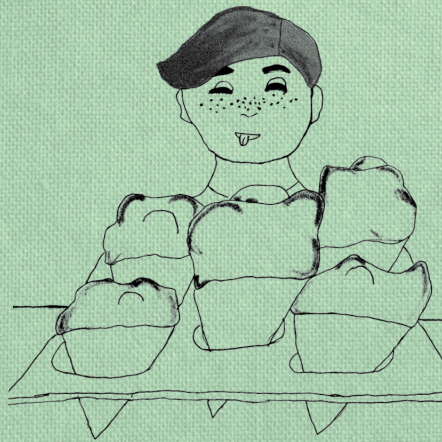




Grannie Annie

Historical Family Stories
Written and Illustrated by Young People



from
The Grannie Annie
Family Story Celebration
Vol. 12



Grannie Annie, Vol. 12

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The Grannie Annie Family Story Celebration
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Saint Louis, Missouri

The Grannie Annie Family Story Celebration

Welcome to the 2016/2017 Grannie Annie celebration of family stories! Students in U.S. grades 4 through 8 and homeschooled or international students 9 through 14 years of age are invited to interview their family storykeepers and write a story from their family's history. The Grannie Annie experience leads young people to strengthen family and community bonds, encounter history in a personal way, and polish their writing skills. Students are encouraged to illustrate their story and then share their work with their family, school, community, and The Grannie Annie.

The works of thirty-eight young authors and twelve young artists, chosen to represent the submissions received this year, are included in this twelfth annual volume of *Grannie Annie*. This year's stories are available in eBook, PDF, and paperback editions, and are also published on The Grannie Annie's website and through social media.

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

Published by The Grannie Annie Family Story Celebration, P.O. Box 11343,
Saint Louis, Missouri 63105.

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

Because the stories in *Grannie Annie, Vol. 12*, were captured from the oral
tradition, they represent a unique blend of history, legend, and opinion.
Accuracy — historical or otherwise — is not guaranteed, and the views
represented are not necessarily those of the authors, directors, or publishers.

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

* * *

In loving memory
of my dear spouse
Mary Sale, 1929–2017,
and her beloved son-in-law
Francis Glenn MacKie, 1957–2017.
May the stories of their brave
lives live on.

Honored by donor Anne Perkins

* * *

In memory of elegant
Minnie Rasmussen
and her Danish brothers
Peter, Nels, and Andrew,
whose lively stories painted a picture of
Dannevirke, Nebraska
in the early 1900s

Honored by donors Louise and Jack McIntyre

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Invitation to Participate

Grannie Annie Storykeepers 2017 and Their Story Titles

Praise for The Grannie Annie

* The time setting of each story is noted in parentheses here and also on the story pages. Where the exact year is unknown, "c." (circa) indicates the approximate year.

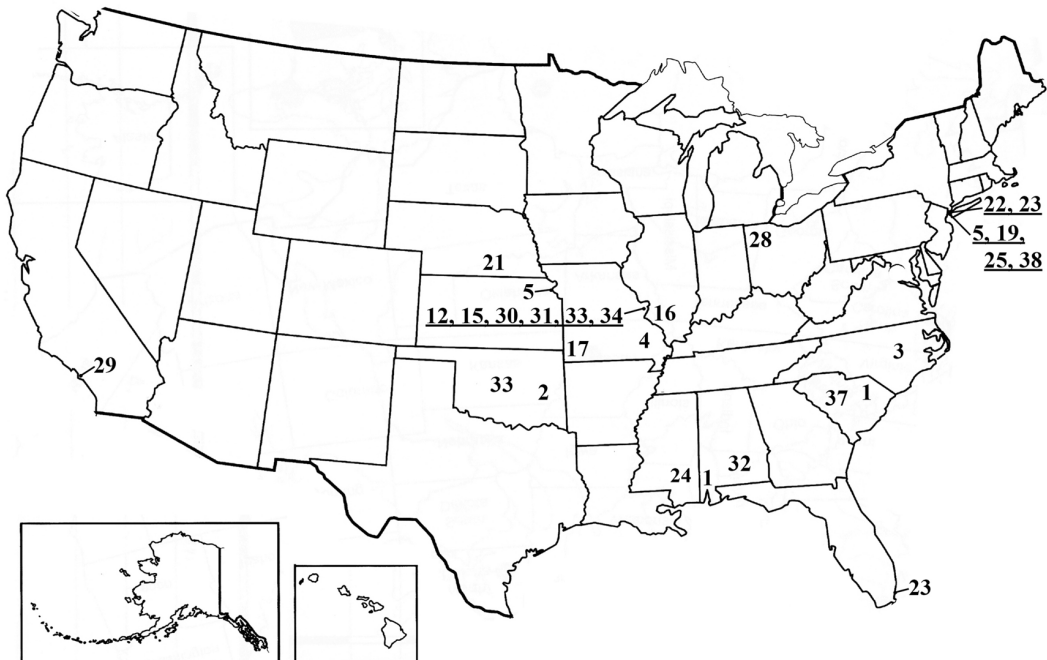
Story Settings Map, International

Numbers on map are story numbers.



Story Settings Map, United States

Numbers on map are story numbers.



A Word from Grannie Annie

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

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

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

Ann Guirrerri Cutler, The Original Grannie Annie, April 2006

Note to Parents and Educators

From a Civil War battlefield to lower Manhattan on 9/11, *Grannie Annie, Vol. 12*, carries its readers far and wide. It takes us to cool places and dark times, and confirms that kindness is its own reward — and could also save your life.

The thirty-eight family stories in this volume will transport you to five continents, and back in time as far as six generations. The stories stretch from heartwarming to haunting, as some family members experience unbelievably good luck, and others experience miracles. You'll read of family members in hiding — under a blackberry bush or in plain sight. And yes, there are stories about food — about neighborly barbecues, about a private stash of ice cream cones, and of course, about cookies. Lots of cookies. Some stories may inspire you to learn something new or to find a way to light up the world — you may even be inspired to clean your attic.

This collection is but a taste of the 522 memorable stories shared with The Grannie Annie this year. These published stories are chosen for you and your family — for your inspiration and entertainment, for your information and enrichment. All this said, you may want to preview the stories before sharing them with young or sensitive readers.

Thank you for joining us. We wish you and your family a memorable year and hope you'll return again next year for The Grannie Annie Family Story Celebration!

Connie McIntyre and Fran Hamilton, Directors of The Grannie Annie

Listening is an act of love.

—Dave Isay, StoryCorps

Grannie Annie, Vol. 12

1. The Life of Morgan Elias Swails

1865;¹ Mobile, Alabama, to Florence, South Carolina, USA

My great-great-great-great-grandfather was named Morgan Elias Swails. He was born on Valentine's Day in 1847. Morgan Elias Swails is important to me because he had to walk home from the Civil War.

Morgan was a poor man with very little money to support his family. He had ten children, and his wife was named Amanda Swails. One of Morgan's children was Anna Louise, and she was my great-great-great-grandmother who passed down this story.

Morgan Swails was a young private in the Confederate Army. Morgan was originally from Florence, South Carolina. He enlisted in 1862 and was assigned to Company C, Third Battalion, South Carolina Light Artillery (Palmetto Battalion). Morgan fought bravely in many battles, including Charleston, Jackson, and Chickamauga. The last battle he fought in was the Battle of Fort Blakely in Alabama, in April of 1865. Lieutenant J. L. Moses was killed in this battle, and the unit was forced to surrender in May.

Morgan Elias Swails was a strong Christian who believed that God would provide, but his faith had never been tested before, until May of 1865. When his unit was forced to surrender, the troops with the least amount of money had no choice but to walk home. Morgan Swails was sadly a member of those troops. Mobile, Alabama, is 615 miles away from Morgan's hometown, which was Florence, South Carolina.

It took Morgan Swails a month to get back to his home. He walked most of the way, but sometimes he could catch a ride on a trader's wagon. There was no money, so that meant no food. The only free food was the unripe corn in the husks. Morgan wasn't alone when he walked back to South Carolina; some of the other troops were walking with him. But sadly, Morgan was the only one to survive the long trek back home. He survived, and the story is still being passed down to my family members.

This story is important to me because it shows how faith can get you through anything. It also shows that oral history is a big part of my family. It is really amazing that a story that was made more than 150 years ago is still told among my family members today. Morgan Elias never gave up faith, even though he was very close to death. I wouldn't be alive right now if Morgan had given up hope. He wouldn't have married Amanda, nor would he have had ten children. Morgan Elias Swails showed me to never give up hope, even in the roughest times.

Anna-Katherine Grubb; North Carolina, USA

1. The setting of each story is noted below its title. In cases where the exact year is not known, "c." (circa) indicates that the year given is approximate.

2. Boomer Sooner

1889, 1954; Ash Creek,¹ near McAlester, Oklahoma, USA

It all started with my great-great-great-uncle Charlie's dad, Harrison. In March of 1889 my four-times-great-uncle heard an announcement from President Benjamin Harrison. He was opening up the Indian Territory in present-day Oklahoma to settlers to stake and claim. The only requirement to get a 160-acre tract of land was to make improvements on the land over a five-year period. After the five years, the settler would receive a deed for the land in his name.

Harrison decided to seize this opportunity. He left his family behind in Nebraska, mounted his fastest horse, and rode all the way to the Kansas border. When he got there, the troops that were guarding the land stopped him. Instead of letting settlers go straight to Oklahoma, the troops directed them around the Kansas border.

It definitely wasn't an easy journey. There were several times when it would have been easier to turn around and give up. Harrison was traveling with several other settlers when he came to a flooded river. The path to Oklahoma was completely blocked off; there was no way around it. Instead of accepting defeat, though, the settlers joined together and came up with a solution: They took boards from a railroad station and built a bridge. By working together, everyone was able to cross!

On the day before Easter in 1889, my four-times-great-uncle arrived at the Indian Territory. It was not the opening day yet, so he waited and passed time with the other settlers by playing games and running races. April 22 finally arrived, and the settlers all started to line up. My uncle lined up very early. While he was waiting, he got thirsty, but he didn't want to lose his spot in line. Little girls came by selling spring water for five cents. He thought that was way too much for a cup of water, but he bought it anyway.

At the strike of noon a gun went off, which signaled that they could finally enter the Indian Territory. Harrison and his horse were going as fast as they could. Once he found the land he wanted, he staked his claim, registered it, and immediately began making improvements. He dug a well and cut down trees to start building a house. Over the next five years, my four-times-great-uncle would make several more trips between Nebraska and Oklahoma. After the five years were up, he moved his entire family to Oklahoma.

The land run was a huge opportunity, and my uncle Charlie was happy to be part of the boomer generation. It wasn't until 1954, when my uncle Charlie met my great-great-grandpa Charles from the other side of the family and they began talking about their roots, that my uncle Charlie learned that Charles had moved to Oklahoma during the land run, too! Charles told my uncle Charlie that he had some Indian friends in the territory so he had come two weeks early and had just

pretended to arrive when everyone else did. He was happy to have arrived soon enough to get the land he wanted. My family truly is a boomer sooner² family!

Abigail Wilson; Missouri, USA

1. Ash Creek was a small mining community.
2. “Boomer” and “sooner” are terms used for early settlers in what is now the state of Oklahoma, nicknamed “the Sooner State.”

3. A Better World Full of Light

1890–1917; Pine Level, Johnston County, North Carolina, USA

Clarence slumped down on a tree stump. “Flora, I’m not going to pick up pine knots¹ my whole life,” my great-great-great-grandfather told his sister.

It was a hot summer day in the late 1890s, and Flora and Clarence Godwin were young children. Deep in a small town called Pine Level in North Carolina, they were laboring away at “clearing new ground.” “Clearing new ground” is a term for a rather grueling process that includes felling a tree. Every part of the tree was dug up by hand, including the stump. Since Flora and Clarence were young at the time, they were tasked with the job of picking up the pine knots. But Clarence had bigger plans.

“One day,” he continued, “I’m going to live in a big house where I’ll just press a button and the lights will come on. I won’t draw water with a chain and bucket from a well — the water will already be in my house. I’m going places and will see things, and the places I’m going are not going to be ‘new ground.’”

Flora mulled over her brother’s endeavors for a time. Such wild, untamed fantasies galloped through her brother’s head. A bit taken aback, she went to her first defense: her superiority.

“Clarence, if you don’t get off that stump, Father will whip you and you’ll be glad to draw water from a chain and bucket.”

Many years later, on June 12, 1917, at the age of thirty, Clarence I. (CI) Godwin did the impossible. Armed with his electric company at his back, Clarence lit up the town of Four Oaks, North Carolina. He financed wiring of Kenly, Four Oaks, Princeton, and his hometown, Pine Level.

But most people didn’t like the idea of electricity. People said vile things about Clarence Godwin and Thomas Edison, the inventor of the light bulb. The reason behind this is that people didn’t think electricity was needed. Good, honest citizens rose with the sun and worked all day. When they went home, all they wanted was a good supper and then to go to bed. People who slept in and stayed up late were rumored of doing the devil’s work.

But people adapted, and times changed until we reached the civilization we have today, nearly fully dependent on electricity. Clarence never let anyone put him down and followed the dream that was planted in his head as a little boy. Passion and determination helped him persevere and not give up. Clarence did it for the people he knew would see the benefits of electricity. He persevered for his family and future generations that would live a life full of light. He kept going for himself and the little boy who dreamed of a better life.

Clarence I. Godwin believed in himself and never picked up another pine knot.

Elizabeth Grace Norris; North Carolina, USA

1. A pine knot is a joint in pinewood. Pine knots burn long and hot because they are hard and have a lot of resin.

4. The Montgomery Indians

late 1800s; Patterson, Missouri, USA

In the late 1800s Great-Great-Grandpa Joe moved from Virginia to Wayne County — Patterson — Missouri. He was in his twenties, and he would go to the Holmes Cave to have a square dance with all the neighbors. There was a part of the cave near the mouth that had collapsed and made a perfect dance floor, and the musicians sat on a ledge above the cave's entrance. People tied the horses and buggies on top of the cave. A sinkhole was about thirty feet back on top of the cave. One night at a square dance a horse escaped with a buggy and fell into a sinkhole and didn't live.

About forty years later, Grandpa Johnny Montgomery was a young boy and lived in a four-room house. It had a kitchen, living room, and two bedrooms. Grandpa Johnny and his siblings had to walk across the porch outside to access their two bedrooms. The house had no electricity and was heated only by two stoves. One was a kitchen stove and did not provide as much heat. To keep their produce cold, they would go to the Holmes Cave across the road, where it was always about sixty degrees. Grandpa Johnny and his siblings would play in the cave and use pine knots¹ for light. After their light went out, they would draw on the walls with the burnt remnant of the pine knot.

Soon Grandpa Johnny grew up and had kids of his own. He found out that Holmes Cave had been opened to the public. He took his own kids to see the cave that he had played in as a child. When they were on the tour, the tour guide said, "The markings on the cave walls are from Indians. The damaged stalagmites are from the Indians' torches."

After the tour was over, Grandpa Johnny told the tour guide, "The *Montgomery* Indians made the drawings on the wall, and I am one of them!" He also showed the tour guide a secret room that they didn't know existed. The cave is now called Rebel Cave, but it is not commercially operated at this time.

Camden Mallady, Missouri, USA

1. A pine knot is a joint in pinewood. Pine knots burn long and hot because they are hard and have a lot of resin.

5. Abandoned

c.1928; New York, New York, to Atchison, Kansas, USA

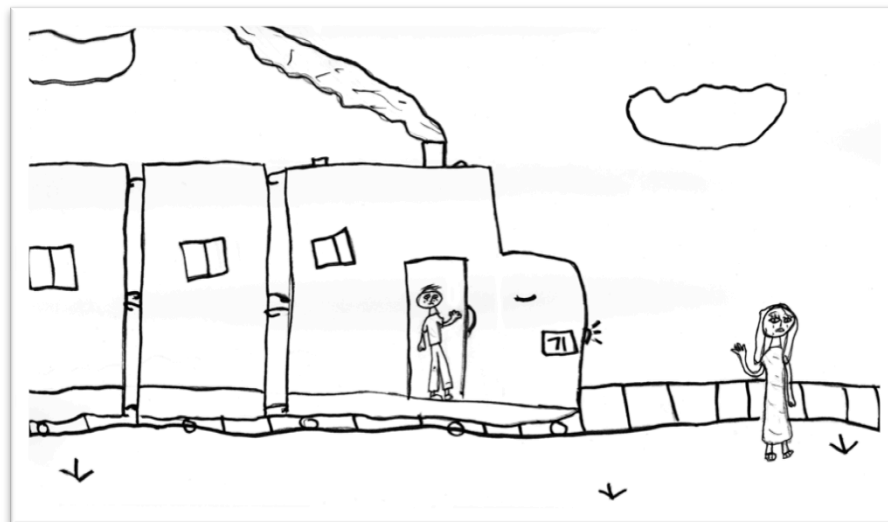
I've faced ups and downs, but mostly life's been great. I have food, and a roof over my head, and I've never imagined life without them. Some may say I took my life for granted — until I heard the story of my great-grandfather. With no shoes on his feet or a blanket when the weather dropped, he knew only poverty.

