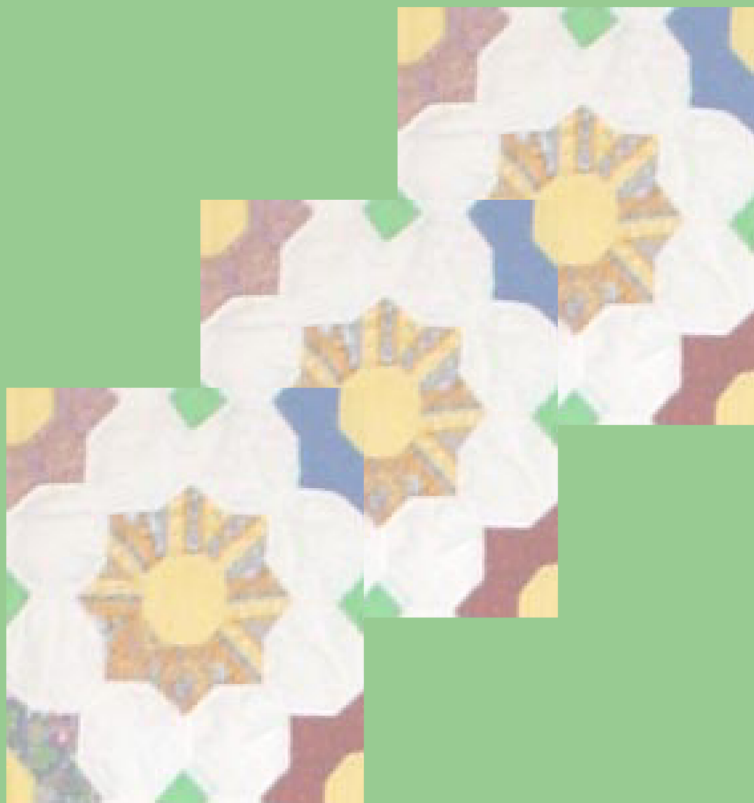


Grannie Annie



Vol. 2

**Selections from the 2007
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 are invited to interview their family storykeepers and write a story based on their interview. They are encouraged to share their story with their family, school, community, and The Grannie Annie. Twenty-six stories from two age categories, chosen to represent the stories received this year, are included in this second annual volume 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. Quietly, surely, the world moves one step closer to peace.

Grannie Annie

Vol. 2

Selections from
The Grannie Annie Family Story Celebration
An Annual Writing Contest for *One-of-a-Kind* Kids

Thumbprint Press

Portico Books

Saint Louis, Missouri

Because the stories in *Grannie Annie, Vol. 2* were captured from the oral tradition, they represent a unique blend of history and legend. No claims of accuracy, historical or otherwise, are guaranteed by the authors, sponsors, or publishers.

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In memory of
Catherine Randazzo Guirrerri,
who loved to tell her stories

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

Also in memory of
Madison Paige McIntyre,
author of “Longest Attack of Hiccups,”
Grannie Annie, Vol. 1

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Listening is an act of love.

—*Dave Isay, StoryCorps*

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

Note to Parents and Educators

Grannie Annie, Vol. 2 is a miniature “history of the world” that reads like your grandparent’s journal. The twenty-six family stories, which span several centuries and four continents, bring to life historical events and unfamiliar cultures. These tales of family life, adventure, hardship, and triumph entertain and educate us. Even more than that, our stories connect us.

Again this year we received many stories set in difficult times or dangerous situations. Recognizing that it is through challenge that we grow, we have included stories of families separated by war or handicapped by poverty. We’ve included stories of children thrust into adult roles and of family members facing prejudice.

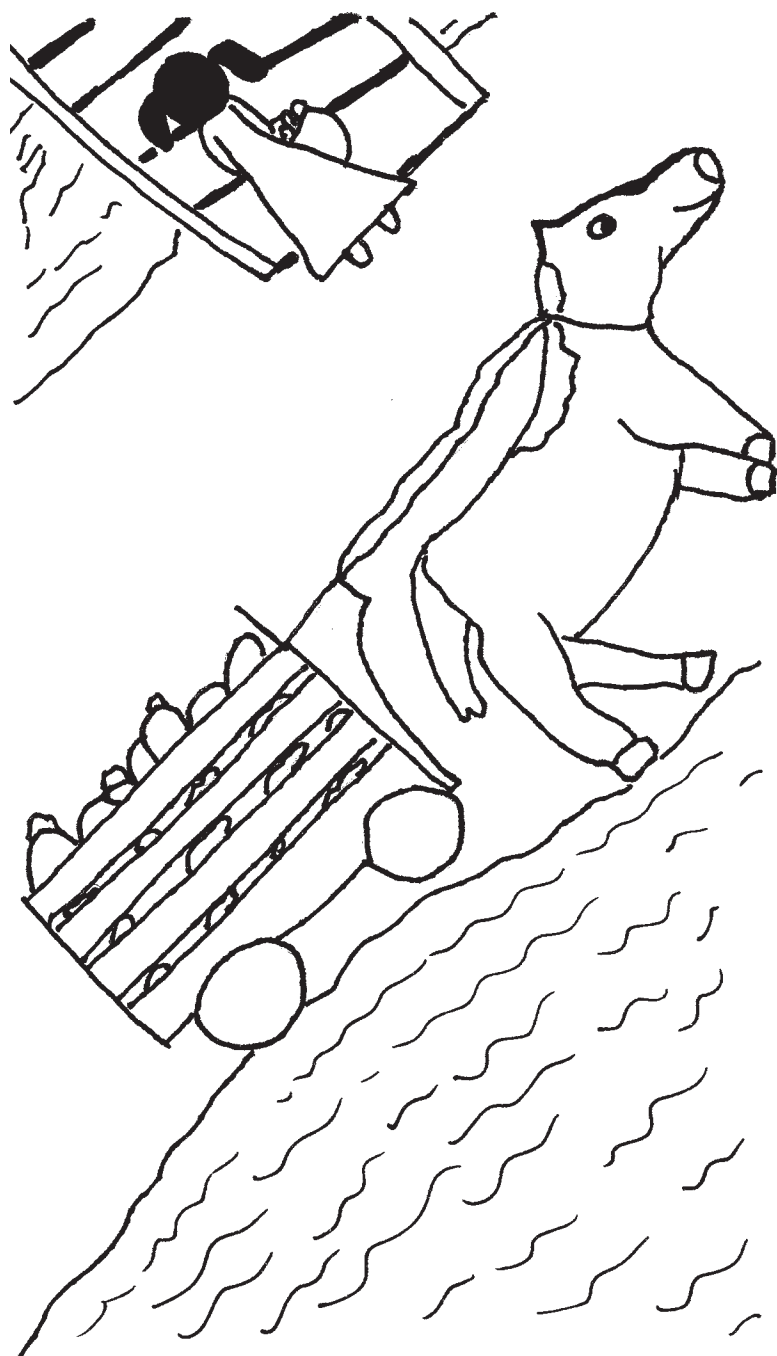
You may wish to read the stories in this volume before sharing them with your children. Previewing the stories would allow you to consider the responses you’ll give to the difficult questions your children are likely to ask as they read some stories—questions about poverty and justice, stereotypes and peace.

We believe you’ll find that the stories in *Grannie Annie, Vol. 2* have a special ability to inspire and motivate. We also believe that by learning from our past we can face the future with greater confidence and vision.

Thank you for becoming part of the Grannie Annie family. We hope you’ll return next year—and also invite others to join The Grannie Annie Family Story Celebration.

Connie McIntyre and Fran Hamilton
Sponsors of The Grannie Annie

Grannie Annie, Vol. 2



Ferdyl

“Grandma, will you tell me a story?” I ask.

“Sure. Which one?” she says in a warm and kind voice.

I reply quickly, “Ferdyl.”

“Okay,” she says. “I was living in a growing city, Chicago. I was just eight years old. My papa didn’t have a lot of money, so he had a lot of jobs. No one really had any money, so it had more value. An apple would only cost five cents.

