

This Mom's Memories

Getting your stories

This series of questions was sent by Sue Cornelius Johnson of Freeport, IL. Here is her initial message and, oh, what memories she turned loose!

"Ok family, I am getting all the records loaded into this old computer, trying to prepare this information into a family history CD that can be burned to share with all of you, so now it is time to add some flair. I need your stories and memories to make this a document so fascinating that future generations will enjoy this too. Everyone in this family has a great story, so please get your entire family stories. If you need more forms, please copy more and print them off or ask me for more copies. Please ask each person in your family to do a questionnaire. I know this is rather personal stuff, just fill out the info you want to and add if you have more!

OK I know there are a lot of questions---most of these are just to get your brain warmed up and thinking. Just fill out the ones you want or type up some notes of your own. Thanks again.....I can't wait to get these into the family memories".....suz

By the way, this picture is of Suz:



Hang on to your hats...here we go!

This is simply a saga of a mother's memories. Enjoy...and I hope they spark a memory or two of your own.

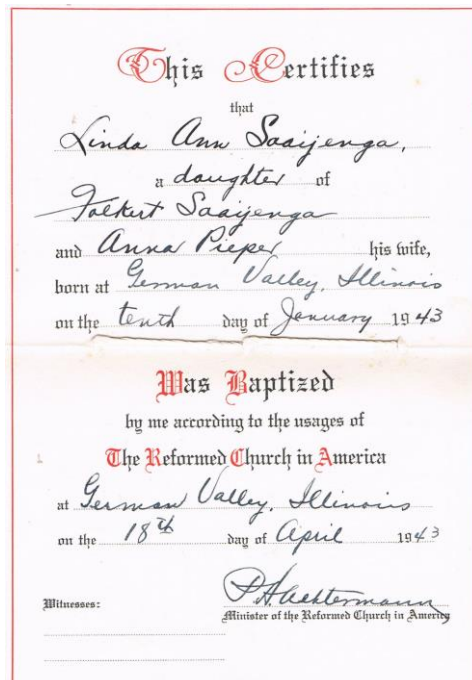
This Mom's Memories

BEING YOUNG

What is your full name? Linda Ann Saaijenga (Faist for almost 41 years) Moseley

Were you named after anyone special? Not as far as I know. In 2000 when I moved to VA, I discovered that an awful lot of mammas here chose the name of Linda for their daughters. At one point, there were 5 Lindas within 20 feet of me at a workplace. I started going by Lin and it has worked out well.

Were there any unusual circumstances surrounding your birth, baptism? Nothing special other than the fact that I was allowed to attend.



Where was your first home? My birthplace and first home was on a farm on Edwardsville Road, northeast of German Valley, Illinois.

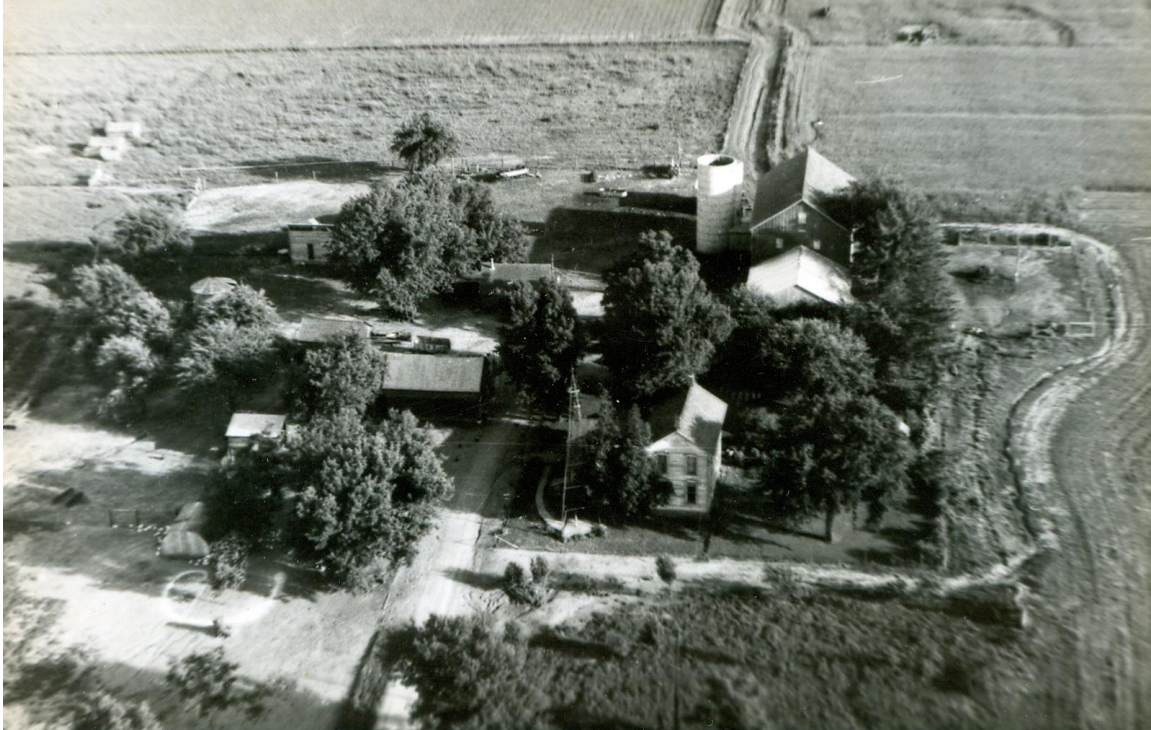
That's Dad in 1978. Would you just look at all those flowers?



The picture below is of my mom in 1941. She sent copies "back home" to Nebraska to show her family her new home. The chickens still had the run of the place so Mom's supply of flowers had not kicked in gear yet.



The picture below was taken in about 1950: You are looking toward the south.



Did you like your house? What was so special about it? I think the thing I liked best about my childhood home was the feeling of safety and love that prevailed there.



I always thought it was a huge house. During the early '90's, after the property had been sold out of the family, Larry and I stopped there one evening. The door was unlocked so we walked in and were surprised to find bales of hay all over the house. The purpose of the hay suddenly struck me. The local fire department was going to use the house as a practice area. The house was going to be burned to make way for a double-wide that was being moved to the property from a mile south. It made my stomach sick to think about it. Well I remember the story my dad

often told of waking up one night out of a dream. In his dream all the neighbors were walking by his, Mom's and my caskets, remarking about how awful it was that carbon monoxide killed all of us. Dad woke up with a start and realized that the chimney to the heat stove had plugged and the house was blue with smoke. All three of us got out OK but it really shook up Dad and Mom. They were super careful after that about smoke and fire. Remembering this, it was terrible to know that the house would be purposely burned. The new owners invited me to come the evening the fire department chose to burn the house but I just could not bring myself to do it. About a week after it was burned, I stopped there and was amazed to see what a small basement was only left. Actually the basement was only under the very original section of the house. Through the years several additions were added but none of these had a basement. My great-grandparents settled on the land in the early 1800's. The first house burned. The original section of my birthplace was built in 1899, the rest added later.



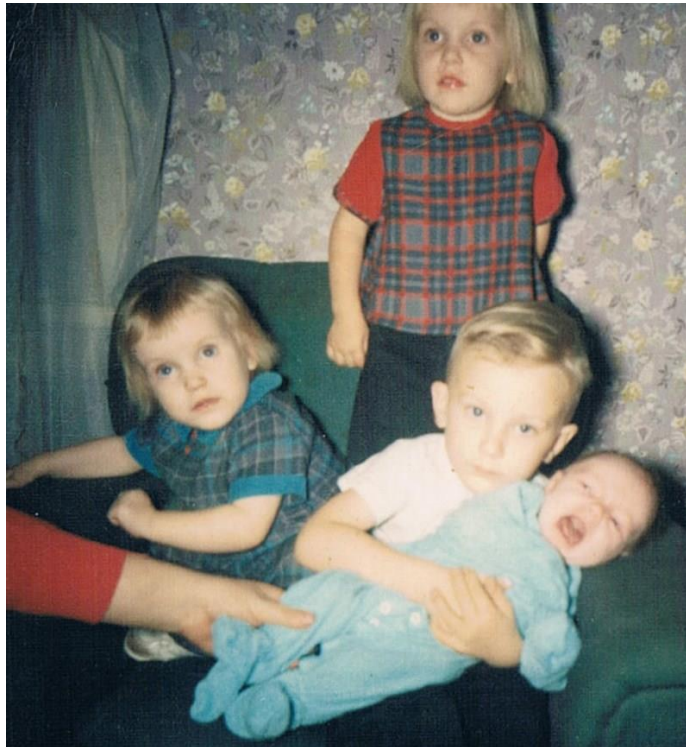
There was an attic above the original section (the part that was used as the kitchen during my childhood).



I remember when my folks cleaned out that attic. Dad backed the hayrack along the side of the house and they tossed out everything, then burned it. I was a small kid at the time but remember seeing old baby cribs, beds, and baby carriages. I bet that “old junk” would be priceless today.