In Italy, Jim's parents had their American dream, but America didn't exactly go as they had dreamed. They spent their last penny to buy tickets to America and journey from their homeland to the dreamland. At the end of each day they had cuts and scars for little pay and had six children to raise.

As if their situation couldn't get any worse, Jim's father died. Jim's mother was never around. She worked before the sun rose, and Jim was already asleep when she returned.

With no other choice, Jim's mother had to say goodbye to her two oldest children. Jim was only six, and his sister was seven. At such a young age, all Jim could wonder was *Why?* Soon he and his sister would leave the busy streets of New York City and ride to the quiet plains of Kansas on the Orphan Train.¹

Jim will never forget the expression on his mother's face as she sent him away. Jim walked onto the train, heart pounding, leaving everything as he stepped onto some dirty train. All he could hear was crying — babies who didn't know better, kids who missed their parents, and his own weeping. Jim looked out the windows to see his mom for the last time. He saw tears roll down her face. Why would she do this if she was so devastated?



Despite all the crying and screaming, Jim managed to fall asleep as the sun began to set.

Morning came, and Jim no longer saw the tall buildings and bright streetlights of the city. Instead he saw cornfield after cornfield.

“Do you really think we’ll find a home for all these kids?” Jim heard an older lady say to a man.

“Yeah. Nowadays, people need extra help on their farms. Most of these kids will just work, but it’ll be fine. Better than their old life anyway. Plus the siblings don’t have to be in the same family.”

Was this really true? Jim dreamed of nice loving parents, but now they’d probably beat him if he didn’t work hard enough! And without his sister?! She was all he had left. Would anyone want him? He was all alone with nothing left.

As days went by, Jim found a family who took him in like their own. Sadly, he never saw his sister again, but he persevered through the adversity he faced and lived a better life. He even went on to serve his country in World War II, conquering hardship and suffering to provide a better life for Americans.

The hardships that my great-grandfather endured have made me more grateful for my life.

Kharis Perona; Missouri, USA

Illustrator: Grace Suellentrop; Missouri, USA

1. Between 1854 and 1929 about 200,000 orphaned or homeless children in the United States were carried by train to areas where they could find a family to care for them — or even adopt them. The children were often expected to work on the family’s farm.

6. Camera

c. 1939; Nowy Sacz, Poland

Rivka and Shlomo, my great-grandparents, had just gotten married in 1939. They lived in a small home in Poland. Germany had just taken over Poland. The Germans were anti-Semites,¹ so they were very mean to Jewish people. Rivka and Shlomo didn't know that the Germans were anti-Semites.

One day Rivka was at home by herself. A German officer broke into the house, looked around, and didn't say a single word. All Rivka had were a camera and her Shabbos² candles. Rivka was scared but stayed quiet. The German officer took the camera and walked out of the house.

Shlomo came home and saw that Rivka was upset. Rivka told him what had happened with the German officer.

Shlomo went to the police station to report what had happened. He saw a lot of the important Jewish people being rounded up and put into jail. Suddenly a German officer grabbed Shlomo by the collar and wailed, "Do you speak German?"

Luckily Shlomo spoke a lot of languages, and German was one of them. So Shlomo replied in German, "Yes."

The German officer yelled at Shlomo, in German, "Get me a dog! My wife wants a dog."

So Shlomo ran and searched. He somehow found a dog. Then he zoomed back to the police station and gave the officer the dog.

The German officer said, "Good job, Jew. Go home."

Shlomo then hired a Jewish man with a wagon and horses, and took Rivka, four friends, and another couple — and escaped Poland.

At first when the camera was stolen, Rivka was very upset. But if it weren't for the stolen camera, they wouldn't have escaped from Poland and the Germans.

Abigail Wunder; New York, USA

1. An anti-Semite is someone who feels unfriendly toward Jews and may be mean to them.

2. "Shabbos" means "Sabbath," a day of rest and worship.

7. The Miracles of Reizel Fuchs

1939–1945; Lodz, Poland; Bergen-Belsen Concentration Camp, Germany

My great-grandmother Reizel Fuchs was born in May 1923 in the city of Pabianice, in Poland. She had five siblings. Reizel grew up in a wealthy family, and her childhood was very happy. Her father, Yosse, was a city councilman and owned a large factory. Her mother, Rachel, was a very educated and respectable woman. Reizel and her family were very religious, and they were well respected in the community.

In September 1939, World War II started. The Nazis turned the synagogue into a horse stable. They made all the Jews work — making uniforms and fixing shoes for the Nazi soldiers. The children were separated from their parents. Five thousand Jews were sent to the Lodz Ghetto — including my great-grandmother. After the Jews finished working, the Nazis would make “selections.” These selections were terrible experiences for the Jews. The Nazis would kill people who looked weak, every single day. Reizel’s brother Label was killed during one of these selections. Her brother Beral was sent to a different camp.

To help themselves, they used to collect wheat from the bottom of the Nazis’ shoes and from the garbage to try to make food and rolls for the Sabbath. Reizel tried to save a young girl by doing her hair and making her more “put together” so she wouldn’t be picked during one of the selections to die.

Towards the end of the war, Reizel was sent to a concentration camp, called Bergen-Belsen, to work. Reizel and ten other girls tried to run away, but they were caught and taken to a pit to be shot. But then a miracle happened. Just as the Nazi soldier was about to shoot, he stepped on a glass bottle and needed to be taken to the hospital. The girls were supposed to be shot the next day, but another miracle occurred: The camp was liberated!

The only survivors in Reizel’s family were Reizel and her brother Beral. Sometime later, Reizel Fuchs met her husband and got married. They moved to Israel and had three children, fourteen grandchildren, and forty-six great-grandchildren.

My great-grandmother Reizel Fuchs is a nice and kind lady. I am so happy that she lived through the war and is still alive. It was hard for her, but she was able to live through the hard times, and then experience the miracles that saved her.

Sari Merdinger; New York, USA

8. A Story That Could Have Changed My Life

1941; Athens, Greece

I glance up to my grandpa, who's rocking back and forth in his chair. I rub my palms on the shaggy carpet, spelling out my name while wondering if I should ask him this question. "Papou?" I whisper in a hushed tone. "Will you tell me a story — a — a — a story about you when you were my age?"

"Of course!" he tells me with his strong Greek accent. He pauses a few seconds before he begins speaking.

"Well, when World War II was happening, I was in the middle of it. I was living in Athena¹ on an average day until . . .

"My buddies invited me to play soccer with them. We headed toward the middle of town, to the only soccer field around. We were having a blast until — "

"Till what?! Till what!" I bellow while fidgeting with the shaggy carpet.

"Till we heard screams and shouts. I froze, while the ball bounced off of my feet. One of my friends met eyes with a guy dressed in a uniform, someone he didn't know. A bullet chased after him — until it struck him. We all were astonished and didn't know what to do. One thing I knew was to evacuate the area. We heard the piercing sound of *another* bullet that was shot and that struck successfully.

"We knew what was happening: The Nazis were invading Greece. I felt sick to my stomach. POW! A bullet was shot; it was headed for me. I ducked — but not enough, for it clipped my ear. Collapsing, straight to the ground I went."



My hands, without me even thinking, burst right up to my ears. “No, no, no!” I shout.

Papou keeps chattering, like he does not hear me. “I heard a faint blare of ringing,” he continues. “My head started to ache. I still managed to stay hidden. I told myself, ‘It’s not going to end like this’ — which it didn’t. Things started to blur, and everything went black.”

Papou’s voice gets rusty, and he stops speaking.

I glance up to Papou, his eyes pitch black. He is in the moment. I hesitate, then ask, “Is everything okay?”

A tough, firm, courageous tear drops down his cheek. I rush up to him, in his rocking chair, and give him a great big hug. “Has anyone ever called you a hero?”

He shakes his head no.

“Well, now they will, because you are *my* hero.”

Elise Spanos; Missouri, USA

Illustrator: David Nieters; Missouri, USA

1. “Athena” is the most common English spelling of the Greek name for “Athens.”

9. War Zone Waves

c. 1942; Pacific Ocean between Japan and Taiwan

The ocean liner had trudged through the battering waves of the stretch of ocean between Japan and Taiwan that splashed against the hull. It was mid-afternoon — the warm sun's rays had eagerly reached out to the passengers on the deck, while frothy white clouds hung lazily in the azure sky.

It was 1942. My great-grandparents from my father's side were moving back from Japan to their homeland — Taiwan. A few years before, in 1939, World War II had started. The warring nations were divided — the Axis and Allied powers. The Axis powers consisted of Germany, Italy, and Japan. The main Allied powers were Great Britain, the United States, and the Soviet Union (USSR).

My great-grandma was on the deck of the ship with her first child, an infant boy, wrapped carefully in soft bundles, nested in the crook of her arms, with my great-grandfather by her side. They enjoyed the pleasing weather, oblivious to the dangers that would lie ahead.

Suddenly the heavy humming of planes approached the ship, and battle planes streaked across the sky. From another direction, enemy planes had also arrived. In the next few seconds, catastrophe descended. Bullets and explosives were fired across the battleground of the sky, followed by their deafening booms and bursts of light. One of the planes exploded and crashed into the back of the ship, tearing through the hull as if it were made of paper.

Then came the water. It swelled from the damaged hull and began to overflow the ship like water bursting forth from a broken dam. Quickly the ship began to sink, pulling people down who were still in their rooms. The ship had been caught in the war zone, and the remaining passengers flung themselves into the water. Something exploded nearby, and my great-grandparents were tossed into the ocean. Bullets that were fired into the waters tore and ripped through the targeted passengers, dyeing the water crimson.

When my great-grandmother resurfaced, she couldn't find her child. She tried to tread water and look around, but there was no sight of the infant or the blankets that had so carefully been wrapped around him. My great-grandfather had to guide my frantic great-grandmother to a piece of stray driftwood from the ship so she wouldn't drown while searching in vain. Great-grandmother was in too much shock to cry. They floated in danger, with grief, and in clinging, soaked clothes throughout the battle — until they were rescued by another ship. They were exceptionally lucky to have survived.

World War II took something precious from many families. The loss of my grandfather's older brother would remain a reminder of death in the war. Through this family tale, I've learned to appreciate life more

than ever. I am extremely thankful I live in a country where I do not have to experience war firsthand. On September 2, 1945, World War II finally ended. I truly hope it's the last war to take as many lives as that war did.

Caroline Y. Tu; North Carolina, USA

10. Hidden Away

c. 1943; Nice, France

Were you ever away from your family for a long time? Well, Esther Taub, my great-grandmother, was not with her family for more than two and a half years.

In 1943, during the Holocaust, Esther Taub was a young teenager who was separated from her family. All the parents of the young children had to trust an organization that was called “The Underground.” This was an organization that protected young Jewish children by hiding them and having them pretend they were not Jewish. The parents were not told where their children were. They did not even know the address. They were allowed to write letters but were unable to add an address.

The Jewish children, including Esther Taub, had to hide their Jewish religion and Jewish practices. It was very scary for all the young children, including my great-grandmother. While hiding, the children learned how to sew, which was one of the main activities. Sometimes they went for walks, but it was very scary and they had to act very serious.

Every day they had to pray in the church. Esther Taub wrote to her parents and reminded them that she remembered where she came from and her Jewish roots.

When the Holocaust was finally over, The Underground helped the young children find any remaining family they may have. Esther Taub was one of the “lucky ones” who found both her parents alive, unlike many of her friends, who had lost both their parents, or at least one, as well as many other family members. Esther Taub’s family was so very thankful to The Underground for caring for their daughter and keeping her alive during the war.

Many years later the head nun of The Underground was honored by the Holocaust museum in Israel. I cannot believe I am related to such a wonderful woman who went through the scary days and difficult challenges of World War II!

Shana Kaminetzky; New York, USA

11. The Darkest Times

c. 1943; Starachowice labor camp, Starachowice, Poland

Just imagine how you would feel to be my great-grandfather Yossel, who was taken away from his parents and was put into a slave labor camp during World War II in Poland. As most people know, the Nazis were very cruel, and every morning the terrible Nazis gave work to the Jews.

The Jews were sitting around waiting for the Nazis to come. All of a sudden, a Jew in the back remembered that it was Simchas Torah.¹ They started to celebrate and sing a beautiful song.

Then suddenly a Nazi burst into the room, red in the face. Everyone stopped singing and dancing. Everyone was terrified of this horrible person. The Nazi screamed, “Tell me — what do you think you are doing, singing and dancing without permission?!”

Everybody was silent except for Yossel. He said in a calm voice, “We are celebrating our holiday.”

The Nazi was silent. Then he commanded, “Yossel, translate this song that you were singing.”

Yossel was terrified, but he finally said, “There is no one as mighty as G-d.² There is no one as blessed as the son of Amram. There is nothing as great as the Torah. And there is no inheritor like Israel.”

The Nazi was silent. Then he said mockingly, “Do you believe this song? Your G-d has left you! You are now prisoners!”

The room was quiet. Suddenly a fourteen-year-old boy in the back said, “*Ich glaube*.”³ I believe.

One by one, every Jew in the room said, “*Ich glaube*.”

The Nazi was shocked. He was about to turn back, and then he said, “Not even Hitler will be able to destroy your nation.”

My great-grandfather Yossel was a brave man. He did not go away from Judaism, even at the darkest times. This story is special to me because it teaches *me* never to go away from Judaism, even at the darkest times.

Gita Davidowitz; New York, USA

1. Simchas Torah is a Jewish holiday that celebrates and marks the end of the yearly public reading of the Torah, and the beginning of the next cycle.

2. This incomplete spelling is a show of respect.

3. “*Ich glaube*” is pronounced ik GLOU-beh (ou as in “out”).

12. Eyes of Fear

c.1944; St. Louis, Missouri, USA

I stared at the camera when it flashed. I tried to smile, but Mama had made my braids so tight that it made my head ache. I was sitting next to my father, who was wearing one of his best suits that day. It made sense, because it was Christmas, but I could tell he had something on his mind — and it was not because Joan and I had gotten into his cigars again. No, it was something more serious.

Three weeks ago my uncle Randall had gone off to fight in the war. My father was a strong man, but I could tell that he was afraid. I glanced at my older sister Joan; she gave me a dirty look. I could tell she was still mad at me. Last week I found her diary. Being the “brat” (what she liked to call me) I was, I blabbed it to everyone I knew. I had fun, until she got back at me by pushing me down a hill while I was roller-skating.

Finally dinner was served. After eating some chicken, I went into my room for the rest of the night.

The next morning I walked downstairs to see my mother in the kitchen. I asked her where everyone was. She said, “Papa is in the living room watching the television set, Joan is out.”

Joan was out? This early? It didn’t sound like her. I decided to go look for her. I walked past the living room to see my father staring at the television. He still had the look of fear in his eyes. It was as if he had a dark cloud over him that wouldn’t go away. This terrified me. Joan always said I was a chicken (especially when I saw spiders), but to have Papa be afraid was more than I could bear! I did not know what to do. I needed to find Joan.

I hopped onto my bike and took off towards town! I passed all the spots Joan liked to go, but she was not there. I even asked Joan’s friends if they had seen her, but they hadn’t. Losing hope, I decided to go home.