“One of Papa’s jobs was a vendor. A vendor sold goods from his cart. Personally, that was my favorite job for Papa out of all his jobs. Because the one who pulled the cart was Ferdyl. Ferdyl was a beautiful horse. His name is Yiddish for ‘little horse.’ When my papa let me ride in the cart, I was very excited. My adrenaline shot up, and I was overcome with happiness. I was gonna be with my papa for the whole day!

“As I rode in the cart, Papa stayed on the side walking with Ferdyl. When we went faster, it got bumpier on the ridged streets. As we went, my papa yelled, ‘Happles, honions, and potatoes!’ in his thick Yiddish accent. He had to yell loudly because the streets were bustling and it was hard to hear over everything.

“When Papa heard someone calling to him for his produce, he would tell me to get out of the cart and walk with him up the stairs. We would give the people their

goods, get paid, and go on to the next customer.

“By the end of the day, I was so tired because we had walked those stairs all day. After we dropped off Ferdyl at the barn, my papa and I walked home. Together like two peas in a pod.”

This is my favorite story. It makes me feel like I’m a time traveler. My grandma passed along her history, and now I’m passing it along.

Samuel Kramer
Missouri

Holding Hands

My dad and his sister had a little adventure in Xing Hua, China, when he was a little over five years old. Back then, my dad's parents did not have a babysitter and both went to work. My dad practically was the babysitter. (Get it?)

My dad and his sister did a lot of things together. They would play and fight, but they were good friends. One of their favorite activities was going out to the main street to browse through the shops. Their favorite was a candy stand. The owner (they called him Mr. Candy) blew hot candy into action figures, animals, fruits, and all kinds of interesting shapes. It was just like balloon animals at the fair except it was smaller and you could eat it if you wanted. Most of the kids eventually did.

One day my dad was watching Mr. Candy blow a complicated figure, the monkey king, when he felt his right hand close around nothing! He searched everywhere he could—the crowd, the street, he even went back and searched their home. But he could not find his little sister. He went to his dad's workplace and told him the story. They first went to the police department, and then they posted a radio announcement. (Back then the radios were wired to the reception tower.)

The next day, which happened to be a Sunday, in the middle of breakfast there was a knock on the door.

They answered the door, and there was dad's sister! The man with her explained that he had found her outside the candy store standing alone. When he asked where her parents were, she said they were at work. He decided to take her home with him. It just so happened that his wife heard the radio announcement. He brought my dad's sister home the next day. After he explained what had happened, the man said, "Don't just tell her to hold your hand; hold *her* hand."

So after that, until she was old enough, my dad would always hold his sister's hand.

Benji Gu
Missouri

The Golden Chocolate Bar

My family is Jewish, and when I listen to my grandparents' stories, it helps me to learn more about my history and my heritage. My savta (Hebrew for *grandmother*) and her sister were born in the late 1930s in Romania. Sadly, they were subjected to one of the most tragic events in our world's history, the Holocaust. Their parents died at a concentration camp. Miraculously, my savta and aunt survived. The following story is one that my grandmother has told me and my three siblings many times.

My savta was eight years old, and her sister Blanca was twelve. It was the winter of 1947 in the month of February. My savta and her sister were survivors of the Holocaust. After enduring a difficult and frightening childhood during the war, they would finally get a chance for a new life. Arrangements were made for them to travel on a ship called the *S.S. Sterges*. The ship used to be a United States Navy troop transport vessel. It was heading from Europe to Canada. There were 2,000 Jewish orphans on this ship, and my savta and her sister happened to be the two youngest people aboard.

The seas were very rough, making my savta very seasick most of the long voyage. However, as the ship began to near the port of Halifax, Nova Scotia, in Canada, the seas became calmer. My savta started to feel

better, and she was finally able to go up to the dining area to eat. On the way, a kind porter stopped her and gave her a treat. It was her very first candy bar, a Hershey chocolate bar. Savta had never eaten anything like it. First, she carefully unwrapped the beautiful golden paper. Then she sniffed the wonderful, chocolaty aroma. She loved the gold paper wrapper so much that she saved it for a long time, even long after she finished the chocolate. Of course, she didn't consume the chocolate all at once. She ate just a small square each day and savored the special treat.

Once the ship docked, my savta and her sister were met by their cousins Sarah and Noa Heinish. The Heinishes had brought warm, cuddly coats and boots to keep the girls warm and dry on the ride to their home. About a year later, Sarah and Noa decided to adopt my savta and her sister.

Eventually, my savta became a teacher. One day she told her twenty-one third-grade students the story about the Hershey bar. When she went into her classroom the next day, there were twenty-one Hershey chocolate bars on her desk. My savta was so touched by this that she burst into tears. She always knew she loved her students very much, but this loving gesture warmed her heart everlastingly.

Ariela Halzel
Tennessee

The Best Rejection Ever

There was a large white flash, and Julia Tucker blinked. She was outside the doctor's room, on the docks. The doctor looked toward Ike and said, "This child has pinkeye; your family can't come on board."

Julia was stunned; the doctor had to be wrong. Julia looked at her mother and tried to imagine her pappa. They might never see him! Their new home, in America, was waiting, too. Didn't the doctor know that? Julia looked at her dirty, grimy bag. Sylvia and Nellie had a bag between them. They had sold their apartment, full of drafts and cold. They had nothing!

Julia looked up at the *Titanic*, wishing that she were the girl on the vast white deck waving the banner in the cold air. Julia, who washed clothes and dishes, cleaned houses and yards, knew it was not good to want such a thing after her family—Mamma, Sylvia, Nellie, Sy, Abe, and Ike—had been forced off the same boat.

America seemed like a small, hidden hope, like a toy lost and forgotten in a garden. The *Titanic*, the queen of the dock, seemed like the last hope, the last dream of Julia's mamma. Sy stared at the boat, the crowning glory of the world, then said, "Let's go. I don't want to see that boat ever again."

After days of parties and nights in star-reflected waters, the glory of the world vanished into the chilly

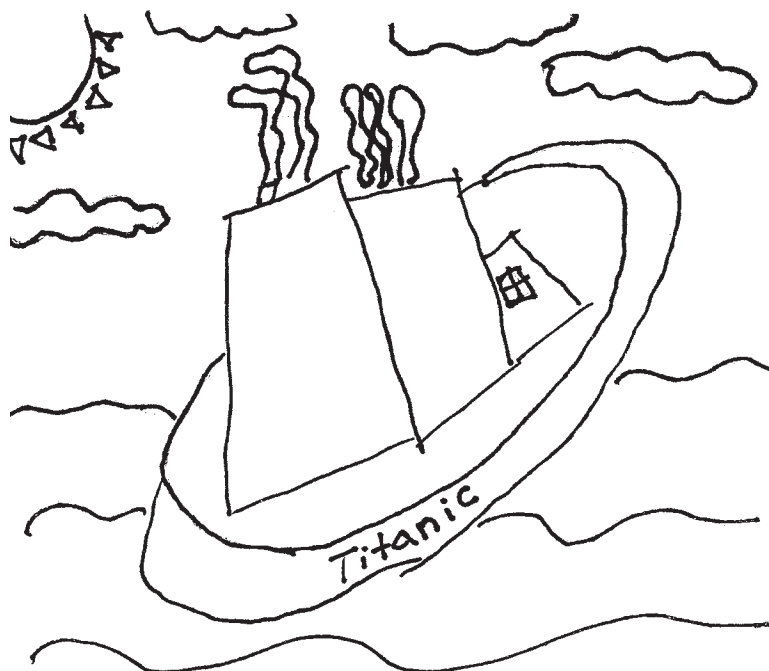
waters. That large ship, the vast white deck, the banners, sank into a watery grave.

If Julia's brother hadn't had pinkeye, Julia's family would have been trapped in the lowest levels of the ship—they would still be there. Because Ike had pink-eye, Julia and her family took a different boat and made it to America with the beacon of hope shining brightly.

That's the story Ema,* who is Julia's granddaughter, told me.