Did you like your room? Did you have your own room or did you have to share? What was it decorated like?

My first recollection of a bedroom was my crib in my parents' bedroom. Then they put a single bed in its place for a few years. The next plan was to partition off half of the very long dining room to make a room of my own. Oh, it was great stuff to have my very own room! My folks moved the single bed in there. (Lori slept in the bed for many years as she was growing up until she bought her own waterbed during her high school years. It now is in the studio at Randy and Monica's home in Janesville, WI). Mom bought a chest of drawers and a desk-type vanity from Montgomery Ward. It was unfinished so she varnished it to match the bed. (Lori also used that furniture until she left Florence Road. Those two dressers are now here in Lynchburg. I just can't bear to part with them.) When I was a sophomore at Forreston, a Home-Ec project was to redecorate my room. We papered it with lavender paper with tiny yellow roses and white daisies. The curtains were white lace-like plastic. *The picture below shows Lori, Cindy and Larry (holding a squalling Sandi) in that room in 1965. Wasn't that lavender paper gorgeous?*



By that time my Gramma Pieper also had a single bed in that room so both beds sported bright yellow chenille bedspreads and there were matching yellow throw rugs beside each bed. During my second year in high school I moved upstairs so Gramma could have the room downstairs by herself. Grammas and teenagers do not mesh well when it comes to clothing choices for school, etc. The move upstairs was much needed for family harmony. This upstairs room was about 4 times larger than I was used to and I LOVED IT! There was a built-in closet and I could hang my clothes as I wanted. One fall day my folks and Fan and Dick Cornelius went to a furniture auction near Rockford and my folks bought me a gray bed and long dresser with mirror. Oh, I thought it was the grandest thing ever!

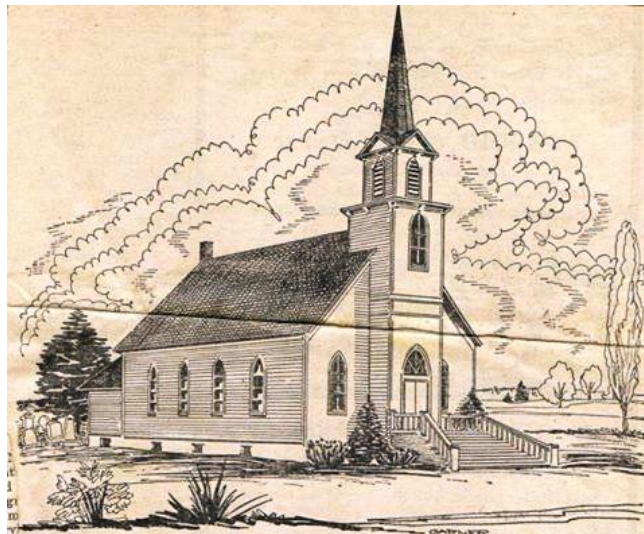


(Eventually the bed stayed at the farm on Florence Road but the dresser was moved, first to my beautiful duplex on Hardin Ave. in Freeport, then to Virginia. Just this summer it was replaced by a new bedroom suite. The dresser is now near Forest, VA. It still has a lot of wear left. See my story about "Treasures and Dreams".) My upstairs bedroom had windows on three sides. From the east window I could spot the school bus coming a mile away and I would barrel thru the kitchen with my coat on. (Gramma never had time to critique my choice of apparel that way). From the north window I could see several miles and used to watch trains pass on a distant track. The west window gave me a good view of our garden. It was a room of peace. It was also a room of cold during the Midwest winters. The only source of heat was the stovepipe which ran through the floor to the chimney. An electric blanket made things cozy overnight but that room was massive nipper in the mornings. I used to carefully fold my underwear and tuck it under a pillow overnight. The next morning I simply dressed in bed. Because there were windows on three sides, there usually was a good breeze during summer.

What was your neighborhood like? We lived on a farm so neighbors were always at least a half mile away. The Buttels lived east of us and sometimes, when my folks went to Freeport while I was in the very early years of grade school, I stayed at their house until my folks came home. Also, east of us lived the Stratmanns. They were the parents of four daughters; one was Harriet Gerloff. This is Jennie Stratmann:



The Holland Church was to our west.



Did you have a big yard? My parents owned an 80 acre farm so I had a lot of land to roam. The actual area that was mowed was not too much but my dogs and I ranged out all over the place. Before the blacktop road was built there was a hedge along the old gravel road to the west of the buildings.



Very early in the spring the sun melted the snow first on the south side of that hedge so my dogs and I spent a good bit of time there. I even had some toy dishes there and played house

sometimes. In the summer there were wild black raspberries among the trees and I ate my fill of those treats. Wild asparagus also grew there and I got into big trouble with my mom once when I showed a man who stopped to talk to me where he could find the asparagus too. He came every day or so and got the asparagus before Mom did. Mom loved flowers and had flower beds all over. The house yard fence was lined with flowers, as were all the sidewalks, along the house foundation, around any tree, and wherever Mom could plant something.



Even the outhouse was surrounded by flowers. After I left home Dad took over the mowing (and bought a RIDER MOWER instead of the walk-behind one I had to use).



Each time Dad did the lawns, he had “problems” making it turn short enough to miss some of the flowers in beds spread all over the yard. Eventually, there were not nearly so many flower beds and his job of mowing was much simpler.

What kind of vehicle do you first remember? The first car I remember was the '38 Buick. It was dark gray. Note all the mud on that baby. Blacktopped roads were rare out in the country in those days.



Once a salesman came and showed Dad how great his product would work at restoring the shine to that car. The man polished just the gas cap. Mom decided that the price was too steep for the product so, from then on, that car had a shiny gas cap and the rest was dull.

In 1953 the old Buick shifted its last gear and died right smack in a busy intersection in Freeport. I remember being so angry when people honked at us. Dad and Mom went to the local Lincoln/Mercury dealer and ordered a wonderful new Mercury. Problem was that the Merc would not be delivered for a month. Dad bought an old beater for less than a hundred dollars so we could have transportation until the new beauty arrived. Now that beater was something special! When we wanted to go to Freeport (about 15 miles from home), the last job before leaving was to fill that car with gas, oil, and water. By the time we got to the east edge of Freeport, the gauges were on E and the thing was steaming. Last stop on our way home was at the same gas station to “load ‘er up” for the dash home.

Oh, that new Merc was a prize possession. After I got my license, Dad sometimes left me drive it to Forreston to school functions or to see friends (My friends called it "The Bomb".). He never knew about the drag race my friend Elaine and I got into with some guys from Adeline with their souped-up hotrod. We took off up Route 72-----Elaine and I in the right lane and the guys in the left lane----over hills too--- until we reached the east edge of Forreston. Dad’s Merc left them in the dust and they never challenged us again. In looking back, that was probably one of the

dumbest things I ever did----and I did plenty of dumb things when I was a teenager! That's Elaine below:



Did anybody outside your parents or siblings live with you? When my Grandpa Pieper died in 1941, Gramma decided to leave the Nebraska farm and buy a home in town. First, though, she wanted to spend a few weeks with each of her five children.



After 1968 Gramma finally went to a nursing home, having spent all the years in between shuttling from one household to another.

She got into too many disagreements at the four Nebraska houses so she spent most of the time at our home. There were lots of problems and hard feelings during those years. In looking back, I think Gramma meant well but she just never learned to cut the apron strings and give up absolute control of her children. Grammas need homes of their own so cousins get along better and tales are not carried from family to family.



Who was your favorite person in the household? Why, my parents, of course!

Did you have any pets? Aside from the usual farm-variety cats, there were numerous dogs during my childhood. When I was born my folks had a brown boxer named Zippy. Zippy was my buddy and my protector. My parents used to tell the story that, when I was a baby and company arrived, Zip promptly lay down on the feet of anyone who held me. If I was passed on to somebody else, Zip moved to their feet. On the rare occasion that my mom felt a need to spank me for some “imagined” misdeed, she always had to do it with me in the house and Zippy outside or she would encounter trouble with Zippy. She rarely worried about me as long as Zip was along.





We often got into trouble because we had a habit of hunting for mice under the chicken house. Zip dug and I tore boards off the building...not a good plan to Mom's way of thinking. She called us "The Wrecking Crew". Eventually Zippy left my life.

One cold Thanksgiving our family was at a dinner at Gerloff's and they had PUPPIES! I remember coming home in the dark in the backseat of the '38 Buick with Smokey snuggled under my coat. It was too cold for a little puppy to stay outside so Mom set up a box in the kitchen for Smokey. When he chewed it to shreds one day, his household pet days were over and he got moved into the big doghouse just outside the kitchen door.

SUNDAY, JANUARY 16

got the cows pretty well trained to go in their places
our puppy Smokey is growing and is very naughty I didn't get him on Thanksgiving day from Aunt Gerloff's 1 mo. old.

