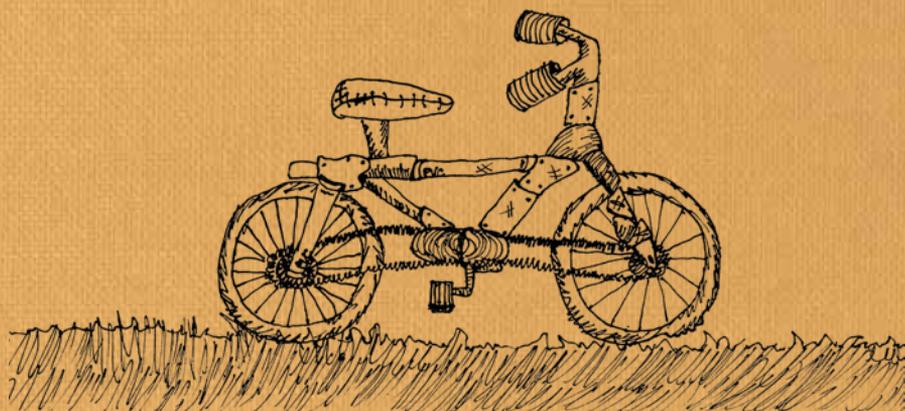


Grannie Annie

Historical Family Stories

Written and Illustrated by Young People



from
*The Grannie Annie
Family Story Celebration*

Vol. 8

The Grannie Annie Family Story Celebration

Welcome to the 2013 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-five young authors and twelve young artists, chosen to represent the submissions received this year, are included in this eighth annual volume of *Grannie Annie*. This book is also available as a PDF edition.

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.

Grannie Annie
Vol. 8

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

Saint Louis, Missouri

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. 8*, 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.

Cover illustration by Maggie Morse.

Particular thanks to fiber artist Elda Miller, graphics specialists Josh Hagan and Jeff Hirsch, and researchers Bert Francis and Doug Nolte.

Financial assistance for this project has been provided by the Missouri Arts Council, a state agency.

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

In memory of
Jens Peder and Kirstine Jensen Pedersen
of Hvam, Denmark, who in the early 1900s
saw three of their nine children
sail to new lives in America—
Honored by donors Louise and Jack McIntyre

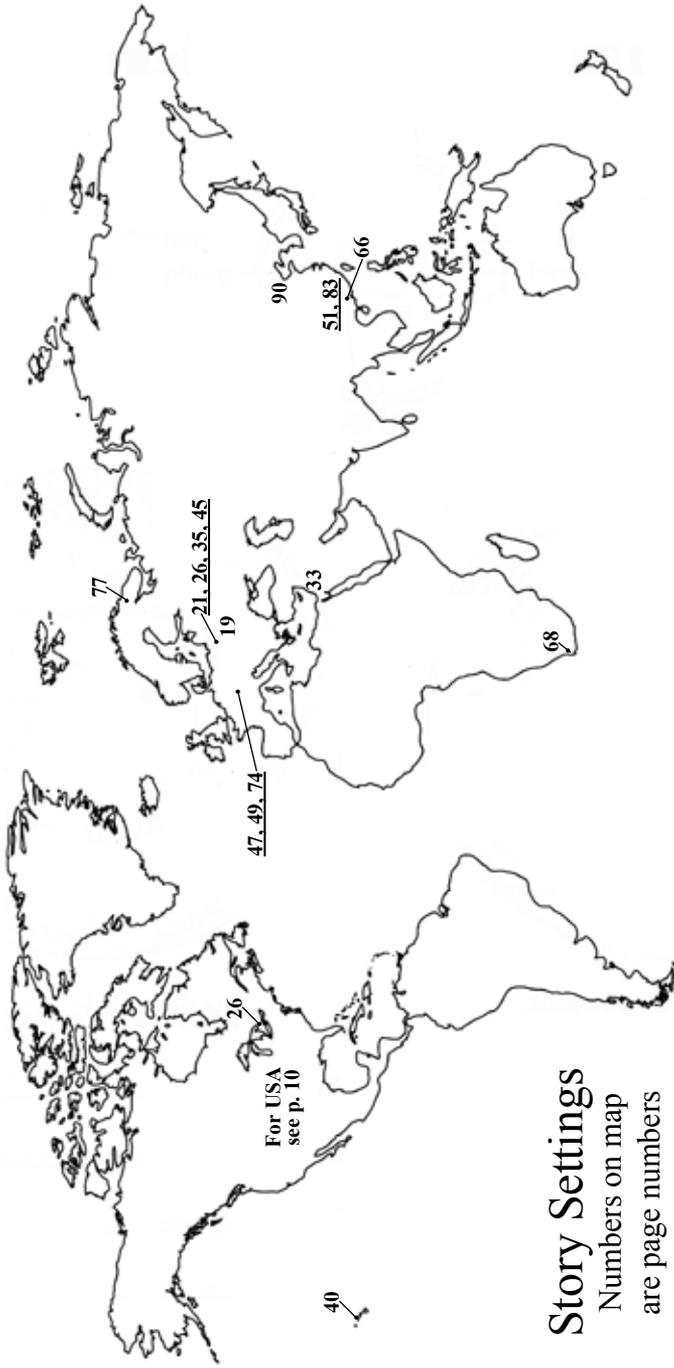
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Story Settings

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A Word from Grannie Annie

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

Crawl under, climb through, and run for your life with the family members whose stories are captured in this eighth volume of *Grannie Annie!*

In addition to engaging tales about clever youngsters and life *way back when*, this year's collection provides plenty of adventure. Explore new heights jumping on the first trampoline. Hide, *quickly*—in your closet, deep in the woods, under a stack of mattresses or, miraculously, in a hole in the ground. As disaster approaches, shout *Nooooo!*—in English or Chinese. “Share” your home with soldiers. Survive war; stand up for peace.