But then I remembered one more place. I burst down the road, then into the woods, and then into the blackberry field. As I scanned all of the bushes, I saw Joan crouched in a ball. I ran over to Joan to find her crying. She looked up at me and had the same look in her eyes as my father. Joan wasn’t the best sister — I have the scars to prove it — but I’ll never stop trusting her.

We made our way home, and then into the kitchen to see Mother and Father. Mother was holding a box of chocolates. Mother stood there smiling, then said, “It is from your uncle Randall!”

I looked at my father, who was standing next to her. For a moment, I thought I saw his eyes light up.

Gummy Rizer, great-niece of Carol, the narrator; Missouri, USA

13. Camp Dread

1945; northwestern Poland

It was sometime around late February or early March when my great-grandpa was on his way to Poland with the army during World War II. The road was cold, and my great-grandpa was trying to prevent the Nazi army from reaching the Allies'¹ main army, which was currently trying to get deeper into Germany.

When my great-grandpa's group was walking the road to Poland, they came across a small village. It was very small, and there weren't many people living there. One of the soldiers spotted a dirt trail through the woods, so they followed it. It led to what one would call a small town, but instead of houses, there were barracks. There were bodies lying everywhere. The small place was surrounded by a barbwire fence. When the men saw a few German soldiers, they realized it was a Nazi concentration camp. My great-grandpa's group of soldiers quickly shot the Germans. In each corner of the barbwire fence there was a stone tower. There was an odor so foul it hurt.

When my great-grandpa's group entered the camp, there were half-dead people crawling on the bloody turf of the camp. Many of these people were missing several limbs. There was a trail in the back of the camp that led a mile or two into the bosk² that surrounded the camp. At the end of the trail were a few pits filled with the corpses of captives. The soldiers walked through the camp only to find more and more of what looked like zombies. The "zombies" all had numbers tattooed onto their skin. These people were sick. They had been tortured and starved so badly that you could see their bones through their skin.

These people were going to die, so my great-grandpa and the rest of the soldiers went back to the small village to get help. They gathered all men seventeen and older to help the people at the concentration camp, whether they wanted to help or not, and most of them did not want to. They led the villagers to the camp to help the soldiers aid the "zombies." The soldiers tried to give the people of the concentration camp drugs to make them feel better. The soldiers wrapped the wounds of the people in gauze and bandages. They tried to identify the people by asking the villagers, but sadly, many of the people's identities remained unknown. The soldiers forced the German civilians to take the dead bodies to the trenches.

After several days of hard work, the area was considered safe. The soldiers continued on their journey to Poland. My great-grandpa

has seen some gruesome things, but none of them can compete with the horror, the stench, and the gore of those days in Germany.

Sam Stephens; Missouri, USA

1. The Allies were the twenty-six countries, including Great Britain, the United States, France, and the Soviet Union (USSR), that fought against Germany, Japan, and other countries in World War II.
2. A bosk is a small area with dense shrubs or small trees.

14. Smoking Over Hiroshima

August 5 and 6, 1945; Hiroshima, Japan

August 5, 1945: It was a normal day for everyone but the people in the Air Force, including my great-grandfather Joseph Daniel Duggan. Joseph and the rest of the Air Force were planning to drop the world's first deployed atomic bomb over the Japanese city of Hiroshima. They were planning on dropping the bomb to end the war that the United States had joined when Japan bombed Pearl Harbor in 1941. Before they dropped the bomb, Joseph smoked a cigar to calm his nerves.

"Joseph, you ready for this big day?" Joseph's friend asked.

"Well, I have my cigar, so I guess." Joseph said that to pretty much everything. He loved his cigars.

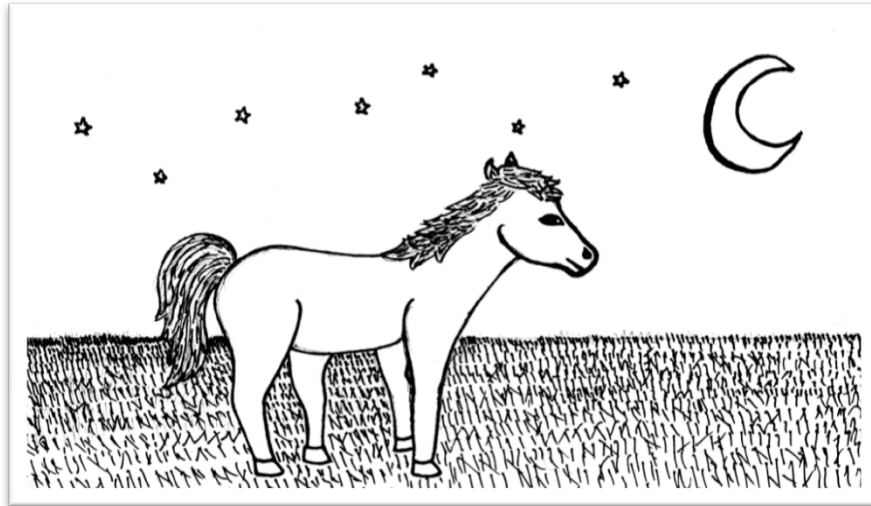
August 6, 1945: Joseph and his crew were preparing to fly to Hiroshima, Japan, to drop the Little Boy, the first deployed atomic bomb. My great-grandfather was the radio operator. He told the crew members when to drop the bomb.

A friend asked, "Joseph, do you have an extra cigar?"

Joseph looked in his pocket and saw his cigar. It was broken. He knew that after he did what he was about to do, he was going to need one. He pretended that he had one, but it didn't work, so he thought about his sweet and loving wife and kids. "That works a lot better than a cigar ever has," he thought to himself.

When it was time, Joseph did his job and told them to drop the bomb. Joseph never thought about that cigar after what he saw. It was a frightening sight. Joseph was traumatized by the death and the chaos. He told the story only once when he left the service. Later in his life he spoke of it more often. He said it haunted him all his life.

Madison McClure; Missouri, USA



15. Starlight

1946; St. Louis, Missouri, USA

When you were a little kid and could fit onto your grandpa's lap, he might have told you stories all day about when he was a little kid. Well, that goes the same with this story. When I was a little kid, I would sit on my grandpa's lap, and he would tell me stories about when he was my age. There is one story that I always remembered.

From the day he was born to the day he left for college, my grandpa lived on a farm. His dad was a milk deliveryman, and his mom worked around the house. A farm life is much different from a city life today.

Living on a farm meant having a lot of animals. Grandpa had many chickens, ducks, pigs, turkeys, and other animals. At the heart of it all, he had one miniature pony named Starlight. She was a beautiful dark brown pony with a black mane. He loved to feed and brush her.

Grandpa's family was not wealthy, so he would have to kill most of the animals so they could eat. My grandpa hated doing this, but when he looked at Starlight, he knew it was the right thing to do to kill the other animals. That was the only way his family could eat!

One day he got the news that he had to sell Starlight so his family could have the money for the things they needed to live. He was horrified when he heard this, but he realized there was no other way. He sold Starlight and got the money to pay his parents.

Grandpa tells me that he will never forget Starlight, and I never will either.

Libby Holmes; Missouri, USA

Illustrator: Mya Gray; Missouri, USA



16. A Sweet Treat

1947; Eden, Illinois, USA

Growing up poor is never easy, and definitely isn't fun. In 1947 a quarter was an immense amount of money, especially to a dirt-poor five-year-old boy. It was the month of August 1947, and the hot, humid southern Illinois sun beat down on anyone who dared to step out of the shade. My grandpa Bill, five years old at the time, was walking alone on a dirt road in his messy jeans and T-shirt. His suspenders were too tight, and his thick country accent was as deep as an accent can be for a five-year-old. He walked alone because his mother and siblings were working.

My grandpa Bill was poor growing up, but he and his family worked hard to make ends meet and still put food on the table. Rarely would he see money, especially a big coin such as a quarter. Back when he was a boy, 25 cents was practically worth 25 dollars for anyone now.

My grandpa walked alone on the dirt road, and he was kicking rocks with his feet as he walked. As he looked down at the rocks he displaced, something shimmering caught his eye. He bent down, and sure enough — just lying on the ground was a shining quarter. A whole 25 cents! Ecstatic, my grandpa picked the coin up and pondered what to do with the glistening 25 cents. After a few minutes he decided to go to the general store in his town and get delicious, cool ice cream on a warm summer's day.

"How many ice cream cones can I buy with a quarter?" he asked the clerk.

"Five — a nickel a cone."

"I'll have five then!!" my grandfather said.

He walked out holding a tray — with five vanilla ice cream cones in the tray, and a huge smile on his face. Now normally my grandpa was a kind, generous boy, but the excitement of being able to have five ice cream cones all to himself sounded great to him. So happily he skipped to a ditch, a place where he could eat his ice cream in private.

The ditch he sat near was right next to a dirt road, so every time a car would pass, dirt would fly and his vanilla ice cream would look like chocolate. But nothing could prevent my grandpa from joyfully gobbling down his ice cream. The taste was more than satisfying, as the ice cream was dripping down his cheeks.

But eventually, little by little, drop by drop, his creamy ice cream started to melt more and more. My grandpa could fully devour only two of the five cones he got, before they all melted and he got full. But throughout the entire time he was eating, he was so very thankful for what he had.

The lesson my grandfather learned was that you should never spend all your money at once. However, if you do spend all your money at once, always share what you have!

Isabella Trost; Illinois, USA

Illustrator: Devyn Shelton; Missouri, USA

17. The Explosion

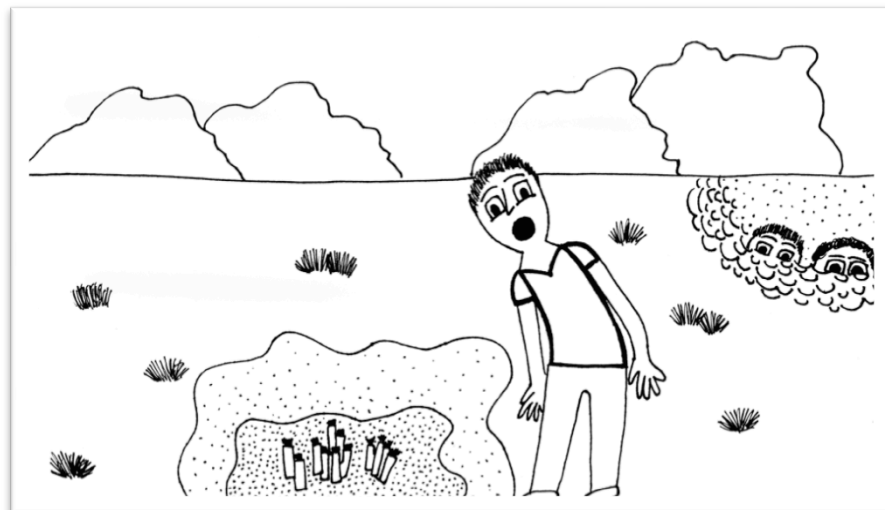
c. 1948; Joplin, Missouri, USA

It was a warm spring day in Joplin, Missouri, in 1948. The air was fresh and cool. Today eleven-year-old blond-haired and blue-eyed Charles woke with an idea that was eating him whole. He thought, “Why don’t I get rich by mining?” So he got up, dressed, and went over to his friend Clyde’s house. He woke up Clyde and explained his idea.

Clyde and Charles gathered their friend Bob, picked up their shovels, and sprinted to Clyde’s land. They decided to start in a small pasture. The friends dug until they had a medium-sized ditch. Then they reached a thick hard layer (clay). If you don’t know about clay, it is very hard to get past, and Missouri is full of it. So Charles, being the head of the group, decided they should get through the clay with explosives. Charles remembered seeing an old shack by an abandoned mine. The three boys decided they should go and see what, if anything, was in the shed that might help them.

The boys crawled around and found fuses, some gooey stuff, and explosives. They went back to the field and put the gooey stuff on the explosives and stuck a fuse in the heap of danger. They had enough sanity in them to construct a bunker for when the explosion went off. After everything was set up, they realized, “Who’s going to light the fuse?” The boys pulled straws, and Clyde lost. Clyde went down to the blast site and lit the fuse. Then he ran as fast as his legs could carry him, and hopped into the bunker. They waited and waited — until they were sure it had been a dud.

Then they were in a spot where they had to draw straws again. Clyde must’ve had bad luck that day, and lost for a second time. Clyde slowly inched toward the explosives. Just as he peered over the lip of



the hole to check the fuse, he suddenly seemed to revive — and *ran*. Then an almost biblical pillar of fire burst from the dirt, and a ripple started. All of a sudden it seemed like Clyde was a puppet that was picked up by the puppeteer. Before Charles knew it, he was in the air, too. As soon as the moment had started, it passed.

Charles lay on the ground, eyes to the sky, and thought, “How did I get in this position?” He turned his head to see what was happening. He saw Clyde’s mouth moving, but all he could hear was the ringing in his ears.

For two straight weeks all the boys did was fill in the hole they had created. They did find out that the gooey stuff was nitroglycerin. This story is an example of a close call.

Charles is my grandpa, and he told this story to my mom, who in turn told it to me. The moral of this story is to not do dangerous things like this, unless your luck is extremely good.

Cori Boerner; Missouri, USA

Illustrator: Eva Stern; Missouri, USA

18. Hard Work Will Surely Pay Off

1948–1974; Shandong Province, China

My grandpa was born in 1948 to a very wealthy family in the countryside of China. But a year later the CPC, or the Communist Party of China, won the Chinese Civil War and, unfortunately, founded the People's Republic of China. The new government took away all wealth and properties from all wealthy citizens, and Grandpa's family became poor. But they still had maintained the class label "wealthy landowner," which in China was a label to be ashamed of having. Most great opportunities were not meant for people with a "bad" class label, and so they couldn't get the good opportunities.

After finishing middle school, Grandpa had the best scores in most subjects and was very successful in school, but because of his "bad" class label, his opportunity to continue on to high school was taken away, so he ended up being a poor peasant.

Also during that time, the Cultural Revolution erupted in China. The government was split into two groups that fought against each other all the time.

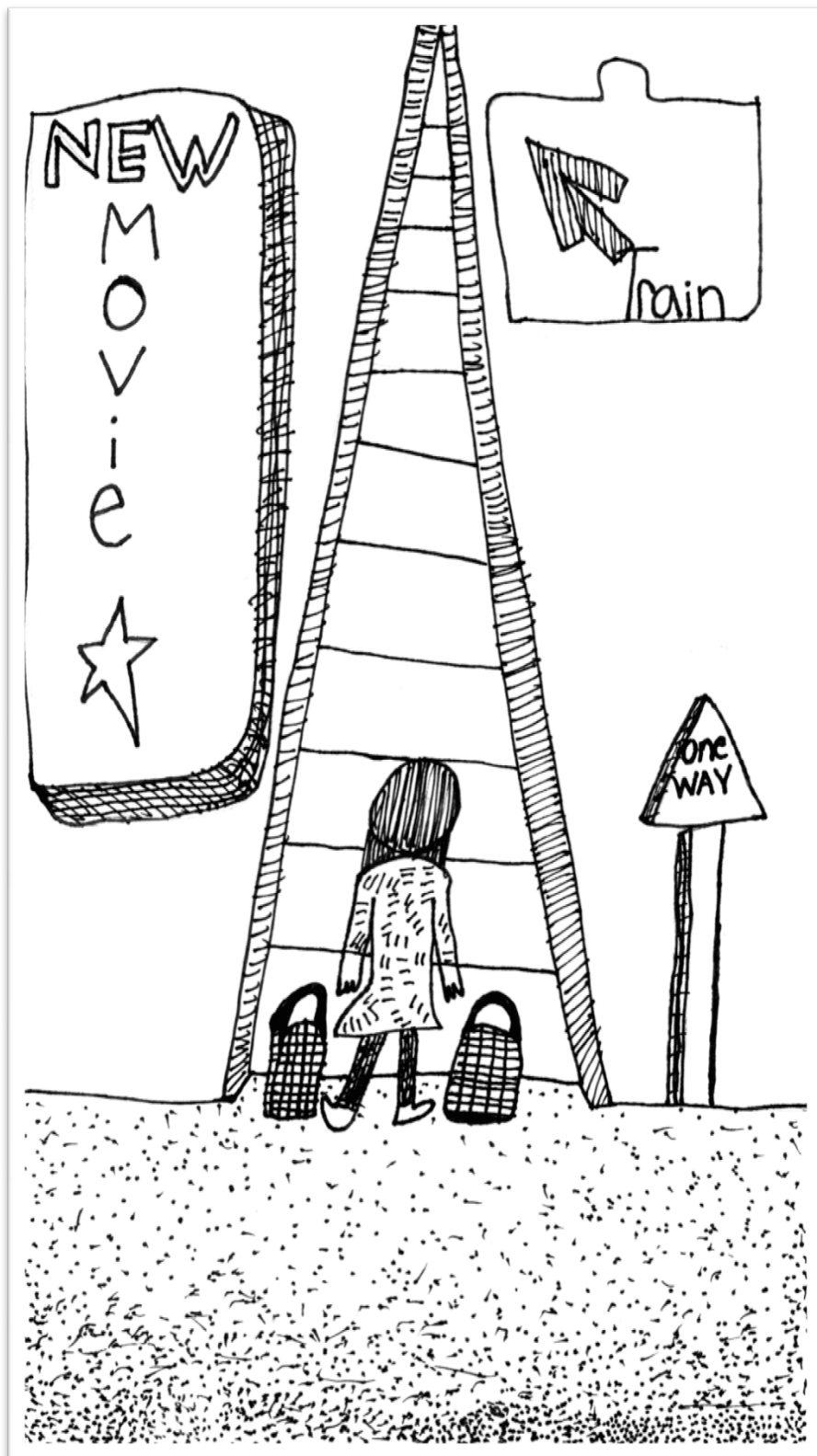
Two years later there was a great opportunity for the teenagers in the village to join the army, and so everyone wanted to join. But usually people like Grandpa who had a "bad" class label were not considered for opportunities like being recruited into the army. But the two teams in the Cultural Revolution were opposing each other in every small thing. One team said that Grandpa couldn't join the army, and so the other team strongly supported Grandpa being in the army, just to oppose the first team. Luckily Grandpa was able to join the army in the end.