SATURDAY, JANUARY 29

this morning the wind blew thru the trees
making chimes out of them at 10
high lines are breaking power off this am
for 1 hr this P.M. since 3 to 8

that smoky is a nut he sure acts
silly over any thing. wanted a piece of apple
to eat because Fokul was eating one too



After Smokey left us we got Mike. A couple of years later, my boy-dog Mike did a strange thing. HE had puppies. All except two "disappeared" and I had a great time with those 2 puppies until they had to find new homes.

SATURDAY - AUGUST 14

Canned cherries pickles yellow
beans peaches 38 qts in all
Harold + Odell Gerloff come for
the puppies get they were so cute
hope they have a good home



In the mean time, Mike paid a visit to the vet and never had puppies again. The dog's name was changed to Mikela. Mom worked with Mikela and had her well trained. See Mom's 1954 diary entry:

WEDNESDAY - MAY 26

I'm trying to train our border
collie Mikla Jane she is my
man Friday she loves to do the
chicken feeding where she taste each
feeder full she can catch any hen
I want her too she is pretty good
on the cows for me



Other family dogs were Pat and Spot, rat terriers. Pat and I played Hide and Seek while my folks were outside doing evening chores. I tossed a coat hanger into the dark living room and ran to hide while Pat searched for the hanger. Then he came to search for me. One night it took him longer than usual to find that hanger so I turned on the living room light. Oh, Oh! I found the hanger jammed through the window shade and it made a big hole. That was the end our Hide and Seek games. Oh, and one of the farm cats was named Chesela. She was jet black and used to stand on her hind legs on the cement walkway behind the cows at milking time and catch streams of milk that Dad shot across the gutter in her direction. Only two cats ever got into the house. One was Penny, the mitten kitty. Penny had seven toes on each front paw. She knew that an open refrigerator door meant milk and she came on the run every time she heard the familiar creak of the door. Once she got her tail caught as the door was pushed shut and got her tail broken. From then on, she had a very noticeable kink in her tail. The other kitty had pure white long fur and was named Crisco.



Did you have any nicknames for anybody? Nope

Do you have a nickname? My dad used to call me Shikinpoop. Wasn't that special? My uncle Harry Suess called me Candy Bar because he said I was half sweet and half nuts. When he passed away I sent a bouquet of flowers with a candy bar attached and no name card. His daughter, Sylvia, immediately remembered and knew the origin of the flowers. Now-a-days I am sometimes called Shugah.

Who was the best cook in the family? The best cook, hands down, was my mom. She always had a huge, picturesque garden and oodles of fruit trees. For a number of years she raised and sold strawberries too. Our basement shelves were lined with home-canned goods, half a dozen varieties of pickles, relishes, tomatoes, pears, peaches, green beans, jellies, jams, canned meats, soup mix, you name it. Then she got a large chest type freezer and really branched out. I remember her going to schools sponsored by the local dealer (Louis Miller) in German Valley and learned how to freeze produce. That freezer was jammed with veggies, meat, and baked goods. As soon as unexpected company came on the place, she headed for that freezer and started digging out the fixings for a meal. Nobody ever went home hungry. Wait, only once do I remember her not being the "Hostess with the Mostest". She used to sell eggs to customers and had a refrigerator stocked with eggs in the barn. One couple caught on that if they came to the house and timed their visit right, they would get a nice meal every Saturday noon. Mom finally got tired of that plan and warned Dad to have some crackers stashed somewhere the next Saturday. When the people came, Mom sat, pleasantly visiting and Dad fidgeted. Finally, about 5:00, they went home and Mom hurried to get a meal ready. The next week they came later in the afternoon for their eggs....never again at noon. Three weeks before Mom died she was still cooking, rolling from the cupboards to her stove in her wheelchair. *That's Mom and Dad in 1987:*

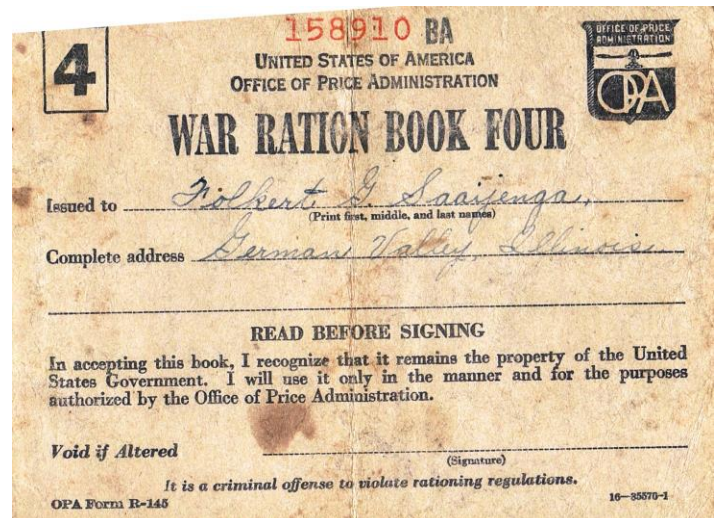
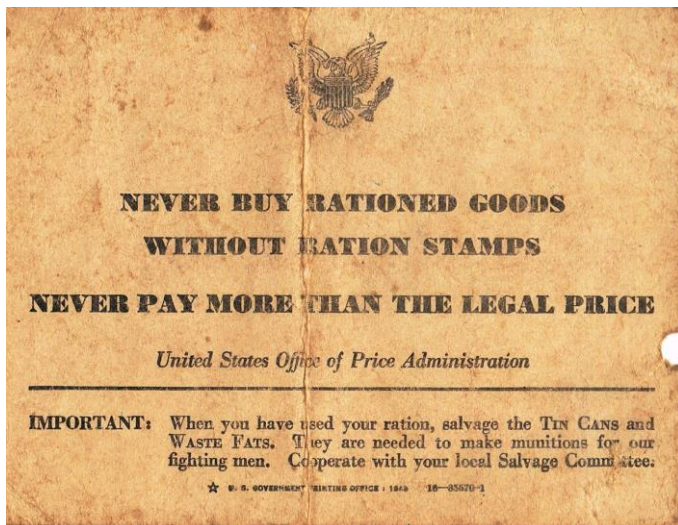


Did your Mother tell stories of when she was growing up? Your Father? I can remember sitting beside my parents' bed, listening to them telling about their childhoods and about growing up. I often fell asleep there. How I wish I'd had a tape recorder. They both were young adults during the depression and Mom lived in the "dust bowl" days in Nebraska. She told of sawing down trees along the creek so the cattle could eat the green leaves. See my story "The 30s in Nebraska" for more on this subject.

1936 real truth.

The first rain we had was Aug 22 and then it came with wind hail and dust
 We grew no corn very little hay no garden except
 beets just a few bush. of oats but an average wheat
 crop no fruit of any kind the apples that were on the
 trees you could cook all day
 corn \$1.25 wheat \$1.34 oats .65 we are feeding syrup to
 the hogs.

During WWII many things were rationed so that the troops overseas could have what they needed. Citizens were given ration books with specific numbers of stamps which were used to buy things like gasoline, tires, sugar, etc. Ladies who used sugar for canning had to get special permission to buy more sugar and farmers and truckers needed special stamps to buy extra tires. There is NO WAY people of today would tolerate such a plan.



DING WITH 27 SUGAR THIS YEAR BECAUSE—

Applicant will print or type below his full name and complete mailing address

serial no. 158911

NAME MRS. FOLKERT SAAIJENCA

ADDRESS _____
(Number) (Street, R. F. D., or Gen. Delivery)

CITY, POSTAL ZONE, STATE GERMAN VALLEY 14

READ BEFORE USING 5-POUND HOME CANNING SUGAR COUPONS

Before the attached coupons are used for the purchase of sugar for home canning, you or any member of your "family unit" listed on the application must sign each home canning coupon (OPA Form R-342). The person signing must enter the serial number of his War Ration Book Four thereon.

For the purpose of identification, it will be necessary for the signer to take his War Ration Book Four with him when he purchases the sugar.

These coupons are not transferable.

WE MUST GET ALONG WITH LESS SUGAR THIS YEAR BECAUSE—

1. Military needs are high. Each soldier actually consumes twice as much sugar a year as the average civilian now receives.
2. Ships which otherwise might be bringing sugar into the United States are hauling supplies to the battle fronts.
3. Manpower is scarce at sugar refineries and shipping ports.
4. Beet sugar production last year was 500,000 tons short, making the stock of sugar smaller for this year.
5. Last year many people over-applied for canning sugar. We used so much sugar that stocks at the beginning of this year were abnormally low.

DO NOT APPLY FOR MORE SUGAR THAN YOU ACTUALLY NEED FOR HOME CANNING — HELP MAKE OUR WAR SHORT SUGAR SUPPLIES LAST ALL YEAR

No surprise, there was a huge black market for some items. Dad told of buying a 50 pound sack of sugar and being so relieved that the entire sack was actually sugar. A common practice was to fill all but the top few inches of the sack with sand. By the time the "sucker" discovered the switch, the salesman was long gone into the sunset. And the victim certainly couldn't call the police to report that he had been cheated when he bought something on the black market.



