

FOREWORD

Respectfully submitted by Merry Carol Whirry Larkin

When I agreed to be responsible for the printing of Dad's autobiography, Dad also asked if I would write a foreword to his life story. I began a final proofing of his autobiography with this task in mind. Because of my current involvement in a seven year Bible study, I found myself reading Dad's story from a new perspective.

I have always admired my father as a man of integrity...a man who models the same behavior in private as he does in public. My father's life has a strong theme of doing what is right, forgiving what is wrong and teaching by example. Where did this come from?

In his autobiography Dad speaks of his precious aunts, his father's sisters, who shared their faith with him...who taught him to kneel by the bed to pray. Dad explains that he lived with parents who had a strong work ethic and governed their lives by the Ten Commandments. They tithed their money as biblically commanded.

Dad speaks with fond memories of attending vacation Bible school and visiting Catholic midnight Christmas mass. He speaks of his respect for Catholic friends and neighbors who lived their faith and convictions.

I recall when I was a child Dad had a high regard for Billy Graham's preaching of the gospel...teaching "Christ died for our sins. We must admit our sins, repent and ask Jesus Christ to be Lord of our Life. When we do, we receive the gift of eternal life and Christ places the Holy Spirit within us to guide our life." I could not understand Dad's interest in this teaching. The message seemed different than what we heard at our church. Or was it an expansion of what we were taught?

How does this fit together? As an adult I have learned of Dad's daily time with the Lord. Dad meets God each morning before he starts his day. The meeting is often

only a few minutes in the Bible guided by the devotional titled “The Upper Room”. A few minutes is sufficient time for Dad to open his eyes to God’s work in his life and the lives of others. These minutes prepare Dad to give credit to “the Almighty” throughout the day by noticing and pointing out the “mini-miracles” he and others experience. He frequently tells me with joy that he feels as safe as if he was in God’s pocket. Such peace!

The Bible says that the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. I see these fruits in my father’s life.

This thought-provoking assignment has brought me to the conclusion that the Holy Spirit within my father is self evident. It appears to me that my father lives his life with God’s promised end in mind. He received forgiveness of his sins and committed his life to the Lord...he is prepared for the ultimate new beginning...HEAVEN!!

What an example for us to follow!

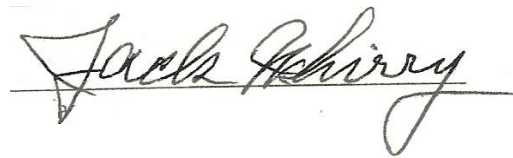
TO MY FAMILY AND FRIENDS:

I have had a full and wonderful life filled with more blessings than I could have ever dreamed of when I was a young boy on the farm. Every day has held more "mini miracles" than I could even keep track of throughout my many years of life and a number of "maxi miracles" as well. When I reflect on days gone by and look back over all of the things that have happened in my 89 years on this earth, sometimes I feel as though I've lived two or three lifetimes.

Thank you to all of you who are part of this life story and to my youngest granddaughter, "Tessie Lou", who listened to this story and changed my spoken word into this written document.

I have been a very fortunate man and I am truly thankful to God...for my Mickey, my family, my friends, my life.

I'm so glad we had this time together,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jack Whirry". The signature is written in dark ink and is underlined with a single horizontal line.

THANKFULNESS FOR MIRICLES

I begin the story of my life with thankfulness for miracles. For without the following miracles I would not be here to tell you the story of my life which could have easily ended with any of these three events. I often say that I feel as safe as if I were in God's pocket. I truly believe that is were I was during these significant moments:

It was a spring day in 1967. I was plowing fire lanes along County Trunk B when I hit a hive of ground wasps. Suddenly I had a swarm of wasps relentlessly surrounding me going up my shirt and stinging where ever they found bare flesh. I drove the tractor back to the farm yard, jumped into the truck and headed to town. There were wasps remaining under my clothes which continued to sting as I drove the 10 miles to town. I arrived at the doctor's office with dozens of stings. It was a miracle that I had no allergic reaction.

Another miracle happened on July 16, 1969. Mickey and I stopped at the machine shed at the home farm on 17th Road. Mickey remained in the truck while I hurried into the shed to start the tractor. As I had done for years and years, I went to the front of the tractor and turned the crank. Only this time hired help had parked the tractor the day before and the tractor was in high gear instead of in neutral. This time the tractor not only started, but it lunged forward imbedding the crank into my left thigh. The tractor pushed with full force pinning me against the back concrete wall as the crank vibrated into my leg. I called for Mickey. Miraculously she heard me calling. Coming into the shed she found me pinned against the wall with blood running out of my nose. She was not familiar with driving a tractor. All I could say was "clutch". My Mickey jumped onto the tractor and pushed the clutch, freeing me from the tractor's push. She was able to help me to the truck and begin the half-hour drive to the Portage Hospital. My head lay on Mickey's lap and my feet were out the rider's window. I used my thumbs to stop the bleeding as best I could. I was transferred to UW Madison Hospital. Using knowledge gained during the Viet Nam War, my leg was saved. The wound was cleansed and allowed to heal from the inside out with no

attempt to close the wound. The doctor said that he could see my main artery and if the crank had torn that artery, I would have bled to death in minutes at the accident site. Another amazing fact is that when the family came to pick up the truck left at the Portage Hospital, it was completely out of gas. Mickey and I had been carried on gas fumes.

The third miracle came years later on Sunday morning during shearing time. I was in Squirrel Heaven (a hill on the tree farm) working on some tall Scotch pine trees. I had a step ladder to help me reach the tops of the trees. I was all by myself, using a hedge shears with 9 ½ inch blades when the right front leg of the step ladder sunk down into the sand. I collapsed along with the ladder. Before I knew what had happened, I realized that the hedge shears had stabbed me; one blade had gone into my liver, and the other into my lung. I was almost sure that it was the end of me because I was bleeding severely. I had the truck up on the hill with me and I drove as fast as I could to the neighbors, all the while panicking about what I was going to do and if I was going to live to tell about it. I ran to one neighbor's house and then another, desperately trying to find help. I ended up at the Fraser's house and collapsed on their floor while Carol Fraser called 911. Once the emergency vehicle arrived, I was whisked away to the Portage hospital by ambulance and from there was transferred to the UW Madison Hospital. The doctor later jokingly told me that I was the first patient he ever had who had done his own liver biopsy.

Thankfully, I was allowed to live to tell about these experiences.

Early History

Well, I should probably go way back to the beginning, so as not to miss any important details. My father, John James Whirry (1886-1968), was born on February 17, 1886 in rural Dalton, Wisconsin. This area remained home for him throughout his life. My mother, Irma Louise Anna Frank (1894-1974) was born on April 13, 1894 in Horicon, Wisconsin. She grew up in Horicon with her five brothers and one sister. Their names were Ewalt, Hardy, Irving, Irma, Harold, Eddie and Elsie. Their family lived in Horicon until



they moved out to the Nettleton farm in rural Wisconsin, a place we now know as the Whirry tree farm or the Evergreen Ranch (www.evergreenranch.us). At that time, my father and his family were living on the family homestead (2090 Cty Tk B) where he



grew up, so he and my mother became about as close to next-door neighbors as you could get way out in the country. My dad had four sisters and one adopted brother. Their names were Winifred “Winnie,” Harriet “Hattie,” Lois, Edna and Arnold. Anyway, it was during the time my mother’s family was living at the tree farm

that my parents had their first meeting, somewhere around the year 1915.

It wasn't long after my mom's family moved to Dalton that tragedy struck. The Franks were building a silo beside their barn when my mother's father was struck on the head by a falling piece of scaffolding. He was rushed into the house after the accident and the local physician, Dr. Fedderman, performed an emergency operation while my grandfather lay on the kitchen table. Despite their efforts, the incident proved fatal. Shortly after the terrible accident, my mom's family returned to Horicon. I am not certain as to the events that occurred between that point and the time that my mom and dad actually married.

During the presidency of Woodrow Wilson, I was born in the front room of our old farmhouse (N1345 17TH Road) in Buffalo Township in Marquette County on September 27, 1919. I have a little trouble remembering it myself and the exact details of the day are a bit foggy, but I must have been a pretty cute baby because they didn't throw me back! My parents named me Jack William Whirry. I have a little theory worked out as to the origin of my name. I have a hunch that the name "Jack" was probably after my dad "John," because back in those days, "Jack" was a nickname for "John". In fact, when I was hired for my first teaching position in Fish Creek, Wisconsin, my contract bore the name "John Whirry." They didn't even bother to ask me if "Jack" was a nickname or not! My middle name "William" was after my grandfather, William B. Whirry (1856-1920).

GIBALTAR UNION HIGH SCHOOL TEACHER'S CONTRACT	
IT IS HEREBY AGREED, by and between the BOARD OF EDUCATION OF THE GIBALTAR UNION HIGH SCHOOL OF FISH CREEK, WISCONSIN, and <u>John Whirry</u> , a legally qualified teacher, that the said <u>John Whirry</u> shall teach in the above mentioned school of the said Village of Fish Creek, Wisconsin, for the term of <u>8</u> months at and for the sum of \$ <u>133.33</u> per month ^{calendar} month payable in equal installments at the end of each and every month, and for the term <u>1940</u> to <u>1941</u> and for such services properly rendered the said Board of Education shall pay to the said <u>John Whirry</u> the sum of \$ <u>133.33</u> per month ^{calendar} month (and in case the said teacher is hired for twelve months, the month will end on the last day of said summer month), less Teachers' Retirement Fund Deposit, at the time and in the manner herein agreed.	
IT IS ALSO AGREED by the said teacher to have his or her residence in the school district and actually reside there during the term and duration of the contract.	
IT IS FURTHER AGREED that sixty days' notice must be given before said contract may be void.	
IT IS ALSO AGREED the sum of \$ <u>5.00</u> per month be retained by the Board of Education each month as a guarantee that said contract be fulfilled. This sum so retained shall be paid in full with Teacher's last check or installment. This sum shall be forfeited to the Board by the teacher upon the failure of said teacher to fulfill the contract or complete the school year. In case of the dismissal of teacher said amount shall be due at time of dismissal.	
Dated this <u>4th</u> day of <u>November</u> , 193 <u>40</u> .	
<u>Herma Bass</u> PRESIDENT	<u>Marion A. Paulson</u> CLERK
<u>H. J. Jorgensen</u> TREASURER	<u>Jack Whirry</u> TEACHER
IT IS FURTHER UNDERSTOOD that this contract is entered into subject to the provisions of the Wisconsin State Retirement Law for Teachers and the blank spaces below are filled for the sole purpose of enabling the Retirement Officials to certainly identify the report and payments made in behalf of any teacher coming within the provisions of the statute.	
Teacher <u>John Whirry</u>	Age <u>21</u> Date of Birth <u>Sept 27, 1919</u>
School address this year <u>Fish Creek, Wis.</u>	
Last year	

Certificate of Baptism.



Whoever
shall not receive
the kingdom of
God as a little
child, he shall
not enter
therein.

He that
believeth
and is baptized
shall be
saved.

Jack Williams
Child of Mr. *James J. Wherry*
and his wife *Myra Louisa*
born at *Proffels, Wis.* *Sept. 27, 1914*
was baptized in *The Hammond Presbyterian Church*
on the *First day of May, 1921*
in the **Name of the Father and of the Son**
and of the **Holy Ghost.**

Sponsors:

Edw. J. Adams

Suffer little children to come unto Me, and forbid
them not: for of such is the kingdom of God.



Early Memories of my Parents

When my father's father, Grandpa William, (1856-1920) died it was written that his children would "share and share alike." Grandma Alma (1858-1930), his wife, was to receive 40 acres of land and all of the buildings on the property. This was known as "widow's rights." Grandma Alma was living

on the family homestead on County B. In addition to owning the homestead, in 1917 Grandpa William had purchased what I call the "home farm" on 17th Road where my dad, mother and I resided in 1920 when he died. As time passed, it was decided that rather than receive the home and buildings



on either of these farms, Grandma Alma would receive 40 acres and a new house on the NE corner of the home farm. Dad, mother and I would remain living in the original house on the home farm and Dad would pay his siblings for their shares.

The old farmhouse on 17th Road was a lot different during the days of my childhood. The rooms that now make up an office and bathroom were then one room because we were still using an outhouse in those days. I actually shared that room with my parents and slept in an iron bed with sides that came up and down; kind of like a crib. What is now a laundry room was then a closet. No one ever went into the front room or "parlor" as my mother called it, except for rare and special occasions.

