

## Family history Rides On Collection to feature boy's story of saddle

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The saddle smells of old horses and history. Its overpowering scent inspired Andrew Malphurs to begin his story by describing the horse saddle that his great-great-great-grandfather once used.

Malphurs' work will be published in the fifth volume of "Grannie Annie," a collection of stories children write about family history.

The 10-year-old Cumming resident is one of 38 young authors selected from hundreds of submissions around the world.

For the contest, each child interviews a family member from an older generation and writes an historical story.

Malphurs chose to interview his grandfather about the saddle.

And when Malphurs found out he would be published, he knew who to share the news with first.

"I was so excited," he said. "I immediately went up to call my grandpa."

The family saddle story has been passed down for five generations, but Malphurs said it was his first time hearing the tale.

"My mom taught me about all kinds of interesting stories, and there was one that really intrigued me," he said. "It was the story about my great-great-great-grandpa's saddle."

The one-and-a-half page story details how Malphurs' ancestor took the saddle to a Missouri rodeo in the late 1800s to ride Old Mac, a horse that had never been broken.

He worked out a deal to take the horse back across the Mississippi River to his home in Illinois, where he forged a special relationship with Old Mac, something no one else had been able to do.

The old saddle has stayed with the family through the years. Even after being sold at an auction, it worked its way back through the generations.

That same saddle has now helped Malphurs, who is home schooled, get his entry published in the anthology.

"It was nice to see a story that was based on one object," said co-publisher Fran Hamilton. "The life was really tied up with this saddle."



Andrew Malphurs looks at the saddle he wrote about in "Grandpa's Saddle" Friday morning at his home in north Forsyth. Malphurs' story will be published in the fifth volume of "Grannie Annie," a collection of stories children write about family history.

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Hamilton said the judges look for unique angles or something memorable when selecting stories for the collection, which will be released in May.

The children's stories will appear online in April.

The anthology, in its fifth year and volume, is published in memory of the real Grannie Annie, who worked passionately to save family stories, Hamilton said.

For Malphurs, the story and contest have brought him closer to his family's past.

Getting published also has brought him closer to his future, meeting a New Year's resolution to get published this year.

His mother, Susan, said the family thought the process of getting published might take a while.

They found the contest in "The Old Schoolhouse," a home-schooling magazine, and Malphurs spent about two weeks getting his entry ready.

He'd never ridden a horse, only a pony, but the story of his grandfather fit right in with the adventure stories he often makes up with his younger brother.

Someday, he may be able to live the adventure of taking a horse across the Mississippi River, his favorite part of the story.

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