Now Jim and I often talk for hours about our childhoods. It amazes me that, despite growing up nearly a thousand miles apart, so many common threads weave through our memories.

Did your parents have a good sense of humor? Dad had a dry sense of humor, which Randy has inherited. I can remember him and Uncle George sharing "cute" jokes when they thought I wasn't listening. Mom loved a good joke and was always ready for a good laugh.

Did your mother have any hobbies? Your father? Mom had an interest in anything that had to do with handcrafts. I remember winter nights when the TV would be running and Mom would be crocheting and Dad would be reading and smoking his pipe.



In 2014 that picture behind Dad hangs in Randy's home near Janesville, WI.

Dad spent a good bit of time out in his shop building windmills and star frames for Christmas lights.

Saturday, March 11, 1972

*Falbert work on the Windmills
he says he has to do other work
pretty soon he has 3 done so far*

Mom loved to sew, had so many African Violets that you often could not see out the windows, liked to try new recipes, and she inhaled her garden.



Below are some of Mom's crafts for sale in 1938 in Nebraska:



Dad loved old tractors and had such pride in the Rumeley Do-All that he restored and drove in parades at the threshing show.



That tractor was sold to my uncle in Nebraska.

Were your parents involved in church, music, community, politics? No public politics for my folks but they certainly had an interest in politics and talked for hours about candidates and the nasty party that they were not members of. They attended church regularly.

Do you remember any weird clothes worn by your parents, grandparents or others? Not

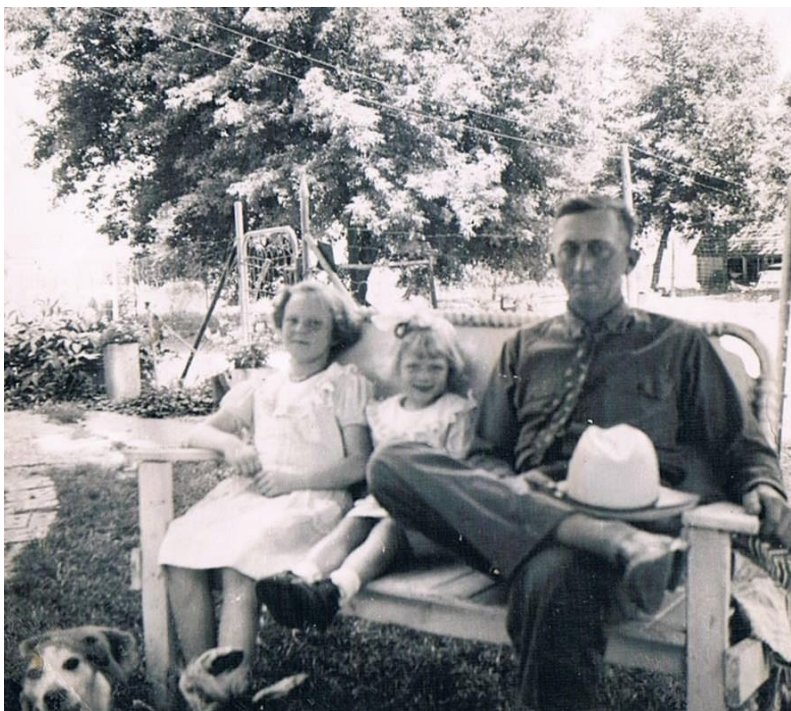
really. They just wore the same clothes as everybody else in the community.

Did you have any siblings? Nope, I always wished for a sibling and I know that I hurt my folks by badgering them about it. In my mind, God simply placed a baby in a family...with no other preparations. I remember praying once and was sure there would be a baby by morning, then was terribly angry when there was no baby. It must have hurt my mom. She had several miscarriages after me and I know they did want more children.

What time did you have to go to bed? I never really had a set bedtime. Mostly I just went to bed when I was tired. My folks' bedtime was right after the 10:00 news. I can remember lying in bed late at night, tuning my little radio to find far off stations.

How did you spend summer vacations? I loved summertime! There was always something nice to do. I remember playing with my dolls outside a lot. When I was in third grade, my cousin, Margaret, stayed during the summer.





We had old blankets strung over the wash line for a tent. Mom and Dad never let us stay outside overnight though. We had that tent full of dolls and toy dishes.



I loved to lay out in the cool grass south of the house and watch the clouds. It was fun to try to pick out animal shapes. There were always baby chicks and ducks and kittens to play with. Childhood was very uncomplicated for me.

Did you have any accidents as a child? Nothing serious, just dumb. I fell out of my hammock once and landed on the dog who promptly bit me.

SATURDAY, JULY 2

Here it's hot again
rain last night
Lenda got bit by Smokey
took her to Dr. had 2 stitches

A few weeks later I fell out of that same hammock and landed on one of the dog's old bones and gouged a hole in my knee. One Sunday afternoon my folks and I had gone to a Mission Fest at church. My folks had to come home to milk the cows and planned to go back for evening services. I begged to keep on my good dress and promised not to get it dirty while they were doing chores. Mom was not a bit happy with the plan but agreed. Don't you just know, I was playing on a large metal gate, gave it a mighty swing, it hit the silo and bounced back against my head, poking a hole in my forehead and blood gushed all over my good dress. Mom was even more unhappy with the plan at that point.

Were you sick often? I wasn't sick very often but did have tonsillitis one summer. The doctor told Mom to get lots of liquids down me. Muskmelons (cantaloupes to most people) were just getting ripe so she shoved them down me. I got so sick of them and it took many years before I could stand the sight of them again.

Now it is time to throw you off center and deviate from this line of questions. I need to tell you a story that has NO connection with me or my family. During the 90's I often called a programming supplier near Indianapolis to order satellite dish programming for customers for Country Communications. I generally spoke with the same people there and one lady, Pat, told me a tender story from her childhood. As a child she lived in a city but spent some time with her grandparents on a farm somewhere in Indiana. Her grandparents rose very early each morning and always ate breakfast before the little girl and her grandpa went outside to do the morning chores. Grandma cooked hard boiled eggs on very cold mornings. Grandpa and Pat slipped a couple of hot eggs in their pockets. Those eggs provided a warm spot to take the chill off cold fingers. When chores were done, Pat and her grandpa climbed up on bales of hay and enjoyed a snack of warm hard boiled eggs. This same grandpa had an old row boat behind the barn. Often he and Pat sat in that boat and pretended to travel around the world as Grandpa narrated all the marvelous sights they saw in their imaginations ---- London, Africa, California. Grandpa was giving Pat geography lessons at the same time he was encouraging her to dream and expand her imagination. Later Pat quit working for the

programming company and I no longer was part of Country Communications so we never spoke again. Her story pulled at my heartstrings and I hope it does the same for you.

What was the first movie you ever saw? I could not tell you any names but every summer German Valley's merchants pooled their money and sponsored free movies one night a week. They were beamed up against Borchers' Store. Everybody brought blankets and popcorn and we all sat on the grassy empty lot to the east of the store. The town was loaded with people. Many of the small towns did the same thing and you could go to movies most nights if you wanted to.

During my childhood the newest invention was the drive-in theater. Once or twice a summer my parents and I went to the show and it was big stuff.

Monday JUNE 19

did do much as it win
some
Went to the Comet Open Air show
at night "cheaper by the dozen"

Parents liked it because they could put their kids in pajamas, bring along a couple of pillows and it did not matter what time the show was over. Their kids were fast asleep by then. Teenagers also liked those outdoor movies. If the windows steamed up, it was OK and nobody could see them necking.

Which are your favorite cartoon characters? My all time favorite would have to be the road runner. I've always enjoyed that little rascal.

Did you have chores to do around the house? When I was growing up, my folks kept me pretty busy. I helped with Mom's garden, dusted the furniture every Saturday, chased the cows home from pastures at chore time, pitched silage down for feeding, and mowed the lawns when I was a teenager. I was always involved in canning and freezing. I never did consider it work or chores. It was just part of living.

How important is religion in your life? Religion is very important to me. God has carried me through some awful as well as some totally awesome times. My first memories of church were

at the little Lutheran church in Freeport. The Corneliuses also went there.



Redeemer Lutheran built a new church and the building is now Holy Cross Greek Orthodox Church.



Gramma Pieper used to dictate which dress I dared wear and I vividly remember her yanking my dress off before we even got home from church because the dress was too “good” to risk getting dirty. I wore just my coat into the house. Later Mom gave some of my outgrown dresses to a

little girl in our school and I remember seeing Marilyn wear my “good” dress to a school picnic. I cried and vowed any kids I ever had would be allowed to wear their pretty clothes. When I was old enough for Sunday School, my folks decided that they could not get chores done early enough to get to Freeport that early so they started attending the Ridott Christian Reformed Church just a half mile west of our farm. I remember walking to Sunday School while my folks finished chores. Later, during my teen years, Uncle George used to take me along to Silver Creek Church. Soon my folks started going there too. I consider that my home church. Later years I belonged to Florence Methodist, Faith Methodist in Freeport, New Covenant (later renamed Crossroads) north of Freeport. Then I moved to VA and attended Timberlake Methodist, now Thomas Road Baptist.