These thirty-five historical family stories span nearly one hundred years, from the debut of cotton candy at the 1904 World's Fair to the hilarious antics of one of the greenest dads of the new millennium. The stories circle the globe, taking place in North America, Asia, Europe, and Africa. The maps on pages 9 and 10 will help you locate each story's setting. You can also find the stories and their illustrations in the identical PDF edition and on the Grannie Annie website.

A celebration of families everywhere, this volume is designed for you and *your* family. You may wish to read the stories, however, before sharing them with sensitive or younger readers.

We are so honored to be sharing these remarkable family stories with you. Our hope is that you will be entertained and inspired, and that you will join us again for next year's 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. 8

Surprised at the 1904 World's Fair

1904*
St. Louis, Missouri, USA

In 2013 the Internet has become a dominant part of our lives. I can't even imagine life without the Internet. The Internet was invented before I was born, but to my parents and grandparents, it's still a very new toy.

Back in the early 1900s, all of your news was from newspapers, as even the TV had not yet been invented. People were isolated from everything that happened outside their home state. So imagine the wonders that the people of St. Louis experienced when the 1904 World's Fair came to town. My great-great-aunt Mary and her cousin Nell were eleven and sixteen at that time.

"I can't believe that my mom said yes!" Mary shouted.

"Yes, isn't it grand that we're going to the 1904 St. Louis World's Fair? And just the two of us!" exclaimed Nell.

Two days later they were on their way to the fair with high hopes. When they arrived, they decided to travel down the Pike. The Pike was a mile-long walkway where you could eat anything and just have fun. Mary and Nell tasted their first-ever hot dogs, hamburgers, ice cream cones, and iced teas. They also enjoyed something completely new called "cotton candy." How could they ever convince their parents that cotton was

* 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.

now a candy! The girls strolled down the Pike, trying a little bit of everything—basically stuffing themselves and then eating even more. Along the Pike they also saw international stations, including an “Eskimo Camp” and the “Geisha Girls,” which thrilled them. By the time they got to the end of the Pike, Mary was feeling a bit queasy from eating too much.

Then they saw the Ferris wheel.

The girls hurried over and excitedly gave the carnies 50 cents admission for two rotations. They climbed into a car with fifty-eight other people, the doors closed, and the Ferris wheel started its rotation. They sat together on fancy twisted-wire chairs, holding hands, anticipating the ride of their lives. In 1904 no one had been very far off the ground, because skyscrapers and airplanes had just been invented, so their ride up to 264 feet both thrilled and terrified both of them. At the top, they searched intently for their neighborhood and their houses in the skyline of St. Louis. Unfortunately, Mary’s stomach started churning because of all of the food she’d eaten on the Pike. The conductor on their car was very nice and offered her some water. The ride was really long, taking forty minutes for them to complete two rotations before they were let out of the car.

Mary shared this memory with my grandmother Catherine, who passed it to me. Neither Mary nor Nell is with us anymore, but they live on in our hearts through these loving stories.

Orion F. Jones
Pennsylvania, USA

No Child Left Behind

1919

Bilozirka, Ukraine

The date was January 15, 1913, the day my great-grandmother was born: Rebecca (Ruth) Shochet. It was such a happy day for Mr. Label and Mrs. Mariam.

Years later, in Russia,* it wasn't so restful. Ruth was with her family and her cousins. They were having their Sabbath day meal when all of a sudden an ear-piercing gunshot interrupted their meal. They heard screams of terror coming from neighbors. Ruth and her family peered out of their snow-covered window, which revealed a horrifying sight. Everybody was running out of their homes, screaming in terror to take shelter from the Cossacks.

Papa said, "Those mischievous Russians! They always steal, and kill everyone that doesn't believe in their religion." He sighed. "Everyone! Go and run away!" he cried. "We want everyone to be safe!"

"But, Papa," Ruth heaved. "I don't want to leave our home." Ruth began to cry.

"Don't worry, Ruthie. We will come back. Now, everyone! Let's go!"

They all ran with all their might, stomping on soft snow, making footprint by footprint. Mama was carrying baby Fagie. She glanced over her shoulder to find the Cossacks running after them, shouting in Russian.

* When this story took place, *Bilozirka* was spelled *Belozirka* and was located in Russia.

Ten minutes later, they all were gasping for breath as they entered a cave with dark walls and horrifying echoes. While everyone was hoping they could grab more of the cold air into their lungs, they heard faint cries, coming from . . . Mama?

“Mama, why are you crying?” asked Ruth.

Mama sniffled and said, “Fagie . . . Cossacks chasing us . . . running . . . Fagie’s cries . . . snow . . .” She started wailing.

“Do you mean . . . ?” asked Papa.

Mama nodded sadly.