That house has quite a history. I was told that before my time, maybe all the way back to when the Grahams lived there, dances would be held in the very same front room where I was born. The bay window nook was where the band would sit and play while laughter and light-heartedness filled the room and young couples danced the night away.

My dad was of English-Scotch-Irish decent and was what I like to call a "diversified farmer." You see, in those days, farmers like my father were very much like doctors in that they didn't really have any specialties. All country doctors were basically family

practitioners. They treated everyone and every illness to the best of their ability. Farmers were very much the same. They needed to be able to do a little bit of everything in order to survive. However, if I had to pick a particular focus of my dad's farming years, I would have to say that it was probably milk production.

We had dairy cows whose milk we sold to the cheese factory down the road. Most every farmer had pigs that they raised for market, and I still remember butchering one of our 235 pound pigs. First, we caught it, sat on it to hold it down, and then slit its throat with a butcher knife...a little hard to stomach, but somebody had to do it. We would butcher the cattle by hitting them over the head with a maul to knock them out before we killed them.



Anyway, aside from the farm animals that we raised, the main crops that we grew were oats and corn. I remember one time we had a crop of potatoes over in the field located by the property that now belongs to Tom Wilson. My dad probably did that in order to help with the payments he was making to his sisters toward the purchase of their shares of the home farm. The majority of farmers back then were a little below middle class. Those were difficult times. I remember that a lot of our neighbors had to scrimp on their food intake. My dad was on the town board during my boyhood and part of his job was shopping for the destitute families in our community. Sponsored by the community, he would buy them staple foods which, ironically, included chewing tobacco. Let's just say that my family had a little bit more than some people, but not for lack of hard work.

Everybody in those days, even the people who lived in town, had chickens (called laying hens) which brings me to the reason why I was probably the very first child in the Whirry family that was able to go to college. You see, anything beyond a high school education was a privilege that few could afford. The funding for my college education was all thanks to the money that came from raising chickens. We would raise around 500 white Leghorn chickens at a time, and caring for them was one of my main responsibilities as a young boy. I'll never forget running back and forth between the chicken coop and the water pump with five-gallon buckets in each hand brimming over with water. I had to do that several times each day. Eggs were only 10 cents a dozen, but there was still enough money that came in as "extra" from the eggs (aside from the cows, milk, pigs, and even, at one time, a flock of sheep), for my mother to tuck away in a college fund for me. It is interesting to note that I've had a heart for the poultry industry ever since those days on the farm. In fact, poultry judging was the area in which my FFA students saw the most success in their competitions.

My mother was 100% of German decent and was a strong, hardworking woman. In all of my memories of her she is barefoot and always milking cows, feeding hogs, and tending to her 500 chickens. She worked by my father's side as his constant helpmate and companion, but my

parents were never openly affectionate toward one another. I guess the words "I love you" were simply not spoken as freely back then. My parents were more like two business people running a farm



together. My mother actually worked like a hired man, especially after Grandpa William passed away and she had to help my dad in order to make payments to my aunts. My mom taught me all of the tunes that I first learned on my mouth organ. She would hum

and whistle melodies until I caught on and then away I would go. My mom did some really good home cookin' for us when I was growing up. The one thing that still vividly looms in my mind about my mother's cooking is the memory of her beating egg whites in a huge bowl as she made her delicious angel food cake. Why, just the thought of it now is making my mouth water!



When I was young, I didn't get to see my Grandma Frank, my mother's mother, very often. There was so much work on the farm that you couldn't just leave and travel to a destination very far away...like 50 miles to where Grandma Frank lived in Horicon. So, we didn't get to see her much beyond her occasional visits to our farm. I remember, on her rare visits to our house, that my grandma and my mother would always go back and forth speaking in German when they didn't want me to hear or understand what they were talking about. My Grandma Frank was so fresh of German decent that it was actually easier for her to speak in her native tongue than it was for her to use English. After hearing some things spoken in German many times, I picked up on a few of their commonly used phrases, but to this day, I don't know what they mean...and that's probably a good thing!

Early Memories of my Boyhood on the Farm

Almost everyone was poor when I was born. This part of the country hadn't been settled for very long yet, so virtually everything had to be done with manual labor. If you were a simple farmer, you had a walking plow that was pulled by two horses. If you were a little more affluent, you might have a sulky plow that you could ride on, but even that was only a single bottom plow. You quickly learned that those were hard times and it was just a matter of surviving against difficult odds and making the most of your situation. There were no frilly things. I would get a nickel or a dime for a treat on great occasion, and even then I would not spend the money but would come home with my tiny treasure and put it away in my piggy bank. Even so, I can't complain because my family had it pretty good compared to folks in the city. We had our own meat and could always butcher a pig or a chicken if we needed to. When times got really hard, our relatives would actually come to the farm and help carry the workload in exchange for their room and board, because they had no income. I especially remember Dick and Elsie Krueger coming to help out at the farm. There were a couple other uncles and cousins who came to the farm as well. My two closest cousins, Leonard and Merla, would come quite often. We always had to work first, but then we were allowed to play. After all, the motto was, "If you don't work, you don't eat" and we really wanted to eat, so we all did our share of work. One year, when I was still quite young, my dad asked me to help him put bundles of oats into shocks. Well, I accidentally stacked them east and west instead of north and south, but I don't even remember if my dad ever went back over my work to correct my mistake. I just know that he let me know how it was supposed to be done correctly for future reference!



In the early years of my childhood while growing up on the home farm, the only artificial lights we had were kerosene lanterns and they didn't provide much more light than a candle does. It was very dark at night time...and even a little scary...especially on nights when there wasn't a full moon lending its light to the black sky. There is one

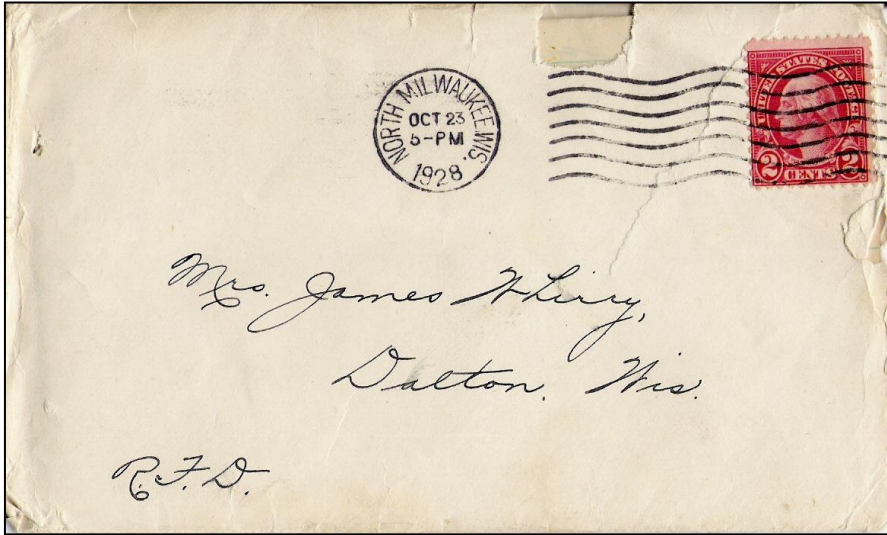
funny memory that comes to mind when I think about how dark it used to get. I remember being alone one night while my folks were out doing their night milking in the big old barn across the road. I'm not sure what frightened me about being in the house by myself on that particular evening, but I do know that I was scared silly. This was before there was even a sidewalk going from the house down to the road. At any rate, I just remember deciding that it was time for me to be with my parents. I made a beeline from the house to the barn...it was pitch dark...and I ran smack dab into the door leading to the barn on the northeast corner. I don't know why I wasn't badly injured in my head-on collision with the barn door. I'm not even sure of anything beside the fact that I hit the door while running full speed ahead. I guess that I was only four or five years old at the time, so I was a tough little cookie! After a hard day of work on the farm, my parents were exhausted and they virtually dropped into bed at night. I don't recall having bedtime stories read to me or anything of that nature, but it never really bothered me because after a full day of being a farm boy, I was ready for bed too.

Bath time was a totally different story back in my day than it is today. The first bath that I ever recall taking was in a wash tub right in the kitchen by the woodstove. There were probably only two inches of water in the bottom of the tub for me to wash myself in, and this ritual was probably only done once a week at most. Some things have changed for the better with the passing of time!

Many modern day conveniences that we take for granted now were small wonders back in my day, like running water and the telephone. While I was growing up, our telephone was made out of wood and mounted on the wall. It was about eight inches wide and stuck out from the wall about eight inches. There were two bells and a little knocker. Then there was a little hollow earpiece that you held up to your ear. Our phone was connected to all the phones in the neighborhood and everyone had their own personal ring...maybe it was one long and two shorts, or two longs and one short. There were probably ten neighbors on one line, so every time someone called somebody else, our phone would ring. You had to listen for your own personal ring so as not to accidentally overhear

anyone else's conversation, although some folks thoroughly enjoyed doing just that! Back then, eavesdropping on the telephone was referred to as "rubbering".

While on the topic of communication, it is interesting to reflect on our postal service during my growing-up years. Back then, my address was R.F.D.2, standing for "Rural



Free Delivery.”

Those were the days when a postcard could be mailed for one cent and a letter for two cents. Boy, how the times have changed! What I

remember the most about how the mail was delivered were the winter deliveries. We lived on what was called a "spur route," which meant that we were at the end of the line in receiving our mail...not to mention we were also on the bottom of the list in getting plowed out. Because we were often snowed in, I remember that sometimes I would have to bring the mail home with me from school. The mail carrier could get to the one-room schoolhouse before he could get to our farm. On one trip back to the farm from school, when I was bringing home our mail, I was carrying the Sears Roebuck catalog. Lugging that big old catalog home was a real challenge on that particular day because, little to my knowledge, I was coming down with the chicken pox or some kind of childhood disease and was quite ill.

Our mailman wasn't the only delivery person who serviced us on the farm. There was also a delivery man named Bud Audis who had a company called "Bud's Store at Your Door." He had a regular store in Endeavor but would also make house calls once a week in order to service country folk, like us, who were oftentimes unable to get into town for

the staples that we needed. We could even purchase certain food items that Bud kept stored in the back of his wagon at their proper temperatures. It was a pretty nifty deal.

Of course there were no televisions until a much later date, but my family did have an old Atwater Kent radio with three dials which was powered by a car battery. As a matter of fact, we even borrowed the battery from our car in order to run the radio. I remember really loving the Mexican music that poured from the Del Rio, Texas station. But it was quite a trick getting the radio tuned into a clear station. Unlike a lot of other kids my age, I was never hooked on much of the radio drama in those days except for one show called "Jack Armstrong: The All American Boy." I really liked that one. Maybe it was because he and I shared the same name.

As a young boy, my favorite thing in the whole world was my slingshot. I suppose from the time that I was about six years old until well into my teenage years I carried that homemade trinket. In those carefree days, I thought I was going to live my whole life with a slingshot around my neck. I would always have my slingshot handy with a pocketful of marble-sized stones for ammunition. I remember that on my adventures around the farm I would see a lot of snakes everywhere. There used to be all kinds of them along the creek. There was always one I was worried about. It was called a water moccasin and was poisonous. Needless to say, I kept an eye out for that one!

I had pretty good aim in those days, if I might say so myself. I could even hit a dragon fly that was perched on a stick of goldenrod or a piece of marsh grass like nobodies' business! Rumor has it that one day my mom spotted a mouse in the corner of the kitchen and was frightened. Now, I don't really think she would've been afraid, because this was a woman who chopped the heads off of chickens, but it makes for a good story! Anyway, when my mom spotted the mouse, I came to the rescue with my trusty slingshot. I aimed and fired, killing the little rodent right there in his tracks. That was a moment I will never forget!



Ah, those were the carefree days of my life...playing alongside the Graham Creek that ran through our farm. My recreation included fishing for trout and chubs (for bait) and getting some good practice using my slingshot. I would walk down to the creek and go fishing using a pole that I made out of a stick, cord string, and a bent pin. Of course, I always had my trusty sidekick, Sparky the dog, by my side. I also loved to play down by the railroad track. I would put pennies on the track, get ammo for my slingshot and wave at the passengers whizzing by on the "400" when it would pass through. People would smile and wave back. The hunting was another big draw to the track for me. There weren't any deer or turkeys in the area yet back then, but there were pheasants. We would go to the Poynette game farm for pheasant eggs and bring them home to be hatched under our chickens. After they hatched, we would release and hunt them.