Did you go to nursery school (now called preK)? Are you kidding? They did not even have the term “nursery school” when I was that age.

Where did you go to grade school? High school? College or tech school? My first 4 years were spent at Iler School about 2 miles south east of my home. This building is now the home of Mrs. Hudson. Then the community consolidated and we kids were shifted between one-room schools until the new school was finished. Fifth grade was in the “big” school (now Boomgardens live in that building between the two sections of German Valley.



Sixth grade was spent at Wessel’s School 2 miles north of German Valley. In April of that year

the new school was ready and all the kids were moved in.

High school was spent at Forreston. College was not an option.

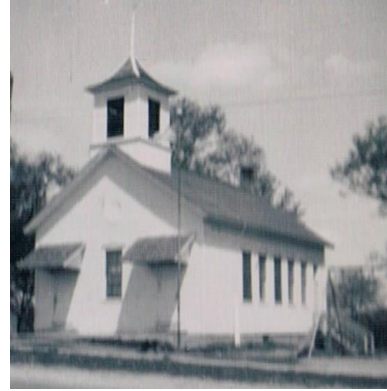


I got married 3 days after high school graduation.

What did your grade school look like? Iler was a big square white wooden building.



It had a basement with a large furnace. During winter months we kids used to bring potatoes and lay them on the furnace. By noon we had a nice baked potato. For more info on this school, see my accompanying story about Iler School days. The school in German Valley was smaller than Iler and had no basement. Actually there were two schools on the property. The first 3 grades were in the smaller one and our fourth, fifth and sixth grades were in the larger.



There was a shed between the two buildings and we kids played some rousing games of Andy-I-Over. At the time Pleasant Prairie Academy was still in operation about a half mile west. During good weather we kids walked there for hot lunches. Wessel's School was a great little brick building. The teacher did not have very good control over the kids and we often wandered up the dead road along side during recess. "Nimbo" rang her little brass bell when it was time to come back in for lessons but we often feigned not hearing her bell and came back when we were good and ready. (See also the accompanying story about Wessel's School.)



Then we moved to the new school on the north edge of German Valley. Oh, it was a gorgeous building and I thought it was the greatest ever...and so big!



(Years later, when my own kids attended there, I was disappointed to find that it really was not as huge as it seemed when I was in seventh and eighth grade.)

What was your favorite teacher's name? My favorite teacher was Mrs. Wilson, the teacher at Iler. I was in awe of her.



Later, when I was in high school, she had built a house in Forreston and I sometimes stayed at her house between school hours and games. Other good teachers were Miss Lois Bruning, Mr. Frey, Vera Ziegler, Mildred Capps, and Jim Hendee.



MILDRED M. CAPPS
Mt. Morris College B.A.
English II and IV, Librarian,
GAA, Junior Play



JAMES E. HENDEE
University of Dubuque, Northern
Illinois State College B.S.
Penn State M. Ed. in Biologi-
cal Sciences.
Biology, Advanced Biology.

What kind of student were you? (Attentive, lazy, industrious, mischievous) I suppose you would say I was studious. I suspect I would have lots more fun if I went to school now. I thought I had to get all A's or my folks would be disappointed in me. I know now that was not true but I was a weird little bird....still am.

Did you ever have to stand up and recite anything? Nothing more than the normal stuff.

Did you ever get in trouble for anything at school? Naah, I was a perfect little kid. During my high school career, we were not supposed to bring squirt guns to school. Do you realize that, if you fill an empty Mennen Baby Magic squeeze bottle with water, you can nail somebody clear across study hall ---- and, if they check your purse, all they find is an innocent bottle of lotion? One of the last days of the year, everybody piled into buses and we went to The Pines (a beautiful park about 30 miles away) for a picnic. Again, we were NOT allowed to carry water pistols along! However, when we arrived at the park, the bus driver pulled out a box of plastic water guns and sold every one of them for a quarter each. He had a corner on the market! I do remember being accused of cheating once. We had a test in Biology and, when I had finished the test, I glanced over to see how my buddy, Reuben, was doing.



We had studied together for the test. Imagine my surprise when I heard, “Eyes on your own paper, Linda!” I told the teacher I was done and was only checking on my friend’s progress. I was told to hand in my paper immediately. I aced that doggone test but Reuben didn’t. Guess I wasn’t cheating after all, huh?

Did you ever play hooky from school? Technically, I did. About once a month my folks went to Freeport for supplies. Sometimes I just skipped school and went along. Rules were much more relaxed those days.

Do you remember any special homework projects? There were the usual stories to write but nothing stands out in my memory.

How did your school celebrate holidays like Christmas or Valentine's Day? During the Iler days, there were “programs” to prepare for at Thanksgiving and Christmas. We learned plays and songs and the parents all came one evening to watch us perform. See accompanying Iler School story for more on this.

What were your favorite toys? It would be a toss-up between my dolls and my jig saw puzzles. I had oodles of dolls. There were Mary, Lois, Elsie, Carol, Nancy, Flossie, and a few more. When Santa still was the man of the hour, each Christmas I arranged my dolls around the Christmas tree and he placed a new doll among the older ones. In the picture below I am holding Lois. Carol and Mary are beside me. The doll clear against the wall was Mom's and Humpty Dumpty was home-made as was the Teddy Bear. The little doll in front of Teddy was Flossie. She spent several days in a barrel of whey and never quite cleaned up again. That etched glass window in the door now is on Cranes Grove Road near Freeport, IL. The miniature tea set on the brick-patterned-crepe-paper-covered, fake fireplace was made of pink plastic and I loved it so much! Most ornaments on the tree were painted gourds and eggs (with the insides blown out). And the lights were those big 7 watt kind. The round rug in front of the slip-covered chair was

crocheted from strips of worn-out clothes. Note the Congoleum rug on the floor and my sensible brown-cotton long stockings (how I hated them but they did keep me warm!).

Of all those dolls, only Mary and Flossie still survive...and maybe not even them. I gave them to Monica but I strongly suspect they met their Waterloo in a storage building in Pearl City when it was inundated with flood water a couple of years ago. My jig saw puzzles were my pride and joy. Mom used to set me up on the kitchen table with them while she and Dad were in the barn doing chores and challenge me how many I could get put together before she came back to the house. Those puzzles were handed down to my kids but they were not as interested in them and managed to lose quite a few of the pieces. The puzzles were stored in a large wooden tote when I lived on Florence Road. They did not make the trip to Hardin Ave. when I moved so I have no idea what happened to them. They probably were burned when Bob cleared out the house for the new owners.

What kind of games did you play in grade school? At Iler, I did not play very many active games due to a rupture. Most of my recess time was spent swinging. At the little school in GV, we played baseball, Andy-I-Over, and all sorts of fun games. At Wessels we spent hours along that dirt road having snow ball fights. One game we also played was "Hog Pile". Out of the blue somebody would yell "HOG PILE" and everybody piled on top of each other. You better hope you were not at the bottom of the heap. At the new grade school, we played baseball and basketball. There was a skating rink just west of the school and when the ice was hard enough we learned to skate. I LOVED it! Don Cornelius loaned me a pair of skates. They were miles too big but worked OK for the skills I possessed. When most of the other kids got tired of skating, Jerry Guth and I used to go out anyway and try to learn to at least stand up better.



We were both lousy.

Did you have imaginary friends? What was their name? What did you do together? Not a one.

Did you collect anything? I had a large napkin collection. Each napkin had noted on it the occasion, date and other info. Included in that collection were also some very old ones that had belonged to my mom when she lived in Nebraska. One was from Sweden from a pen pal. When I left Florence Road, I decided to trash that collection because the huge box had not been opened for years and was very musty.

Did you play sports? The only sports I played in grade school was basketball. I was about 8 inches taller than anybody my age so all I had to do was stand under the basket and catch the ball.

What was your favorite candy? How much did they cost? My favorite was a giant size Hershey bar. They cost all of 25 cents those days and I made one bar last a week. I did enjoy chocolate drops until the day I ate too many and got violently ill....haven't eaten one since.

Which is your favorite season of the year? I've always loved fall the best. As an adult, fall was the season when you finally got to harvest the crops. All spring and summer was spent working on those crops and a great deal of money was invested in them. In the fall you could finally get some return from your investment. In the fall even the air takes on a sense of urgency as people unconsciously gather for the coming winter. And I absolutely LOVE the fall colors. The first date Jim and I had was to look at the fall colors in the mountains.



Who are/were your favorite idols? (Movie stars, musicians, sports figures, etc) I've never understood people who go gah-gah over some dumb actor or singer. I just keep thinking that they need to wipe their noses too when they have colds and that takes away all of their mystique.

Do/did you like to read? I LOVE to read. When I was a kid, there were only a couple of

books in our home....a Bible, a dictionary, and Alice in Wonderland (which I never read because I thought it was stupid after the first couple of pages). I did, however, read just about every book in the school libraries and the church libraries. As an adult I have quite a collection, even after giving away scads of books when I left Freeport. In fact, Jim and I have enough books between us that we had a twelve foot floor to ceiling bookcase/cabinet built and dedicated one bedroom to being a library.