Usually the maximum time to be in the army is only three years. And Grandpa would've then gone back to being a peasant with a "bad" label. But during the three years in the army he worked hard learning things and stood out from his peers and was accepted by the army's medical school.

After Grandpa graduated from the medical school, he became a pharmacist in the city hospital in Tsingtao and successfully took away the "bad" label and brought dignity back to his family.

Sometimes you may be trapped in a hard situation, but never give up! Prepare so you will be able to catch a precious opportunity when it *does* come. Grandpa had a hard life. Sadly I never got to meet him personally, because he died from liver cancer when Mom and Dad were in college.

Jennifer Tian; New Jersey, USA



19. Rivka's Daily Journey

1950s; the Bronx, New York, New York, USA

Anytime you would walk into my great-great-grandmother Rivka Buls's house, the soup would be cooking on her stove, smelling as lovely as a field of roses, ready for its long journey the next day.

Rivka Buls, whom I am named after,¹ was only 4 foot 11, but she was a strong woman. Every day she would go to the Beth Abraham nursing home in the Bronx — no matter what the weather. Rivka would start her journey every day packing up heavy glass jars of soup and chicken, and stuffing them into her cloth shopping bags. Then she would trudge all the way to the el train. The el train was a train that ran on tracks elevated above the ground. Since the train was above ground, Rivka had to climb up all the steps to the train with her bags of all the food. Since she was a small woman, she would have to stop every few steps to catch her breath.

Then Rivka would take the train. She would get off the train and have to walk down all the steps. When she got to the bottom of the steps, she started walking again. As she kept on walking, she had to stop every few blocks.

She would get to the nursing home and see the familiar faces waiting to be fed. She would feed the people, no matter how they looked or what had happened to them, because some of the people had injuries that made it hard for them to eat. The nurses didn't have enough time to deal with all of them. After all the food had been eaten, Rivka was ready to begin her journey back home.

My great-great-grandmother was always trying to do good. She got an award for her work at the Beth Abraham nursing home. She was a great woman and left an impact on everyone who knew her through all of her good deeds.

Keira Kahn; New York, USA

Illustrator: Camille Elise O'Dwyer; Missouri, USA

1. In addition to her English name (Keira Grace), the author has a Hebrew name: Yakira Chana Rivka.

20. The Scarring Things I Saw

1951; near the boundary between North Korea and South Korea

Sometime during the Korean War, P. Vincent Iannace's personality changed. My grandfather was reconfigured to a more quiet state. This is why the change occurred, as told by him:

We had just sent out leaflets — a warning that our army would attack the village — so all the civilians could evacuate and get to safety. At nightfall our troops would rain down bombs on the Korean¹ soldiers. We sat and waited, and being inside a tank, I was not necessarily comfortable — my helmet weighing on my head, my tunic shoving my shoulders to the tank's floor.

Nightfall crept upon the village as the last orders were sent out on what everyone was to do. My palms were sweaty against the trigger of the gun, and my eyes shone with fear as the time to strike neared. People in my tank exchanged nervous glances.

Finally it was time. We snuck up on the village and readied our men. On the signal of the commander, we fired. Shots rang out back and forth between the Korean and American armies. With shot after shot, Korean soldiers would fall. Cries of pain and misery echoed into the night.

When this battle was won, we had to search the wreckage for survivors or prisoners of war. I clambered out of my tank and began to scavenge the area. The dead lying out before me was scarring. How would you feel if you had to look for survivors among all the dead that you'd just killed, so that they could be your prisoners?

As I scanned my surroundings, I stumbled upon people's belongings that they'd left behind in the sudden rush of evacuation — cooking utensils, children's dolls, books, papers, and much more — mostly or completely demolished. It was agonizing to see what we'd taken away from these people's lives. The fallen were scattered. In some of their hands, guns were clenched, as if they were just about to fire. The soldiers, lying still in a deep red sea, were hopeless and lifeless.

We rounded up the captives in the area. I hoisted myself up and into the tank. When I sat down, I thought about all the Korean men who'd fallen in the line of duty.

My grandfather was so traumatized by his experience that he wouldn't drive cars anymore. It reminded him so much of a tank that another

family member had to drive him. War changes people. It changed P. Vincent Iannace.

Kaitlyn Iannace; North Carolina, USA

1. In this story, “Korean” means “North Korean.” At the time of this war, Korea had two governments, each saying it was in charge of the whole country. When troops from other countries helped North Korea attack South Korea, United Nations forces went to help South Korea.

21. It's a Family Tradition . . .

1950s – present; Blue Hill, Nebraska, USA

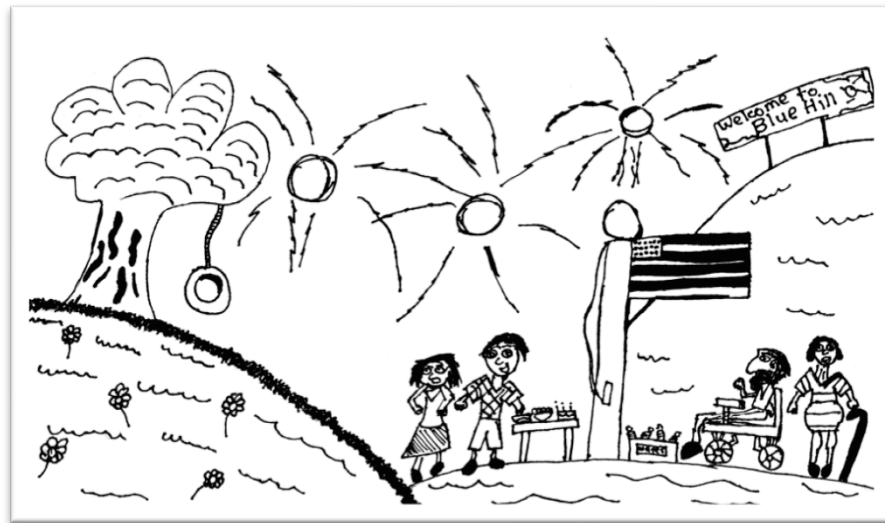
What started as a fun family event over sixty-five years ago has turned into an annual highlight of the Blue Hill, Nebraska, Fourth of July festival. In the early 1950s my great-grandfather Gilbert (Gib) Schunk started doing a fireworks show for his family and some close friends in Blue Hill. This small family event has developed into an all-day family-fun Independence Day celebration.

My grandpa Roger Schunk was born in 1947, and when he was only three years old, his dad, Gib, started lighting off fireworks for his family and some friends. When the fireworks first started, there was a potluck dinner beforehand, and anyone was welcome to come for dinner and stay to watch. My great-grandpa Gib and his wife, Anna, owned a hardware store, so they were able to order special fireworks to light off.

The number of people attending started to grow, because the fireworks show became popular in the small town. The city of Blue Hill approached my great-grandpa Gib around 1967 and asked him to put on a fireworks show for the whole town. Within a few years the Community Club started to provide a pork barbecue before the fireworks show. Soon after, a parade was added before the barbecue dinner. My great-grandpa Gib passed away in February of 1981, so my grandpa Roger took over the fireworks show for him. Today the Blue Hill Fourth of July festival includes golf, softball, and sand volleyball tournaments, kids' games, and a classic car show in addition to the parade, barbecue, and fireworks.

Managing a fireworks show as big as this is a lot of work. Each year my grandpa Roger is required to have a license to light off the fireworks. He orders the fireworks in early April and requests permits in late May. The fireworks are delivered in mid-June and get organized into the order of the show.

On July 3 my grandpa Roger and some helpers dig about a dozen holes to put the fireworks in when lighting them. These holes are dug on the Blue Hill golf course, which is where the fireworks show takes place. On the morning of the show, my grandpa Roger makes sure all of the supplies are ready and organized. It takes about fifteen volunteers, including my uncle Mike and uncle Terry, to make the show run smoothly. Starting at 9:45 p.m., under my grandpa's direction, the volunteers light almost three hundred fireworks. These fireworks are a mixture of ground displays, high-flying colorful bursts, and loud boomers, which are my grandpa Roger's favorite.



This fireworks show is the highlight of a fun-filled Independence Day celebration. It is enjoyed by people from Blue Hill and surrounding communities. The fireworks show is a tradition my family is very proud to have started and carried on for so many years. My grandpa Roger passed away on January 10, 2017, so this year my uncles will take over this tradition, which I know would make my grandpa Roger very proud.

Anna Kohmetscher; Missouri, USA

Illustrator: Will Evans; Missouri, USA

22. Lady Driver

c. 1958; Palisades Park, New Jersey, USA

It was 1957 in Fairview, New Jersey, when Dora was married. At this time many women didn't drive. However, many women *wanted* to drive — like Dora and her mother. The problem was that their husbands didn't want them behind the wheel of an automobile.

Both Dora and her mom had enough of being told that they couldn't drive. They felt that it was important that they learned. So behind Dora's husband's and Dora's father's backs, they decided to take driving lessons without anyone knowing. They met the driving instructor down at the corner from Dora's mom's house.

When they were done and each got her driver's license, they took the driver's licenses home. They were so proud to show Joseph, Dora's father. When she showed her driver's license to him, he yelled at her. He told her, "What are you going to drive? You have no car!"

"I will buy my own car, and my mom and I will share it."

Dora and her mom saved all their money for a few months and bought their new car. It was a black Plymouth. They were so proud that they got the car. Every Sunday all the grandchildren, like Dora's daughters Joanne and Donna, went over to Dora's mom's house. Dora's son Joseph would go also. Dora and her mom would take Dora's kids all for a ride in their new car. Dora and her mom would drive to New York City. They would get there by going through the Holland Tunnel. Once they got to midtown, they took Dora's kids shopping. Every Sunday when they went home from New York City, Dora and her mom would buy Dora's kids ice cream.

Dora and her mom loved driving. Since they had to share a car, they would decide who would drive on the way to New York City and who would drive on the way home. If one of them drove to New York City, then the other would drive home.

Dora and her mother were very happy that they could drive. "I'm very happy that we took those driving lessons," said Dora proudly.

Anthony Patrickio, grandson of Dora; New Jersey, USA

23. How Pedro Pan Brought Us Pepy

1959–1972; Havana, Cuba; Miami, Florida, and Tenafly, New Jersey, USA

Fifty-five years ago a Cuban boy at the age of fourteen left his family and fled to the United States for a better life. Jose Angel Suarez — Pepy — was born in Cuba and lived there with his parents and eight brothers and sisters until Castro took power. The sad story for his family was a happy one for mine. Pepy left his homeland, went to America, and ended up becoming a part of my family.

In 1959 Fidel Castro took over Cuba, and things changed for the worse. Pepy lived with his family in Havana, and all of a sudden he was no longer allowed to go to school and his father lost his job. Neighbors had to spy on their neighbors and tell the police if anyone said anything bad about the government. It was not a good way to live, and Pepy wanted out. He worked and saved his money so he could travel to America and go to school and play baseball.

On December 31, 1961, Pepy left Cuba by himself on a plane for Miami on what was known as The Pedro Pan flights.¹ At that time a Catholic priest in America named Bryan O. Walsh had arranged flights to help children flee Cuba for a better life in America. Castro let the children go because they didn't work and were more mouths to feed. When Pepy first got to the United States, he lived with his aunt and uncle in Miami. He was able to finish high school and learn some English.

He was an astonishing baseball player. A scout for the Philadelphia Phillies came to visit him and tell him that he could not play shortstop because of his short stature. However, he could play second baseman. But Pepy turned down the offer.

Because Miami had become so crowded with people from Cuba, Pepy decided that he would like to move someplace else to improve his English and see more of the country. My grandparents' church in New Jersey was helping to settle single people from Cuba in the area by finding families that they could live with for a few months while they got used to the area and got a job. Pepy went to live with my mom and her family in October of 1964. He was supposed to stay only a few months but quickly became part of the family and did not move out until eight years later, when he got married.

Pepy still lives in New Jersey near my other relatives with his wife, Regina. We go to visit them, and they come here in the summer with their children and grandchildren to go to the beach with us. I am sad

that Pepy had to leave his family at such a young age, but so happy he is a part of mine.

Colby Lewis; North Carolina, USA

1. Between 1960 and 1962, fourteen thousand children moved to the United States through Pedro Pan. Parents had requested this opportunity for their children.

24. Jewish American Princess

c. 1960; Hattiesburg, Mississippi, USA

Let's imagine you find a piece of leather that has a deed on it. A deed indicates ownership of land. My cousin has found a deed like this, so let me tell you that story.

One wonderful day, one of my relatives was cleaning out his dusty attic and found a piece of folded-up leather with writing on it. He gave it to our cousin Bill Wicht, who took the piece of leather to a professor at the University of Southern Mississippi in the city of Hattiesburg. The professor proclaimed that the piece of leather was a deed. The deed was for a part of New Orleans. That part of New Orleans is called the French Quarter.¹ The question was How had this deed come into my family?

Let's go back to my seventh-great-grandfather in Mississippi. His name was Simon Favre. He was Catholic. One day he met a beautiful woman. The exotic young woman was from the Native American tribe called "Choctaw." In fact, her father was the chief. His name was Chief Push Ma Ta Ha (Apushim Pushmataha). Eventually Simon married Pistikiokonay Pushmataha. The chief used the deed as a dowry, an extraordinary wedding gift.

We all know that no family owns the French Quarter of New Orleans. Upon making the amazing discovery of this deed, Bill filed a claim with the city of New Orleans to get our land back. The city of New Orleans didn't give back our land, but they *did* pay all my living relatives up through my great-grandfather's generation reparations for the land.

That is the story of how I have a princess in my family. The princess is related to me through my maternal grandfather's family. Since I'm Jewish, that makes me a Jewish American princess!

Tzipporah Wodinsky; New York, USA

1. The French Quarter is the oldest section of New Orleans, Louisiana. It is known for its historic architecture, and for its restaurants, shops, and nightlife.

25. The Unforgotten Months

1966; Queens, New York, New York, USA

Mr. Weis crossed his fingers. He'd been crossing his fingers for the last fifty-five and a half seconds, not to mention the past month. Finally someone came out and told him the dreaded news. He felt dizzy, as a little baby wrapped in a pink baby blanket was handed to him. Questions swirled around in his head like bees whose hive has been ruined. His shoulders suddenly felt heavier than before. How would he take care of this baby — not to mention his other two kids — without a wife? The kids would grow up without a mother. It was then that he decided to name the baby “Esther,” after her mother.