Moria R. Crowley
New Jersey

*Ema = "mother" in Hebrew





The Wonderful Pet Coon

Did you ever have a pet coon? My dad's family did. My dad was about ten years old when they found Lone Ranger. My grandpa found the baby raccoon in early spring after a storm. The tree that the coon had been in had blown down in the storm, and my grandpa found him and took him back to the house. They kept him in a crate in a shed. They fed him milk, and as he got older they fed him table scraps. The coon slept in the haymow of their barn.

Lone Ranger, as they called him, was one of the smartest animals my dad and his family ever had. He loved to play with marbles. My aunt would take the washtub outside and put marbles in it, and Lone Ranger would climb in and have lots of fun! Also Lone Ranger loved candy. Whenever he could, he would find some candy. He especially liked candy corn.

Another thing that made Lone Ranger special was that he would go anywhere people went. When my aunt went after cows, Lone Ranger would go with her. He was a special pet. Also when they went out to the garden, Lone Ranger went along. He would sit under the bean plants in the shade. When you were ready to leave, all you had to do was to call him, and he came running.

Lone Ranger also loved to play in water. He would

sit by a pail of water and slap at his reflection. Lone Ranger was an awesome animal.

As Lone Ranger got older, he got wiser. Also as he got older, the call of the wild took him away. One morning my dad got up, and Lone Ranger was gone. This is my story about the wonderful pet coon named Lone Ranger.

AnnaLisa Glenn
Nebraska

Coyote

It was hard times in the days of the Depression in 1931. It was winter, and since it was hard making money, I trapped and skinned coyotes. Most of the animals were hibernating, but I still caught some at night. On the weekends I played the fiddle while everyone danced. I made a dollar a weekend for doing that. In the winter I lived in a tent with my family and beautiful baby girl, Lila. We lived by Hoover Dam Creek.

One day my puppy and I were checking traps, and it was getting late out. I didn't have my gun. I figured since all the animals were sleeping, it wouldn't matter. I was on my way home just whistling my favorite song when I noticed that my dog was under the horse. When I bent down to move him, I saw a coyote chasing us. I grabbed the dog, put him on the saddle horn, and then took the end of the reins to get a whip thing called a romal.* As I was trying to hit the coyote, the romal hooked onto his tooth and the tooth fell out. He sat there a minute, then spit the blood out and started chasing us again. I started hitting him again, and finally he fell into the creek and died.

Later that night we went to a cabin. I was

*romal = a riding whip attached to a circular style of Western reins, as in the vaquero tradition

washing dishes with the door open when I saw a coyote with rabies. I threw a dish at it and shut the door, but his leg got caught. It was shaking and flying while my wife was screaming at me to do something. I ran to get my gun while she started hitting the leg with a pan. I shot the coyote, and it died. Once everything was over with, the kids wanted to bury the coyote. They dug a hole, but I didn't want them to touch the dead coyote, so I got the shovel.

Now every time I wash dishes, the door is always shut. And even if it's winter, I always take my gun.

Kaila Goodwin, Idaho
Story told by Kaila's great-great-grandpa Chet

Over from Ireland

My great-great-great-grandfather was Patrick Clancy Riordan, and he was born in Limerick, Ireland, on April 24, 1824. This city was the third-largest city in Ireland. Patrick Riordan was one of the many thousands who left Ireland to move to America to have a better life. At the age of twenty-five, he was told he should move to America because of the potato famine. The famine was caused by a potato fungus that destroyed their main food source. Most of the people were farmers, and the main crop they grew was potatoes. Between 1845 and 1849 about a million people in Ireland died from starvation and from diseases related to the famine. In 1849 when Patrick Riordan came to America by boat, he sailed across the Atlantic Ocean. The boat was overcrowded with too many passengers.

When he reached America, he first stopped in New York, where he stayed with his brother John. When he arrived at his brother's house, he met Mary Flynn, John's housekeeper. After a few years Patrick and Mary moved to Detroit, then on to Chicago, and finally they arrived in St. Louis. They got married in St. Louis and had children; five lived, and others died.

During that time, the United States was involved in the Civil War between the North and the South. Missouri was a slave state, but many people in the state

were against slavery. One day Mary had just finished delivering twins in their home when some Northern soldiers knocked on the door and asked to search their home for Southern soldiers. Patrick told the soldiers at the door that his wife had just delivered twins and that they could not search the home. At that time there were Southern soldiers secretly hiding out in their basement. If Patrick had allowed the basement to be searched by those soldiers, there would have been people killed in his home.

During his lifetime, Patrick worked at the Cupples warehouse located by the river in downtown St. Louis. He went to work as a drayman, who was the person who transported dry goods by mules and wagons. We heard that he met Samuel Clemens while working on the river. Eventually he retired, and he died on April 7, 1912, when he was eighty-seven years old.

Sean Riordan
Missouri

A Walk into the Past

We start our walk, heading down through the flower-filled village green, past the glimmering clear water that fills the pond. The fluffy yellow ducklings peep at our feet as we toss them stale breadcrumbs. The little birds sing their sweet songs; twitters pierce the air. We stop and listen, then continue our way down to the beach. It is a long walk with lovely scenery. I am visiting my grandparents in England. Grandma and I are taking a stroll. She begins to tell me a story from when she was a little girl.

The blaring sirens tear apart the silent night. It is World War II. Nazi fighter planes bearing bombs are in the air. The devastating bombs fall through the night. Hysteria has broken out below. As citizens head for shelter, my grandma glances quickly around. Audrey, her baby sister, is missing! She fights the mob to help her but is sucked into the shelter. The door is locked, and nobody is allowed in or out until it is declared safe. All she can do is worry about her sister out there. Dirt falls from the ceiling as another bomb hits the ground. All she can do is hope, pray.

At dawn the call is sounded; it is now safe to go out. Dashing to the door and outside, my grandma calls out, "Audrey, Audrey!" She listens and hears quiet sobs of terror. As she glances around, she notes that

nobody is nearby, but one of the tin garbage cans is softly shaking. Lifting the lid and cautiously peering inside, she sees a figure huddled there. "Audrey?" she questions. As the figure looks up, a rush of relief engulfs her. She is alive. Her little sister is alive. All is well; nobody was hurt, or killed.

I sigh with relief. I can almost feel, as well as see, it all happening. As I come back to reality, I realize that we have entered and exited a field. We had stood together smelling the salt air and gazing at the waves foaming and crashing against the rock. This was a walk I would always remember. I learned much about my grandma and her past. We had also grown much closer in that one hike. I looked forward with much excitement to the next day with more tales. This was a time I would never forget.

Megan M. Howson
New Jersey



Arthur's Death

My grandpa was the oldest in his family by two years. When he was two years old, his younger brother, Arthur, was born. Before kindergarten Arthur never bothered my grandpa much. When Arthur started kindergarten, he really started bothering my grandpa a lot. My grandpa had to be very responsible for him. He really hated having to watch him every day.

One day Arthur got very sick. In those days the doctor would come to your house when you were sick. The hospital was only for serious emergencies. The doctor went to the 120-acre farm where grandpa's family lived. After checking Arthur over, the doctor said, "There is nothing I can do. I have to take him to the hospital."

My grandpa's dad went with Arthur. For days my grandpa's family waited for Arthur to come home. My grandpa did everything he was supposed to do—he milked the cows and chased the chickens. But it was very lonely without Arthur. My grandpa had nothing to do and nobody to play with.

Then a couple of days later my grandpa's dad came home. He didn't say anything until my grandpa ran up to him and asked, "Dad, where's Arthur?"

His dad responded, "I watched my son burn up." They learned that Arthur had strep throat. It had spread, taken over his body, and killed him.

My grandpa had hated being responsible for Arthur, and he hadn't been happy with what Arthur had done a lot of times. But when Arthur died, it really shook him up. My grandpa had no one his age to play with, and he had lost a member of his family. As for his dad, after my grandpa asked where Arthur was, he never talked about Arthur's death for as long as he lived.

Austin Cox
Missouri

The Battle

It was 1963 when a battle between tribes broke out in Nigeria, a country in west Africa just north of the equator. Since my dad was from the Ibo tribe, his family had to leave. They moved to a new village where they had no home, no food, and no running water. They moved to his uncle's house. At this time my dad was a little kid, so things were hard and scary for him. It was like having everything you need one day, then losing it the next.

