

Fifth-Graders' Family Stories Chosen For International Publication

BY KAREN BERGER
MIRROR REPORTER

From an ancestor's famed bull ride in 1665 to an aunt's skydiving experience a decade ago, the stories by Fallen Timbers Middle School students not only captured stories that will be passed down for generations to come, but captured some awards as well.

For the fifth year in a row, fifth-grade LEAP students had stories chosen for publication in The Grannie Annie — an international writing contest. So far, Fallen Timbers has had 16 published authors with six others receiving honorable mention, said Grannie Annie co-founder Fran Hamilton.

Through its annual writing contest and published anthology, The Grannie Annie encourages youth to interview family members to discover stories from their family's history.

The four chosen for publication include:

■ "The Great Bull Ride" by Timothy Marshall, which details how his ancestor Richard "Bull" Smith (or Smythe), the founder of Smithtown, N.Y., won land from the Indians in 1665.

As the legend goes, the Indians told Smith he could keep whatever land he circled in a day's time riding atop a bull.

"He was a horse trainer, but the Indians didn't know he also trained bulls," Tim explained.

So riding atop a bull named Whisper, he rode 35 miles in one day. Some say he chose the summer solstice because it was the longest day of the year, said Tim, who has seen the bronze statue of the bull in Smithtown, Long Island, N.Y. He also notes that the valley where Smith stopped for lunch is named Bread and Cheese Hollow.

While he's read and heard different accounts of the story,

and knows it might be a legend, he concludes: "My great-great Aunt told me this story and I am telling you."

■ "Stuck in the Quicksand" by Hannah Myers, which details how her great-aunt Dolores spent time living on a farm during World War II.

With her father at war and her mother working in a factory and food rationed in the city, her family sent her to a relative's farm.

Dolores liked to swim in a small lake on the farm, but had been told not to, as there was quicksand in one area. Dolores told of how one day two horses wandered to the land, got stuck and eventually died. Later, a tractor rolled into the quicksand and was also lost. She never swam in the lake after that.

■ "A Big League Dreamer" by Rogan Pransky, which tells how great-uncle Jim Pransky's love of baseball became his career.

"His dad would toss him pop flies in the back yard, and really helped him," Rogan said.

Jim was a good baseball player and his dad thought he'd make it to the Major Leagues but his junior year in high school he broke his leg — derailing his career. Instead, he became a scout for the Tampa Bay Rays, which was named Major League Baseball's 2008 Team of the Year.

"He gave the ring and ball to his parents, because his parents inspired him," Rogan said of his Uncle Jim. Born in Pennsylvania, Jim lives in Iowa and is still a scout.

■ "What Sticks, Half-Lick?" by Olivia Thomas, which tells the story of Fluffy the dog during the Blizzard of '78.

Olivia's mother Diana and Uncle Dave were at home with their Fluffy while their parents left for the hospital because their brother Rob was about to be born.

"They went outside for five minutes and were headed back inside when they heard the dog whining," Olivia said. "It turned out his tongue was stuck to the storm door."

At first they tried peeling it off but stopped so as not to hurt the dog. With the door the only way into the house, they had to open it carefully with the dog's tongue attached, so Dave could slip inside and get warm water. That worked, but a little piece of tongue was left behind on the door. After that, Fluffy earned the nickname Half-Lick.

Olivia has a dog, but he doesn't like to lick things. "He just eats snow," she said.

Earning an honorable mention this year was Madelyn Gerken, for "Jump, Aunt Jeanie, Jump!"

Madelyn was persuaded by her Uncle Tom not to include in her story the reason why he said "Jump, Jeanie, Jump!"

Just after Jeanie and Tom married 10 years ago, the couple decided to go skydiving, harnessed to an instructor. But when it came time to jump out, Tom was scared to go. It took some persuading to get Jeanie out the door, and when she did she was startled when the instructor pulled the cord on the parachute.

"It yanked her up 10 feet," said Madelyn, who learned of the story when gathering with family over winter break.

"I would probably go skydiving," Madelyn believes.

The Grannie Annie honors Ann Guirrerri Cutler, who was passionate about saving family stories. For more information, visit thegrannieannie.org.



Five Fallen Timbers Middle School students were honored by The Grannie Annie, and four will have their work published in a paperback book and online. Pictured are (from left) back row, Olivia Thomas and Rogan Pransky, and front row, Madelyn Gerken, Tim Marshall and Hannah Myers.


MIRROR PHOTO BY KAREN BERGER



Community Celebrates Library's 85th Birthday

To commemorate the Waterville Branch Library's 85th anniversary, children's librarian Lori Witham dressed in character while reading to children. Several hundred attended the anniversary celebration on April 12, which also included adult programs and a display of historical photos and items.

MIRROR PHOTO BY NANCY GAGNET




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A.W. SCHOOLS MENU

HIGH SCHOOL & JUNIOR HIGH MENU

April 25 through April 29

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
A.W. Chicken Finger Deluxe Veggies and Dip Applesauce	Spaghetti with Meat Sauce Breadstick Broccoli and Cheese Sauce Strawberries	Grilled Cheese Sandwich Tomato Soup Garden Salad Applesauce	Chicken Fajita Salad Breadstick Mixed Fruit	Tony's Cheese Pizza Breadstick Garden Salad Orange Wedges

Menu is subject to change without notice! 2% milk and chocolate milk are offered as a daily choice. Contact person: Jeri Mier (A.W. Food Service Director) 419-877-0789

ELEMENTARY & MIDDLE SCHOOL MENU

April 25 through April 29

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
A.W. Chicken Finger Deluxe or Corn Dog Veggies and Dip Applesauce	Spaghetti with Meatsauce/ Breadstick or Grilled Chicken on a Bun Broccoli & Cheese Strawberries	Grilled Cheese Sandwich OR Hamburger on a Bun Tomato Soup Applesauce Garden Salad	Chicken Fajita Salad Breadstick or Chicken Hip Dipper on a Bun w/Salad Fruit Mix	Tony's Cheese Pizza OR Turkey/Cheese Sandwich Garden Salad Orange Wedges