And all my cookbooks did not fit on those shelves so there are a good many books still on shelves downstairs.

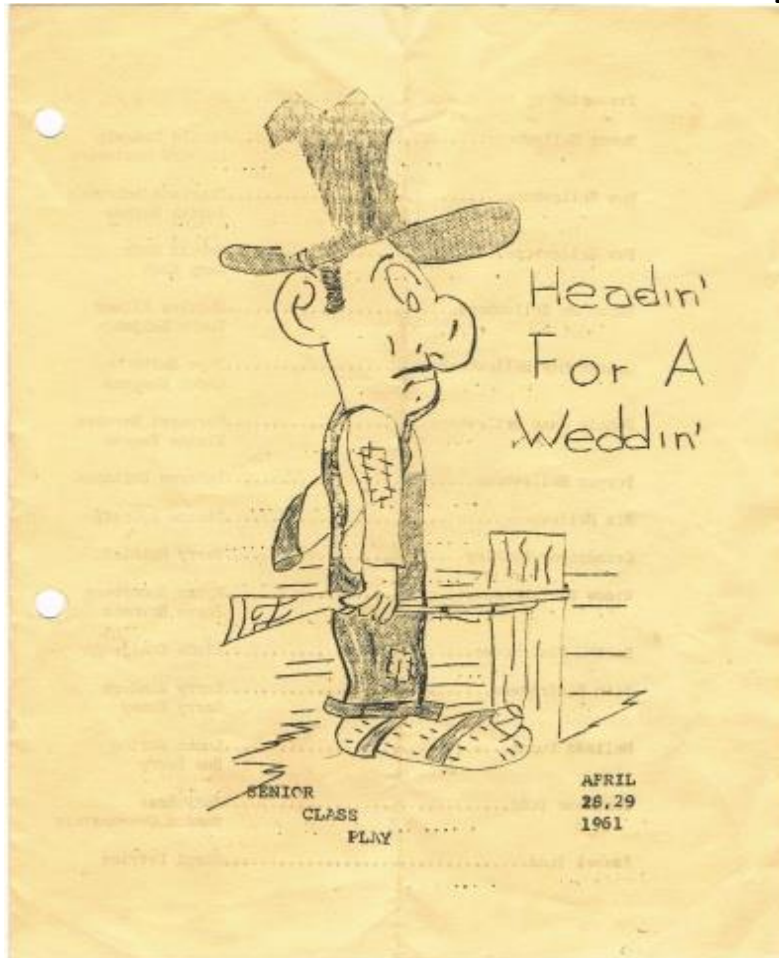
What high school did you go to? Was it scary the first day there? High school was at Forreston, IL. What was there to fear about a school?

Do you remember any of the counselors or principals? John I. Masterson was the head-honcho. He was strict but fair and I respected him.



JOHN I. MASTERSON
Mt. Morris College B.A.; North-
western M.A.

Were you in any plays? Just one --- the senior play. It was a blast. It was about a hillbilly family and was entitled "Headin' For a Weddin". I was Bertha Halloway.



What was your favorite class? There were many favorites. Even though they were difficult, I learned so much from them. The one that I use most today is Latin. So many English words are

derived from Latin and, if you remember your Latin vocabulary, you can generally figure out the meaning to any word you find. Speech class was agony, but I learned to stand up in front of people and not be quite so self-conscious. Mrs. Capps' Senior English was OK for the most part but the highlight was when she read Shakespeare out loud to the class. When I tried to read it, it was just a bunch of gobbledeegook, but, when she read it, the whole mess made sense and was actually pretty interesting. I took chemistry one day. That was enough. I hated the smell of the room and disliked the person assigned as my partner so I opted out of it and signed up for Senior English instead.

Did you ever go on a hayride? There were the usual grade school and youth group hayrides, but the best hayride ever was in 1998 when neighbors across the road from the farm on Florence Road had a Fourth of July party and hayride. We piled on that wagon and did a tour of the area. It just seemed so nice. Then we came back to their home and all sat out north of their buildings to watch the fireworks. Twenty seven days later I was no longer a resident of Florence Road, but I will always remember the hayride with good neighbors.

Who was your best friend? In sixth grade my best friend was Bonita Greve (Viet's aunt).



We used to sit on an abandoned road grader in the school yard and talk all recess. During my high school years I was part of "The Gang", a group of 7 or 8 girls. We had the BEST slumber

parties and went to games together. To this day we are still in touch. Diane Buss Van Raden was my buddy during my freshman year but she moved to Shannon.

She did not get involved in many of our parties after that but the rest of us kept things humming. The group consisted of Carol Meyer Midthum, Sandy Gravenstein Rogers, Elaine Heeren Hayunga, Judy Walker DeVries, Lyla Schoenhardt Thomas, and Betty Kitzmiller Remmers. *Below back: Lin, Elaine, Sandy. Front: Lyla, Carol Jean and Betty at Betty's house in about 1990.*



My best friend from church was Shirley Dieken Jordan.



In later years I started corresponding with Faye Smith Bailey, Denise DeGraff Lane and Luann Moring Walton. I wish we had been closer in high school.



Did you have a high school sweetheart? You ask too many questions. There were a few nice guys there.

Did you feel you were shy, outgoing, indecisive, etc? I was WAY too serious and concerned about what other people would think of me. I finally relaxed during my senior year and enjoyed that year. My class rank dropped from one to three and that was just fine with me.

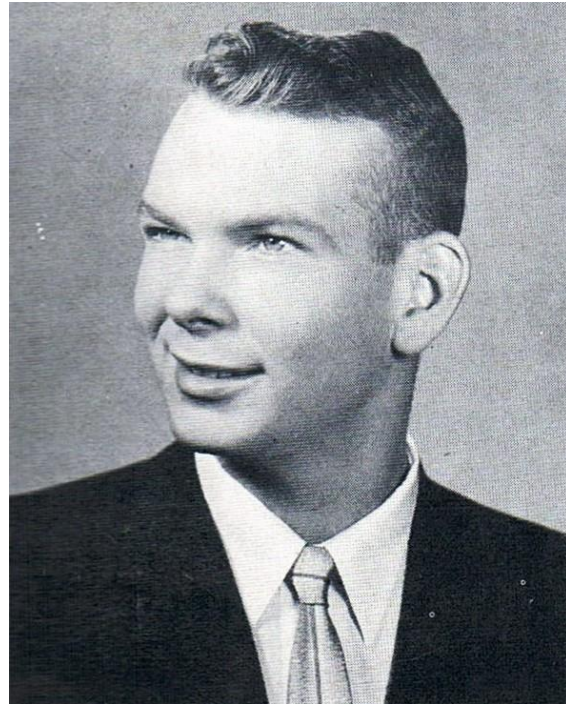
What was your first car? That would be Dad's green '53 Merc. It was affectionately known as "The Bomb" and Dad would have slept even less if he had known the scrapes I came near with that vehicle.

Did you take drivers training in high school? Everybody took Drivers" Ed during their Soph. or Junior Year. Rusty Egan was the instructor.



WILLIAM F. EGAN
Northern Illinois University B.S.
Ed., M.S. Ed.
Driver Ed., Industrial Arts, As-
sistant Coach, Class Adviser.

Bob Finch and Wayne Hayunga were in my driving group. Wayne drove while he and Rusty talked sports most sessions while Bob and I had to sit quietly in the back seat.



My best learning experiences came under my mom's watchful eye. But I passed the test anyway and have been a menace on the road ever since. Mom's driving is a whole 'nuther story. When I was in Iler School, my parents and Buttels took turns taking us kids to school. Mom decided she could take over the duties when it was our turn so she went to Freeport to get her license. At the time the license facility was in the courthouse downtown. She did fine on the written test but looked out the window at all the traffic on Stephenson Street and convinced the examiner that she would never drive anywhere but between home and the school and should not need to take a driving test in all that traffic. He agreed.