You might have thought things were bad, but they got worse. Because of the war, my dad's family had to separate. A tear trickled down my dad's cheek. He had already lost his home, and he didn't want to lose his family, too. He waited and waited for the war to end so he could see his siblings again.

Finally the war was over. My dad waited and waited to see his other brothers and sisters, but most of all he waited to see his father. He waited and waited. By the eighteenth month my dad was wondering if they were even alive.

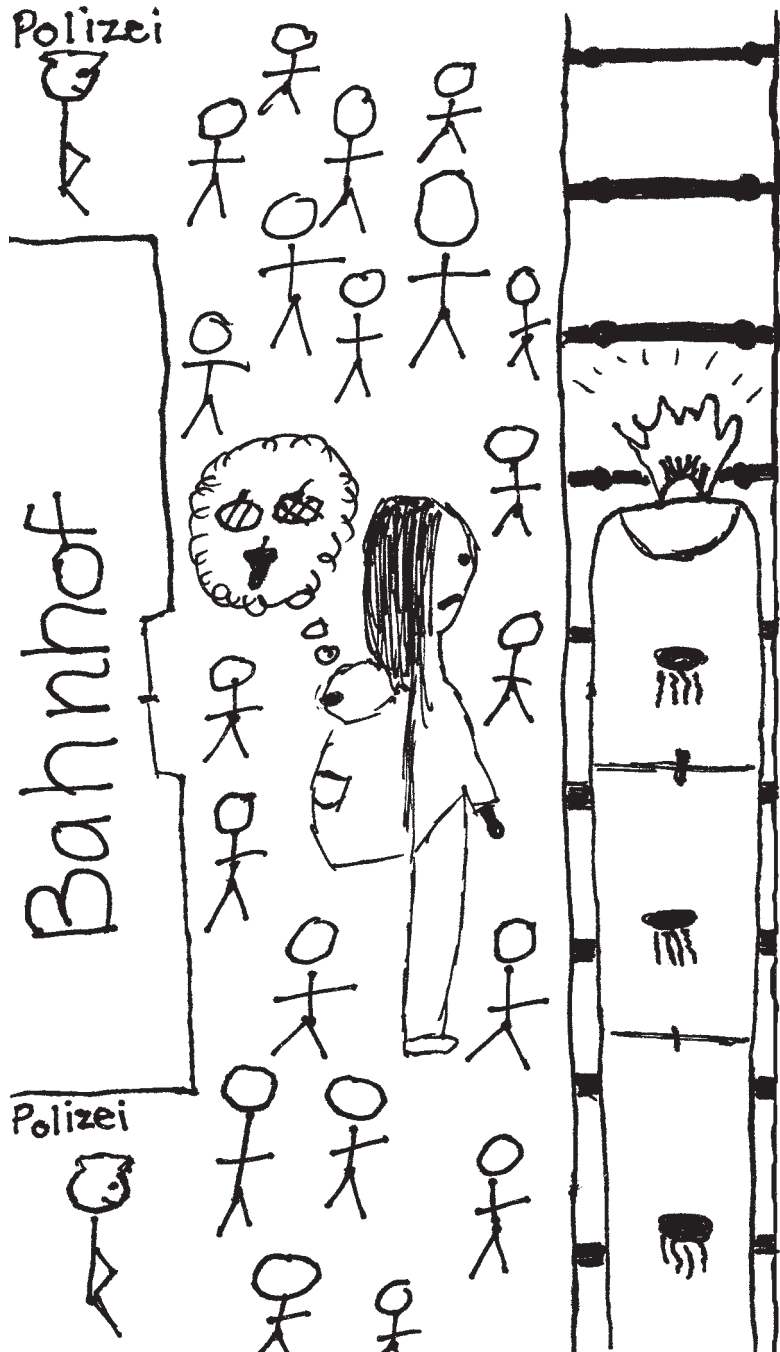
One day my dad looked down the dirt road while he was sweeping the house. He saw a group of people coming toward him. The leader of the group looked a lot like his dad. And the kids with him looked like his brothers and sisters. Could it be? Yes! It was! It was

papa and the others. My dad called his mother and the siblings he had stayed with. Everyone was so blissful. There was crying, hugging, laughing, playing, and talking—everyone was happy.

After that, they moved back to Nigeria. They worked hard to restart the family and get everything back to normal.

Chisara A. Achilefu
Missouri

Polizei



Growing Up German

My grandma Oma was born on May 18, 1934. Her name is Christine, and she was born in Kunau, Sudetenland. She is the next-to-the-youngest of four sisters. Her sisters' names are Margaret, Ludmilla, and Emilie. All three are still living today. Margaret is in Michigan, Ludmilla is in Alabama, and Emilie is still in Westerheim, Germany.

When World War II was over, the German people who lived in Sudetenland were forced out of the country because Czechoslovakia took back that region from the Germans. Oma's family was told they would have to leave their house and everything they could not carry. They were told that each person could take only forty pounds of "stuff." Oma carried the family Christmas ornaments. These Christmas ornaments are made of fragile glass and are all different shapes and sizes, not just round bulbs like the ones we buy today. My family has many of these bulbs hanging on our Christmas tree every year. Oma has some of them hanging on her tree each year, too.

Oma's family had to get ready to leave early in the morning but then had to wait for a wagon to pick them up. All the Germans that were forced to leave had to meet at the train station. Fifty people were loaded into each boxcar and taken away. All of Oma's family

traveled in one boxcar with forty-four other people. They knew only some of them. No one knew where they were being taken. All they knew was that they had to leave their homes, friends, and neighbors. There were forty cars to each train, so that meant there were 2,000 people on each train being taken out of the country. No one knew how many trains carried all the people away.

Oma's train took them to Westerheim, Germany. What was left of the German government told the residents of Westerheim that they were required to give up part of their house and land to those coming from Sudetenland. Oma's family had three small bedrooms for their own.

Oma finished the eighth grade and soon worked as a housekeeper making \$10 a month. Since the war, the country was left without many businesses and without much money or food. Oma was happy to find work, because she could get food at the house she kept. Soon she found a job at Siemens. This was a factory job that paid \$6 a week. With her better-paying job, Oma bought a green bicycle with lights on the front and the back so she could ride fourteen miles round trip between home and work each day. Also, she had to give her mom and dad \$2.50 a week to help them with costs at home.

Oma married Wallace (Opa) in October of 1955. Opa was in the military. They traveled to and from the United States for many years until they landed for good in Indianapolis in 1968. My house is just a couple of doors down from Opa and Oma today. I like living close to Opa and Oma.

Sean Millard
Indiana

Crossing the Border

My dad has had many adventures. His plan was to travel the world in five years. He went many places in the world but not everywhere. He was going to go from St. Louis through Central America. He was traveling on a dual-purpose motorcycle that could travel on- or off-road.

This story takes place when my dad was traveling on his motorcycle with six months' worth of gear. He was going to cross the border from Honduras to Nicaragua. He was on a small dirt road away from the main highway. My dad had gone to the Honduran customhouse to check out of the country. The Nicaraguan customhouse was a quarter mile downhill.

Unfortunately a year before, in 1979, there was a big anti-American civil war in Nicaragua. Many Nicaraguans hated Americans. The bad news was that my dad was an American.

Once he got to the hill, he decided not to start the engine because it was a kick-start bike so it would be hard. My dad was simply coasting down the hill into Nicaragua. Ahead he could see a tiny old wooden guardhouse. It looked abandoned and like something out of a cartoon. When he got to the guardhouse, he glanced in and no one was there, so he coasted past, going on toward the customhouse.

It was really quiet. There was no sound except for my dad's wheels rubbing against the ground. Suddenly he heard a "click-click" noise. It was the sound of a bolt-action rifle loading a bullet about to be fired! A little voice in my dad's head told him, "Stop!!! You're about to be shot!" My dad's heart was pounding like crazy! My dad put on his brakes and looked over his shoulder. He saw a soldier with a rifle aimed right at him. The guard thought my dad had ammo, guns, and bombs, and because his engine was off, the guard thought he was trying to sneak over the border.