Every spring it was tradition to go spearing for fish. We would use bright flashlights or, if we really wanted to get serious, a big torch. The sucker fish would come all the way up to our little creek from Lake Puckaway. They started there and traveled through the Fox River to the Grand River to Bell Fountain Creek all the way to Graham Creek. What a journey! I can still recall the beauty of the colorful brook trout in that stream. I remember feeling awed as a young boy at the sight of them. Another thing that I remember is how we would burn the marsh grass. This resulted in huge fires that set the night sky ablaze in brilliant color. Once, a railroad bridge even caught fire and almost caused a wreck.

My best buddy, Jimmy Foley, got a big BB gun long before I ever had one and together we would go on hunting adventures, me with my faithful slingshot and him with his gun.



However, one adventure in particular stands out in my mind as a memorable one. It was a warm summer afternoon and Jimmy's mother told us boys to go out and get some pigeons so that we could have ourselves a pigeon feast for supper. Well, Jimmy and I weren't about to let Jim's mom down in her hankering for some pigeons, so we set out on the hunt, determined to get ourselves just as many pigeons as we could get! We headed over to Grandpa Jim Foley's place where we knew there would be a lot of them and let's just say that we took care of business.

Not only did we get the pigeons we were after, but we also shot several holes in Grandpa Foley's barn roof. In fact, it is likely that the two of us were partially responsible for those buildings being gone today. If I recall correctly, Grandpa Foley remembered what it was like being a young boy and had mercy on the two of us. Whew! Anyway, when we got back to Jimmy's house with our catch of the day, true to her word, Nellie Foley cooked up those pigeons for us and we had ourselves a feast!

I remember that I eventually got a BB gun of my own, but still, I always preferred my slingshot. One memory stands out in my mind from those early BB gun days. I still can't believe I did this. I was on the front porch of our farm house when I was probably only a boy of 10 or so, and I had my BB gun. My dad was down by the far south end of the granary and he was carrying water to mix with the hog feed. I was always up for a challenge and it was a long shot, but I somehow manage to aim high and hit my dad with one of my BBs. When he came in from his chores, I remember he didn't say a word to me, but simply took my BB gun and hurled it half way down to the mailbox. That was my dad's way of telling me that he was a bit upset and that was all he had to say... without actually saying anything. I learned my lesson and still remember it to this day!

Usually my dad would use his razor strap to discipline me. It was a long leather strap that hung in a very visible corner of the kitchen. His discipline technique, which was highly effective, was quite simple. He had that strap hanging in clear view for me to see. He never actually used it on my backside, but I always thought that he might and that fear alone kept me in check! There were many days when I'm sure that my dad was very tempted to actually use his strap on my backside. One of those occasions was when I took my little tool box, along with a bit and brace used for making holes in wood, and did some artwork on the side of the corn crib. To this day, the little face that I chiseled into the side of the building still smiles at me every time I walk by. Similar to my punishment after the BB gun incident, my dad gave me the clear understanding that I was out of line. I guess he thought that my smiley face was sort of like graffiti or something.

At some point in time during our childhood, Jimmy became heir to a bicycle. It was old and there weren't any pedals on it...come to think of it, there wasn't even a chain, but that didn't stop the two of us. We would push that old rickety bike up to the top of the hill over by where the Bordihns live now, and we would coast down over and over and over again. We thought we were in hog heaven! If I'm not mistaken, I didn't get a bike of my own until I was about 60 years old, so those memories are a real treat for me!

Neighborhood Gatherings and Holiday Celebrations

The nearest thing to a community event that we had in my rural neighborhood was an occasional euchre party when the adults would get together to play cards. These parties were more frequent when the oysters were in season. Most everyone would all have oyster stew, which was one of my dad's favorite dishes, but I, on the other hand, couldn't stand oysters...even the smell of them set my stomach to spinning. Thankfully, my creativity came to the rescue and I invented my own unique concoction of oyster crackers, butter, warm milk, and sugar. Yum yum!! I was usually the only child at most



of our neighborhood gatherings, but that didn't really bother me because I was used to being the only child in my family. During the winter months, we used our 4-runner sleigh to get to wherever the card parties were being hosted throughout the neighborhood. I remember being particularly impressed with the Warrack's house. I was amazed by the fact that they had carpeting in their house. They even had carpeting that covered their stairway. Wow! After the card parties were over, it was usually a 15 to 20 minute trek back to our house. I used to get teased about the fact that, even as a seven and eight-year-old boy, I would fake being asleep so that my mother would have to carry me into bed. I hesitate to say that I *was* sleeping...I mean...faking. ☺ On those really cold nights when we would get home, we would use a flat iron that had been warmed on the stove and wrap a quilt around it to keep by our feet. Hot water bottles were another thing that we used for additional warmth from time to time.

One neighborhood memory that I have isn't a very pleasant one. I was quite young, somewhere around eight years old, and there was a young man named Lester Bowman that disappeared. He lived where the Amish now hold residence on Smith Rd. The whole neighborhood put on a search party to find Lester and my father was the one who discovered him in the Bowman's granary. He had shot and killed himself and everyone was stunned.

Outings and holidays were nearly unheard of when I was a boy. We rarely left the farm except on Saturday nights, which was the night that most of the farmers in our area would make a voyage into town to do their weekly shopping and usually to get a shave and a haircut for two bits (or 25 cents). The Fourth of July was always a date that my father set as a goal to have our first crop of alfalfa in the barn. My guess is that we got to celebrate Independence Day if and only if we were through haying in time.

As for my birthday, I didn't really have birthday parties when I was young. We were rather isolated, so things were a lot different than they are nowadays. September 27th just passed right on by like any other day. However, Christmas was one occasion that we didn't let pass us by without recognition. We always had Christmas celebrations at our house. We would feast on turkey and, in the early 1920's, the turkeys that we ate would have been ones that we had raised ourselves. I definitely remember raising turkeys and geese. I don't think we ever raised ducks, though. There were all kinds of domesticated ducks that you could raise, but I don't think we ever did. Anyway, back to Christmas, I never opened anything until Christmas morning...so the holiday season was always filled with suspense and anticipation. There was no sneaking of anything. I knew that I shouldn't even try to figure out what was in my brightly colored packages. I just trusted that the surprise would be far greater than any satisfaction I could possibly get from taking a sneak peak. Our Christmas trees in those days were all the way from northern Wisconsin. My dad would head up north to go deer hunting and bring a tree back for us every year. It wasn't until the forties that we began growing our own Christmas trees around here. Anyway, my dad would bring us a nice spruce tree and we would proudly put it on display in the bay window area of the front room. We used to use candles on

our tree for lights. I don't believe we ever actually lit them...it was considered too much of a fire hazard and back in those days, when would a farmer have found the time to sit down and look at it anyway? Those were good, but hard times.

I don't remember how old I was, but one year my uncle Tony Utke dressed up like Santa Clause. I was convinced to the bottom of my boots that he was the real thing. I'll never forget...he came on Christmas day before anybody else had arrived. Uncle Tony often drove a snowmobile that he had created out of what had been an old model "T" car. It had runners instead of wheels and it would have been a dead giveaway if he had come in that contraption. I never did figure out how he got to our house, but he did! Boy...that was a Christmas to remember!



During my growing up years, I was the only kid from my generation in my family that lived in the area. I had cousins in Horicon that would sometimes come to visit, but usually it was just me, my parents, and my aunts and uncles. Most of the time, our celebrations only included my dad's family because they lived close to us, but my mother's brother Ewalt and his wife Maggie would also come to celebrate with us occasionally. Those were the days when fifty miles to travel seemed like an awfully long trip. My parents and I would only get over to Horicon to visit with my mother's family once or twice a year and there were probably even years when we didn't go at all.

Being the only nephew for a while, I was rather doted on by my loving aunts. I still remember some of the unique gifts that I received. One of the most significant toys that stands out in my mind was a miniature steam engine that actually created its own steam. You could even drive little accessories along with it. I also got a trip hammer one year and a stick with an airplane on one end and a dirigible on the other. You would wind up the spring, release the propeller on the airplane, and the plane and dirigible would start flying around and around until they glided to a stop. Those simple toys provided me with endless hours of amusement!

When I was in elementary school, every year at Christmas time my school mates and I would put on a Christmas program for our parents and the community. We would string a wire across the width of the schoolroom and then hang up a big curtain that would act as our "stage." When I was seven or eight years old, I even performed for everyone on my brand new harmonica. That was a special night!

Most of our neighbors were Catholic and I remember that they would always attend midnight mass on Christmas Eve. In fact, the church that they attended was the little country Catholic Church located on Highway 22. On two separate occasions, I accompanied them to midnight Christmas mass and I always respected our Catholic neighbors for their beliefs and convictions. I was told things about their thinking and how strict they were by my parents. I particularly remember how intrigued I was that they would not eat meat on Fridays. I also recall them being very religious about not drinking any alcoholic beverages. Of course, the priests would indulge from time to time because it was part of their mass ceremony, but that was different. It was also common knowledge that the Catholic girls had a reputation of being very straight laced...no hanky panky from them!

My folks were just too workaholic to even go to church. I think from the old school, my parents found the Ten Commandments to be good enough religion for them. They simply weren't church-going people. It was largely hard work and the "thou shalt not's" that governed their lives. But despite the fact that my parents weren't regular attendees at Sunday services, my father faithfully tithed his money and my mother was a member of the Ladies' Aid Society.

I remember attending vacation Bible school during many summers of my childhood with all of the neighborhood kids. My Uncle Tony would put up his big tent on the lawn at Greenwood Church for the occasion. My Aunt Lois, Aunt Winnie, and Aunt Hattie were all involved too. One time, I was going home with Aunt Lois in her model A Ford sedan after a Bible school meeting. We were on our way to Montello and, if I remember right, I was in the passenger seat while my Aunt Winnie was riding in the backseat with Nilo, the

dog. We were driving on highway B when Nilo moved suddenly and distracted Aunt Lois. She lost control and the car tipped right over. I'll never forget that day because my aunt Winnie nearly bled to death...that was before they made shatter-proof glass for car windows. The accident occurred quite close to Jimmy Lytle's house and Jimmy remembered his mother grabbing bed sheets in order to make tourniquets for my bleeding aunt. Thank goodness, we all made it through.



Another important holiday that we would observe when I was young was Easter Sunday. I recall one particular Easter when my family was at my Grandma Alma's house. We were looking out the window at a haystack over toward the north field when my aunts and I spotted a rabbit running around it. Well, unknown to me, my aunts...I mean, the Easter bunny, had hidden some brightly colored eggs for me to hunt for on the other side of that haystack. My little eyes grew wide with amazement when I discovered a pile of colorful eggs left there just for me! My aunts were a special part of my life while I was growing up. As I got older, they loved to tell me stories about the silly little things that I used to say when I was three or four years old. One day, when I was quite young, I must have been sitting by a window with the sun pouring in on me when one of my aunts walked in front of the window and blocked the light. I looked up at her and said in a commanding little voice, "Get out of my sunshine!" Another story that my aunts would tell me was about a spider that we had spotted one day running along the floor. When it suddenly disappeared, someone asked me where it had gone and I replied, "I think it went into my belly button."

My Aunt Hattie lived with my Aunt Lois and Uncle Tony and helped them raise their twin children, Donny and Dorothy. My most vivid memory of my Aunt Hattie is of when I was about two years old and my head somehow accidentally hit and broke her nose. I

guess I must have had a hard head back then! Aunt Hattie was also the one who taught me how to pray while kneeling beside my bed.

My Aunt Winnie, a nurse by trade, was the family comedian and lived with my adopted Uncle Arnold to help him raise his children after his wife, Lola passed away during childbirth.

Needless to say, all of my aunts were very special ladies and I am so thankful that they were able to be such a special part of my boyhood.

Hired Men and Hard Work



We had three different hired men that I remember, Carl Hartwig, Harley Day and Bernard Aldrich. Harley was an old recluse who lived down the road from us. He had a particular fondness of alcohol and would work just enough to support his liquor and tobacco habits. He was quite the character, Harley was! I can still picture him clear as day... riding his horse bareback around our corner and singing away...if you would call it singing! Despite his drinking, he was a hard worker.