They gasped and started talking all at once. “The baby—” “She dropped her in the snow???”

“We have to go back!” Ruth cried.

“No, we can’t. The Cossacks could still be looking. We must stay in the cave,” Papa said.

Hours later they peered out of the cave. The Cossacks were gone. They crept out of the cave. They ran and ran until they found baby Fagie. They all thanked G-d* that she was still alive, but she lost her hearing.

Now always remember: No child left behind.

Rivka Abedon
Maryland, USA

* This incomplete spelling is a show of respect.

Remember Me?

c. 1926–1928
Warsaw, Poland;
Brooklyn, New York, New York, USA

“Gertrude, they’re going to kill you!” Gertrude’s friend shouted frantically.

“I don’t care!” Gertrude Bloustein answered abruptly. Then Gertrude walked off to the very small one-room schoolhouse with a gorgeous façade of oak wood. The wood came out of the façade into an arch. Under the oak arch there was a moderate-size rusty brass bell.

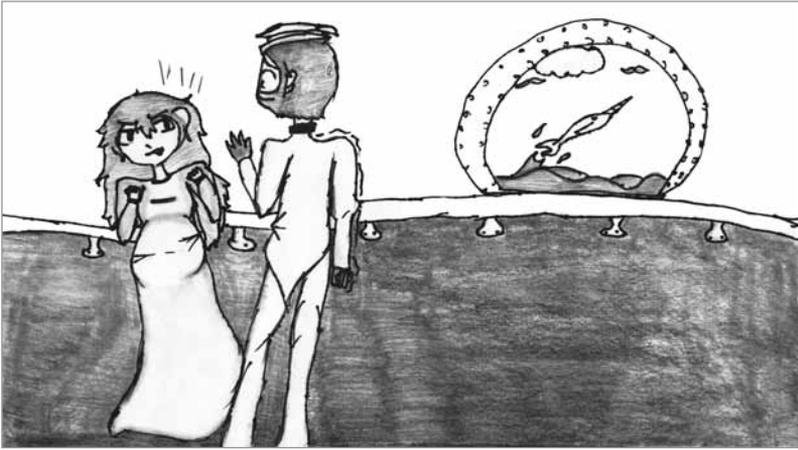
Then the petite sixteen-year-old Jewish girl with brown hair, pale skin, and big brown eyes reached for the rusty old brass doorknob. She turned the knob and walked in. She gaped at the willowy teacher with pale skin, green eyes, and gray hair in a bun. The teacher turned toward her and asked, “What do you want?” Her voice was like a cat’s claws on a chalkboard.

Gertrude went into her best posture and answered, “I want to learn.”

The teacher pointed to an old oak desk as she responded, “Go sit down then.”

Gertrude walked over to the old oak desk and learned.

A couple of years later a Polish man from the New World came to find a bride from the *shtetl*, meaning “small Jewish village.” The man, whose name was William, had brown hair and hazel eyes. He was tall and slender. William, from America, had arranged to marry Gertrude’s cousin, but when William looked at Gertrude,



Autumn Caito

it was love at first sight. The two lovebirds eloped, and by the time Gertrude was eighteen, she was packing to go to the New World.

As Gertrude approached the monstrous ship, she held her protruding stomach and thought about her unborn baby. She gazed upon the huge steel steamboat. Then she looked up at a large smokestack that was puffing black smoke. She boarded third class, or steerage, which was exceptionally cramped. She looked down at the old red wood and realized that she did not feel well and started vomiting.

As three days passed, the hurling got worse. So she went to see the captain. She gazed at the captain with his gray beard, green eyes, and large scar next to his right eye. She looked him in the eye and spoke with a firm voice. “I want to be moved to first class.”

The captain was shocked at the tiny Jewish girl. “Okay then. You will be moved from steerage to first class.”

Later that day, she got to sit at the captain's table with all the other first-class passengers. She thought about her life in the New World.

They eventually made it to Ellis Island. When Gertrude arrived, she couldn't find William. She realized that he was in the third-class steerage line, and she was in first class. So Gertrude took a lengthy walk and saw William. She tapped him on the shoulder and whispered, "Remember me?"

Miles R. Bassett, great-grandson of Gertrude
Missouri, USA

The Bootlegger

c. 1930s
Harrisburg, Illinois, USA

Bootleggers. They fit right up there with robbers and gangsters. Bootleggers had very interesting jobs. They made liquor illegally. My great-great-grandpa Ira T. Kingsley did just that in Harrisburg, Illinois. He started working on making whiskey in his basement, but he did not know much about the process. As he figured out more and more, he became very good at what he did. After a while he moved the “business” into the middle of the woods and went underground.*

Being a bootlegger was no cup of tea! First off, they were always being chased by the authorities. Second, they had to learn how to draw the tax stamp that the government put on legal liquor,** because back then, if the liquor had no tax stamp, there would sometimes be no sale. Third, they had to perfect their liquor-making skills.

Making liquor was illegal because of Prohibition, the Eighteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution, banning the making of and sale of alcohol. Even though it was illegal, my great-great-grandpa did it anyway. The reason why is because bootleggers made a lot of money. Back then, \$25 seemed like about \$325 today. So if bootleggers sold each bottle of whiskey for, let’s say, \$10, they would be rich!