Eventually my dad apologized to the guard and explained to him what he was doing. He asked the guard's forgiveness, so the guard forgave him. When my dad got to the customhouse, he said many prayers of thanks to the voice in his head.

The moral of the story is to listen to the voice in your head.

Antonio Zapiain Luna
Missouri

And They Lived Happily Ever After

The way my mother and father met is an interesting and somehow incredible story. There is a bit of magic and mystery that makes it a little bit difficult to believe. I've heard this story many times, and each time I listen to it, I think I am listening to a story taken directly from a soap opera.

My mother and father met for the first time when they were about five years old. Both of my parents' fathers worked for the government in Spain, and they were good friends. Even though their parents had a good relationship, my parents never saw each other again until many years later. When my mother was fourteen years old, she moved with her parents to live in the United States. At first her father and my father's father kept the relationship going by letter, but after a few years they only sent Christmas cards once a year.

Many years later, my mother received a letter from someone in Spain. It was addressed to her father. Tears rolled down her cheeks because her father had recently passed away. The sender's name seemed familiar. She quickly opened the letter. Her hands were shaking. It was a brief note that read like this: "Just a few words to let you know that my father recently passed away. I know how much he appreciated your friendship. I hope you and your family are well." The

letter was signed by Manuel Rodriguez. My mother was shocked. She mumbled the name several times, and then she remembered all the Christmas cards.

A few days later she felt the urge to respond. She had to tell this person what was happening. She had to tell him how sorry she was about the death of his father, but she also needed to inform him that they had just returned from burying her father in Spain.

At the end of the letter she added a sentence. This was the sentence that changed their lives—the reason for my existence. She wrote: “I will be going to Spain this summer. It would be really nice if we could meet.”

A few days after my mother got to Spain, the doorbell rang. She opened the door, and there he was. The rest of the story is not difficult to imagine. The only thing I am certain of is that I love both of my parents very much, and I am glad that their story has a happy ending.

Manny Rodriguez
New Jersey

A Little Adult

My mom was born in a poor village in Vietnam. She was born into a poor family and later had two younger siblings—a brother and a sister. At age five my mom went to school. She didn't do very well because there was no one at home to help her with her homework. Both of her parents helped sell goods at the marketplace all day until very late at night. She went to school only until sixth grade. Then she quit because her family couldn't afford to send her anymore. Even though she didn't do well in school, she was a very hard worker at home.

Her parents taught her how to cook, clean, and babysit her little siblings when she was only seven. My mom was a fast learner and did everything very well, even if she sometimes cut herself while chopping the ingredients for some meals. But before that, she stayed at home all by herself at age six. My mom always made lunch and helped make dinner every evening.

After she was done with all her chores, she would go outside and play games with her friends in the neighborhood. They would jump rope, play hopscotch, and sometimes go to the movies. Since she didn't have much money to buy toys, she made her own toys out of a special kind of mud that is sort of like clay. You can't find this kind of mud in the United States, but back in

Vietnam my mom had lots of fun squishing and modeling different things out of the mud. My mom liked to make kitchen-type toys with her little brother and sister. They had lots of fun together.

My mom was practically an adult when she was little. Today my mom is still hard working and has lots of fun with her family. She is going to teach me how to cook in the summer, and I hope I learn as fast as she did. When I grow up and become an adult, I want to be just like my mom.

Vivian Phung
Missouri

Making the Grade

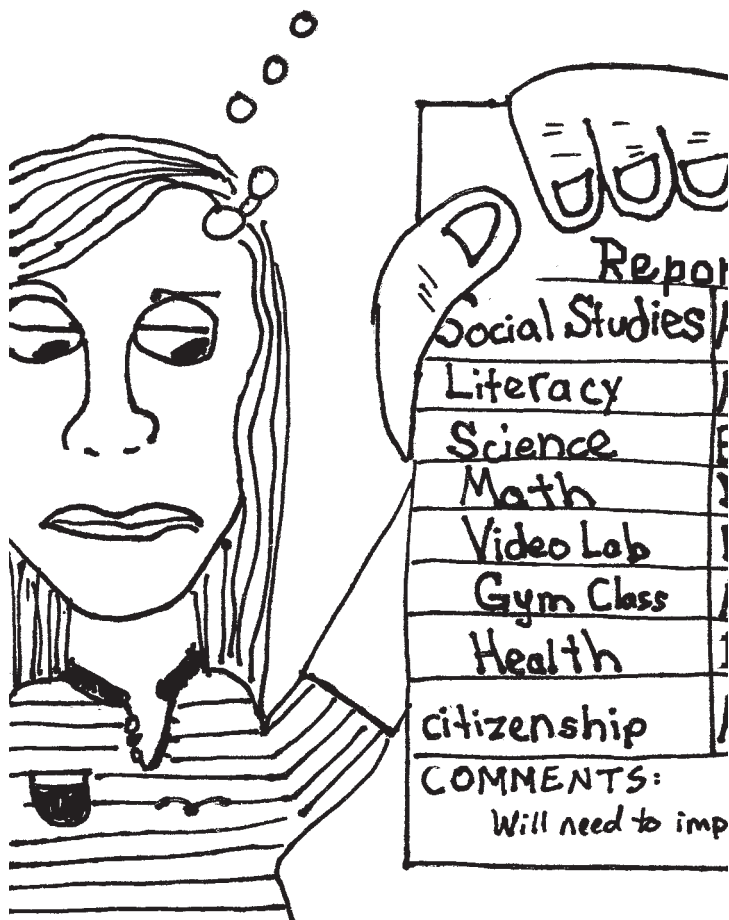
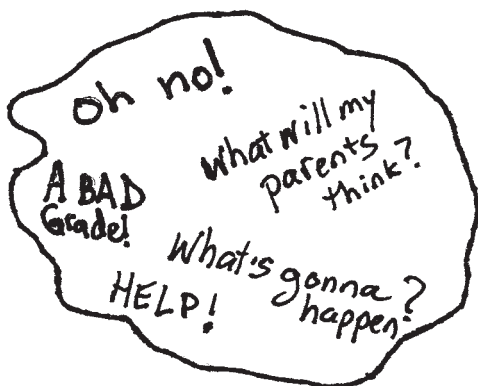
A few weeks ago I brought home my first bad grade. My parents were overcome with shock. When I came home, my grandma Glenda was over. I told her and my parents the bad news.

“Speaking of this, I remember when your daddy brought home a terrible grade,” Grandma said when I finished telling what had happened. “When he brought home that horrible piece of news, Grandpa Leroy said, ‘If you bring home another grade like that, you might as well get out!’ We were very disappointed in him.

“A few days later, your daddy brought home another bad grade. As soon as he got home, he got out his suitcase and packed his stuffed animal, his favorite clothes, and his ball and glove!” Grandma said. “He moped out the door, slumping as he walked.

“His father ran out and got him as he trudged down the sidewalk. Then his father gave him a hug, walked him into the house, and gave him a stern talking-to about the value of good grades. He told your dad and Uncle Al about the value of education.”

Her eyes got a faraway look. “Things were much harder for me than they are for you,” she said softly. “Back when I was in college, I had a very hard time. I was very self-conscious because of my homemade clothes. I was poor, I was a four-eyes, I was short and



skinny, and I walked most places I went.

“What was most difficult was when the all-black college had to integrate with the all-white college. It was very hard for my fellow students and me because of racism. I had to prove myself. I had to be better than the rest.”

I am very proud of my grandma because she decided to become a teacher, then a principal. She is a great example to me.

Olivia Adkins
Missouri

Horses Know the Way to Carry the Barrel

It is hard to believe, but our grandparents were young once. In the good old days, kids were the same; transportation was not. When my grandma was in third grade, cars were rare, and she relied on horses for transportation.