Bernie was another man that my father hired to help him out on the farm when I was just a young boy and unable to do a lot of physical work myself. Even though I was young, I still had to help milk the cows. Things were different in those days. The saying was, "If you're old enough to drive, you're old enough to milk" and I wanted to drive a lot more than I wanted to milk, but I had to roll with the punches anyway! I remember that people used to brag about what age they first began to drive. To be quite honest, I don't remember when I drove for the very first time, but I do remember at one point getting to drive the Model T Ford around the driveway. That was a real treat! There weren't really any roads back then, just trails that people had been driving their horses on for so long that they eventually became used as unofficial roadways. Of course, we kids started driving when we were a lot younger than young people do now, but transportation was altogether a very different story. Anyway, enough about driving, let's get back to milking. Bernie and I would sit on one-legged stools made out of a two by six board. It was actually a balancing act for us. All the while the cow's tails were switching all around us and most of the time they weren't all that clean! Sometimes the tail would catch our straw hats and they would go flying off of our heads, but we just kept right on

milking. We sat on our stools beside the cow's udders and milked away. The hired men and I discovered that the milk would squirt out quite a ways if it was aimed right. We were usually sitting eight to ten feet apart from one another, so it was quite a trick to try and squirt one another without my parents noticing...especially when they were milking with us! What fun we had! Bernie Aldrich and I had some interesting milk-squirting fights in the barn while we were supposed to be doing our chores. Sometimes you even got it in the eye. After all, you were always aiming for the head!

I think it was back in those days that I kind of lost my taste for milk. The cattle would run free and had a natural diet that wasn't very conducive to milk production. It was fortunate that we had a stream where the cows could go to get a drink, but in the mean time, their udders would get all dirty. In those early days, we wouldn't even wash their dirty udders before milking. We would milk into a 12-quart milk pail that was held between the knees. When we were finished milking, we would pour the milk into a strainer that had a filter. It was called a strainer pad. I remember those strainers would be just black when we were finished and I knew that we'd only gotten about 90 percent of the dirt, if that. Our barn cats always loved to lick what got caught in the strainer! There was something called "wet-hand milking" which meant that the people milking would first squirt their hands with milk in order to have a slippery surface to work with. The downside of that was that there was chocolate milk dripping off of the cow's udders and their hands as a result.

I still have a lot of memories of adventures that I had with our hired men. Carl Hartwig was the hired man that helped us



during the time that I was at school in Madison. The two of us got to be pretty good friends and even did a little "carousing" together, as you might say. ☺ You know how young guys are. Anyway, he was still the hired man when I met Mickey and one night,

after our chores were through, Carl and I jumped into our old clunker International truck and drove all of 100 miles to Wauwautosa. My mother was a wreck when we got home because we hadn't told her where we were going and we didn't return home until two or three in the morning. Another time, my dad told Carl and me to go to the Grand River Marsh in order to hunt some deer. So we did as we were told and went hunting with our shotguns while my dad was at home doing chores, or so we thought. Little to our knowledge, he had his 30/30 gun right on hand and a mischievous plan up his sleeve. You see, when deer were first introduced to Marquette County, you were only supposed to use shotguns to hunt them, but my dad was a stinker, and when Carl and I got back from our hunt, he had a big sly grin on his face. There must have been some kind of hanky panky going on because my dad had shot a nice-sized buck across the creek and sent me to fetch it for him. I never questioned him about it because, as they say, "the more you stir it, the worse it stinks!"

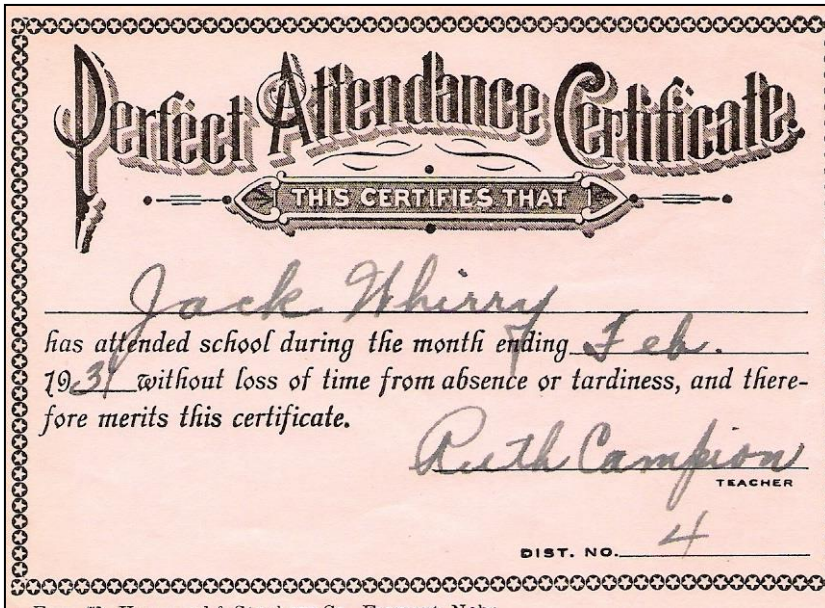


Another thing I remember was one summer...I believe it was in 1935 or so, when I was a teenager. It was so hot that the hired man and I would sleep out on the marsh hay stacks in a desperate attempt to try to stay cool. I don't remember the exact summer it was, but I do recall that it was stifling HOT! I must have been about 15 years old.

The hired men that we had on our farm were probably my closest friends growing up. It wasn't necessarily by choice, but when you're put into close quarters like we were...working, eating, and sleeping side by side, you learn to get along whether you like it or not! Every once and a while, when it was really hot out, we would go swimming over in Madden's Lake, which was about a mile down the road from the Buffalo Town Hall...that was always refreshing.

When I was young, a lot of people depended on trains for their transportation. There would be roughly 20 trains a day that would use the track just down the road from our farm. One passenger train that traveled through on occasion would go from Chicago to Minneapolis. It was called "The 400" because 400 miles was the approximate distance between Chicago and Minneapolis. Even back then, that train could clip along at about 60 miles per hour, so it could virtually travel 400 miles in about 400 minutes. Guys who wanted to get out West for the wheat harvest would often catch a ride by hopping on a freight train, but they didn't even attempt to hop the 400. They stuck to the boxcar trains while the cars were at or close to a stand still. Out West, people could make up to ten dollars a day during harvest time as opposed to the dollar a day they could get working around here. One time on his way out West, our hired man Carl Hartwig attempted to jump on a moving train. The poor guy got his foot crushed by one of the wheels and was laid up for a whole summer while it healed. The train must have damaged all of his toes pretty severely, because Carl ended up losing all but his big toe on one foot.

Primary School and High School Days



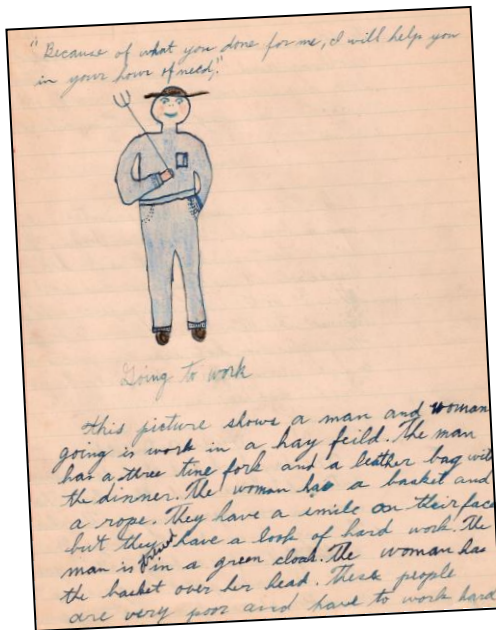
The first school that I attended was the Vondersump one-room schoolhouse in rural Dalton. The schoolhouse was built out of wood, about 20 feet by 50 feet and stood only one-story tall. Inside of the school, there were about a dozen seats

with desks for the students. The teacher's desk was up in the front of the classroom where she could keep a good eye on all of us. Over in the left hand corner of the room was our bubbler. There was a pipe that came up out of the floor with a stone on top of it

for a basin and the overflow water went into a pail. One of my goals in those early school years was to never miss a day of classes. Because of this, there were days when I was the only student at school. Why, I even received a certificate marking my absence-free record each month. Jack Farrell's mother, Mrs. Hazel Farrell, was my favorite



teacher back then. You see, she was no ordinary teacher who taught only one grade at a time like teachers do today. The school marm at our little country school had eight grades to teach at once. To put it simply, Mrs. Farrell was an amazing and very capable lady.



I was always the best at doing my arithmetic. English, on the other hand, was my worst subject. The number of students who attended the old Sump school varied from year to year. Of course, we only had one instructor for all eight grades and no kindergarten, so if you listened really well as a student, you could probably complete all eight grades in one year because everyone was able to hear what was being studied in each grade.

I still remember having to walk to school. I would tromp my way to the little Sump school every day and it was almost a mile each way. The railroad tracks always provided me with a good path to take, but sometimes I would take different routes to add a little variety. There were actually four unique ways to get to school, so I always had options! Sometimes, I would go past Jim Foley's place (where Bob Miller and his family now live). Other times I would head in Jimmy Lytle's direction (where Herbie Beahm's family now resides).



Often, I would walk on the railroad tracks and balance on the rails all the way to school without falling off. The last route that I would sometimes take was a direct cut across the marsh to get to the railroad tracks. One time, I got into playing with matches out in the tall marsh grass. Let's just say that it only took one time for me to learn my lesson! Anyway, back to school. It didn't matter how deep or how cold the snow was... I would still have to walk. However, if the weather was really bad, my dad would hitch up a team to the horse-drawn sleigh. I'll never forget those trips to school, all bundled up in

blankets sitting beside my dad. Thankfully, we had a big old wood-burning stove in the corner of our school room where I would go to warm my feet when I arrived. There was something called a jacket that went around the stove to keep the little children from getting too close to the fire and I found a way to sit on top of the jacket in order to dangle my feet down closer to the stove so I could warm up faster. I don't remember any of the other children doing what I did...I think I had a patent on that move!

Nearly every morning, we would begin each class time with the cheery song, "Good morning to you. Good morning to you. We're all in our places with sunshiny faces. And this is the way we start a new day." Once in a while we would recite the Pledge of Allegiance, but usually only on legal holidays when class was in session. During the cold winter months, we even had our own hot lunch program at school. Different mothers from the community would take turns bringing in hot soup for us kids to eat with our sandwiches from home. That was always a nice warm treat...except when one mom would bring in her famous bean soup...I had to choke that stuff down!



Using the bathroom back then was an experience that few kids these days could even comprehend. There were two outhouses behind our little school. One was for the girls and the other for the boys. We boys had a lot of fun pegging stones at the girls' outhouse while they were in there! Of course, toilet paper hadn't been invented yet, so we would use pages from the Sears Roebuck catalog instead. Once you got the hang of it, it wasn't too bad. The trick was, you had to tear out the pages and rub them back and forth between your hands for a while to soften them up a little. We had a pretty good system with what we had to work with, I think!



School wasn't all hard work. There was, of course, always recess and oh, the games we would play! There were several games that we always played at school. Those included *Annie*, *Annie Over* and *Pom*, *Pom*, *Pull Away*. Then there was a game called

Cricket which was played with an old broom handle.

Back in grade school, Jimmy Foley was my best buddy in the whole world. Jim and I would always trade sandwiches at lunch time. He wanted my meat sandwich and I wanted his peanut butter and jelly or sandwich spread. We also loved to wrestle with one another. There was a grove of willow trees close to his house



where we would have our matches. We called it our “wrestling ring.” I remember it was all in good fun, but a couple of times I can recall just sitting on Jimmy. I would just sit there and I don’t even think he tried too hard to get up. I was a little bigger and stronger than he was, after all! Jim and I were also in the dam building business growing up. We would build little dams, in what is now Bob Miller’s field, when there was a stream from the melted snow in the spring. We’d take our little shovels out there and build miniature dams to our heart’s content.