Meanwhile, David and Evelyn Poppick, my great-grandparents, were sitting around their dinner table when the phone rang and they were told the dreaded news. They knew what they had to do. Although they had two kids, Judy, who was fourteen, and Rhonda, who was eleven, and although Mr. Weis was only a distant relative, they offered to take care of Esther for Mr. Weis.

After a lot of debate, Mr. Weis gave Esther to David and Evelyn Poppick to take care of for three months.

My great-grandparents soon developed a fond relationship with Esther. David Poppick loved Esther like a cat loves her kittens. Every day he would push Esther in her carriage up and down the block, over and over. He did that not to get to a certain place, but because he loved spending time with Esther.

Often neighbors questioned, “Whose baby is that?”

Great-Grandpa would smile and proudly answer, “Mine,” before returning home.

Although to others three months may not seem like such a long time, to my great-grandparents and their kids, it felt like forever. Maybe it was because of all the time my great-grandmother spent watching Esther, or because of how proud my great-grandpa felt whenever he was with her. Or maybe it was because of how happy Judy and Rhonda felt to have a new baby in the house. For all of these reasons, the Poppicks grew to love Esther as if she were their own.

Finally the day came for Esther to be given back to her own family. Although the day was bright and sunny, to the Poppicks it felt cloudy and cold. It was very hard to return Esther to her father, but they knew it was the right thing to do.

Although this story took place fifty years ago, it is not forgotten. To this day, my grandmother Rhonda carries a picture of Esther in her wallet. And when my great-grandma Evelyn died a few years ago, Esther's family said Kaddish¹ for her. My great-grandparents were kind people who stepped up when someone was in need. Their



kindness led to a relationship between the two families that has lasted until this day. I am proud to be their granddaughter, and hope that I will follow in their footsteps one day.

Kate Alper; New York, USA

Illustrator: Sindhu Vinayak Kalabhavi; Missouri, USA

1. Kaddish is a prayer that Jewish mourners recite in the daily synagogue services after the death of a close relative.

26. The USS *Forrestal* Fire

July 29, 1967; the Gulf of Tonkin, east of Vietnam

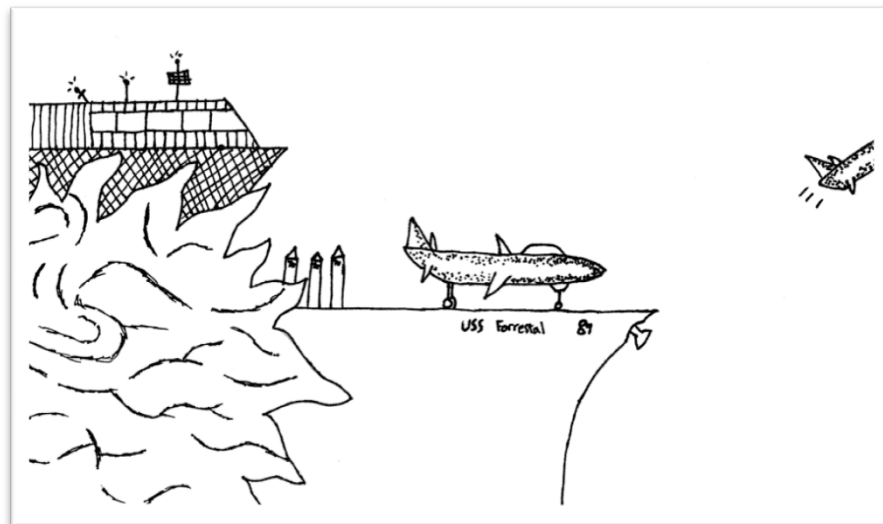
The day was July 29, 1967. Twenty-one aircraft were lined up on the deck of the USS *Forrestal* and were ready for a launch to attack targets in North Vietnam. The strike aircraft were loaded with more than a dozen 1,000-pound and 500-pound bombs, and all the safety pins were pulled. Full of fuel and ready to go, the first aircraft, an A-4 light-attack plane piloted by then Lieutenant Commander John McCain,¹ was suddenly hit by a rocket that accidentally came from an F-4 fighter that was parked across the deck from it. The fuel tank was hit and the fire began. The fire spread fast and caused bombs to explode.

All twenty-one strike aircraft were destroyed by the fire or pushed overboard into the water. The explosions blew holes through the three-inch steel decking of the carrier, allowing the burning fuel to run down inside the ship. The fire burned four levels below the flight deck. The catastrophe took the life of 134 sailors and marines.

Just before the explosion, four non-strike aircraft had been launched. My grandpa was on the last plane launched — one minute and twenty seconds before the accident. When my grandpa looked back, he saw a massive fireball in the air and realized it was from the ship.

Soldiers immediately grabbed hoses and began to fight the flames and water the bombs. With each exploding bomb, more lives were lost. Eventually, untrained firefighters jumped in and grabbed hoses to help. After thirteen hours of fighting the fire, it was finally contained.

Thankfully the engines were not damaged, and the ship was able to move under its own power to Subic Bay for initial repairs. The USS *Forrestal* finally reached Norfolk, Virginia, on September 15, 1967.



The carrier was out of service for a year. It rejoined the fleet; however, it never returned to Vietnam.

My grandpa's plane couldn't land back on the USS *Forrestal*, so it was sent to Da Nang Air Base in South Vietnam for the night. When my grandpa reached Da Nang, he was able to call home to let his family know he was safe. The next day his plane was sent back out to land on the USS *Intrepid*. The USS *Intrepid* is now a museum in New York City. My grandpa eventually found out that none of his squadron mates were lost in the fire.

July 29, 1967, was an awful day in U.S. history. Although the fire was an accident, it shows how important attention to detail is in aviation. The smallest mistake can cause the biggest disaster.² This was a day my grandpa will never forget.

Kaitlyn Sweetman; New Jersey, USA

Illustrator: Aidan Baker; Missouri, USA

1. John McCain has served in the U.S. Senate for more than thirty years and was the Republican presidential nominee in 2008.

2. The fire on the USS *Forrestal* caused more loss of life aboard a naval ship than any other single incident since World War II, and damage to the ship alone was more than 72 million U.S. dollars.

27. A Casualty of War

1967–1971; Anambra State, Nigeria

As a child growing up in a Nigerian home, I have heard my parents tell us a lot of stories from their past. At times I am saddened by some of the stories, and sometimes glad, but I never cease to learn one or two lessons from their stories. The story of Amazuilò,¹ a woman from Nigeria, was an exceptional one, and was also one that I was deeply saddened by, but I learned a lesson I will keep for the rest of my life.

Amazuilò lived in southeast Nigeria and had seven children. During the time she was living in southeast Nigeria, Nigeria was in the middle of a war that broke out in 1967. Due to the severity of this war, the southeastern part of Nigeria was nearly destroyed. Education and health care were nonexistent at the time.

During this war, millions of people died, mainly women and children. Children were left hungry, which led to a disease known as kwashiorkor (severe protein malnutrition). Since the southeast was the epicenter of the war, many children became orphans due to the death of their parents. These were the conditions that Amazuilò was in.

While this war was going on, Amazuilò became pregnant with her seventh child. She was able to carry the pregnancy to term, but unfortunately, on the day of the birth, there were no doctors to deliver the child. With her husband and the help of a midwife, the baby boy was born. Things turned for the worse, though, because after the delivery, Amazuilò developed postpartum hemorrhage,² which neither her husband nor the midwife knew how to treat. Since there was no transportation and there were very few functioning major hospitals in southeast Nigeria at the time, Amazuilò couldn't get the treatment she needed, and she died in January of 1971. The baby was taken home, but died a few months later due to the war. There was a belief that his mother had taken him back.

Looking back, I see that Amazuilò, who was my paternal grandmother, was a great person that took care of her children to the best of her ability before her death. Her death could have been prevented, but because of the heavy involvement in the war by so many citizens, she wasn't able to get the treatment she needed.³ From this story that my dad told me about his mother, I learned that war should be avoided, and steps should be taken to make sure it is avoided.

Diuto Mozie; North Carolina, USA

1. "Amazuilò" is pronounced ah-mah-zoo-EE-loh.

2. Postpartum hemorrhage is severe bleeding following delivery of a baby.

3. In the Igbo language "Amazuilò" means "you never know all your enemies."

28. The Black Lincoln

1970; Paulding, Ohio, USA

In 1970 my grandfather was an eighteen-year-old boy. One day he found out that he had been drafted by the U.S. government to serve in the Vietnam War. He was very nervous and scared to leave his home and family. His mom, my great-grandmother, was worried sick that he was not going to come home alive. As the young soldier was getting ready to leave, he said to his mother, “Don’t worry unless you see a black Lincoln with two men in military suits pull into the driveway. If you see that, I died at war.”

As the months went by, the mother missed her son more and more. One day, as she was doing the family’s laundry, she glanced up and saw a black car driving down her street. It slowed down and pulled into her driveway. As she glanced through the windows, she noticed the two men in full uniform. Her heart broke as she dropped to her knees, unable to stand. She dragged herself to the door and was face to face with her worst nightmare.

Struggling to hear through her own sobs and tears, she heard the man say, “I’m so sorry to upset you, ma’am, but I need to know if the Smiths live next door?” The men had no idea that she had a son in war. As the color returned to her face, she felt relief and guilt all at the same time, as she thought about the sadness that was about to be given to her friend Mrs. Smith. She felt angry at the loss of the young neighbor boy who had been forced into this awful war. As the car pulled out, she dropped once again to her knees and gave thanks to God, and began praying for the sweet Smiths.

Alex Baughman; Ohio, USA

29. Trouble Developing

1975; Los Angeles, California, USA

Before I begin, it's important to travel back to 1975, to shift to a time when darkrooms were used to develop photos. And that is exactly where my dad was — the darkroom at Palms Junior High. It was a near-fatal day for my 4-foot 8-inch thirteen-year-old dad, although he had no way of knowing this ahead of time.

It all started when Jerome came into the darkroom. Now in the prehistoric days of darkrooms, it was common knowledge that turning on the lights messed up the development of photos. Jerome, however, did not have the etiquette to wait until photos were done developing, so you can imagine the frustration of my dad when Jerome turned the lights on, flooding the room with light, ruining my dad's photographs. And so it comes as no surprise that my dad wanted to know whom he could blame for ruining his photos. Therefore, he did the only logical thing to do: He yelled across the room asking what fool had turned the light on! Soon enough he got his answer.

A shadow hulked over his scrawny, petite body, and my dad looked up with terror. And then he looked a little more up, and a little more, until he finally found the eyes of Jerome.

"This 'fool' turned the lights on," rasped Jerome in a menacingly low voice.

My dad gulped, and his heart began to race. "I, uh, I was just joking around," my dad stammered, but no excuse could save him now. Before he knew it, he had been yanked out of his chair as if he were merely a feather, and the bulking muscles of Jerome were locked around his tiny neck. My dad kicked and writhed but struck only air, for his feet were dangling several inches off the ground. He gasped for breath, and his face slowly grew redder. This was past the point of embarrassment — this was life-threatening. Seconds ticked by, and my dad's fear grew.

Then a hero appeared. A tiny girl, even more petite than my dad, dark brown curls bouncing, rushed to his aid — Aunt Linda. She raced to free her brother from Jerome's grip, and as soon as she was within arm's reach, she shot out a fist, which landed squarely on Jerome's nose. He yelped in pain, and in all the confusion released my dad. My dad used his remaining energy to dash away and take in a long, sweet gulp of air.

Rumors flew like bullets that day, and many people asked Aunt Linda about the ordeal. Linda simply flipped her hair and said, "Oh, I just beat up Jerome. Don't worry about it." Then she strode off with her head held high, smiling from ear to ear. After all, she may have saved her brother's life.

Belle Sara Gage; Missouri, USA

30. The Tote Bag

1977; St. Louis, Missouri, USA

Today was the day when Kelli got her Girl Scout cookie form. Bev — my red-headed, crazy grandma — watched Kelli, my mom, sprint to the doorstep, waving a paper in her hand with her dimples shining in the sun. Kelli was so excited to sell cookies, but she was even more excited about the prize — a tote bag. This tote bag wasn't any ordinary bag. The bag was pink with the Girl Scout logo embroidered in green on the side. The straps were also green. As Kelli was admiring the picture of the bag on the form, Bev was surprised about the number of cookies Kelli would have to sell in order to get the tote bag — 600 boxes.

Bev stared at Kelli with a struggling grin on her face, thinking about how she was going to sell all those cookies. There was no way Kelli could sell all those boxes. Bev knew she had to take some of the work into her own hands. The next day Bev dropped Kelli off at school and made her way to work, ready to sell some cookies. Bev walked into her office building with a plan in her mind. "I will sell cookies to every person I work with," Bev thought. The day went quickly, and Bev ended up selling about 150 boxes of cookies. But that was all the people she worked with.

The day ended, and Bev was exhausted. She went home feeling defeated. At this point she was desperate, because she knew she couldn't sell any more cookies at her office, so she made a new plan. She called the secretaries' office to put a notice in the paper. The notice read, "Help put food on our table for a single mom! Buy our Girl Scout cookies! We need the money." Bev, being the person she is, was exaggerating. A whole lot of lies were put into this ad. But Bev just wanted Kelli to be happy by winning the tote bag.

A couple days later the ad started to work. The cookie boxes sold were racking up. Finally the tote bag was theirs. At the next Girl Scout meeting Kelli — or should I say Bev — received her prize. Bev, and all the other Girl Scouts, were so happy for Kelli, and Kelli appeared to be happy, too. But deep down, Kelli didn't feel right. She felt guilty that she had never sold one box of cookies out of the 600.

Since Kelli never got to sell any boxes of cookies, she felt she didn't deserve the prize. Bev just saw the prize and not the responsibility for winning. So Kelli learned that she cannot let Bev get her hands on the cookie form. If someone makes a goal, they shouldn't let someone else achieve their goal for them.

Connor McMillin; Missouri, USA

31. An American Dream

c. 1980–1991; St. Louis, Missouri, USA

Have you ever had a dream that your family discouraged you about? Well, my uncle Dan Lauer has been in that situation before. Back when he was a child, he and his three brothers and three sisters had only toys they'd made, because their parents didn't have money for anything except food and bills. My uncle Dan's idea first came from water balloons with drawn faces he and his siblings had made, but that soon blossomed into something much bigger.

When my uncle graduated from college, he got a degree as a banker. Every day he thought about his childhood, remembering his imagination and his determination to become an entrepreneur. Over time, his dream of becoming an entrepreneur grew, and he set his idea to work at the age of twenty-six.

Pound Puppies and Cabbage Patch Kids caught his attention; he thought if regular people could come up with ideas like those dolls, so could he. So he began to write to toy companies. He wrote to Mr. Mattel so he could sell his idea for one million dollars . . . only to find out that Mr. Mattel didn't really exist.

But my uncle didn't give up. He wrote over seven hundred letters to toy companies, determined to sell his idea. Unfortunately, all of the companies rejected the idea, so my uncle began working on his Waterbabies himself.

The Waterbabies had to be able to hold hot or cold water and keep the temperature the same for long periods of time. He went through many trials and errors, but his perseverance was strong and he kept trying. When he finally made the first working Waterbabies, he sent some of them to Walmarts and Targets, but seven of the ten stores rejected them. After a while, my uncle quit his job, and his in-laws argued that it was a mistake, because they feared he wouldn't make enough money to keep his family safe.

After my uncle had sold Waterbabies to seven Targets and Walmarts, people who had heard of his invention searched for his products in the markets. Companies from all over the world began to meet with my uncle about his idea, eager to buy some Waterbabies for their own stores. My uncle's invention was becoming more popular, and Christmas was right around the corner. Waterbabies dolls were selling faster than a peregrine falcon ascends. Consumers were left disappointed when the stores finally ran out of Waterbabies stock. Stores then came begging my uncle for the dolls to be sold in their stores. In 1991, Waterbabies was the best-selling baby doll in America, with over twenty-three million sold!

My uncle inspired me and other people around the globe to follow our dreams, showing that we can achieve anything we put our minds to. If

it were easy, anyone would do it, but it takes passion and extreme perseverance. My uncle has the wondrous job of an inventor, and his motivation stands: Helping children have a happy, memorable childhood.

