to a world of stories from the past. On days filled with CDs, DVDs, and electronic games and screens, we yearn for an afternoon in Grandmother's kitchen sprinkling cinnamon and sugar on cookies fresh out of the oven or a long walk down to the river with Grandpa to see the tadpoles. It is in these moments with our elders that stories are shared and we discover who we are, our true legacy. For their tales contain wisdom, laughter, and love that connect us to our past and to each other. These shared memories that will live on in us help us “come into our own,” but not “on our own.” We discover a deep sense of belonging, values, and pride.

Hop on this old creaking swing and you'll hear stories that will bring tears to your eyes or make you laugh till your sides hurt. Grab your pen—you'll want to get one of your own family escapades down so that you can submit it to The Grannie Annie, share it with others, and pass it on to your grandchildren someday. 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*



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