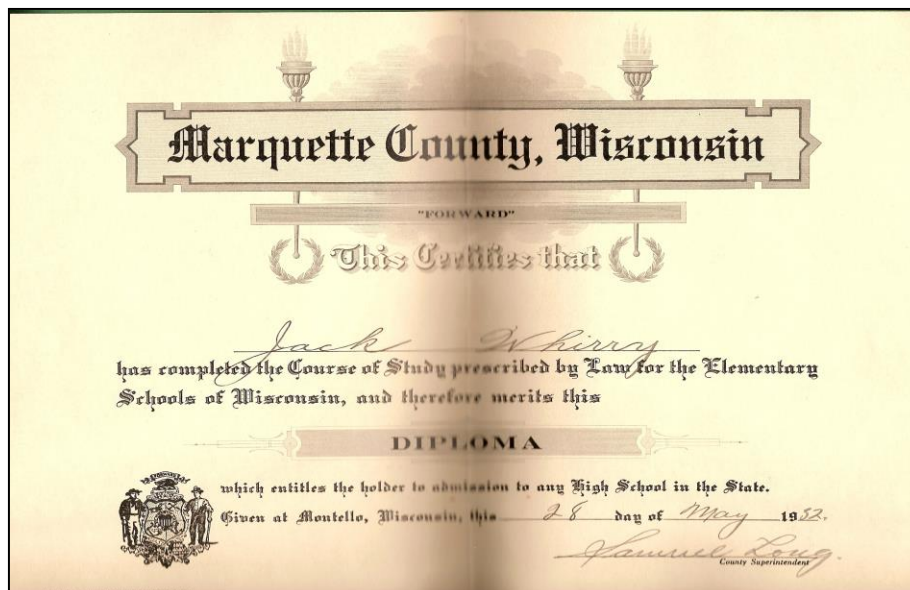
The highlight of my grade school years was probably our trip out to Washington D.C. My guess is that it was less than \$100 to take the trip to D.C. in 1930. We traveled by train and, if my



memory serves me right, I believe that I was the only little boy from my school that got to go. My hero, Judge Callahan from Montello, was along

as well. Anyway, I'm going to guess that we got on the train in Glenn Oak and from there began our exciting adventure. I even took my mouth organ along and serenaded my fellow passengers while we traveled. During our long train ride, I met another young boy and we went wandering around on the train seeing what kind of mischief we could get into. We found and devoured a vat of milk that was probably intended for the passengers. Now I wasn't really into milk because of my experiences in milk production, but I was pretty thirsty at the time, so I indulged myself. We also got into a bunch of peanut butter, which was a real treat for me because I loved the stuff! We pigged out! Much to the relief of the train crew, we finally arrived at our destination. One of my buddies and I rode the elevator all the way to the top of the Washington Monument which was 556 feet and then we ran all the way back down on the stairs. I remember feeling like my legs were going to melt out from under me. Many other sites and adventures made my visit to Washington D.C. a trip that I will never forget!

All in all, my grade school years were a full and rich experience for me as a young boy, but time marched on and after completing eight years of primary school in seven, it was time for me to head to Montello High School at the ripe old age of 12 years. If I had to estimate, I would say that there were probably about 150 students enrolled in the High School when I first began attending there, few of whom I knew at all. Let's just say that it was an adjustment for me to go from a school of seven or eight kids to one with over 100 students.



I was a good deal younger than a lot of people in my class, so I was not considered to be a hulk of an athlete or anything like that. We didn't even have physical education classes. I guess we got more than enough exercise by working on the farm. Oddly enough, I wasn't even involved in any agricultural events during my high school years. In fact, nothing in that area of education was offered until my junior or senior year of school.

During the summertime in my teen years, I used to help my dad and my Uncle Ed, Aunt Edna's husband, with the threshing. Uncle Ed and my father jointly owned a threshing



machine and due to the loss of one of my uncle's arms in a threshing machine accident years earlier, I was hired to be the grease monkey for the two of them. I still vividly recall those scorching summer days when we would be threshing in the fields from dawn to dusk.

Sometimes, we would have threshing days when all the neighbors would meet and we would thresh together. The men would work out in the fields while the women scurried around in the kitchen fixing us a feast...a huge spread of all of their special dishes. To this day I can almost smell that delicious food. Oh dear...my mouth is starting to water again!

I had Scarlet Fever during my senior year of high school. I was quarantined for the six weeks that I was ill and had to move away from the home farm for that period of time. If I would have stayed home while I was sick, our milk would have become quarantined as well, and we couldn't allow that to happen. During my quarantine, I lived in Montello with the McDowell family, shirt-tail relatives I called Uncle James and Aunt Sarah. I remember that my buddies from school would come and holler at me from a distance so that they wouldn't catch anything.



There were 33 students in my graduating class and my rank was toward the top at number 11. There had probably been closer to 40 students at the beginning of the year, but even back in those days we would have students leave school before the end of the year. Times were hard. So there I was, only four short years after beginning high school and I was off to the city to attend the University of Wisconsin, Madison at the age of 16.



College Years



It is a mystery why I ever even ended up going to the University. Why, in those days people didn't just up and go to college...especially at 16 years of age. A lot of boys my age went to the Civil Conservation Corp (CCC) when they completed high school. There were at least five or six boys from my class that went there after our senior year. They lived in barracks and earned something like \$25 per month for their work, but were only allowed to keep \$5 of it for themselves. The rest of the money was sent home to aid their struggling families. After all, it was during the Great Depression. My friend Jim Lytle told me all about his experience at the CCC. I was very fortunate that I had the opportunity to further my education beyond high school.

I was just 16 years old when my parents dropped me off at the bottom of Bascom Hill in Madison, Wisconsin with nothing but two sets of clothing and a mind hungry to learn. I didn't even know what I wanted to major in or where I was supposed to go. I ended up having my first conversation at the University with an advisor at the College of Letters and Science. After he thoroughly questioned me about my interests and strengths, he guided me over to Ag Hall where I met with Dean Kivlin, the man who was to be my advisor throughout the next four years. Mr. Kivlin helped me understand what I needed to do for a degree in Agriculture and got me headed in the right direction, one that I would follow for the rest of my career.

My very first roommate at school was named John O'Connell and he was studying to become an FBI agent. We lived in a dorm on 1213 Johnson Street, but only roomed together during my freshman year. Not long after I had begun attending the UW, I met a guy name Faville "Fay" Bayles, who was in several of my classes.



We got along really well and decided to room together the following year on Charter Street. At that residence, we did janitorial work for the building in which our main job was to keep the coal-burning furnace going. Interestingly enough, Don and Ardith McDowell, my second cousin and his wife, lived in the very same building as we did during that time, so that was a pleasant arrangement. I couldn't have asked for better neighbors! The following year, Fay and I met a guy named Roy Melvin and the three of us moved into a small apartment together on Johnson Street.



It was around that time that I purchased my first 16-hole harmonica in a hock shop for one dollar. Fay played the Spanish guitar and the two of us started jamming with one another. Somewhere along the way, we met Grant Bessie, a guy who was studying string bass in the School of Music. We must have been in some of the same classes. Anyway, that meeting marked the beginning of our college musical trio, which was made up of a



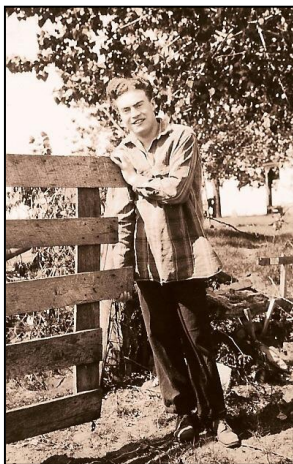
harmonica, a string bass, and a Spanish guitar. One day, Grant and Fay decided to swap instruments and Grant picked up the guitar while Fay tried his hand at the bass fiddle. Poor Roy wasn't much of a musician, so he was the only odd man out. Our trio usually played for only simple small scale occasions like 4-H functions, but once we were asked to perform in Dalton for a dance. That was a special treat! We also had the opportunity play on the Portage radio station WIBU where we were sponsored by H.A. Freitag and Son. On the day of our radio gig, the weather was awful and on our way to Portage we came very close to being in a serious car accident. We were driving along by the

Madison airport when two vehicles suddenly came over the hill driving straight toward us...taking up both lanes on the road. The roadways were very icy, but thankfully the two cars parted and we were able to pass safely between them. Whew! That was what I would call a close call...and a mini miracle!

I will never forget the old apartment that my good friends and I shared during our senior year. There are many memories from those old days. Roy Melvin, Fay Bayles, and John Polish (from Sturgeon Bay) and I had some great times together.



One funny occurrence in particular stands out above the rest in my mind. Fay, Roy, and I were all taking a class in Entomology (the study of insects) together when Fay somehow contracted a strain of creeping dandruff or lice. We all ended up taking some samples of Fay's bountiful lice supply and used it in our final bug collection project. I got an "A" if I remember correctly. Now talk about taking lemons and making lemonade!



It was hard to keep in touch with my folks while I was away at school. After all, phones were expensive luxuries back then and were used sparingly. I probably didn't call home more than a dozen times during the four years that I was at the UW. However, I did my best to make it home on most weekends in order to help my folks out on the farm. I would hitchhike on highway 51 in order to get a free ride to Dalton. If I wasn't able to make it home for a couple of weeks, I would always try to write my mother to let her know what I was up to...just so she wouldn't worry. After all, it was our last name!

I took boxing as an elective Phy Ed course at the U.W. and I will never forget feeling as though my legs were going to melt out from underneath me when I was going down the stairs to enter the ring for my very first match. Another class that stands out in my mind

is freshman chemistry...my most dreaded subject of all that I was forced to take. I hadn't had any science classes during high school in Montello which meant that most of my classmates had a head start on me. Somehow, I managed to pass that class, but not without a lot of study and even more prayer! Even today I shudder to think of it!

In all of my years at the U.W., I don't believe that I ever stayed up all night in order to study for an examination, but I did "cram" from time to time for a big test. I wasn't much of a library person because the library had to do with books, which had to do with words, and words were simply too close to English for me...the subject that I liked the least next to chemistry.



During those college years, food was scarce and I didn't eat very well as a result. After my weekend visits home, I remember that my mother would always send me back to school with some good home cookin'. Sadly, that didn't usually last for the whole week. I will never forget a place that my companions and I would go for a 10 cent hotdog. It was a restaurant called Coney Island and we would go there about once a week. My, was that ever a treat! Along with my studies, I kept a couple of jobs on the side in order to bring in a little extra income. I mostly had ushering jobs working at football games, basketball games, and boxing matches.

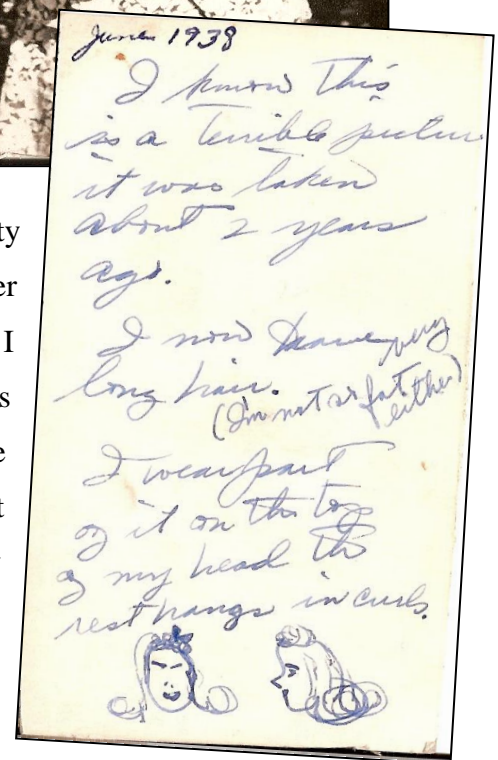
Hitch-hiking and Wedding Bells

It was the summer of 1939 when I first laid eyes on the girl who was to become my wife. I had gone to a dance at Scharenberg's Resort on White Lake...just outside of Montello. I can still remember walking into the dance hall and seeing two girls standing next to each other. I remember thinking that they looked like twins. I later learned that they were sisters staying with their grandparents in a cottage on White



Lake. The older girl's name was June and the younger one was named Mickey (Marion). I can still see her standing there...in bobby socks, saddle shoes and a pleated skirt looking just as pretty as a picture. I can't remember what my first thought was when I met Mickey that night, but it was

a great thought and I'd live it all over again if I had the chance. I guess you could use the old quote "love at first sight" to describe my condition after meeting the lovely 15-year-old Mickey Schmidt. That night marked the beginning of a beautiful love story that was destined to forever change my life.



During the two years after Mickey and I met, before we were married, we spent as much time together as we possibly could. I probably made 50 trips hitch-hiking back and forth between UW Madison and Wauwautosa where Mickey was from, in order to see



her. One time we even hitch-hiked together, but those were the days when it was a common and relatively safe practice. More often than not, Mickey would take a train from Milwaukee to Madison to come and see me. Up until that point in time, I had been going home to help my folks out on the farm most weekends, but now my interests were quite divided and I usually opted to head in a different direction instead to see my sweetheart. There was an old saying that defined our situation perfectly, "Life is one thing right after another...and love is two things after each other." That was most certainly the case with Mickey and me!