* *Went underground* means “took extra steps to keep the operation hidden.”

** The only legal liquor during Prohibition (1920–1933) was for medical or scientific purposes or for religious observances.

After a while in the liquor business, my great-great-grandpa was caught and sent to prison for five years. Near the end of his term, the warden had to make sure that my great-great-grandpa had a home and a job to go back to. My great-great-grandpa had both, so he was free to go.

Not long after being released, he got an offer to sell his liquor recipe to Jack Daniel's, a big liquor company in Tennessee. My great-great-grandpa never accepted.

My grandpa said he found out about all this when he discovered the liquor-making equipment in the basement where it all started. My grandpa is not proud of what his grandfather did, but it will always be part of our colorful family history.

Jenna Pardieck
Missouri, USA

America, Here I Come?

c. 1930–1964
Drohiczyn, Poland; New York, New York, USA;
Toronto, Ontario, Canada

When my great-grandfather Hershel Steinberg moved to America, he decided that he wanted to bring all his siblings over to America as well. He bought boat tickets for all his siblings, but he couldn't get one for his brother Levi.*

“Hershel, when will I get to come to America?”
Levi wrote in a letter.

“Very soon,” Hershel replied. Hershel tried but could not succeed.

He wrote back to Levi, saying, “Levi, go to the port on Wednesday. I have contacted my friend Aron Maksym to take you to America.”

The next day Levi went to the port, and Aron was already there.

“Hello. I am Aron,” he said.

“Hello. I'm Levi, Hershel's brother.”

“All right. I'm glad to meet you. Now, since the ship doesn't leave port for three days, you will be living with me until then.”

Levi enjoyed three days of living with Aron, and Levi lost track of time. But Aron didn't.

“Levi, the ship leaves today!”

“Let's go!” Before they left, Aron took out an empty suitcase and told Levi to climb in.

* Pronounced LAY-vee.

“What? I’m not climbing into a suitcase!”

“You have to!”

“Okay, fine.” Levi climbed into the suitcase. They went to the port, and Aron boarded the ship with two suitcases.

The boat ride lasted about one month.

“Hello, Aron!” Hershel greeted when they arrived in New York. “Safe journey for both of you?”

“Levi is in the other suitcase,” Aron replied softly.

“Thank you, Aron,” said Hershel.

“Of course.” And with that, Aron left.

After about four months of living in America, Levi was getting pretty used to his lifestyle. One day, when he was driving, he was pulled over by a police officer.

“Hello, sir,” Levi said. “Can I help you?”

“Yeah, you were speeding! Show me your driver’s license!” the cop said.

“Sir, I don’t have a driver’s license.”

“Well, that’s a problem. Fortunately, I’m also part of the Immigration Department. So I guess we’ll just have to deport you to Canada. If you try to sneak back into America again, we will deport you again, and then you won’t be able to get a license or become a citizen at all.”

“Yes, sir.”

“Now go pack. You go to Canada tomorrow.”

“Yes, sir.” Then Levi drove back home.

After the plane ride to Canada, Levi found a place to stay. Then Levi called Hershel. Hershel flew to Canada with an empty suitcase, found Levi, and flew home. When they got back, Levi went into hiding under the name “Joe Levy.”

He married a woman named Sylvia Klempner, and they had a daughter named Judy. How Levi became a citizen, on July 2, 1964, is still a mystery. Somehow he came out of hiding and received all the legal documents he needed to use his real name, not his fake name.

Levi died in 2009.

Sophie Pomeranz
Colorado, USA

Stuck to the Ground

1978
Oakville, Missouri, USA

It was a sunny day in May 1978. The birds were chirping, the lawns on Sky Hill Drive in Oakville, Missouri, were all green from the April showers. A mischievous eight-year-old boy named Bryan Lucas had just told a doozy of a lie at his Catholic grade school, and it was on this day that the “coin prank” became legendary.

Before Bryan was read his rights by his mom (my grandma) he was asked to bring the brown trash can up from the curb. As Bryan walked to the side of the house, breathing in the fresh air for his last time for the next couple days, he suddenly had a brilliant idea. Bryan would have some fun while being “grounded.”

Bryan went into the garage with a smirk on his face. He proceeded to grab superglue out of the rusty old toolbox and a quarter out of his mom’s powder blue Chevette. Walking proudly, chest out, Bryan strolled down the sidewalk. Bryan squirted a big glob of glue onto the bumpy concrete. Next he pressed the quarter into the glue with all his might. Bryan stood up and brushed his hands together as if he had succeeded at the biggest prank ever.

When Bryan went back into the house, he happily went back to his room to begin his grounding sentence. At this point, Bryan had no idea how long he was going to be grounded, but he knew his entertainment for the duration of the sentence. With his green eyes focused on the sidewalk, with the quarter shining in the sunlight,

Bryan awaited his first victim. Bryan had a great eye-level view from his bedroom as he sat in his beanbag chair.

A person came by and noticed the quarter, bent over, and picked and picked, trying to grab the lucky coin. No luck. Then more and more children and adults came by—people walking their dogs, kids stopping on their bikes—all attempting to become twenty-five cents richer and luckier. Some people shook their head and laughed when they realized the coin was a prank.