One day there was a near-paralyzing blizzard in her rural town of Big Lake, Minnesota. The snow fell so densely that people could walk only a few feet before getting buried or disoriented. Her father, my great-grandpa, had to get Grandma to school somehow. Great-Grandpa couldn't guide the horses because of the heavy snow; he couldn't guide even himself. What were they to do? Horses to the rescue! The horses had gone to and from school so many times that they had memorized the way.

The horses could easily take Grandma to school in her sleigh. The sleigh was like a modern-day farmer's truck. Great-Grandpa knew he could rely on the horses to take Grandma to school and back. His next obstacle was to protect Grandma from the incessant snow. Great-Grandpa placed an old wooden barrel in the sleigh, and he placed Grandma in the barrel. For a canopy, he placed a wool horse blanket on top. Safely, and somewhat cozily, Grandma arrived at school.

At dismissal time, the blizzard had not lessened.



Neither Grandma nor her classmates could get home. She went with her classmates to a storm shelter, where she stayed until Great-Grandpa came to pick her up. When he arrived, the snow had accumulated so high that the door to the shelter was blocked. Grandma had to hoist herself up and out of a window to get outside. She climbed onto the sleigh and into the barrel, and again covered herself with the blanket. Great-Grandpa covered himself as best he could from the cold and wind, and off they went.

Karen Figenshau
Missouri

An Unusual But Special Talent

I was walking down my road to my neighbor's house in Cleveland, where I babysat two young kids. The year was 1951.

"Play your broom, play your broom please!" yelled the two kids. I took out my broom and wooden spoon and played for them. Yes, it was a rather unusual talent, but it definitely amazed people and kept me busy.

"I will give you five dollars if you take a train down to the radio station and audition for that talent show I've been hearing about," said Joe, the father of the two children. "Playing the broom is a one-of-a-kind talent."

I went home and practiced, like always. I put a lot of thought into what Joe had said. My family also encouraged me to audition for the talent show. They thought it would be a fun thing for me to do while also introducing something new and unusual to our town of Cleveland, Ohio. With everyone supporting me, I finally gave in.

The next day I did exactly what Joe had told me to do. I took a train all the way down to the radio station. Auditions were beginning. There was singing, and people were playing instruments. When it was finally my turn, I took out my wooden spoon and my broom, and I did exactly what I needed to do. After

everyone performed and the judges made their decision, I was extremely surprised to hear that I was the winner!

“Congratulations, Mary!” said one of the judges. “Your prize for winning this talent show is a one-hundred-dollar savings bond!”

I was so excited that I can’t even describe it! My family didn’t have much money, so earning this one-hundred-dollar savings bond made me really proud. When I got home, my five siblings and my mother were very proud of me. I even got to be on the radio and on television, which was amazing!

The broom is something I’ve continued all my life, and it is still something I do very well today. I’m so glad I got the chance to show my special talent. I even got my five dollars!

Nicole Devenny, New Jersey
Story told by Nicole’s grandmother

Kitty

When you hear this title, you might expect to hear some cute story about a little girl who gets a kitten or maybe about a cat being chased by a dog. Well, “Kitty” is different. Kitty is a tough tomcat. You see, my dad grew up with his two sisters, a mom, a dad, the family dog, and, of course, Kitty. Kitty belonged to my dad’s older sister, my aunt Sue. In some ways he was like any ordinary cat; he hated dogs and protected his territory. He even had the scars to prove it. Some of his fights against dogs resulted in ears being bitten off, faces being cut and scarred, and other things you couldn’t even imagine.

My dad grew up in a calm neighborhood in Bangor, Michigan. His sister begged and begged for a cat until Grandpa, who didn’t much care for cats, gave in and bought Aunt Sue a cat. It was 1969 and my dad was eight years old when Kitty came to live with them. No one knew from looking at Kitty what a tough cat he was.

Kitty’s unusual behavior was first noticed by the family during that winter when Grandpa noticed that the amount of bird feed lasted longer than expected. They knew something was wrong. The family dog, Queeny, began hanging out in the basement and always had scratches on her nose. Grandpa no longer sat in his



favorite chair, as Kitty was usually resting there. Kitty also had a habit of perching up on the garbage cans and waiting for his next victim to come. When the neighbors' dogs came by, Kitty would leap off the garbage cans and pounce onto their backs. You could hear the yelping from far away, and most of the dogs never came back!

The most amazing thing Kitty did was come back to life. You see, during one fall, Kitty went away for the entire winter and came back in the spring. The whole family, including my aunt Sue, thought Kitty was dead. Then one day they saw Kitty perched on one of the garbage cans looking well fed and happy. My grandpa thought it was a bad dream. He hoped Kitty might go away if he didn't pay attention to him. Aunt Sue ran out to pet him and hug him. Kitty purred at Aunt Sue and my dad. He gave Grandpa that old familiar glare. Kitty had come home to stay. They could see by his bloody face that even in the wild he had been fighting for a late-night snack.

Joey Rosga
Missouri

Miracles Do Happen

This is a story about my mother, Harriett Jones.

Growing up as a child was very hard for Harriett; she was the oldest of three kids. After her parents' divorce, times were even harder. Harriett's mother, Bettie, became an alcoholic. This is when Harriett knew it was all up to her to keep the family together. Harriett's brother, Mario, was nothing but trouble; he stayed in and out of messes and made it even harder on Bettie. It got to the point where Bettie would spend all her money and income on alcohol.

One day when Harriett came home from school, she found her mother drunk and a big red eviction letter on the door. Harriett sat in tears at the door, and her little sister, Raven, joined her. What were they going to do? They didn't have a job. The next day Harriett dropped out of school and went out looking for work. She didn't care what her job was as long as it kept food on the table and a roof over their heads.

Every day Harriett came home and cooked and cleaned, but she was tired. She would tell her little sister every day the importance of going to school. Raven felt sorry. She watched her sister as a young black teenager trying to keep their family together. On the other hand, Mario saw it differently. He was no help at all. Sometimes he didn't come home for days. Harriett

would try to talk to her brother, but nothing would help. He was into gangs and drugs, but this soon would change.

Raven was determined to help out. She received a job babysitting; the pay was \$10.00 a day. Raven began buying things for the house and thought of ways to turn her mother around. Life for Harriett began to get better. Her mother was starting to straighten her act up. What more could she ask for?

One day while Harriett, Raven, and Bettie were at a card game, Mario rushed into the house. He had been shot three times—in the chest, head, and lower leg. Harriett cried—just when she thought everything was going all right. Mario was rushed to the hospital. He was the only one in the whole gang fight who had been hurt.

Mario was lying in the hospital bed when Bettie walked in. He could not speak at the time, but he could still hear. Bettie explained to Mario how much she loved him and the girls, and how sorry she was for not having been there for them. Mario lay there with tears in his eyes. He heard every word she said and wanted to believe her.

That night Bettie made a promise to them that she would look for work. Bettie made Harriett promise that she would enroll in school again. The family was back together. Mario even changed his life around; he got a job at the barbershop. It wasn't much, but it kept him out of trouble.

As you can see, miracles do happen!

Bri'Anna Brown
Illinois

Big Bob

My great-grandfather, Big Bob, passed away before I had a chance to meet him. I knew my great-grandmother Marney, who was married to him for over fifty years. She told stories about Big Bob so my brother and I would have memories of him. The story that I enjoyed the most is one that helps me know that it is okay to be different and that everybody is going to struggle sometime in life.

Big Bob was going to graduate from high school when his life dreams changed. He volunteered to go to World War I, so he did not finish high school or get to go to college. He was only eighteen years old when he left for the war. He went to war with several high school friends. They were sent to France to fight. It was hard on his family because they wanted him to be safe and come home alive. He thought it was his duty to serve his country.

Big Bob was gone one year when he had a dramatic turn of events. He had been shot in the leg, and he would have to have it amputated. He felt lonely and depressed. He was going to be sent home, but he was going home alone. All his friends who went to war with him had been killed, so he had to deal with his war memories by himself. My great-grandmother went over to Germany to meet him before they flew home together.

Big Bob was now handicapped and had to find work. He was sad and mad because of how he was treated with one leg. He walked on crutches before getting a wooden leg. My great-grandmother and Big Bob got married even though it was looked down upon because he had only one leg.