Carly Jackson; Missouri, USA

32. Saved by a 71-Year-Old

c. 1984; Pike County, Alabama, USA

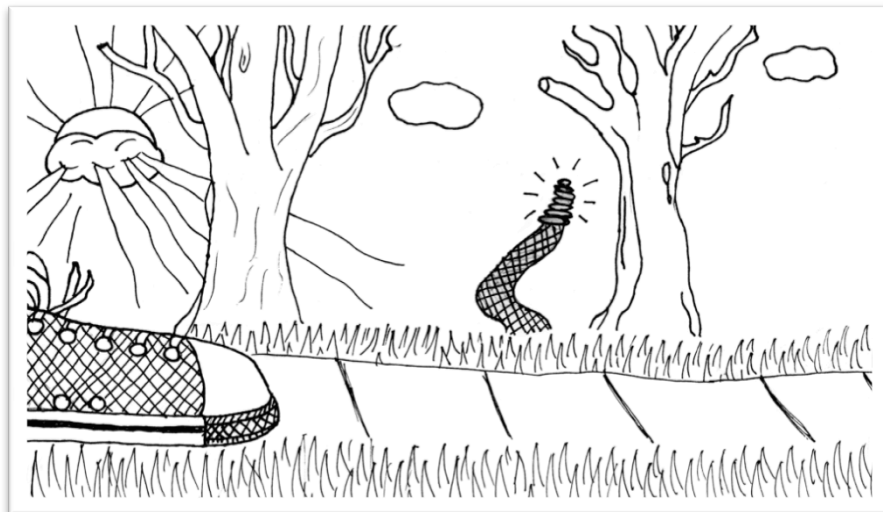
On a summer afternoon in 1984 my mother was at her grandparents' farm near Brundidge, a small town in Pike County, Alabama. Her ten-year-old self was sitting in her "typical perch," a fig tree in the side yard. Her 71-year-old grandfather came outside with his walking stick, a metal coffee can, and a Boston terrier named Scooter. Her grandmother wanted them to go pick a coffee can full of blackberries so she could make cobbler for dessert that night. So they started walking down the dirt road towards the wild blackberry patch on the farm.

Even though both of them knew there were snakes on the farm, they did not think they would run into any, because they had never seen any on the road. They were walking and talking when all of a sudden my mother heard the unnerving sound of a rattlesnake's tail. She looked down, and her foot was hovering over a rattlesnake that was ready to strike.

She froze, not knowing what to do. Scooter took off back to the house, running as fast as her little legs could take her. Scooter had been bitten on the foot the previous year, and even the noise of a fly buzzing frightened her.

Before my mother could think, her grandfather threw her through the air with one arm and began beating the snake with his walking stick. My mother sat on the ground staring at her grandfather, who was very elderly in her eyes, trying to catch her breath. The snake was coiling around in strange shapes as he hit it. Finally he decapitated the snake.

They didn't have blackberry cobbler that night. "Thank you for saving me," she told her grandfather as they walked back to the house. She



felt terrified, but she was also thankful for her grandfather's reaction. It was satisfying knowing that someone would do that for her if she were in danger. It is one of my mother's most vivid memories of her grandfather that she doesn't think will ever go away. Even though it was a scary experience, she enjoys the memory of walking with her grandfather. The old man she saw as simply her grandfather was suddenly a hero.

Lily Naylor; Alabama, USA

Illustrator: Mia Schaefer; Missouri, USA

33. The Day My Uncle Met a Wizard

1985; Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, and St. Louis, Missouri, USA

Have you ever heard of a real life wizard? Guess what! My uncle met one, and he was a famous one. My uncle got the chance to meet one of his heroes, and it was the adventure of a lifetime.

It all started in the month of October 1985, which means “baseball” to my uncle. This year the Cardinals were playing the Dodgers in the playoffs. My uncle’s favorite player at the time was Ozzie Smith. It was Monday and just a normal day at the General Motors shop in Oklahoma City, which was where my uncle Marty worked. People from all over the country worked there, and they knew Marty was a big Cardinals fan. He had posters, baseballs, and pictures all over his office. It was about time to leave, so Marty packed up and headed out for his walk home from work. On that walk home something unforgettable happened. My uncle was almost home when he ran into a small gentleman.

The gentleman asked, “You a Cardinals fan?”

My uncle said, “You bet I am.”

There was a short pause. Then all of a sudden my uncle said, “Come down to my office tomorrow. I’ve got some cool merchandise.”

So the next day my uncle went into work relaxed, waiting for his day to begin, when he saw the old man standing at his office door looking at all the things my uncle had.

When the old man realized my uncle was there, he asked, “So who’s your favorite player?”

My uncle said, “That guy right there, The Wizard,” while pointing at a picture of Ozzie Smith.

Then, surprisingly, the old man said, “He’s my son.”

My uncle looked at him awkwardly and said, “No way.”

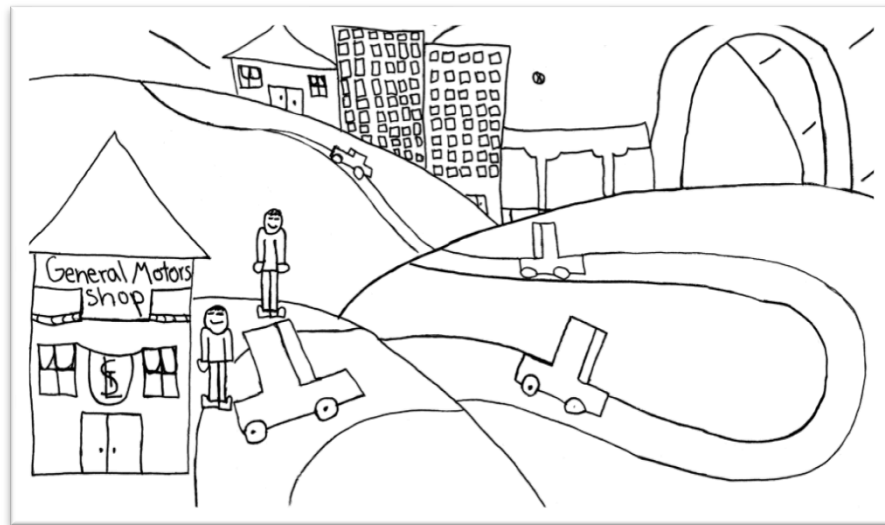
The old man said, “He sure is. You know — How would you and your wife like to go to the playoff game tomorrow night with me and my wife, Marvelle?”

My uncle said, in amazement, “You bet!”

That next day my uncle was ready for the game. The old man called and said, “So you ready?”

My uncle replied, “Yes, I am. What time are we heading down?”

The old man said, “We will follow each other to my son’s house, and then from there head to the stadium.” So as told, my uncle followed the man and his wife for nine hours to the wonderful St. Louis house of Ozzie Smith.



My uncle was so excited to meet his favorite athlete. They walked into the house, and the old man introduced my uncle to Ozzie and his wife. They talked for a long time, and then finally they made their way down to the stadium. When they arrived, my uncle got the best seats, and he also had a very good feeling about the game.

It was the ninth inning when Ozzie Smith made history. “Go crazy, folks! Go crazy!” The stadium went berserk. Ozzie Smith had hit a walk-off home run, left-handed, to beat the Dodgers.¹ I guess my uncle was right when he had a good feeling about the game.

Jack Lafata; Missouri, USA

Illustrator: Peter Underwood; Missouri, USA

1. In 2005, Cardinals fans voted this spectacular home run by Ozzie Smith the greatest moment in the 40-year history of Busch Stadium.

34. A Creek Adventure

1986; Affton, Missouri, USA

My mom told me this story from her childhood.

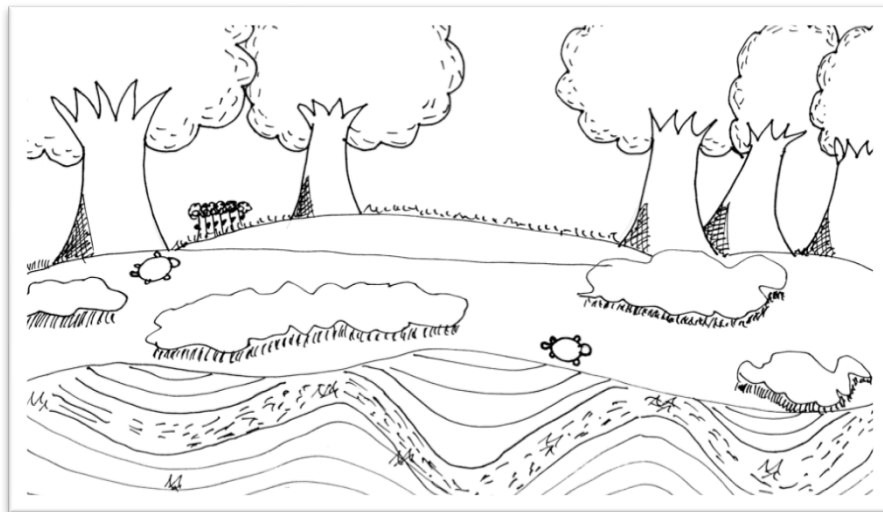
I was a fairly anxious and twitchy kid. 1986 was a stressful year for me; my parents were divorcing, and I was having a rough time adjusting to middle school. One thing that helped me relax was spending time outdoors.

One day my mom, my sister, and I went to visit my godparents. They lived close to a creek under a train trestle. I loved to explore that creek. After being warned not to ruin my shoes, I journeyed to the creek, hoping to find some toads. I was strolling along the bank, looking under exposed tree roots.

Suddenly I saw the prettiest snake I had ever seen. I wanted so badly to catch it that I grabbed it without thinking! It bit me, of course, and I released it.

As I was trying to figure out how I could still catch the snake, I saw a huge soft-shell turtle cruising down the bank and into the water. I thought I was dreaming! I had never seen a soft-shell turtle in the wild before.

I jumped into the water with my shoes and non-waterproof watch, and grabbed the back of its shell. It was soft and leathery, like no turtle I had ever felt. The turtle gave me a mean look, as if it was going to bite me, so I let go before it had the chance. I crawled back onto the bank and realized that I had ruined my clothes, my shoes, and my watch, and had nothing to show for it. I figured it was time to go.



Later I was so excited, trying to tell my family what had happened, that I was shaking all over and could not speak clearly. I led them to the creek, but of course, they didn't see anything. They told me I needed to go home and get some rest.

In the car, I saw two little holes in my hand and realized I didn't know if the snake that had bitten me was poisonous or not. Feeling fortunate that I had not gotten in trouble for ruining my shoes, I did not want to bring up the fact that I had been bitten by a strange snake. Before bed, I gave my cat extra treats and snuggled her close, in case I didn't wake up the next morning, because I knew she would miss me.

Fortunately I did wake up; however, I was unsure how quickly poisonous snakebites take effect. Wondering how much time I had left, I casually asked one of my teachers, Mrs. P., "How do you know if you've been bitten by a poisonous snake?" She told me a story about how her husband had been bitten on the arm by a copperhead and within a half hour his arm had swelled up and he was in horrible pain. After hearing that, I was relieved to know I wasn't going to die.

Being bitten by a snake put a new perspective on things that had been stressing me.

Theodore Krieger; Missouri, USA

Illustrator: Helen Butler; Missouri, USA

35. The Ultimate Protector

c. 1987; Merida, Yucatan, Mexico

It was 102 degrees in the seminary room with no air-conditioning in Mexico. Ben, a student attending the seminary, was living with my dad's family. He had done some awful things in the past, but then quit and converted to Christianity. But soon what had happened in the past would come back to haunt him.

One morning in the house where Ben was staying, the phone rang and Ben picked it up. A gruff voice said, "We'll pick you up at 2:00 p.m. tomorrow."

Immediately Ben knew what was going on. He told the family that he used to be in the drug cartel, selling weapons and smuggling drugs, and was second in command until he quit and became a Christian. Now the boss of the cartel wanted to see and talk with him.

The next day at 2:00 sharp, a black Mercedes pulled up to the house. The man inside got out a gun and told Ben to get in. They talked about Ben's life. The man let Ben out of the car, unharmed, but told him that he would have to see the boss of the cartel soon. My father's family prayed for Ben's safety and trip.

The next morning Ben woke up at 6:00 a.m. and got on a bus towards Veracruz, where he would meet the boss. He knew that he was being followed, and when he arrived, the same Mercedes picked him up and a blindfold was put over his eyes. But when they arrived at the building, Ben knew exactly where he was.

They took him to a small room with an armchair and a desk that the boss was sitting behind. In a deep voice the boss said, "Take a seat." When Ben did, the boss started asking questions about his life.

When they got to the topic of Christianity, Ben saw his chance and took it. Ben knew that he might get killed, but it was a risk he had to take. Ben said to the boss, "You can have anything you want — money, drugs, weapons, and cars — but what you don't want, but need, is peace with God." He then reached into his back pocket, took out a Bible, and laid it on the desk.

The boss took out a gun, and aimed it right between Ben's eyes. Ben knew that he was going to be killed on the spot — he had seen it happen before. The boss's hand started to tremble, and he said, "I don't know why, but something isn't letting me pull the trigger. Go. You're free. But if I hear any news about you, I will hunt you down — and that time, I won't let you live."

Ben hopped onto the next bus home, and arrived safely. He told the family everything, and they were amazed and praised God for protecting Ben. Ben is currently a pastor and living a cartel-free life.

Ben stood up for what was right, even when facing danger.

Caleb Legters; Missouri, USA

36. Don't Forget to Say "Good Morning"!

c. 1994; Buenos Aires, Argentina

Around 1994, in Buenos Aires, Argentina, Mr. Grumblat, my mother's family friend, worked in a slaughterhouse.¹ Mr. Gonzalez also worked in the slaughterhouse — as a doorman. Mr. Grumblat always said "good morning" to the doorman. The doorman was always there when the slaughterhouse opened and stayed there until the door closed at night. Mr. Grumblat never forgot to say "goodbye" to Mr. Gonzalez. He was a very nice man.

One day there were a lot of workers in the slaughterhouse. Mr. Grumblat accidentally got stuck inside the big walk-in refrigerator. After a short while, he was very cold. Everyone passed by, but they didn't realize anything unusual at all. Mr. Grumblat was stuck there for a long time, and he was so cold! More people passed, but they still didn't notice him. He didn't know what to do!

Then everyone began to leave. The doorman, Mr. Gonzalez, was thinking, "How come Mr. Grumblat didn't say 'goodbye'? He *always* says 'goodbye.'"

Mr. Gonzalez didn't want to leave. He said to the others, "Not everyone has left. Mr. Grumblat is still here."

"How do you know he is still here?" they asked him.

"Because he didn't say 'goodbye.'"

They checked around, and suddenly somebody found Mr. Grumblat in the refrigerator. He was so happy, even though he was terribly cold. But they finally got him out.

It is important to always greet someone. Mr. Grumblat was a very nice man. Everyone was important to him, and he cared about people a lot.

I am happy that my mother is friends with Mr. Grumblat. He always said "hello" and "goodbye," or "good morning." This saved his life.

Bracha Miriam Lavian; New York, USA

1. A slaughterhouse is a place where animals are killed and cut up for food.

37. They're Gone!

1998; Lexington, South Carolina, USA

Do you ever wonder what you would do if you won \$1,000? Well, this very thing happened to my mom in 1998 when she was pregnant with my brother and lived in South Carolina. Every afternoon she craved a glass of milk and some *Chips Ahoy!* chocolate chip cookies.

One afternoon she was getting ready to satisfy this craving with a brand-new bag of cookies. She poured her glass of milk, sat down, reached into the bag, and, of course, pulled out a cookie. Suspiciously, she looked at this cookie, noticing that something wasn't right. Finally she realized what was wrong. There were no chocolate chips on that cookie! As we would probably all do, she put "the bad one" back in the bag. She reached back into the heavenly supply of cookies, and pulled out another cookie. This cookie didn't have any chips either! Looking into the bag, my mom discovered that there were not *any* chocolate chips on *any* of the cookies!

My mother was very mad, because you do *not* mess with a pregnant woman and her cravings. She thought, "Gosh, now I have to go back to the grocery store and get another bag!" My mom shoved the cookies back into the bag, wondering how this could even get past the quality control. While closing the bag, she noticed a message: FIND THE BAG OF CHIPLESS COOKIES AND WIN \$1,000! This was unbelievable!