My grandma heard lots of laughter coming from Bryan's room and could not imagine what he was up to now. Grandma went into his room, and Bryan confessed to his latest prank. Grandma was unable to be mad, because she thought it was a pretty clever idea. Bryan did receive a lecture and a threat to never lie at school again. Bryan and my grandma sat together looking out the window with their dog Pepper by their side, enjoying the entertainment of all who walked by.

Hailey Peterson, niece of Bryan
Missouri, USA

A Miscommunication

c. 1984
Guangdong Province, China

It was the winter break of my dad's junior year in high school and the time to join his parents, who had gone to Foshan to visit his ailing grandparents.

His parents' friend bought the ticket for him and sent a telegraph to Foshan about the arrival time. At age fifteen, it was going to be my dad's first time on a train all by himself. He took a very thick book and fifteen pounds of tangerines with him, which were from his mom's workplace and signified good luck for the coming Chinese New Year.

The twenty-hour train ride was smooth, but he could not fall asleep, because there wasn't room to lie down. To keep himself busy, he read the book, written by Mikhail Sholokhov.

Finally he arrived at the Guangzhou station. Pushing and shoving through crowds of people, he craned his neck to search for his parents. He knew exactly where to expect them, since he had gone through this train station several times with his parents on vacations. After being jostled by countless people passing through the station, he finally got to the exit. They weren't there!

"Maybe the traffic is bad," he thought.

Trains came and went in a flash, and so did crowds of people. A long, hopeful hour and a half later, there was still no sign of his parents. He was getting anxious. Searching his memory, he vaguely remembered how to get to Foshan, which was twenty miles away. He started to ask almost everyone he came upon.

Several confusing bus transfers later, he finally got to where the buses to Foshan were supposed to be. They were gone! People told him that the bus station had been moved to the west end of the city, because the city's center couldn't handle the heavy flow of holiday passengers. Suddenly, it started raining, and he had no umbrella. He was soaked and was stuck with two not-so-attractive backpacks, making him look almost like a hobo!

An hour later at the western suburb, my dad was once again disappointed. The last bus had just left, and it was getting dark. He was starting to think of how to spend the night in the city when some motorcyclists came and offered people rides. My dad had seen these makeshift taxis many times before but didn't know if he could trust them. In addition, they were asking for twelve dollars, whereas the bus fare was two dollars. With no other choice he decided to "roll the dice."

My dad didn't know his uncle's address but remembered how to get there from the small town's main theater. After the ride in pouring rain, he finally got to his uncle's house and could soak his aching feet in boiling hot water. As it turned out, his uncle had misunderstood the telegraph and thought he would arrive the next day.

My dad would never forget that long rainy day, the feeling of growing up, and being able to handle the unexpected.

Rebecca Tan
Missouri, USA

The Game-Winning Shot

1984

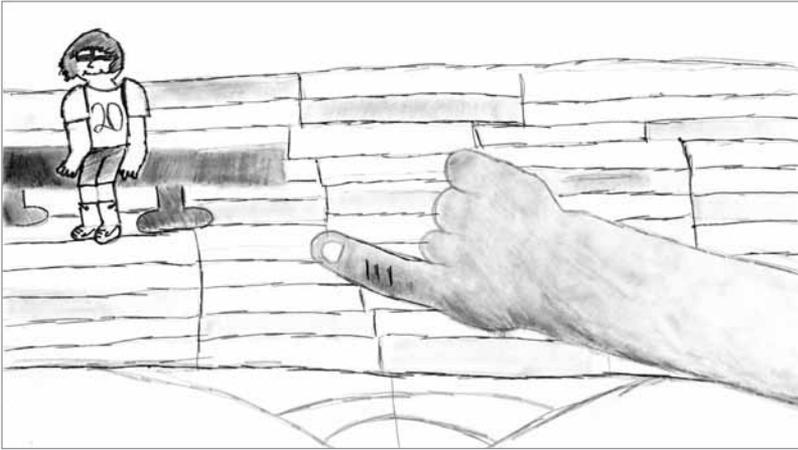
Spalding, Nebraska, USA

My dad came to the basketball game like it was like any other game. But it wasn't. It was the district finals—the game that determined which team would go to the state tournament.

Dad's team, the Greeley Bulldogs, was playing their archrival, Spalding Academy, who had already beaten them twice—by fifteen points each game. Spalding was rated fifth in the state, and everybody thought Greeley didn't have a chance. Spalding even thought it was going to be an easy game. But boy, they were so wrong!

When the game started, Spalding took an early 8-0 lead, and everybody thought it was going to be a blowout. At the end of the first quarter, Spalding was winning by twelve points! Dad's team had their heads down, and their confidence was even lower. Their coach said, "Don't worry! It is only the first quarter, and we still have time. Now get back out there and get back in this!"

Greeley started the second quarter hot. They made five of their first six shots, cutting the lead to two points. But then the gym hushed. Greeley's best player went down in agony. He was so injured that he couldn't play. Somebody had to go in for him, but the coach didn't know who. He looked up and down the bench. Then he finally stopped, looked right at my dad, and pointed at him.



Kelsie Waggoner

At halftime, Spalding was ahead 38–36. Dad’s coach told them, “Just keep doing what you’re doing; play *your* game, not theirs. This is our game!”