Big Bob found a job with an advertising company in Indianapolis. They lived on one dollar a day before deciding to move to Frankfort to work in a bank. He overcame a lot of difficulties dealing with being handicapped. He did not let that stop him. Big Bob worked hard and had a sensitive, positive attitude about him. He became a wonderful husband and father, and a very successful businessman.

My dad enjoyed spending time with Big Bob. I wish I could have met him. I have been told I have to work hard like he did to overcome my learning difficulties. I have a part of him in my heart even though I never knew him.

Kevin Hall
Indiana

Wedding Joy in Wartime Trials

My grandfather and grandmother, whose names are Milan and Nada Miladinovich, lived in Yugoslavia in 1944 during World War II. Belgrade, which is the capital city, had been under German occupation for three years. America was strategically bombing the Germans to decrease their military capability.

Milan was preparing to go to war against the Nazis, but before he did, he wanted to marry his girlfriend, Nada. First he was faced with the problem of finding a church. The churches in Belgrade were not in regular use during the week, only for Sunday services because of the danger of bombing. Milan's relative, who was the minister of the church, reserved St. Marko's Church for the wedding at 6:00 a.m. on Sunday. It was beautiful as well as practical, because bombs were usually aimed not at churches but at areas that would cripple Germany in the war. If there was any danger of bombs during the wedding, the basement would provide a suitable shelter.

Milan and Nada invited friends and relatives to the wedding. Each brought a food dish for the reception afterward. The wedding continued fine, until the dreaded sirens blared! The blasts like ambulance sirens were used to warn the civilians that planes were passing overhead. Yet Milan and Nada decided they were safe



enough, so they continued with the wedding. Soon a second siren went off, signifying that the planes had passed over and everything was safe. The planes flew over to bomb a nearby oil field in Romania. When the wedding was over, the new Miladinovich couple left the church. They saw numerous people coming out of bomb shelters, like ants scurrying out of their holes.

Because Nada's terrace was too small for the guests, my grandparents decided to celebrate at the park. The wedding, fine weather, and the assurance of safety cheered the city people up so much that they started celebrating with the guests at the reception! They came with guitars, fiddles, tambourines, and joyful spirits. There was music, dancing, and merriment, ultimately making for a remarkable wedding.

Hope Miladinovich
New Jersey

Escape from Yugoslavia

My grandparents, Milan and Nada Miladinovich, lived in Yugoslavia during World War II, when the Nazis were trying to take over the world. The Nazis occupied Yugoslavia from 1941 to 1944. In 1944 my grandparents got married in Saint Marko's Church in Belgrade. A few weeks later, Milan and his friends were having a walk in the park when suddenly the Nazis came out of nowhere, encircled Milan and his friends, and gave them orders to arrive for work at a factory that repaired damaged airplanes.

After Milan had worked for the Nazis at the factory for two weeks, he didn't show up for work. He moved with his wife to Obrenovac, where his parents lived. The Russian Communists, who were on the side of the Americans, liberated Belgrade from the Nazis in 1944. After that, Milan went to fight against the remaining Nazis in the rest of Yugoslavia under the new ruler, Tito, who was a Communist backed by America. Eleven other students from Milan's school also went to war, but only Milan and his friend Zoran came back alive.

Milan and Nada's daughter, Milena, was born on January 18, 1946. When she was nine years old, she was called into the office in school and asked what her parents talked about at home. The officials were trying to find out if Milan and Nada listened to Radio Free

Europe, went to church, celebrated Christmas or Slava,* or were saying bad things about the Communists. Also, schools were teaching that there was no God. Milan and Nada Miladinovich wanted to leave this country of Communism!

The perfect chance to escape came when the World's Fair was being held in Brussels. Milan and Nada ordered visas but could get them only for themselves, not for Milena. The government did not believe that Milan and Nada would leave their daughter home and try to escape! They stayed at the fair for four days, but instead of leaving for Yugoslavia on the fifth day like everyone else, they sneaked away on the fourth night to leave for Paris. When they got to Paris, they met their niece, Svetlana, who let them stay at her home.

Milan and Nada had left Milena in Yugoslavia, and after a year they sent for her. The government told them to come and get her. Milan knew that if he went back to Yugoslavia the officials would not let him return to Paris. So he obtained an order from the United Nations to send Milena to Paris because it was against the law for children and parents to be separated. Milan and Nada were so happy Milena was coming that they surrounded her bed with oranges as a surprise, because oranges were a rare and costly fruit in Yugoslavia.

Finally, in 1961, their application for a visa to America was approved, and they moved to America, the land of the free and the home of the brave.

Heather Miladinovich, New Jersey

*Slava = the celebration of a family's patron saint—in this case, St. Nikola

A Different Land

Imagine being a teenager and leaving your family to travel thousands of miles to a new country to live. How would you feel? In 1981 my dad had to do just that. He was sixteen years old, and my grandparents sent him to Chicago alone from Taiwan to stay with family friends. They did this because they thought he would get a better education in the United States.

When Eddy got to his new home, everything was a culture shock. All the houses in the suburbs were so far apart that nobody was out on the street. Also, there were no restaurants nearby that he could walk to. His new environment was very quiet. Back at home in Taiwan my father was used to seeing many people in the street and walking to nearby restaurants to catch a bite to eat. Taiwan definitely wasn't a quiet place!

My father wrote to my grandparents every day and told them not to worry about him. He reassured his parents that he was okay and he was earning strong grades in school. He wrote letters because phone calls to Taiwan were very expensive. My father tried to hide his feelings and be strong, but he was only sixteen and was very homesick. For fun he would ride his bike around the neighborhood or go to the library, because he had no friends. He persevered and remembered that his family wanted him to get a better education.

Today my father is a very successful physician. He owes a lot to my grandparents for sending him to the United States to get such a good education. Though he still misses Taiwan and goes back there any chance he gets, he likes being in the United States, the land of opportunity.

Joanne Hsueh
Missouri

Charm Quarks Are All Around Us

My grandfather, Bruce G. Walker, was a member of the scientific research team that discovered the psi particle. He was working at the Stanford Linear Accelerator Center (SLAC) in Menlo Park, California. The physicists there were looking for anomalies in particle scattering from smashing atoms together.

On November 10, 1974, Bruce Walker and his team were running an experiment at SLAC for physicist Burton Richter. The Stanford Positron Electron Accelerating Ring (SPEAR) lab was busy trying to figure out what the anomalies meant—and discovered something much more important. Burton Richter, using data collected by my grandpa, discovered the psi particle, a charm quark.

The physicist, Burton Richter, received the Nobel Prize in Physics for this discovery. Bruce Walker's lab book with the discovery data is on display at the Smithsonian in Washington, D.C. There is also a picture of my grandpa in an encyclopedia entry about the discovery of the particle. The picture is of him in the SPEAR lab, explaining the equipment used in the experiment.

It used to be that all matter was thought to be made of electrons, protons, and neutrons—nothing smaller. Using particle accelerators, scientists

discovered that these small particles are made up of even smaller particles called quarks, like the psi particle.

I am very proud of my grandfather. He has since received a doctorate in physics from Stanford University and is now teaching science with traveling experiments that he takes from school to school. My dad went to Boise State University and received his physics degree and is now working toward a master's degree in educational technology. He also helps my grandpa with the traveling science show.

Nicholas C. Walker
Idaho

John Howland

I will just put it right out there and say it: I am related to a klutz. No, I am not talking about my dad (though he is on my dad's side). I am talking about my great-great-great-great-great-great-great-great-great-great-grandfather, John Howland. That is ten *greats*, which is a lot. But then I guess you would need that many *greats* to go back to the *Mayflower*. Yes, you read this right. My ancestor came over on the *Mayflower*, and then fell off the *Mayflower*.