She reread it, just to make sure she hadn't lost her mind. What she saw was real, so she turned over the bag for details on this unbelievable scene. You had to have a verification card, but my mom didn't recall such a card. She made sure by opening her lucky bag, and there it was, right under the chipless tray!

Mom quickly called her husband and told him about this success story. After that, she found out that this contest was part of the *Chips Ahoy!* ad campaign that in every ordinary bag there were 1,000 chocolate chips. Apparently some students had decided to test this claim. The students found that there were *not* 1,000 chocolate chips in their bag, so *Chips Ahoy!* had launched this contest.

Because of my mom's cookie craving, she and her husband won \$1,000, and they bought a video camera to video their new baby. If they hadn't won this contest, I wouldn't have been able to see my older brother when he was a baby.

Olivia Thomas; North Carolina, USA

38. Missing on 9/11

September 11, 2001; New York, New York, USA

Meir Sommers was born October 19, 1973. He became a volunteer paramedic. One beautiful clear Tuesday morning in September, he was woken up by his Hatzolah¹ radio. It was his dispatcher calling to see if any units were available to respond to a plane hitting one of the Twin Towers. Meir jumped into an ambulance and headed to Manhattan.

By the time they got there, the second plane had hit the second tower. They parked three blocks away. They heard and felt a rumble. A big mushroom cloud of smoke came towards them. They ran.

When the smoke started to fade, they came back. Many people were hurt. Meir and his fellow paramedics started helping. Meir got a call from his wife. “Too busy to talk right now,” he shouted into the phone.

Then his wife yelled, “Yeah? Well, your mother is worried and thinks you’re dead! So maybe call her.”

Meir was about to call when they heard another rumble. They saw another mushroom cloud of smoke rising. They started running again as they realized the second tower was falling down.

When they came back, a bus was being organized to take medical personnel down to Chelsea Piers. There they set up a “hospital” with nurses, doctors, and paramedics taking care of patients as they arrived. They made a lot of progress stabilizing patients so they could be sent on to real hospitals.

About 1:00 p.m. Meir’s Hatzolah radio died. His dispatcher did a radio check to all their units to make sure everyone was safe. Meir did not answer, because his battery was dead. He was then labeled “missing.” He had tried to check in again with his wife, but he couldn’t get cell service.

After a while many patients had been treated and transported out, and not many people remained who needed help. Meir decided it was time to go home. When he got off the train, he called his wife to let her know he was alive and on the way. She let him know of all the wonderful people in the community who had called to check on her and offer food and assistance when word spread that he was “missing in action.”

When Meir finally walked in the door after his exhausting experience and long journey home, his wife took one look at him and said, “Clothes. Washing machine. Stat.”²

Penina Sommers, daughter of Meir; New York, USA

1. Hatzolah (hot-ZUH-luh), from the Hebrew word for “rescue,” is believed to be the largest volunteer ambulance service in the United States and operates on four other

continents as well. It is supported and staffed by the Jewish community but provides emergency care to anyone in need.

2. Often used in medical situations, “stat.” is the abbreviation of the Latin word *statim*, which means “immediately.”

Illustrators of *Volume 12*

- 5. Grace Suellentrop; Missouri, USA — “Abandoned”
- 8. David Nieters; Missouri, USA — “A Story That Could Have Changed My Life”
- 15. Mya Gray; Missouri, USA — “Starlight”
- 16. Devyn Shelton; Missouri, USA — “A Sweet Treat” (Also on cover)
- 17. Eva Stern; Missouri, USA — “The Explosion”
- 19. Camille Elise O’Dwyer; Missouri, USA — “Rivka’s Daily Journey”
- 21. Will Evans; Missouri, USA — “It’s a Family Tradition . . .”
- 25. Sindhu Vinayak Kalabhavi; Missouri, USA — “The Unforgotten Months”
- 26. Aidan Baker; Missouri, USA — “The USS *Forrestal* Fire”
- 32. Mia Schaefer; Missouri, USA — “Saved by a 71-Year-Old”
- 33. Peter Underwood; Missouri, USA — “The Day My Uncle Met a Wizard”
- 34. Helen Butler; Missouri, USA — “A Creek Adventure”

Invitation to Participate

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

Grannie Annie Storykeepers 2017

and Their Story Titles

Devora Adler — “Escaping Vienna”
Temima Aeder — “The Heroic Adventures of Grandpa Gedalya”
Chloe Albritton — “The Stormy Voyage”
Ahmad Alexander — “Bird Attack”
Jenna Alhosaini — “In an Upside-Down Car”
Tyler Aliff — “A Unique Friendship”
Katie Allen — “Lost”
Meghan Allen — “The Wild River”
Griffin Alm — “It Requires Work”
Kate Alper — “The Unforgotten Months”
Adina Altusky — “A Miracle”
Jake Ammon — “The Chicken and the Hawk”
J. Elijah Anderson — “Ben Franklin Boom”
Joshua K. Anderson — “Unconditional Love”
Max Andrews — “Overcoming the Depression”
Ellie Appelgren — “North Porch Explosion”
Garrett Arnold — “Hurricane Katrina”
Avigail Aronov — “The Promise”
Devorah Aryeh — “Taking Action”
Nomi Axelrod — “Two Voices”
Miriam Tehila Baalhaness — “Yosef Who Kept the Torah”
Nathan Bahnak — “The Hero”
Nalini Gabrielle Bailey — “Curious Baby Girl”
Jack Baker — “Drafted”
Nathan Barclay — “The Story of LeRoy”
Jack Barwick — “Crab in the Inn”
Alex Baughman — “The Black Lincoln”
Luke Beachy — “Going Down”
Kylie Beauchamp — “I’ll Call Him ‘Daddy’”
Archer Beckerdite — “The Strangest Basketball Trip Ever”
Sari Beer — “Small Tefillin, Big Consequences”
Max Begelman — “The Purple People”
Elizabeth Beldner — “Insulation Fire”
Miranda Bellamy — “If Bikes Could Kill”
Tziviva Ben-Habib — “Cry or Steal”

Halley Rose Bench — “How My Great-Grandparents Met”
Luke Bequette — “Think Before You Do”
Clayton Bergkoetter — “Trouble on the Scaffold”
Ava Berutti — “City Boy and High Boy”
Ryder Bishop — “K-9 Cop”
Christian Bissell — “The Halloween Car-Tipper”
Lucy Bland — “Snow Angel”
Esti Blass — “On the Run”
Virginia Blount — “Impeached in Tennessee”
Hadassah Boehm — “Escape!”
Cori Boerner — “The Explosion”
Lauren R. Borchelt — “Cold with the Cat”
Jane Boschert — “Jenny”
Colton Bowers — “The Strange Walk”
Madeline Bowman — “The Creek”
Tanner Brand — “When a Life Saver Isn't Such a Life Saver”
Avigayil Brandler — “Yay! We're at a Water Park!”
Palmer Bratton — “Stranded Deep”
Jes Briley — “A Family Tradition on the Farm”
Haley Brinker — “A Stranger Saves the Day”
Ashton Brinson — “Wreck at Age Twelve”
Ben Broadhurst — “The Treacherous Stop Sign in Asheville, North Carolina”
Lydia Brodbeck — “A Bike in a Tree Meant for Me”
Blake Brodish — “The Burping Tank”
Miri Brody — “Broken Subway”
Caleb Bross — “The Famous Forgotten One”
Jacob W. Brown — “At the Worst Time”
Abigail Bruenning — “It Was That Kind of Morning”
Mitchell Brydge — “The Courage to Fight”
Madison Bugh — “The Moving Car”
Debra Burger — “Raw Potatoes Are Delicious”
Samantha Burger — “The Brave Sister”
Luke Burkey — “The Big Fall”
Hannah Burroughs — “The One Who Escaped”
Kaitlyn Butler — “The Lamp”
Logan M. Buysse — “The Thanksgiving Disaster”
Mindy Buzzini — “The Close Call”
Sarah Cahill — “Polar-Bear Plunge”
Max Cammarata — “Binky Problems”

Henley Campbell — “Traffic Stopper”
Annalise Cannada — “The Happiest Man Alive”
Grant Carey — “A Monkey Named Harry”
Rivka Leah Caro — “The Answer for the Two Shabbos Candles”
Christine Carter — “The Farm”
Landen Cella — “Just Biking to School”
Addie Cheek — “That Touched My Heart”
Caroline Christopher — “How My Mom and Dad Met”
Colin Christopher — “The Heart of War”
Shoshana Chulpayev — “Choices and Successes”
Cori Cima — “Rolling Hills”
Henri Coleman — “The Burn”
Jordan Coleman — “A Family Loss”
Paulina Concagh — “Miracle from St. Teresa”
Lexi Connolly — “The Bull and the Salt Block”
Devorah Cooper — “Town Hero”
Olivia Cordero — “The Sea Urchin Accident”
Parker Corey — “It's More Than Just a Name”
Lucy Craig — “Shifting Gears”
Max Crandell — “Getting Back on Track”
Katherine Crawford — “Those Crazy Crawfords”
Ashlyn Crocker — “My Great-Grandfather, the Zombie”
Michala Crooks — “Tack in the Bed”
Shiri Danesh — “Survival”
Kinsley Dare — “Escaping for Andrea”
Gita Davidowitz — “The Darkest Times”
Hannah Dawson — “Runaway Horse”
Everly Deaton — “Not Your Average Day in the Park”
Sam Dees — “Going to War”
Adina Dekhkanov — “The Jew Who Survived the War”
Kate Dempsey — “A True Love Story”
Sloane Victoria Dengler — “The Joke”
Regina Dennison — “A Change for the Better”
Austin Densmore — “A Rough Ride”
Koleman Sheldon Denton — “A Flight to Remember”
Olivia Diedrich — “In the Ice”
Rachel Leah Dobay — “The Big Explosion”
Justin Dong — “A New Life”
Preston D. Dowling — “Our Family's Civil War Hero”

Macie Drummond — “Heart Racer”
Joseph Dubowski — “Wedding Day”
Gus Duda — “Watch Out for the Bus Lane!”
Noah C. Duddy — “A Walk to Remember”
Savannah Duncan — “A Nice Family Dinner”
Lauren Dunn — “Cyclone Psycho”
Gabrielle Durnbaugh — “The Letter”
Malka Dym — “In Brazil for Seven Years”
Cooper Eaton — “Rocky, the Horse”
Cooper Edgecombe — “Where's Baby”
Parker Edwards — “Dad's Big Burn”
Hodaya Baracha Eghbali — “The Danger Leaving Iran”
Rhianna Ehrenreich — “What Saved His Life”
Ava Elias — “Refugees”
Chaya Elias — “All Fired Up”
Josie Ellis — “Squash”
Kirk Ellis — “The Great Barrier Adventure”
Fiona Ellison — “Army Adventures Around the World”
Leo Engelbrecht — “Miracles at Work”
Daniel Engelsohn — “The Story of My Grandparents”
Ashley Enger — “Feet, Trenches, and World War II”
Camerin England — “Trapped”
Meade Evans — “The Cavalry on Foot”
Daniel Fales — “Candy Cop”
Giselle M. Faria — “Don't Open the Door!”
Isabel Faulkner — “Holy Cow!”
Luke Faust — “The Animal Tamer”
Ethan Feldman — “A Trip to Palestine”
Sarah Feldman — “The Blind Man Who Could Probably Do Math Better Than a Regular Man”
Andrew Feldt — “An Unbreakable Bond”
Nicklaus Fell — “Rough Waters”
Grace Fentress — “The Perfect Sundae”
Mary Pat Ferebee — “The Farm Flood”
Zahava Fertig — “The Secret Escape”
Mary Frances Fields — “An Unusual Trip to the Bank”
Lake Finley — “A Jump of Faith”
Ashelynn Fisher — “Going Bankrupt”
Liam Fitzgerald — “The Ring”

Mason Fong — “Time to Go”
Nick Ford — “A Staircase and a Pepsi Bottle”
Allie Grace Frank — “One in a Million”
Talia Frankel — “Leaving Home”
Anna Fregene — “The Mission to Find Michael”
Victoria Fuller — “The Great Flood in New Orleans”
Ravital Fuzailov — “The Fire Within”
Belle Sara Gage — “Shark Attack”
Belle Sara Gage — “Trouble Developing”
Lauren Gardner — “Road Trip”
Liz Garozzo — “The Secret Bootleggers”
Rivkah Gavrillov — “Second Home”
Stewart Geisz — “One Lucky Guy”
Devin Genereux — “The Go-Cart”
Cora Gierhart — “Tennis Ball Trouble”
William Gignilliat — “Robbery in Puerto Rico”
Aliza Ginian — “The New Baby Girl”
Aleem Glass — “The Purple Boy”
Aaliyah Gleason — “The Icebreaker”
Phoebe F. Glover — “‘Attack’ in Iwo Jima”
Audrey Goddard — “America’s Change”
Conor J. Goggins — “The Naval Tragedy”
Matt Golden — “The Ultimate Close Call”
Shira Goldish — “From Bitter Came Sweet”
Ashley Gordon — “Two-Year-Old Trauma”
Michael Gordon — “Who Wants Some Coffee?”
Jake Goscha — “Battle of Iwo Jima”
Thomas Grady — “The Crash”
Owen Graf — “The Glorious Tragedy”
Anthony Grawer — “The Fastest Dream Runner”
Nomi Gray — “The Big Mistake”
Eitan Greenberg — “The Story of My Aunt”
Yona Greenfield — “Hungary to America”
Tamar Grosberg — “Would You Dare?”
Anna-Katherine Grubb — “The Life of Morgan Elias Swails”
Joey Grunfeld — “Rumors in Hollywood”
Kamal Habal — “The Mission of a Lifetime”
Sophia Haironson — “My Grandpa’s Trains”
Emma Hall — “Lost and Found”

Seth Hardee — “A Wonderful Childhood”
Killen Harper — “Are You Sure It's a Female?”
Austin Hawkins — “How My Grandparents First Met”
Chelsey Hawkins — “Crash from the Past”
Kaitlyn Healey — “The Crash”
Rena Hecht — “The Courageous Man Reuben Hecht”
Jameson Heck — “579– to 1,040-Mile Journey”
Rachel Hedvat — “The Amazing Marriage”
Mary Claire Held — “Back in the Day”
Carly Hemmelgarn — “Santa's Here!”
Ian M. Henderson — “Tour of the Kill Line”
Ashley Henke — “Flying Acorns”
Jacob Herman — “Dr. Daniel”
Sawyer Herring — “Frozen In”
Tricia Herweck — “The Bully”
Brooke Highmark — “Hit and Run”
Dallas Kendall Hill — “My Dad's Crash”
Tré Hill — “The Woman Who Gave”
Anna Hippe — “Daisy Muffin”
Tova Hoch — “Learning from a Challenge”
Libby Holmes — “Starlight”
Sigal Holtzman — “Seeing Stars”
Cole Howard — “Seven-Up”
Katie Huang — “The Dog Did It”
Noor Huda — “My Mom's Path to Success”
Jacob Hughes — “The Hard Decision”
Maren Hunt — “Snow Angel”
Mary Elizabeth Hutchinson — “Murder at the Royal Brompton”
Jonathan Hyatt — “Wild Thing”
Kaitlyn Iannace — “The Scarring Things I Saw”
Carly Jackson — “An American Dream”
Ashlynn Jacobs — “Thanksgiving Trouble”
Arabella Jarani — “My Mom's Adventures Abroad”
Luke Jarosiewicz — “Oh, What a Night!”
Abby Johler — “Love Across the Nations”
Andrew Johnson — “Baby Sister”
Hayden M. Johnson — “Raiders of the Lost Tank”
James A. Johnson — “New Year with the Black Witch”
Nolan Johnson — “The Eleven-Year-Old Driver”