In the third quarter, Greeley scored ten points in a row. However, Spalding answered back and tied the game within minutes. But before you could even blink, Greeley was up by six points again. Surprisingly, Spalding would get back into the game. At the end of the third quarter, Greeley was ahead 50–45. Greeley’s coach encouraged, “Just one more quarter!”

At the start of the fourth quarter, the gym noise was earsplitting. Greeley scored the first points of the fourth quarter. Greeley’s momentum was grand, but Spalding didn’t quit. They ended up taking the lead with one minute left in the game. The score was 78–76, but then Greeley made a three-point shot and was ahead by one point. Spalding called a timeout, and in the huddle, Dad’s coach said, “We need to hold them! Get a steal and hold on to it. Don’t let them get easy points.”

Greeley made a two-pointer to make them lead by three points. Spalding struck right back with a three-pointer, and the score was tied with ten seconds left in the game. Greeley threw the ball in. Dad grabbed the ball at the three-point line and shot! The ball sank into the basket as the buzzer went off! Greeley won. Greeley was going to the Nebraska state basketball tournament! The final score was 84–81. That is what I call a great game-winning shot!

Connor Wood
Nebraska, USA

Hands Across America

1986
Toledo, Ohio, USA

When my mom was just about my age, almost eleven, she saw a commercial promoting Hands Across America. She knew instantly this was something she wanted to do.

Hands Across America was a charitable cause to help the homeless and fight hunger right here in America. There were commercials and even a song! The vision of Hands Across America was a line of people holding hands from coast to coast (New York to California). In order to reserve your place in line, you had to make a ten-dollar donation. My mom was very excited, because she remembered how the song “We Are the World” made a huge impact on her and the rest of the world. My mom thought this would be an amazing opportunity to participate and be part of something big! She can remember being over the moon when she received her location and totally cool T-shirt in the mail.

Unfortunately, she never got to wear the shirt. My mom’s cousin Pete, my second cousin, was a marine stationed in Hawaii at the time, so he could not participate. Pete was home on leave the week before the colossal event. He saw my mom’s shirt proudly displayed in her room, just waiting to be worn. He loved it! Pete said it would be a great conversation piece back at the barracks. My mom figured since he was serving our country, the least she could do was give him the shirt. So that’s exactly what she did!



Elizabeth Adams

There were approximately 6.5 million people holding hands! The line was 4,152 miles long! It was May of 1986 when Hands Across America took place. My mom said she didn't think there were enough people to make an unbroken chain, and she could see broken links from where she was, but it didn't matter. It was monumental to my eleven-year-old mother. My mom and grandma watched the news later that night. The newscaster had said that even though hands were not held everywhere, if each person stood four feet apart with their hands stretched out to their sides, from heaven it would look like one continuous line.

In conclusion, I think Hands Across America was a pretty unique and fantastic experience for my mom to see and for me to hear about. To see our country participating in something so humanitarian rather than being at odds with one another would be wonderful. Maybe sometime in my lifetime, our society will come together again for the aid of our own.

Jocelyn Crossley; Ohio, USA

The One-Ticket Escape

June 5, 1989
Beijing, China

June 5, 1989. My mother, father, and four of their colleagues were anxiously huddled in worry and fright in an old subway station. Chaos surrounded the six college students as they struggled to remain together despite being jostled by the crowd. All the buses were down, and outside nothing but tanks seemed to be running—rolling across the unpaved roads in rhythmic parade.

The six colleagues were desperate. They needed to escape the panic of Tiananmen Square,* and their only option was the subway. Everything was gated in, including the waiting area and the ticket booth. But what were they to do with the one ticket they could afford? The adventure began.

“All right,” my mother, Wenli, suggested, “how about we send one of us with the one ticket to climb over the gate and purposely be caught? We have a ticket, and the excuse can be we didn’t know about the gate opening.”

The other five looked uneasy at the idea.

“What if we aren’t allowed past? What if we’re caught?”

Firmly, Wenli answered, “Well, is there anyone willing to try?”

A long moment of silence ensued. Then abruptly her girl colleague, Hong, bravely responded, “I’ll do it.”

* Tiananmen Square was the center of a seven-week student protest against the Chinese government—to which the government responded with military force. To learn more, read “Tiananmen Square Crackdown” in *Grannie Annie*, Vol. 6.

“But what if you’re caught?” my father asked uncertainly, concerned about the overall safety of his friends.

“We can do it,” Hong replied boldly. “We will get out of Beijing and to a place of safety.”

Thus the plan was hatched. Hong was to climb over the fence and distract the conductor, who would open the gate to talk to her. When the gate was opened, the other five were to sneak in and board the train. A simple, but dangerous, plan.

Dexterously, Hong climbed up and over the fence with no trouble.

“Hey!” the one and only conductor yelled. “What are you doing?”

The conductor rushed over, opening the gate at the same time. Hong feigned confusion as she looked at the approaching conductor’s stern figure.

Meanwhile, the other five stealthily headed toward the gate opening, blending into the crowd and remaining alert. They hid their anxiety and hoped for success.

“If you have a ticket, why didn’t you go through the gate door?” the conductor was demanding of Hong.

Hong innocently answered, “I didn’t know there was a door. The crowds hid it from my view. I thought I needed to climb over.”