Needless to say, I had a lot of memorable adventures during those hitch-hiking days. I would always carry my little portable radio along on my trips to see Mickey. It was about the size of a briefcase, only a little smaller and thicker. One winter, when I was hitch-hiking back to Madison from Wauwautosa, it was really icy on the west end of Waukesha. There was a train track that ran between Waukesha and Oconomowoc that, uniquely enough, was designed to travel parallel to the roadway where the vehicles traveled. Essentially, the tracks shared the road with cars. Anyway, I remember that the driver I was riding with lost control of his car because of the grooves on either



side of the rails on the track. We went right into a ditch and then slammed into a raised driveway. We probably weren't going more than 20 to 25 miles per hour, but it was still an abrupt stop. Due to the fact that there was no such thing as a seatbelt back then, I flew forward and hit my forehead on the rearview mirror. It wasn't anything serious, but I had a pretty bad cut and it bled like a stuck hog. The saddest part of the whole ordeal was that my little radio, the one that traveled everywhere with me, was seriously damaged after slamming into the backseat. It wasn't good for much of anything after that, except for maybe being used as a baby rattle when you would shake it.



The things that we did together on our dates varied, depending on where we were meeting. When I went to see her, often we would travel to downtown Milwaukee and go shopping. We would often stop off at a little café to share our favorite drink...Cherry Coke. There was also an ice cream shop called Gillies that we enjoyed frequenting. What a refreshing delight that was!



We would get a cone on our way to or from the Milwaukee Zoo or the State Fair. Sometimes we would go to a restaurant in Wauwatosa called the Sahara. Of course there were no alcoholic beverages sold there, but there was a dance floor! On one particular visit to the Sahara, little to my knowledge, there was a photographer from LIFE magazine at the restaurant taking some pictures. Somehow, my face ended up in the background of a picture in LIFE and a friend spotted me in that week's issue and mailed me a copy. That was one of those mini miracles in my lifetime.



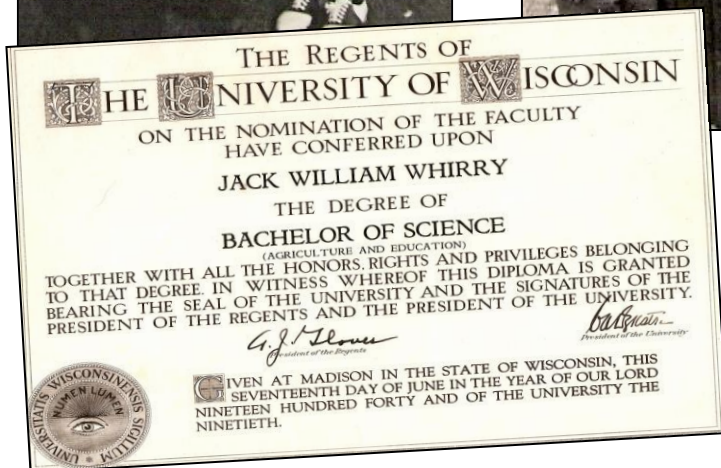
When Mickey would come to visit me at my home in Dalton, there weren't as many things to do there as there were in the city, but we would still have a lovely time together. I remember taking her just outside of Montello to go moon gazing. I don't remember how many times we went...but I suppose we took my Wisconsin blanket and my radio and just enjoyed looking up at the night sky.

I remember it as being a piece of heaven on earth! Needless to say, we were quite taken with each other and knew that we wanted to get married.





I was in college for the first year that we dated and then I graduated with my degree in Agricultural Education in 1940. I can still remember my graduation day so long ago. Mickey came for the occasion and we took lots of pictures of me with my college buddies and me with my sweetheart.



By the fall season of 1940, I had landed a teaching position in Fish Creek, Wisconsin. There's a rather interesting story behind how I got my very first job. My advisor, J.A. Jones from the

University, became aware of a job opening at Gibraltar High School in Fish Creek and recommended me for the position. John Polish, a young man from Sturgeon Bay who lived in the same dormitory as I did during college, was also applying for the position. As a matter of fact, I stayed with his family during my application process. But somehow, I managed to get the job over him. I remember feeling kind of bad for John, but I knew that providence had a hand in allowing me to get the position. After all, I needed to save my money so that I would have enough to marry and support my beloved Mickey. I was only 20 years old when I got the job in Fish Creek. I was making \$1600 per year which averaged out to \$133.33 per month. My starting salary was less than young teachers make these days, but back then it was enough to live on.

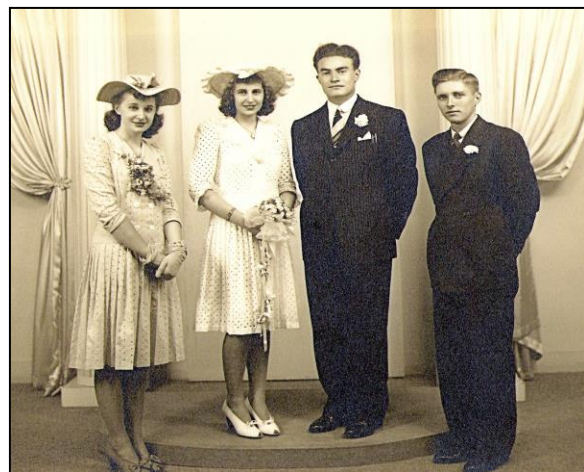


After I settled in Fish Creek, there were a lot of trips back to Wauwautosa to see Mickey while she was still living at home. I vividly remember those long, sleepy drives back to Door County on Sunday nights following my visits. It was usually two or three in the morning before I would get back to Fish Creek. Nevertheless, it was well worth the loss of sleep!

During that first year of teaching, I stayed with an older couple named Frank and Laura Church. I got connected with Mr. and Mrs. Church through someone at the school. I'm not really sure exactly about how we officially got acquainted, but it turned out to be a very convenient situation for me. I will always remember Mrs. Church's mashed potatoes because she would sprinkle them with paprika.



Finally, the long-awaited day came...the day that Mickey and I were married. June 21, 1941 was a day that I will never forget. It was the hottest day of the year and the first day of summer. We were married at a Lutheran Church in Wauwautosa and Mickey's Uncle, Reverend William Neibling married us. Mickey's sister June was her bridesmaid and Roy Melvin, my buddy from college, was my groomsman. I recall being pretty nervous that day...after all, it was the first and last time I was ever going to get married! The church was just one block away from Mickey's house and the following day, we had a reception there. My parents were unable to attend the wedding because of work on the farm, but they did come to our reception. It was a joyous celebration!



For our Honeymoon, we returned home to a new little house in Fish Creek. I'm pretty sure that we were the first people to live in that house.

It was owned by the manager of the Peninsula State Park and we honeymooned right there for about 3 years. I also had a season pass

the Peninsula State Park golf course, so that was nice for me! One of the gifts we received for our wedding was a black cocker spaniel from my best man, Roy. In light of the wartime, we named the puppy "Jeep" and she became a special addition to our new little family.



can still vividly remember the very first Christmas that Mickey and I spent together as husband and wife. It was December of 1941 and we had spent Christmas Eve with Mickey's parents in Wauwautosa. It was mid-afternoon when we decided to head back to my parents' farm. When we started driving, it was lightly snowing, but the weather rapidly grew worse and in no time we were in the middle of a blinding blizzard. Back in those days somehow winter storms seemed so much worse than they do now. One of the reasons is probably because the roads weren't maintained very well during

the winter months due to the fact that the snow plows used at the time were not very efficient. Snow plows in the 1940's were nothing more than caterpillar tractors with big v-shaped



plows hooked on to the front of them. Anyway, back to the story. Mickey and I were just

north of Hartford by a couple of miles and we were meeting cars coming toward us. Pretty soon, traffic slowed way down and people actually got snowed into the lanes that they were traveling in. Mickey and I were no exception. When I was no longer able to move our car, we got out and walked to a farm house that was in site. When we got there, it was obvious that many other stranded people had the same idea as we had because that farm family soon had a house full of snowed-in guests! Even some soldiers on leave from the war were snowed in there. They had walked into Hartford and gotten some liquor to liven up the party. Everyone was having a ball. The farmer had a frozen locker full of meat and he brought up a load of beef steak in order to feed the multitudes. And so it was that the night passed. We could hardly sleep that night because there were so many people in that house and *everyone* had to stay over. It wasn't until around lunch time the following day before a primitive snowplow was able to clear the road enough for us to get out. As I recall, there were several cars

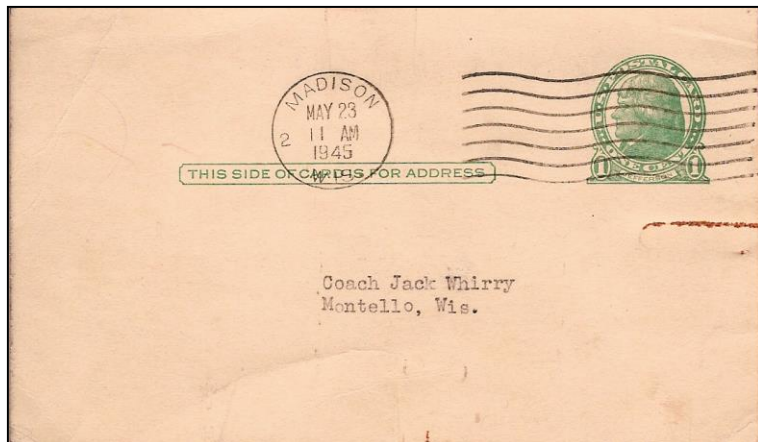


that the snowplow had accidentally hit and damaged while trying to plow the snow and word got back to the farmhouse that this had happened. Let's just say that it was a long walk to our car that afternoon, not knowing what kind of condition we were going to find it in. Thankfully, our car came out of the whole ordeal unharmed and so did we. Late that afternoon, we finally made it to my Uncle Arnold's house and then called my dad. He came with a team of horses and a sleigh to pick us up. The snow had piled up so high that my dad was able to cut across the field and ride right over the top of the fence. In those days, we would get snowed in for up to a week at a time. Needless to say, our first Christmas together didn't go as we had planned, but it was a memorable one!



I taught at Gibraltar High from 1940 to 1943 and a typical day at work for me went something like this...I had four classes of vocational Ag students during the regular school day. One of the significant

requirements of my job was that I had to visit each of my students (which came out to be about 50 kids) on their home farms every week. Back then, my school week lasted five and a half days because of the extra time I needed to spend with my individual students working on their projects. Even if my time wasn't consumed with students on Saturday morning, I was still expected to put in a half day of work at the school. Another one of my duties was to teach night classes to the area farmers. I would give a two-hour presentation to those in attendance and then the farmers would have a chance to ask questions. Now, keep in mind that as a new teacher, a lot of those local farmers knew more than I did...which was a bit intimidating sometimes! I taught three separate night classes that would meet ten times each school year and I was paid \$5 for every meeting held. This was the blueprint of the schedule that I followed during my three years of employment at Gibraltar High School. Another experience that I had in my early years of teaching was coaching the track team. I didn't know beans from bologna about how to do something like that because I had never even taken track myself, but none the less, I did what was expected of me and somehow managed to coach the track team.



On December 16, 1942, Mickey and I gained a wonderful new addition to our family with the birth of a beautiful son...Jon William Whirry. The baby was in a hurry to make his first appearance, so we didn't even have time to make it all the way to Baileys' Harbor where Mickey's doctor was. Jonny was instead delivered by Dr. Dorchester in Sturgeon Bay. Thankfully, everything went smoothly, despite the fact that the little guy was born breech, and we came home with a perfect little son.

Move to Montello



When my contract was up in the summer of 1943, I decided that I wanted to get closer to where my roots were. So, Mickey, Jonny, and I packed up and moved back to Dalton to live with my folks on the home farm until we could find a place of our own. About that time, WWII was in full swing and I was put into a 1-A draft classification for the army. This meant that, pending the results of a physical examination, I was next in line for heading to war.

But when I was examined by a doctor and found to have a curvature of the spine, my number dropped to a 4-F classification and I was spared from going to the war. In essence, I failed my exam which was yet another mini miracle in my life.

A different mini miracle quickly followed when, due to other Ag teachers being drafted and leaving for the war, two local teaching positions opened up, one in Montello and the other in Endeavor. I moved my family to Montello and assumed both the Montello and Endeavor positions on what was to be the equivalent



of a part-time basis at each school. It was a tricky schedule to keep. One year, I would put in my mornings at Montello and afternoons in Endeavor, then the following year, my schedule flipped and I would spend mornings in Endeavor and afternoons in Montello. A similar schedule to the one that I had kept in Fish Creek followed me to my new positions, except for one interesting glitch. My Montello and Endeavor students were

competing against one another in all kinds of contests, speaking, quartets, judging...you name it. I was virtually coaching teams to compete against each other.