Luke A. Johnston — “The Dinner Disaster”
Aaron Jones — “The Big Explosion”
Cameron Jones — “Penny Wishes”
Ellie Jones — “The Sledding Incident”
Laura Fern Jones — “Abandon Ship!”
Lola Katherine Jones — “Left Behind”
Mackenzi Jones — “The Tragedy of Hurricane Camille”
Nolan Jones — “A Trip to Burger Chef Gone Wrong”
Sammy Jones — “The Mafia”
Aiden Joy — “Missing Out on the Big Game”
Devorah Jusupov — “Everything Happens for a Reason”
Keira Kahn — “Rivka's Daily Journey”
Lauren Kalist — “A Christmas Fiasco”
Shana Kaminetzky — “Hidden Away”
Charlie Karlovic — “Great-Grandma Ruth”
Jackson Keane — “Almost Death in a Tree”
Abby Keehn — “G-d's Wedding Gift”
Kate Keenhold — “Leapfrogging into the World Record Books”
Julia R. Kehoe — “The Brown Dog”
Caroline Keller — “Death on the Gasconade”
Esther Keller — “The Family”
Tara Keller — “Wedding Disaster”
Claire Kelly — “Paradise”
Cassidy Kennedy — “My Grandfather”
Aviva Hela Kessock — “War of Independence Hiding”
Gitty Khan — “The Kindest Farmer”
Chaya S. Khiyayev — “Work in the USA”
Holland Killinger — “The Three-Year-Old Lunch”
Haley A. Kinder — “The Football Injury”
Miri Kleiner — “Grandpa's Determination”
Marlise Klenke — “Service in Alaska”
Cole Klocke — “A Christmas to Remember”
Dovid Koenigsberg — “The Tomato That Changed It All”
Anna Kohmetscher — “It's a Family Tradition . . . “
Bracha Sarah Kops — “World War I”
Gabriella Koyenov — “The Dollar Bill”
Heidi Kraemer — “Opa's Journey to St. Louis”
Sammie Krauss — “A Shaking Story”
Chavi Krausz — “The Illegal Escape”

Theodore Krieger — “A Creek Adventure”
Abigail Kuhn — “The Worst Birthday Ever”
Liba Kurz — “Dodging Danger”
Isabelle Kusman — “The Boating Day Tragedy”
Toby Kwapiszeski — “The Miracle Worker”
Charlotte Lackey — “The Plane Crash in the Arctic”
Jack Lafata — “The Day My Uncle Met a Wizard”
Kyan LaMear — “Accidentally in Love”
Ayush Lamsal — “The Dead of Night”
Parker Lancaster — “The Octopus”
Jacob Lancer — “The Tree Cutter”
Ashlyn Lane — “My Grandpa's Story”
Tyler Lane — “Tornado Rescue”
Hilary Lang — “Healing”
Bracha Miriam Lavian — “Don't Forget to Say 'Good Morning!'”
Caleb Legters — “The Ultimate Protector”
Chaya Sarah Lelonek — “The Missing Child”
Adeline Leonard — “Determination”
Manon Lesort — “Fallen from a Car”
Joshua M. Levine — “A New Name”
Daniel Levy — “The Toy Truck That Helped Win the War”
Rebecca Levy — “The Prank”
Colby Lewis — “How Pedro Pan Brought Us Pepy”
Isaac Lindley — “Heimlich on Vacation”
Nick Litschgi — “Bathroom Troubles”
Bailey Litton — “Carny Chaos”
Shannon Lloyd — “The Bombing of the World Trade Center”
Jackson S. Loehr — “A Warning from God”
Natalie Lovell — “How a Shoe Saved a Life”
Yoni Lovy — “Saved from the Holocaust”
Adelyn Lowry — “Little League Lifestyle”
Adrienne Luna — “Playing with Fire”
Adam David Lyles — “Things Go South”
Izzy Mackin — “Court Battle”
Elise Mainard — “How We Came to Pentwater”
Camden Mallady — “Holmes Cave”
Donovan Marshall — “How My Auntie LaShawn Got Burned”
Amelia Martin — “Momma Always Knows Best”
Anne Martinez — “An Unhappy Awakening”

Daniel Maryles — “A Journey to America”
Revital Matatov — “Life and Death in War”
Payton Mathews — “The Outrageous War”
Xavier A. May — “My Baby Nav”
Nora McCloy — “Phoebe's Pancakes”
Madison McClure — “Smoking Over Hiroshima”
Jacob B. McConkey — “A Sailing Disaster”
Dennis McDaniel — “The Big Parade”
Luke McDonald — “The Dune Buggy Destruction”
Suzanna McLellan — “Love at Second Sight”
Connor McMillin — “The Tote Bag”
Elyse Measamer — “*Le Sauveur de Mayenne*”
Dani Meir — “My Great-Grandfather — The Soccer Star”
Yehudis Meltzer — “The Saving of the Letter from England”
Shayna Mendelson — “Cigarettes and Coffee”
Sari Merdinger — “The Miracles of Reizel Fuchs”
Hank Meyer — “A Pig's Tale”
Isabella Meyer — “The Parking Ticket Manifesto”
McKenna Ann Milberg — “The Reluctant Hero”
Annikah Mishra — “Eat Your Pancakes!”
Emily Mitchum — “Bottle Rocket to the Ear”
C. Perry Mizelle — “The Man on Point”
Madison Moeller — “The King of Rock and Roll”
Peyton Moore — “The Dangerous Moment”
Hannah Morey — “Rack Attack”
Chani Morgenbesser — “The Brass Menorah”
Chaya Bracha Morgulis — “The Wavy Ride”
Morgan Morici — “The Punishment”
Ava Morrin — “Frozen Feet”
Robert Morrin — “The Hero Over the Pacific”
Avery Morrow — “The Mule Ride”
Tamar Moskowitz — “Thief at Noon”
Diuto Mozie — “A Casualty of War”
Emery Mueller — “The Snowball Boys”
Abigail Muratov — “The Russian Train”
Sara Cate Murray — “Falling for You”
Yujiro Nakano — “Lost in the Sea”
Lily Naylor — “Saved by a 71-Year-Old”
Maura Nelson — “The Boogieman”

Jeremy A. Nester — “Miss Pennsylvania, My Grandmother”
Sophie Newman — “Our First Day with Our New Pup”
Cobe Newton — “The Runaway Horses”
Isaac Niekamp — “The Prank”
Samuel Nienaber — “The Flaming Rocket”
Elizabeth Grace Norris — “A Better World Full of Light”
Ben North — “Smooth Talking”
Trevor North — “The Stinky Furnace”
Grayson Norwood — “Amazing Grace, How Sweet the Sound”
Natalia Affinito Novak — “Don't Touch the Sauce”
Leba Novick — “Scary and Spooky”
Micah Nurieli — “Dangerous Travels”
Morgan E. O'Connell — “In the Summer”
Emily O'Keefe — “Faith”
Caitlin O'Toole — “When You Buy a School Bus”
Teddy Oates — “Journey Across the Great Divide”
Isabella Obert — “Smile Child”
Rachel Okonkwo — “Looking Presentable”
Gemma Oldani — “The Secret”
Carter Olszweski — “The Biggest Prank of His Life”
Isha Omer — “Drowning in Fear”
Shira Oppenheim — “Harvey Mark Oppenheim's Hard Beginning Led to a Great Life”
Tatum Osmon — “The Prank That Started the War”
Miri Osofsky — “Larry Janos: D-Day Hero”
Harry Ottsen — “Frozen in Time”
Caroline Ouano — “Freedom Awaits”
Kat Owsley — “A Big Week”
Cesar Padilla — “The Turkey's Revenge”
Jacob Park — “Car Wrecked”
Brandon Parker — “Cows at the Union”
Dorsey Parrott — “The Reason I'm Here Today”
Cameron Parsells — “A Life to Remember”
Abhi Patel — “The Successful Businessman”
Anthony Patrickio — “Lady Driver”
Carson Pautz — “Last Date”
Lucy Peacock — “A Young Mother's Struggle”
Esti Pearl — “The Mystery of the Broken Leg”
Mikayla Pereira — “Dad Finds a Husky”

Kharis Perona — “Abandoned”
Cody Peters — “Janie Beat-Up”
Sophie Peterson — “Which One?”
Teresa Pham — “When in Doubt . . . Smile?”
Noah Phillips — “The Horrible Punishment”
Sydney Pickett — “Follow the Light”
Carley Pohl — “The Newspaper Game”
Victoria Pollard — “The Biscuit Puck”
Parshall Pollnow — “Sweet Pea”
Jonathan Rodney Polski — “Indian Chase”
Cody Powell — “The Guard Ram”
Ryder Pressly — “21 Inches Deep”
Edward Joseph Price III — “Stealing Has Consequences”
Hailey Pritchett — “A Day Flipped Upside Down”
Mia Przybylski — “Journey Across the Atlantic”
Sophie Quarles — “A Huckleberry Finn Adventure”
Michal Rafailov — “Ambushed by the Uzbeks”
Ava Reale — “The Special Job”
Katie Reid — “The Baby Girl”
Mallory Rettig — “Evacuate!”
Hanlon Rhodes — “Fish Tank Fiasco”
Ben Ritter — “Deaf But Not Forever”
Calvin Ritzema — “Family Narrative”
Gummy Rizer — “Eyes of Fear”
Kendall Roberts — “Champion Corn-Shucker”
Riley Robertson — “The Deadly Outhouse”
Norah Roller — “A Girl's Best Friend”
Sari Roman — “A Meeting with Mengele”
Phoebe Rominger — “Double Wedding, Double Trouble”
Rivka Rosner — “Follow Your Dream”
Miriam Rotlevi — “Tree Branch”
Stockton Rouse — “Flying on 9/11”
William Rouse — “Assassination Away from Home”
Chloe Rullis — “Teaching in the 1960s”
Meagan Rupert — “Grandpa Meets an 'Angel'”
Isaac Russell — “It Was Dad!!”
Savannah Sackett — “444 Days”
Daman Sahni — “The Unknown Attack on America”
Tehilla Samber — “Confidence”

Thomas Sanders — “What Goes Around Comes Around”

Veronica Sandri — “The Lost Bat”

Ava Sanford — “A Life Story”

Jasmine Sapa — “The Girl Who Saw the Dead”

Kinsey Sasser — “North Carolina's Worst Disaster”

Ayelet Sasson — “He Never Gave Up”

Aden Savany — “The Winter Meeting with a Bull”

Razi Schick — “Just a Regular Day at Michael's”

Maria Schiltz — “The Forgotten Baby”

Paige Schleper — “Where's Mindy?”

Jacob Schloss — “Keystone Creeps”

Allison Schulte — “The Bat in the Chimney”

Sage Schulte — “Rappelling Catastrophe”

Olivia Schwartz — “The Attack of the Japanese”

Sejal Sekhar — “My Religion”

Layla Selk — “The Big Decision”

Rebecca Selness — “Lost Dog, Found Dog”

Ashlyn Shafer — “World War II Surprises”

Ekta Shah — “Fruits of Sacrifice and Seeds of Change”

Madison Sherman — “The Young Flier”

Tikva Shmulewitz — “The Diet That Didn't Work”

Daniel Shultz — “Bear!”

Brooke Shuman — “Fresh Furry Faces”

Joey B. Sievers — “The Town Snowman”

Morgan Slough — “The Letter”

Avery Smith — “Memories”

Miriam Elizabeth Smith — “War Stories”

Lance Hite Smithwick — “The Kidnapping”

Sophia Snyder — “Blizzard Chaos”

Penina Sommers — “Missing on 9/11”

Tali Sosnay — “The Golden Ring”

Elise Spanos — “A Story That Could Have Changed My Life”

Angelina Muskaan Spencer — “Watch Your Step”

Riley Spurgeon — “My Box of Wonders”

Hunter Stegmann — “Shooting Guns at School”

Eli Steinberg — “The Life of Honey”

Daniel Stengel — “Dreams to Reality”

Sam Stephens — “Camp Dread”

Isaac Stern — “One Trouble, One Survivor”

Lochlan F. Stewart — “The Chills”

Kendall Stone — “Grandma's Great African Adventure”

Leora Strauss — “The President Was Shot”

Rocheli Strickoff — “Lost and Found”

Esther D. Sulimanov — “The Helpful Officer”

Avery Surber — “Can't Expect the Unexpected”

Ryan Sutter — “Fishing with the Dead”

Brode Sweet — “The Last Meet at the Horseshoe”

Kaitlyn Sweetman — “The USS Forrestal Fire”

Allison Sydes — “When My Brother Fell Down a Mountain”

Emily Sydes — “The Truth Always Comes Out”

Colby Tant — “The Rabbit Who Ate Her Babies”

Abbie Terschak — “The Devastating Wilkes-Barre Flood”

Olivia Thomas — “They're Gone!”

Caleb Thompson — “The Great Chase”

Kate Thornhill — “The Cat's Revenge”

Jennifer Tian — “Hard Work Will Surely Pay Off”

Meg Trammell — “Girl Who Went Down the Culvert”

Esti Tratner — “The Greek Orthodox Burial”

Isabella Trost — “A Sweet Treat”

Lea Tsamadias — “Asbestos Accident”

Caroline Y. Tu — “War Zone Waves”

Christine Tu — “An Eight-Day Fairy Tale”

Isaac Mathew Tung — “Leaving It All Behind”

Avigail Ustayeva — “The Speech Pathologist”

Sam Vestal — “Monkeying Around”

Rena Waldman — “Hardships of Siberia”

R. J. Walker — “An Accident with Cars and Dogs”

Samuel Wardenburg — “Danger on D-Day”

Aviva Warsawsky — “The Lady Lock Prank”

Ellie Weckherlin — “Happy Birthday to Two”

Lillian Wendel — “Sole Survivor”

Connor Wessler — “Cat in the Mailbox”

Emma Westervelt — “Polly”

Gabrielle L. Wheeler — “Perseverance at Penn State”

Kinsley Tate White — “Don't Park in My Driveway . . . Or Else”

Layla Whitfield — “Uncle Bill and the Unfit Jeans”

Will Whitley — “The Invisible Ford”

April Wienstroer — “The Disease That Changed Her Life”

Landon Wiese — “The Unbelievable Story”
Miller Wiggins — “A Family's Legacy”
Julia Wiley — “The Chicken Catastrophe”
Tyler Willenbrink — “The Childhood of Rose Marie Willenbrink”
Livia Willey — “How to Eat a Pancake”
Elena Williamson — “My Mom's 9/11”
Ty Williamson — “Military Mix-Up”
Abigail Wilson — “Boomer Sooner”
Alex Wittenauer — “Lost Job”
Naftali Wodinsky — “The Empty House”
Tzipporah Wodinsky — “Jewish American Princess”
Nora Woodruff — “Jimmie: A Ghost Story”
Jack Wooldridge — “First Time Driving”
Ele Wooten — “Sugar Cane Karma”
Hadley Worland — “Ice Storm Camp-Out”
Susie Wren — “Three Left Feet”
Abigail Wunder — “Camera”
Conner Wunderlich — “Notecards”
Elisheva Yonk — “A Cry for Help”
Aaron Youngman — “The Disappearing Automobile”
Katherine Zheng — “The Trip Along the East Coast”

Praise for The Grannie Annie

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

—Kathy Lewis, Teacher; Missouri, USA

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

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

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

—Petra Swidler, Parent; Missouri, USA

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

—Aaron Schnoor, Author, *Grannie Annie*, Vols. 5, 6, and 7; Grannie Annie Selection Committee 2014, 2015, 2016, and 2017; North Carolina, USA

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

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

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

—Daniel Liu, Parent; New Jersey, USA

When I showed my student his illustration in the book, the whole class gave him an ovation. Thanks so very much for providing him with this opportunity to succeed.

—Clayvon Wesley, Teacher; Missouri, USA

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

—G-g Metzger, Teacher; Texas, USA

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

—Andrea Rominger, Parent; Alabama, USA

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

—The Reading Tub™, www.TheReadingTub.com

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

—Mark Futrell, Teacher; North Carolina, USA

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

—Rebecca Friedman, Teacher; Maryland, USA

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

—Andrew Jones, Parent; Pennsylvania, USA

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

—Yuxing Feng, Parent; Missouri, USA

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

—Amy Del Coro, Teacher; New Jersey, USA

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

—Beverly Miller, Teacher; Alabama, USA

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

—Ann-Marie Harris, Teacher; Maryland, USA

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

—Karen Metcalf, Parent; Tennessee, USA

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

—Florrie Binford Kichler, Patria Press, www.PatriaPress.com

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

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

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

—Karie Millard, Parent; Indiana, USA

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

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

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

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