Reluctantly the conductor let the girl through, and with the other five successful in their part, the entire plan was officially a success. Relieved, they boarded the train, and today they all live in America with this unforgettable memory as part of their history. Often, my parents reminisce about the terror and nervousness

during the historic event. They will forever be grateful for the survival of their friends and themselves.

Julia Hu
New Jersey, USA

Toyota Tercel Trouble

2000
St. Louis, Missouri, USA

My dad is an environmentalist. In fact, he is the greenest guy I know. He keeps his carbon footprint small as an atom and reuses almost everything. My dad bikes to work every day, wears socks that my dog has chewed till there *are no socks*, and owned the same car for twenty-one years.

In 1980, he took ownership of that car, a Toyota Corolla Tercel, one of the “greenest” white cars with blue pinstripes of the time. My dad remembers the car well. He bought it in twelfth grade for \$6,120, with the money he earned by scooping ice cream at Baskin-Robbins for two years. The beloved car had a stick shift, only two doors, and a hatchback. It traveled thirty miles per gallon—pretty green for back then! My dad drove it to college in northern California, to medical school in San Diego, to Arizona, and then from Arizona to St. Louis!

After sixteen years, the car started getting hard to start in cold weather. On freezing days my dad would spray stinky starting fluid into the carburetor to start the rickety car. A couple years later, the passenger door broke. It was too expensive to fix, but my dad made the best of the event, and of course, the green guy kept the car.

In 2000 my dad drove the twenty-year-old car to the dentist. When he parked at the dentist’s office, he tried to get out of the aging car, but to my dad’s dismay, the driver’s door had joined the passenger door in the

land of being stuck. “Well, that’s all right. I’ll just open the window and climb out that way,” my dad thought. So he unrolled the driver’s window and climbed out. At that point, my dad realized that, unfortunately, if he didn’t want his stereo to be stolen, he would need to close the window. So he reached into the open window, cranked up the window halfway, then pulled his arm out. Then he opened the hatchback, which opened and closed only from the outside, and crawled in. He landed on the seats that were spilling over with foam like a glass of overflowing root beer. Next he rolled the driver’s window up from inside the car, scooted back to the hatchback, climbed out the hatchback, closed the hatchback, and joyfully marched to his dentist appointment, basking in the pride of his success.

After the appointment, which wasn’t as pleasant as he had anticipated, he sighed, and then got to work. First he climbed into the car through the hatchback and then rolled down the driver’s window. Next he climbed out the driver’s window, closed the hatchback, climbed back into the car through the open window, rolled up the window from inside the car, and drove away.

My dad didn’t give away that beloved Toyota Tercel until 2001, when, in addition to becoming donated, reusable metal scraps, it had also become the place that an ant colony called home.

Belle Sara Gage
Missouri, USA

Illustrators of Volume 8

- p. 22 Autumn Caito; Missouri, USA
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Grannie Annie Storykeepers 2013

Congratulations to the following young people for discovering, writing, sharing, and submitting a story from their family's history!

Rivka Abedon • Yisroel Arnson • Eli Asarch • Yordanose Atanaw
Jane Ann Baggett • Sebastian Baker • Miles R. Bassett
Graeme Baxley • Evan Beck • Shelby Behnk • Tyler Beilsmith
Joseph R. Berglund • Amy Betancourth • Emma Biermann
Eliza Black • Shannon Bock • Haleigh Borich • Taylor Brady
Reese Brambrink • Sophie Braun • Sean Britt • Benjamin M. Brock
Anna Cathryn Brown • Yoni Brown • Jake Bruenning
Matthew Bruenning • Hunter Bruno • Jackson Bry
Nicholas Bryant • Keely Butcher • CJ Canfield • Lelia Carlson
Julian Scott Carroll • Alexis Carson • Dominic Cavezza
Chloe Cedergreen • Michael Chamdi • Talon Chapman
John Christen • Phil Christodoulou • Ryan Cilli • Sophie J. Clody
Mason Clynes • Gracie Cohen • Audrey Craig • Jocelyn Crossley
Clark Cytron • Mitchell Dade • Allison Davis • Hope Davis
Madei Davis • Elizabeth DePalma • Lincoln Dibler
Giuseppe Di Cera • Owen Diettrich • Gavyn C. Dockery
Matthew Donnelly • Dede Driscoll • Matthew Dubowski
Sophie Dudeck • Jack DuMont • Hannah Dwyer
Jessica Eastlund • Thomas Eck • Jala Ehrenfried • Savannah Evers
David Fitzgerald • Tony Follmer • Madi Foonberg
David Friedman • Kamryn Fuegner • Belle Sara Gage
Anabel Gallagher • Mary Frances Gaston • Tripp Gatch
Adam Gaughan • Gila Gershman • Emily Giannotti • Liam Goggins
Jill Goldwasser • Dacey Goodwin • Cade Grossart • Michael Guber
Mia Gugino • Chris Guo • Noah Hankins • Katie Hannan
Annesley Haring • Eli Harris • Ella Hartman • Nathan He
Nili Hefetz • Megan Heim • Alex Held • Anya Helmer