Life was quite different during World War II, despite the fact that we were a great distance from where the fighting was taking place. Our nation became extremely aware of the need to conserve in every possible area that we could. During the first year of the war, there were really odd things that we did to help with the war effort in small ways. One of the things we were asked to do was to save our meat fryings, which were then used to make explosives. There was actually a major ammunition factory in Baraboo, so that brought the war a little closer to home. I was even able to get my students involved in the war effort by having my shop class whittle miniature models of enemy airplanes in order to help the Air Force personnel learn how to identify different types of aircraft. They actually used our models in their military classes. During 1943 and 1944, we were asked to search for milkweed pods so the military could use them to make life vests. My students, Mickey, and I would go on hunts for milkweed and then donate our findings to

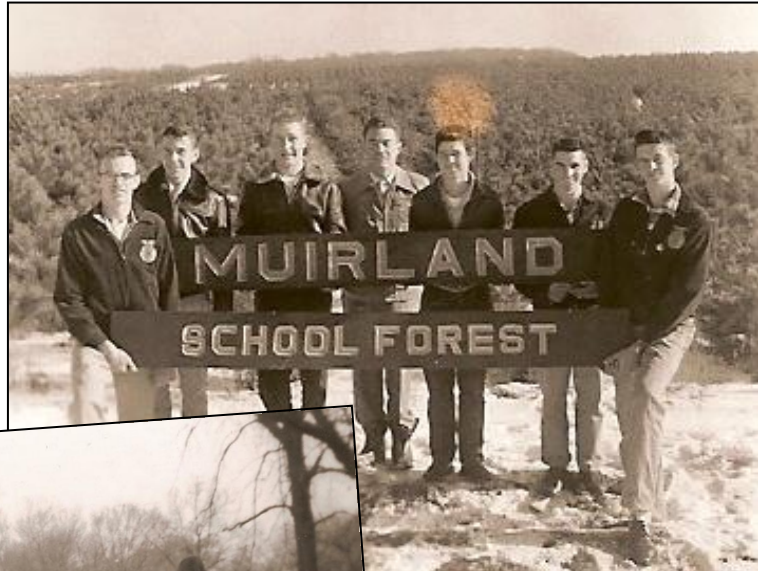


the armed forces. I was glad that I could help my country, despite the fact that I was unable to go and fight.

Aside from a very full schedule, there were definite benefits of teaching in two schools, the largest of which being an increased salary. It was very fortunate when the Montello

school was able to purchase a forest for the FFA boys to work on and learn from. The school was able to get possession of the land because the previous owners who farmed it were forced to move to a better farming location, due to the sandy consistency of the soil.

Typically sandy soil is unproductive for farm use, but it is ideal for the growth of pine trees and so it was perfect for us. I was able to arrange for the purchase of 40 acres for the school for only \$10 per acre. The FFA named the property



Muir Land School Forest in honor of John Muir, the famous naturalist who grew up very close to where I did.

My Ag boys and I hand

planted little seedlings...Norway Red Pines to be exact. We planted

1200 trees per acre of land. It was considered to be a good forestry practice to take a few

of the trees that were planted when they were between six and eight feet tall and use them for Christmas trees. So the FFA boys and I harvested Christmas trees and then sold them to the public. One of our biggest



customers was a man named Bill Skaife who was a college student studying Law in Iowa. In order to help finance his education, Bill would buy Christmas trees from us for one dollar and set up a tree lot in Iowa where he would then sell the trees. I don't know exactly how Bill and I met, but we got to be good friends and we continued our tree business dealings with him for several years. From our tree sale profits alone the FFA made enough money to invest the funds into the purchase of an old Ford tractor, which we then used for the maintenance of the farm. In addition to selling the trees, the FFA were also able to provide a tree for every teacher's room in the school at Christmas time, which added to the holiday spirit.

Sometime later, another opportunity to purchase land arose. I received a call from the district forester, E.L. Vinton, who had learned of an 80-acre farm in the town of Harris. It was a parcel of land that the former owners were unable to pay the taxes on, so it was repossessed by Marquette County and was put up for sale. Dr. Richard Inman was the president of the Montello School Board, so he and I went to look at the property together. Dr. Inman decided that he would make the initial purchase and then have the school buy the land from him because the land had to sell rather quickly and we needed to make an immediate decision. The price we paid for the land was unheard of... 80 acres for only \$4 per acre. There was even a small lake included on the property and the entire purchase cost only \$320. At the next annual meeting of the Montello School District, it was decided that the school would purchase the land from Dr. Inman. Now, the school district was pinching pennies at the time and didn't really have the funds to back such a purchase,



but they somehow managed to gather the necessary resources and Hungry Hills Montello School Forest became another official part of the FFA hands-on curriculum.

History of the Montello F. F. A.
Judging Teams

Prepared by Joe Spain

Mr. Jack Whirry has been the advisor of the Montello Future Farmers of America since 1943. He works hard every year getting the teams ready for the big day. As far as I know, he is the best advisor that the chapter has ever had. He has been here a long time and plans to retire soon, even though everyone wishes he wouldn't. I don't know who the school would get in place of him, but I do know that the person would not be as good an advisor.

In my report I wish to tell the results of the State and National contests. It will include Poultry Management, which has had 19 first place places since 1948. Also included are terms in Dairy Products, Dairy Cattle, Farm Crops and Farm Management. I will also tell the year, place in state, the individuals in the event and the rules for each contest.

Farm Management

This contest is designed to test the contestants knowledge and understanding of basic economic principles essential in the successful management of a farm business. Among other things, contestants will be expected to know how to keep and analyze farm records, evaluate farm leasing arrangements, determine the proper use of credit, and logic to determine the proper combination of resources of enterprises.

The Farm Management test is limited to one hour and thirty minutes. One three member team per school may enter.

The Montello Chapter didn't have a farm management team until 1952.

In 1952, the team placed first in the state. The members were Robert Cotter, John Furman and William Bettin. Individual placings are unavailable.

In 1953, the team placed eleventh in state. The members were Ralph Buchholz, William Barron and Donald Roidt. Individual placing is not known.

In 1954, the team placed fourth. It consisted of James North, placing sixth, Donald Blada, tied for seventh, and Howard Zellmer, also tied for seventh place individually.

In 1955, the team placed twenty-fourth. The members were Robert Bornick, Gene Davis and Vernon Zink.

In 1956, Montello didn't have a farm management team.

In 1957, the team placed fifteenth. The members were Fritz Kendall, Bob Robicheau and Fred Warnke. Individual placing is not known.

In 1958, the team placed seventh in the state. Tom McDowell placed second. Joe Lalar and Layne Kidney were the other members.

In 1959, the team placed twentieth. Jim Kollaszar tied for third. Joe Kofka and Paul McNamara were the other team members.

In 1960, again Montello did not have a team.

In 1961, the team placed tenth. The members were Norman Ingraham, Gerald Reusch and Dick Williamson.

The next farm management team wasn't again until 1975. The team placed fourth in the state. Team members were Steve Buchholz, placing first, and George Kilbride and Kevin Roberts were also on the team.

In 1952 the farm management won a trip to the International Livestock Show at the National Convention.

Dairy Cattle

Some of the rules for dairy cattle judging are: 1. Advisor should pick up contestants cards thirty minutes before contest. 2. Do not bend placing cards. 3. Makes changes on your card clear. 4. Do not touch cattle. 5. If you have questions, ask your group leader. In the conformation analysis class, ten questions about one of the judging classes is asked.

There have been only two years that the chapter has had a dairy cattle contest. One in 1960 and one in 1975.

The team placed second in the state in 1960. It consisted of Judy Hartwig, Jim Polcyn and Ralph Robinson. The team won a trip to the National Dairy Cattle Congress at Waterloo, Iowa. That year, Judy Hartwig, the only girl contestant in the entire contest, won second place in the state contest in competition with 395 boys.

In 1975, the team placed 39th out of 173 teams. It consisted of Gary Eckstein, Dennis Schwochert and John Wegner. Alternates were Kathy Roberts and Randy Schmitz.

In 1976, the team consisted of Tim McGwin, Brent Hunter and Mark Rozek.

Dairy Products

Seven samples of milk are scored and criticized. Only milk is used for selecting the winning team.

Montello didn't have a Dairy Products team until 1962.

In 1962, the team placed second in the state. Team members were Jim Polcyn, placing fourth, Judy Hartwig, placing sixth and Wayne Hein.

In 1963, the team placed first. Jim Millard placed first, Glenn Stelter fourth, and Peter Stewart, eighth. In the National convention they won a silver medal.

In 1964, the team placed first once again. James Roidt placed first individually, Kenneth Hoeft, second, and Wayne Hein, third.

In 1965, the team again placed first. Dale Christensen and Wayne Morris tied for first place. Gordon Lichtenberg tied for fourth. They won a silver medal at the National Convention.

In 1966, the team placed second. It consisted of Bill Brown, tied for second, Ken McGwin third, and Allen Seehaver, fourth.

In 1967, the team placed third. Phil Kollaszar tied for fifth, Neal Turner, tenth. Gary Kamin was the other team member.

In 1968, the team placed first. Greg Wegner placed second, Larry Aldrich, third, and Les Williamson, fourth. They won a gold medal at the National convention.

In 1969, the team placed second. Bob Ebert and Earl Spain tied for first and Ron Sell placed third.

In 1970, the team placed first. Tom Cotter placed first and John McGwin and Bruce Stelter tied for second. The team won a gold medal at the National convention.

In 1971, the team placed first. Alan Christensen tied for third. Mike Beckwith tied for fourth and David Hunter for fifth. They won a gold medal at the National convention.

In 1972, the team placed first. Jon Ebert placed first, Kermit Daye, second and David Radke, fourth. The team won a silver medal at the National convention.

In 1973, the team placed first. Dennis Klawitter placed first, Randy Krueger second, and Ron Smith, third.

Montello F.F.A. Dairy Products Team won the World Dairy Expo in 1971 and 1972.

Farm Crops

In farm crops competition each contestant must place four samples of grain, such as alfalfa hay, wheat, barley, soybeans and corn by quality.

Farm Crops teams have never won the state contest. The highest they ever placed was second, in 1950 with thirds in 1953, 1956, 1966, and 1975.

In 1949, the team placed seventh. David Puterbaugh, Maynard Schmudlach and Kenneth Soda were the other contestants.

In 1950, the team placed second. Delvin Mittelsteadt tied for fourth. Charles Puterbaugh and Norman Roberts were the other contestants. Since the same team won twice in a row, the second place team, Montello, went to National Hay and Grain show, which they won.

In 1951, the team placed eighth in the state. Howard Puterbaugh, Donald Wincell and Lloyd Zellmer were team members.

In 1952, the chapter did not have a farm crops team.

In 1953, the team placed third. Dale Steinhaus placed fourth. Robert Schinkel and John Bandt were also on the team.

In 1954, the team placed fourteenth in the state. Donald Blada, Tom Kusick and Francis Roidt were the contestants.

In 1955, the team placed eleventh. None of the team placed in the top ten, which consisted of Allen Smith, Leonard Zuhlke and Marlin Zellmer.

In 1956, the team placed third. Mark Furman tied for sixth. Kelly Campion and Jon Steinhaus were the other team members.

In 1957, the team placed thirteenth. It consisted of Jerry Glover, Bill Kempley and Charles O'Malley.

In 1958, the team placed fourth. Mike Kollaszar tied for sixth. Others on the team were William Whirry and Vincent Wianeki.

In 1959, the team placed at eighteenth. None of the team placed in the top ten. It consisted of Roger Bliefnick, Tom O'Malley and Dick Roidt.

In 1960, once again the chapter did not have a farm crops team.

In 1961, the team placed seventh. Kyle Kidney placed seventh. Other team members were Judy Hartwig and Paul Zellmer.

In 1962, the team placed eighth. None of the members placed in the top ten. The team consisted of Jon Polcyn, Peter Stewart and Roger Reusch.

In 1963, the team placed tenth. The members of the team were Ronald Barganz, Roger Reusch and Curtis Trimble.

In 1964, the team placed seventh. Bill Hartwig placed eighth. Other team members, Ronald Gerke, Gordon Lichtenberg and Tom Roidt.

In 1965, the team placed fourth. Roger Fleegal placed third. Ronald Gerke and Kenneth Krentz were also on the team.

In 1966, the team placed third. John Nindorf placed seventh. The other members were Paul Metcalf and Pat Solterman.

In 1967, the team placed sixth. It consisted of Ron Hunter, Norman Stelter and Dennis Wegner.