Driver No. 3713011

T. I. P. No. _____

Chauffeur No. _____

Name Anna Javizena

Street Address 610 Theodora J. Caldes

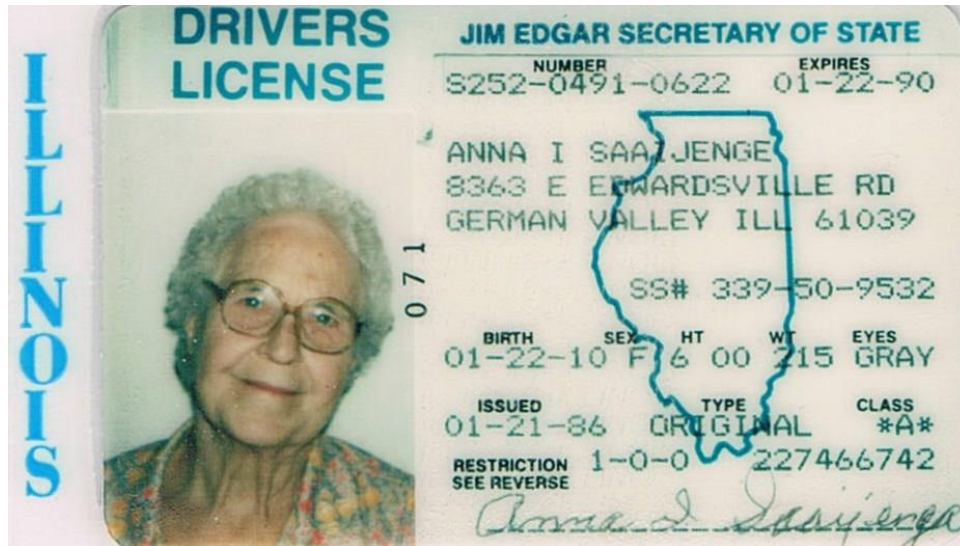
City or Town 622 S. Liberty Ave. Freeport, ILLINOIS

As provided by section 29b. of the Illinois Motor Vehicle Law, this permit will authorize the individual whose name is mentioned above to operate a motor vehicle on the highways of Illinois until 4/29/57

This permit must be kept in the operator's immediate possession at all times while operating a motor vehicle.

Please return this card to the Springfield office of the Secretary of State when your driver's license is received.

EDWARD J. BARRETT,
Secretary of State



She never took a driving test after that and, in her later years, drove all over Illinois and even drove to Nebraska twice. See her 1979 diary entry:

*Sept 12 Went to Nebraska left 7.15
got to almas at 6. We stayed
at Omaha for 1/2 hr. It rained
the last 75 miles but stopped
before we got there I drove most
of the way.*

Did you graduate from high school? I sure did...and I have the pictures to prove it.



PARENT'S HOST GRADUATES

Mr. and Mrs. Folkert Saaijenga entertained the following guests after the Forreston high school graduation exercises May 30, of which their daughter Linda was a member.

The serving table was centered with lavender flowers and the class flower white roses and a miniature doll dressed in a white cap and gown standing on stepping stones representing each event of her life, such as her date of birth, beginning of school, 8th grade graduation, high school graduation and her wedding date. Guests were Mr. and Mrs. Merlyn Greenfield and sons of Forreston; Mr. and Mrs. Clem Faist and Bob of Freeport; Mrs. James Dieken and Shirley of Pecatonica; Mr. and Mrs. Dick Cornelius and Mr. and Mrs. Alfred Kruse.

What did you do after high school? Got married three days later and eventually had 5 kids. I think that qualifies as higher education.

How did you meet your spouse? Which one? I met Bob at a basketball game. Jim and I met at our workplace.

MARRIAGE

Almost nobody gets married with the idea that it will not work out. I knew things were not right at my first wedding but, due to some circumstances that I will not make public here, I felt that my options were severely limited. (and, NO, it was not a have-to situation.) I hoped that, with time, everything would be OK. Thru the years it did not get better and I prayed that God would perform a miracle, something would change, and we could grow old in harmony. Very, very early one July day in 1998 it became quite evident that there would be no change and I made the painful decision to agree to leave the farm where I had lived since 1967. Going thru with that decision is the hardest thing I've ever faced. I believe marriage is for keeps. I had to admit to the world and the people around me that I had failed. I was also pretty ticked at God for not performing a miracle when I needed it most. In time I realized that God had, indeed, performed the miracle of peace and safety for me. I had no clue that He had other plans for me and that eventually He would put Jim in my life. Someone once said to be careful what you pray for. I guess this whole thing would fall into that category. I am SO blessed.

Were your children's births planned or by accident? No child is an accident.

How did you feel about becoming a parent? I don't think I had any feelings one way or the other about it. It seemed the natural progression of life.

Did you take childbirth or parenting classes? Nope. I just "winged it".

What was it like to care for a newborn, your first baby? I had never even held an infant until I held Larry. Frankly, I was afraid I would break him. I had no idea how to change a diaper. I remember calling a nurse in the middle of the night to ask her if I dared give him another ounce of formula when he had finished his bottle and was still hungry. I was afraid I would break his stomach or something.



How did it change your life? It gave my life purpose.

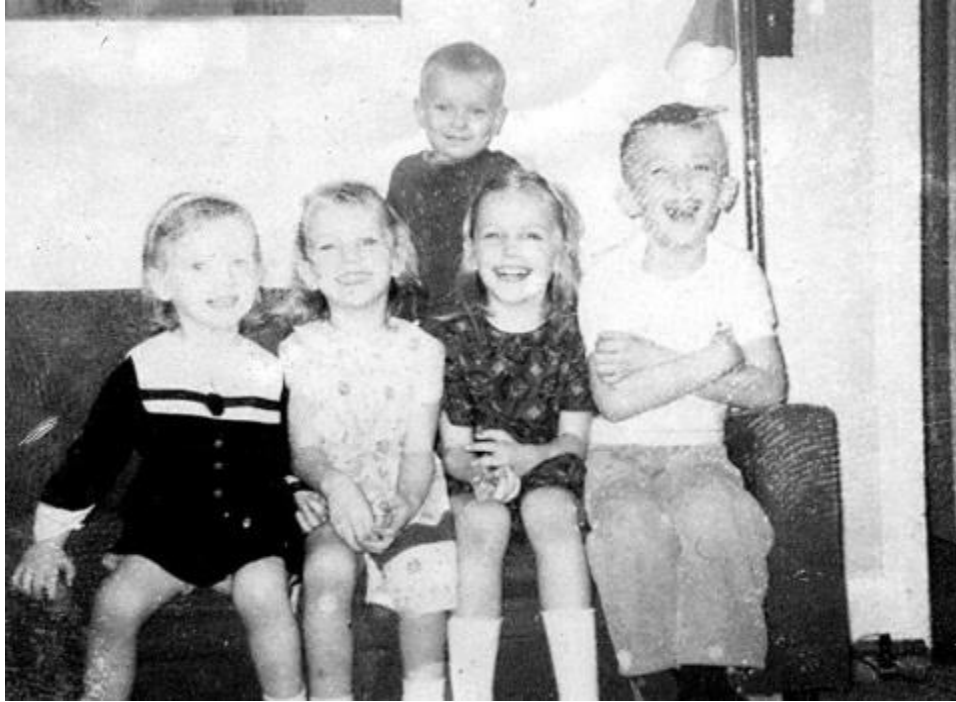
What is the greatest part of being a parent? The greatest part is to live long enough to see your children grown with families of their own and know that you have a legacy that will continue long after you are gone.

Below L to R: Randy, Sandi, Cindy, Lori and Larry in 2013.



What is the greatest challenge? The greatest challenge is to quit being Mommy and just be Mom who lives her own life.

If more than one child, how did each child change the family? More noise, more fun!



How do they relate to each other? They have a network among them. I best tell each one any news or, within a short time, I will get a call from someone complaining why they were not left in on the news.

How are they similar? They all have a drive for success and know the value of hard work to achieve that success.

How are they different? They just are so different from each other. It amazes me that 5 kids who are from the same gene pool and grew up in the same home can be so different.



Were you a strict or permissive parent? I was strict about the things that were important but I chose my battles. If it was not world shaking or character breaking, I left them learn from their actions. In the grand scheme of things, so what if their room was not perfect every day? Each had their own room so it was up to them to clean it up or trip over things. I only asked that they close the door so nothing slimy slithered out into the hall. They all do a better job of keeping house than I do now.

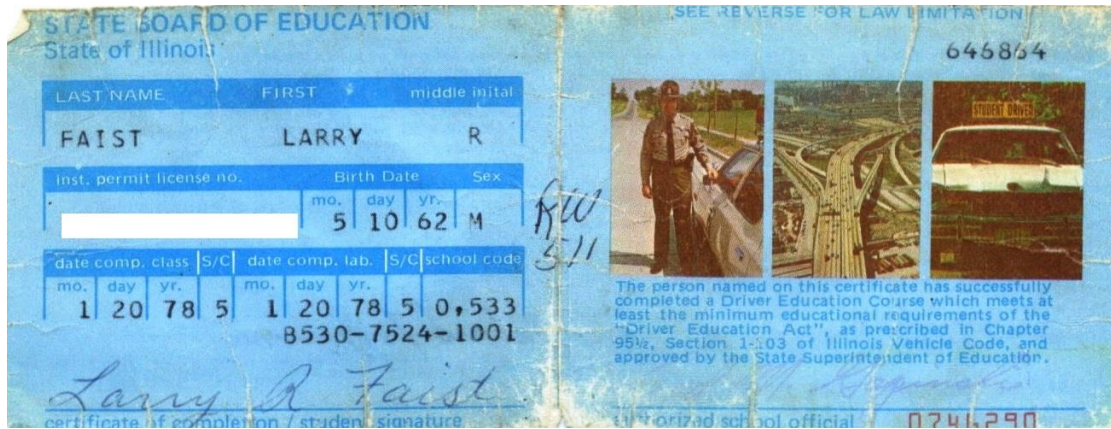
What was/is going on in the world that affects your parenting? Every generation of parents complains about outside influence. It is a factor but I am so glad I don't have to raise kids in today's society.