Ethan Hennix • Audrey Herman • Tommy Herr
 Shelby Herrington • Abbey Hilger • Matt Hippe • Gabi Hoag
 Summer R. Hock • Drake Honaker • Daniel Hu • Julia Hu
 Melina Huang • Kate Huber • Harriett Hudspeth • Ryotaro Ikeda
 Megan Jansen • Connie Jiang • Madeline Jin • Aaliyah Johnson
 Cameron Jones (Missouri) • Cameron Jones (New Jersey)
 Orion F. Jones • Ryann Jones • Daniel Jung • Ashley Juniewicz
 John Jurek • Grady Kadel • Kaylee Kahl • Jack Kahn
 Aylin Kahraman • Asher Kark • Reese Kark
 Jonathan Katsenelson • Reegan Kehres • Brendan Kenny
 Hannah Kinnison • Nicky Klein • Nick Kline • Rebecca Knopf
 Elisabeth G. Knutson • Ruth K. Knutson • Matthew Koffman
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 Zane McNeill • Hannah Merenstein • Hope A. Middaugh
 Reid Miller • Josephine Miller-Davis • Katie Minkler
 Chester J. Mlcek • Mirabelle Rose Mockler • Sydney Mueller
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 Ethan Nettler • Sara Nigro • Ayden Novick • Brianna O'Brien
 Jack O'Connor • Elizabeth O'Dowd • Kenny Oelkers
 Lindsay Origliasso • Payton Palazzolo • Jenna Pardieck
 Jenna Parmentier • Michael Patterson • Luke Paulus
 Hailey Peterson • Aidan Pierce • Sophie Pomeranz • Noah Posey
 Adam Present • Lily Qiu • Taylor Radke • Aishu Ramaswami
 Jackson Rasmusson • Yaakov Reches • Matthew Redding
 Christian Reller • Olivia Rhodes • Elia Grace Rios
 Miles Robinson • Saida Robles-Razzaq • Hunter Roggero
 Kylie Ross • Kayla Rother • Ben Rovner • Rebecca Sachs

Miles Sandbothe • Grace Sander • Amanda Sangalli
Tommy Schefers • Parker Schell • Jenny Schmitt
William Schneider • Natalie Rose Schuver • Roy Schwartz
Brandon Schweid • Gretchen Schwent • Saadia Seiferas
Esha Shah • Robin Shareshian • Tommy Sheehan • Mayson Sheeks
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Lucie Wolfson • Connor Wood • Danielle Wu • Taryn Yaggie
Ben Yao • Julia Young • Katherine O. Zoellner • Natasha Zoellner
Tuvya Zonenberg

Invitation to Participate

Please join us for the 2013/2014 Grannie Annie Family Story Celebration. The submission deadline for *Grannie Annie, Vol. 9*, is February 1, 2014. Complete details, including the required submission form, are available at www.TheGrannieAnnie.org.

Praise for The Grannie Annie

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

The *Grannie Annie* is doing a wonderful job of getting kids more interested in reading, writing, and learning more about their families and their past.

Bert Francis, Parent; Missouri, USA

Thank you so much for creating such a wonderful writing opportunity for young people. I look forward to the students participating each year and reading the published stories.

Amy Del Coro, Teacher; New Jersey, USA

I am always on the lookout for ways to share my students' writing and am thrilled to have discovered *The Grannie Annie*. Everyone had so much fun finding out about past family events, and I'm proud of the stories the students produced.

Beverly Miller, Teacher; Alabama, USA

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

The Reading Tub™, www.TheReadingTub.com

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

Writing for The Grannie Annie helps my students feel confident as writers, which in turn provides their imaginations with a comfortable setting in which to create.

Katelin Moquin, Teacher; Missouri, 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

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

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”

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*

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*

As I'm sure is the objective of The Grannie Annie, this was a lovely experience, and now memory, for Andrew and his grandpa. There are no words for that.

Susan Barton Malphurs, Parent; Georgia, USA

The Grannie Annie offers my students an excellent opportunity to record and share stories from their family histories. By interviewing relatives, the students learn to appreciate and experience the triumphs and the troubles of their ancestors. These stories should be preserved for these students and for future generations, and The Grannie Annie provides this worthwhile opportunity that benefits all generations.

Susan Jewell, Teacher; Nebraska, USA

It is a privilege to be a part of The Grannie Annie Family Story Celebration. This wonderful anthology helps to shape our children's identity by providing them with the opportunity to understand and value their ancestry.

Jodi J. De Luca, Ph.D., Parent; Florida, 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—and to share it with the world.

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

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

We had an incredible time working on [our daughter's *Grannie Annie*] story. It was a great way for Amy to learn about the rich heritage from which she comes—and to get more writing experience to boot.

Ruth Whitaker, Parent; Texas, USA

The *Grannie Annie* proved to be a valuable experience for the students in my school. . . . When the children shared the stories, some students who are normally quiet or reserved got to shine because of something really neat that they wrote about.

Dianne Elson, Teacher; Indiana, USA

Our son's *oma* is overwhelmed that her "story" is in print in *Grannie Annie*. She is thankful for the opportunity to tell it! 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*, www.EducatingForChange.com

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\$14.95 each for 1–4 copies; \$10 each for 5 or more;
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The Grannie Annie Family Story Celebration

Young People Learning and Sharing Family Stories

The Grannie Annie invites students everywhere to discover and share stories from their family's history, and publishes collections of their work. The Grannie Annie experience leads young people to strengthen family and community bonds, encounter history in a personal way, and polish their writing skills.

“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.”

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—Andrew Jones, Parent; Pennsylvania, USA