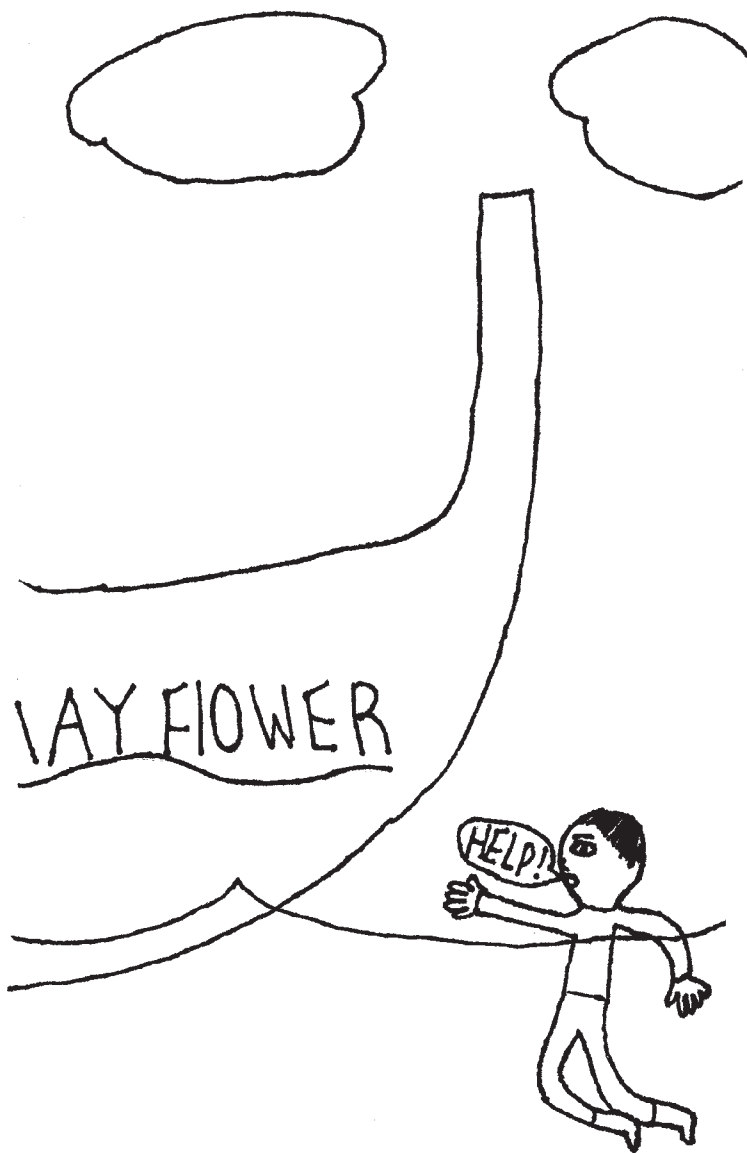
In 1620, as we all know, the *Mayflower* set forth to find a better home for its passengers. That home was America, a new and better horizon. It had the promise of freedom of religion, which is what had caught my tenth-great-grandfather's eye. There were many families aboard the *Mayflower* and many couples, too. But John Howland went alone. He was not married, and he did not have any kids. Both his parents stayed in England, the place where John was born, and no friends went with him. He was alone. Kind of depressing, but true. The good news was that he could make friends on board the *Mayflower*, and that I'm sure he did, though I cannot really know. What I can tell you is that he made one friend for sure, Elizabeth Tilly, whom he later married on shore.

Halfway through the journey, something

happened. They were in the middle of the ocean when a storm hit. Waves were crashing and breaking on the deck where an unlucky John stood. One giant wave was all it took to wash the man overboard. But he was smart enough to reach out and grab the topsail halyards before going under water, so when he came back above the water's surface, he was still hanging on to the boat. That gave the crew enough time to get a rope into the water and drag him out of the frigid, dark water. I'm sure that Elizabeth was glad they were able to save him. In fact, *I'm* sure glad they were able to save him, because without him there would be no me! Now you can certainly see how I'm related to a klutz.

Now I'm not saying I'm ashamed of my tenth-great-grandfather. Oh no, on the contrary, I'm quite proud of John Howland and the rest of my heritage. He came to a new world for a better life, was married, built a house, raised kids, and lived to be the happy eighty-four-year-old he was when he died. And of course, I'm thrilled with the family he left to me. In conclusion, I guess I would just like to say that even though I don't exactly brag about him falling off the *Mayflower*, I'm proud of him and would like to thank him for my family; after all, I probably owe it to him.

Kaylie Hodge
Ohio



My Great-Grandpa Was Great

My great-grandpa was a great man. He is respected, appreciated, and admired to this day.

Great-Grandpa's name was Michael McQuillan. When he was eighteen or nineteen, he graduated from high school. He decided not to go to college. He stayed in town and took a job at the bank. He soon married my great-grandma. They soon had Jimmy, their first child. My great-grandpa was drafted in World War II when Great-Grandma was pregnant with their second child. While Great-Grandpa was in the war, my great-grandma had Mary, who grew up to be my grandma.

When Great-Grandpa returned, he continued to work at the bank until about the 1980s. That may not sound like a very good story, but the part you do not know is why my great-grandpa was such a great guy.

When Great-Grandpa worked at the bank during the Great Depression, life was hard for people. Everyone needed money, but no one had it. Many times the poorest people would walk in the front door of the bank. Some people may have looked at them and frowned, but my great-grandpa would smile and say hello. They would need a loan desperately; some bankers would never give them a chance. The bankers thought they would never be able to pay back the loan. It would be too big of a risk for the bank and their jobs.

My great-grandpa was the one to take that risk. He never judged anyone by his or her looks. He gave everyone an equal chance.

My grandma Mary told me that people today walk up to her and tell her how grateful they were and are that her dad was in their lives and gave them that loan during the Depression. They tell her if not for that loan they would not have made it through. It makes my great-grandma and my grandma and the whole McQuillan family happy that Great-Grandpa was able to help so many families.

Today Great-Grandpa is where he belongs, in heaven. He packed his bags and left last June. I know what he would do if he saw someone walking down the street. He'd smile and say hi in his friendly voice. He never judged anyone.

Kimberly Wood
Nebraska

Honorable Mention Stories

The Blitz—A World War II Story
Dylan Teachey, Pennsylvania

The Broken Ice
Alex Purvey, New Jersey

The Coon and the Hound
Kendall Pemberton, Ohio

Frozen Cast
Courtney C. Chervenak, Ohio

Grandpa's All-Time High
Sarah Vettori, Ohio

The Great Miracle
Michayla DeMaree, Idaho

Lost Hikers
Zoë Schaeffer, Missouri

More Guts than a Fishing Worm
Katie Vettori, Ohio

The Singing Faucet
Davide Johnson, Pennsylvania

Some Call It Luck
Steven Orgill, Missouri

Tragedy Strikes
Jenna-Marie Tracy, New Jersey

Watch Out for That Moose!
Lauren Elizabeth Deisley, Nebraska

Illustrators

- p. 14 Melissa Milbrandt, Missouri
- p. 23 Mary K. Snapp, Missouri
- p. 24 Sarah C. Finnegan, Missouri
- p. 33 Sarah Pinnell, Missouri
- p. 38 Petra Petermann, Missouri
- p. 48 Andrea Stiffelman, Missouri
- p. 51 Madi Schuldt, Missouri
- p. 56 Erica Gramke, Missouri
- p. 63 Tori Hughes, Missouri
- p. 73 Samantha Werdel, Missouri

Invitation to Participate

Please join us for the 2008 Grannie Annie Family Story Celebration. The submission deadline for stories and art for *Grannie Annie, Vol. 3* is February 14, 2008. Complete details, including the required entry form, are available at www.TheGrannieAnnie.org.

Praise for The Grannie Annie

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*

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—and to share it with the world.

Florrie Binford Kichler

Patria Press, www.PatriaPress.com

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

The Reading Tub™

www.TheReadingTub.com

The Grannie Annie offers students real writing in a real setting . . . [and] offers readers true stories that expose the human heart and create space for conversation about what truly matters in life.

Bonnie M. Davis, Ph.D.

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

Culturally Relevant Teaching Strategies, www.A4Achievement.net

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

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.

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Play for Peace

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