Did your parents or in-laws play a part in your children's lives? My kids were fortunate to have both sets of grandparents as a huge part of their lives. Their 4 grandparents lived within 10 miles of them and my kids saw them often.



What were your favorite things to do together as a family? I think there were many things. At least, I hope my kids enjoyed them. Sunday dinner (at noon on the farm) was when everybody came to the meal table in one shift. The table was set with pretty dishes and a fancy dessert. Not so many years ago I was honored when Lori shared that she had bought some pretty glass dessert dishes for her boys because she remembered that sort of thing as a child and wanted her boys to have the same thing. Another good time was sweet corn season. I generally prepared a minimum of 10 (Yup, you read that right...10) ears of corn for each kid and I piled the bounty on a big gray tray in the center of the table. I buttered each ear as each kid was ready for another one to forestall arguments over which ear was the juiciest and biggest. I told them, "This is a nice one," and they were happy until they realized that I said the same thing about each ear on the tray.

Did you have fears your children started driving? Oh, my, yes! When they were toddlers I once complained to my Aunt Rose about the amount of work I had and the uproar in the house with 5 little kids ripping up the place every day. Aunt Rose (who had 7 kids) wisely advised me to enjoy the time when my kids were little and I could check each one in their beds and know they were safe instead of lying awake, waiting for each one to return home. Each one took Drivers' Ed in high school and, during their learning permit days, I always had a volunteer to "take" me grocery shopping. As soon as that volunteer had the license in their hot little hand, Mom was on her own again until the next kid had a permit.



How did you feel when they started dating? Concerned that they would not make wise choices.

What activities did your kids participate in? They went to the usual games, etc. after school but, mostly, they were mighty busy with jobs. Each one got a job away from home as soon as they were 16 and never quit.

Did you try to help get them a first job? No need to. They were resourceful and smart enough to shake out the bushes for work.

Did you help choose a college or technical school? They knew far more about school than I did and they made their own decisions. I was immensely proud of each one of them!

Did you go visit them often while in college? Life was not easy those days but I did get to visit each one, though not often enough to suit me.

Anything else you want to add? No, this is a book the way it is already without adding more of my musings.

How do you feel about growing older? This body is getting older and it rebels against my ideas, but, in my mind, I still feel like I am about 30 years old. I like to think of my hair as growing blonder but I know better when I see the silver. Hey, silver is just a badge of survivorship and only means that you have come this far and have a lot of ground to cover yet.

Was it hard when your kids left the nest? For about a week after the last one left home I was like a lost puppy. Then Judy Meyer told me that she and Rich were so happy that they did not have to plan meals or anything else around Sue and Dave's schedule anymore. I mulled it over and decided that they were right. But it felt awfully good whenever my kids did come to visit.

Do/did you enjoy your new freedom? Freedom from what? I never felt my kids caused me a lack of freedom. They were my window to the world and kept me afloat more times than I care

to think about.

Was it a hard decision to retire? What? Retire? Maybe when we are 80. *Note to add in 2013...Jim and I were both pushed into early (for us, anyway) retirement at 65 and we are totally enjoying life. Money isn't flowing but the light bill gets paid and we can still take little trips. We finally have the time to tackle the fun projects that were too time consuming when we were working.*

How did you feel about becoming a grandparent for the first time? Immensely proud!

What activities do you do with your grandchildren now? Spoil them and send them home to their parents...can you think of any better way to repay my kids for my gray hair?



Nahhhh, that isn't really so. My kids were not at all bad kids and their own kids are just reflections of their personalities.

Do still have any dreams unfulfilled? Yes, I still want to dip my toes in both the Pacific and the Atlantic. *Note in 2013...in 2005 I was able to stand in the Atlantic Ocean and it was flat-out awesome! The raw power of those waves humbles me.*



In 1997 I was able to stand at Cape Flattery, the most northwest spot in the lower 48 states. We were about a hundred feet above the Pacific Ocean that day and it had to do for now.



What kind of lessons did you learn from your mother and father? Hard work and the ability to make do with what I have.

if you had to name one single character trait of your mother, what would it be? Of your father? Mom's devotion to Dad and Dad's devotion to Mom.



What stories or legends have been handed down about your parents or grandparents? My mom often told of how she and Dad met. Mom lived in Nebraska with her parents and a brother and his wife. She was considered an OLD MAID at the ripe old age of 30. She decided to move to California to keep house for a relative. Her family counseled that she would get homesick being that far away from home and urged her to visit an uncle in Chicago first because that would not be so far to come home if she got terribly homesick. Mom spent a month in Chicago, was not homesick and made the decision to make the move to California. She stopped at German Valley to visit a second cousin, Fan Cornelius on her way home. It was a very cold December and she caught an awful cold. One day one of Fan and Dick's neighbors was on the property shelling corn. It was so cold and Fan invited the man to come into the house to warm up. Dad came in, spotted Mom there and always said that it was love at first sight. A few days later the church was having a Christmas program and Fan called my aunts to ask if they could pick up her houseguest because Fan's boys all had colds and she did not want to take them out. The aunts decided to play a joke on Folkert. It would be great fun to rope him into taking some stranger to the church program so they told him to pick up Fan's houseguest. Little did they know that Dad and Mom had already had a date to see the movies in Freeport. Their joke backfired. Mom never left Illinois. They were married 7 months later.



We hear about "the golden days of childhood." Do you remember them that way? Or were they full of struggles? I had a peaceful and innocent childhood. My only bug-a-boo was that I was shy around other people and taller than any of the other kids. Pictures of eighth grade graduation show me at least a head taller than the rest of the class. The boys finally caught up to my height but the girls stayed shorter than me until I got much older and shrank

What would you change about your childhood if you could? Not a thing.

Were there events that happened in grade school that affected the course of your life? During high school? Nothing of world shattering importance happened. Well, I did meet Bob at a high school ballgame and that did change my life quite a bit.

What did you want to be when you grew up? What did your family want you to be? I wanted to be a journalist but circumstances put a definite damper on that plan. I think my parents just wanted me to be happy. My two school teacher aunts had my future all planned and it included being a teacher like them. I'd have dug ditches first!

Was freedom from your parents as good as you thought it would be? The first time I was

away from my parents was when I got married and it certainly was not what I would call freedom.

Did you struggle to get an education? My formal education stopped at high school graduation but I think living 61 years and raising 5 kids should count as one whale of an education. I have this problem. Whenever I get a question answered, there are immediately a hundred more to take their places. Love that internet!

What were major significant turning points in your life? Up until 2000 any major changes in my life were not truly of my own decision. When I moved to VA, it was my own decision and a mighty good one at that.



What's the best thing someone did for you? The worst? So many people did good things for me that it is impossible to pick out just one. Ranking high on the list would be the good coworkers at Micro Switch Dept. 4. They stood behind me in 1998 and left me bounce ideas off them when I was at my wits end. My family helped me with encouragement and money when I was scared to death of surviving on my own. The worst thing anyone ever did for me would have to be advice given me in June 1961 by a certain lawyer who later became a judge in Freeport. He is dead now. I often wonder what kind of life his wife had to lead.

What is the best thing you did for someone? That answer would best be given by someone who actually thinks I did something good for them. What I may have thought was good at the time, may have been nasty to the person on the other end.

How have your values changed over the years? I don't think my values have changed all

that much. I still value people over things.

Is there anything that is becoming more important to you over the years? Yes, I am old enough to realize that each day is a gift and needs to be savored. There may not be a tomorrow. Just yesterday (Aug. 19, 2004) a coworker lost her fiancé unexpectedly to heart disease three weeks before they were to be married. You better take time to live today and never take today and the people around you for granted.

Do you feel you've changed a great deal over the years or do you feel inside you are the same person you always were? Nahh! I haven't changed all that much. I'm still as nuts as ever.

If you could go back and change something what would it be? I'd move to VA about 30 years earlier. No, that isn't true. God leads us in our lives as He sees fit. The trick is to learn from our experiences.

If you could have lived during any historical era, what time frame would you choose and why? Today is just fine for me

What do you consider the most important events in your personal life? What were they and what impact did they have on your life? The birth of my 5 children and the day I fell in love with Jim.

What is the most important lesson you have learned in your lifetime? What is the most difficult? Most important is to live life today, trust God to keep you out of harm's way, appreciate the people around you, don't take yourself too seriously, and grab for the brass ring when it becomes clear to you that it exists. The most difficult lesson was to realize that the adage about "Happily Ever After" is just an adage. If you are cornered into a rotten choice, you have to live with the results for a long time.....but there is still hope. There is always hope, especially when you have given up on ever finding change and happiness.

How do you feel about your life up to now? I have been so blessed with 5 good kids.



I am blessed with a Christian husband who treats me with love and respect.



It feels to me that the best is yet to come

Are there any other thoughts you just want to share? Life is good. God is GREAT!