In 1968, the team again placed sixth. Darwin Barron placed tenth. David Rozek and Earl Spain were the other members.

In 1969, the team placed fifth. Tom Cotter placed tenth. Jerry Rowe and Dan Rozek were also on the team.

In 1970, the team placed eighth. It consisted of Dave Hunter, Don Walters and Mike Atkinson.

In 1971, the team placed seventh. The team consisted of Jon Ebert, Harry Lynch and Tom Pietrykowski.

In 1972, the team placed fourth. It consisted of Teri Klawitter, Michael Lynch and Kurt Roberts.

In 1973, the team placed eighth. The members were George Kilbride, John Millard and Kevin Roberts. None of the team members placed in the top ten.

In 1974, the team placed fourth. Kathy Roberts placed fifth. Orin Schimmel and Mike Gruber did not place in the top ten.

In 1975, the team placed third in the state. George Cairns placed eighth, Joe Spain ninth, Tim McGwin was the other team member.

In 1976, the team placed fifth. Team members were Tom Wilson, Phil Wiannecki and Ken Kerl.

Poultry Management

There is a time limit of 15 minutes for each class. In each instance a 12 minute warning is given. Live birds may be handled by contestants, and wing badges are used to identify these birds. Contestants and official judges do not handle the dressed birds or the eggs to be graded for exterior quality.

In 1949, the team placed first. Fred Meiller placed first. Junior Blada, second and Robert Salzwedel, sixth. The team got a bronze medal in the National convention.

In 1950, the team placed second. Howard Puterbaugh placed fourth, Herbert Klawitter, seventh, and Graydon Gray, eighth. They won a silver medal in the National convention.

In 1951, the team placed first. John Furman placed first. Orland Buchholz, sixth and Don Rowe, eighth. They won a gold medal in the National convention.

In 1952, the team placed fifth. Ralph Buchholz and Dale Steinhaus tied for eighth. Bill Barron was the other team member.

In 1953, the team placed first. James North placed first, Don Blada tied for second, and Howard Zellmer was seventh. They won a silver medal in the National convention.

In 1954, the team placed fourth. Alan Smith tied for seventh. Leonard Zuhlke and Marlin Zellmer were other team members.

In 1955, the team placed first. Jon Steinhaus placed second and Kelly Campion won fourth. Mark Furman was the other team member. The team won a silver medal in the National convention.

In 1956, the team placed first. Fritz Kendall placed first and Robert Robicheau, second. Jerry Glover was also on the team. The team won a silver medal in the National convention.

In 1957, the team placed second. Tom McDowell placed fourth, Gary Hunter tied for fifth and Mike Kollaszar tied for seventh.

In 1958, the team placed third. Gary Glover placed sixth. Stanley Puterbaugh seventh, and the other member is not known.

In 1959, the team placed first. Harry Kratz tied for first. and Edwin Stelter and Jon Whirry tied for seventh. The team won a gold medal in the National convention.

In 1960, the team placed first, Gerald Reusch placed second and Norman Ingraham, fourth and Russell Whirry was the other member. The team won a gold medal in the National convention.

In 1961, the team placed first. Wayne Hein placed first and Jon Polcyn tied for tenth. Jim Polcyn was the other member. The team won first place in the Nation and was awarded a gold trophy.

In 1962, the team placed first. Ronald Barganz placed first, Glenn Stelter, second and Curtis Trimble fifth. The team won a gold medal in the National convention.

In 1963, the team placed first. Jim Roidt placed first and Ernest Hunter, third. Tom Roidt was also on the team. The team won a silver medal in the National convention.

In 1964, the team placed first. Raymond Fleegal placed first, Dennis Schmudlach, second and Wayne Morris, third. The team placed first in the Nation.

In 1965, the team placed first. John Nindorf placed first, James Jensen tied for second, and Paul Metcalf, fourth. The team won a gold medal in the National convention.

In 1966, the team placed second. Dave Rataczak and Gary Kamin tied for second while John Priske placed eighth.

In 1967, the team placed first. Daryl Christensen placed first, Les Williamson fifth, and Greg Wegner tied for sixth. The team won a gold medal in the National convention.

In 1968, the team placed first. Bob Ebert was first, Dennis Schwanke, seventh and Don Stelter, eighth. The team won a gold medal in the National convention.

In 1969, the team placed second. Bruce Stelter placed third and Dennis Kamin, fourth and John McGwin was also on the team.

In 1970, the team placed second. Bill Calnin placed second, Alan Christensen, fourth and Dan Drew, seventh.

In 1971, the team placed first. Alan Keith placed first, Kermit Daye, second and David Radke, third. The team won a gold medal in the National Convention.

In 1972, the team placed first. Don Smith was first, Dennis Streich placed second, and Dennis Klawitter, third. The team won a gold medal in the National convention.

In 1973, the team placed first. Doug Berg placed second, Bill Meiller, third and Kurt Roberts, sixth. The team won a silver medal in the National convention.

In 1974, the team placed second. Jeff Owens placed second, Steve Buchholz, fifth and Kevin Roberts, seventh.

In 1975, the team placed first. Paul Greipentrog placed first, Cindy Krueger third, and Jeanne Walters sixth. The team finished eight in the National convention. Alternates were Tom Wilson and Phil Wianecki.

In 1976, the team again placed first in the state. Kathy Roberts finished first, George Cairnes, second and Joe Spain, fifth. Alternates were Mary Kilbride and John Wegned. The team will compete at Kansas City this fall.

Back in those days, teaching FFA became my life and the Future Farmer Creed was second to the Pledge of Allegiance for me. It went like this...



"I believe in the future of farming, with a faith born not of words but of deeds – achievements won by the present and past generations of agriculturists; in the promise of better days through better ways, even as the better things we now enjoy have come to us from the struggles of former years. I believe that to live and work on a good farm or to be engaged in other agricultural pursuit is pleasant as well as challenging for I know the joys and discomforts of agricultural life and hold an inborn fondness for

those associations which, even in hours of discouragement I cannot deny. I believe in leadership from ourselves and respect from others. I believe in my own ability to work efficiently and think clearly, with such knowledge and skill as I can secure, and in the ability of progressive agricultures to serve our own and the public interest in producing and marketing the products of our toil. I believe in less dependence on begging and more power in bargaining; in the life abundant and enough honest wealth to help make it so – for others as well as myself; in less need for charity and more of it when needed; in being happy myself and playing square with those whose happiness depends upon me. I believe that rural America can and will hold true to the best traditions of our national life and that I can exert an influence in my home and community which will stand solid for my part in that inspiring task."



All of the officers in our FFA meetings had a line to say when the role of officers was called. I still remember my part well. The FFA President would address me as "Mr. Advisor" to which I would reply, "Stationed by the owl." The President then questioned, "Your duties there?" and I responded, "The owl is a time-

honored emblem of knowledge and wisdom. Being older than the rest of you, I am called upon to advise you from time to time as the need arises. I hope that my advice will always be based upon true knowledge and ripened with wisdom."

Along with a growing workload at school, I had a growing family at home. Our first daughter, Merry, was born on December 25, 1945. That Christmas was another very memorable one for both Mickey and me! I wanted to name our little girl Merry Christmas in honor of her extra special birthday, but Mickey put her foot down and said that Merry Carol was the best she could do! ☺ Six years later, our second daughter, Jane Lynn was born on January 22, 1951. Our little Janie proved to be yet another sweet addition to our family. Three years later, Kathy Ann came into the world on November 10, 1953. Another sweet addition, Kathy was destined to be the youngest member of our home and after her birth, our family of six was complete.



In the late 1950's, I finally realized that maybe it was time for me to practice what I had been preaching and look for some good tree-planting land for myself. Now the plot really thickens here...my old friend, Bill Skaife and I were both looking for tree-farming land at the time.

Nettie Kitter was a woman from Illinois that Mickey and I had become friends with. She didn't have any family and she owned and lived in the nice old house on the Nettleton farm where my mother and her family once lived. There were also two recluses that lived on the farm with her and the story goes that while Nettie was gone on a trip, her beautiful home burned down to the ground. Supposedly, one of the old recluses burned up in the fire too, but if I go on about this I'll be telling you more than I know. Anyway, the remaining recluse moved into what we now know as the office on the tree farm until Nettie arranged for an old grey house to be moved onto the land just north of where the Whirry tree farm log cabin now stands. I think she got it from the Baraboo ammunition plant. One thing I will forever remember about Nettie is that she always powdered her face and as a result, her glasses were coated in powder every time I saw her.

When Nettie wanted to sell her 230-acre farm, Mickey and I, along with Bill and Nancy Skaife, purchased it from her. Our purchase went through in 1957 and we began planting trees like crazy. Our two families assumed joint tenancy of the land and Bill thought that we should plant the bare land on the farm with Scotch pine trees, which were quite popular during that time. Bill and I apparently picked a prime time to plant because there was even a government-sponsored program available that encouraged the conversion of formerly unused land to tree-growing land. Our joint land ownership with the Skaife's was short lived, however, because Bill had one of his investments go sour and he lost all of his money. As a result of his financial situation, Bill needed to sell his portion of the land, so Mickey and I ended up buying his half of the tree farm back from him and the rest is history. Over a period of about 4 years, our whole family worked together on the farm and planted 175 acres with about 1200 trees per acre which comes out to approximately 210,000 trees...quite an accomplishment! This figure doesn't even include the number of Christmas trees that we planted.

Favorite Hobbies

Pheasant hunting was my very favorite sport...the season that I anticipated all year long.

When I was young, my parents and I would get free eggs from the Poynette game farm.



We took the eggs home and went searching for a white rock chicken that was sitting on her nest. Let's just say that it was a trick to find an old broody hen willing to hatch our eggs for us. When the eggs hatched, we would release them into the wild and then go hunting! The general pheasant hunting season always began

right around the same time as our FFA judging competition in Kansas City. I can still recall the excitement and anticipation that I felt every year as I rushed home from the competition, a trip that was about 600 miles, in order to be back in time for opening day when the season began.

Hunting, in general, has always been a favorite sport of mine. In the past, I even hunted partridges (also known as rough grouse). I'll never forget one particular trip that I took with Mickey and two of my friends and their wives. We went up just to the west of Plainfield, anticipating the thrill of our partridge hunt. After not seeing any action, we emerged from the woods only to be greeted by a game warden who informed us that we were hunting in a restricted zone –unknown to us, of course. The warden took away our guns and fined us for our mistake. The funny thing about it is that we never even saw a partridge on that whole trip!





My first experience hunting deer was when I was about 21 years old. We took my Uncle Tony Utke's big old work truck on a 200-mile trip up North to a place called Glidden. Uncle Tony put me at a certain spot in the woods and there I experienced beginners luck. I shot a good-sized buck with my dad's old 30/30 rifle. It was a thrilling experience for me, and after that trip I was hooked on deer hunting! I still have the head of that trophy deer mounted in the den.

The various game that I hunted, trapped, fished for, and found across the years included all of the following: Mallard ducks, Wood ducks, Canada geese, turkeys, deer, otters, elk, bear, pheasants, fish (of all kinds), weasel, screech owl, gray squirrel, Bob White quail, Great-horned owl, badger, rabbit and Timber Doodle or woodcock.



I remember one particular fishing experience that I had with my buddy, Clarence Sell. Now, May fly fishing for trout was my favorite fishing pastime, but on this particular excursion I was using a cane pole and suddenly the bobber plunged down into the water. When I reeled in my lure, I had caught a 3-foot long Northern. That was one of my most memorable fishing experiences.

Another one of my hobbies from way back in the days of my young adulthood was golf. I



loved to golf! I was first introduced to the sport when I became a teacher in Fish Creek, right after Mickey and I were married. Because we rented our first little home from the Peninsula State Park superintendent, Mr. Grimmer, I had a complimentary year-long pass to the park's golf course. I can still remember taking our little black cocker spaniel, Jeep, to the golf course with me where she would find the lost golf balls of other golfers and bring them back to me. All that to say, I never even had to buy a golf ball! It was a pretty good deal. ☺

When Mickey and I relocated with my new teaching job in Montello, there weren't any golf courses close to where we lived, so I picked up bowling instead. I joined the bowling team in Montello where our sponsor was the Red Rock Soft Drink Company. I had several memorable experiences throughout my bowling career, but a couple of my bowling achievements really stand out in my mind. Once, during a bowling competition, I picked up a seven/ten split...something that is considered to be close to impossible most of the time! I hit the seven pin with the ball, it bounced into the back of the alley and then came back and hit the ten pin. I received a trophy and an ABC (American Bowling Congress) patch which was considered to be an extremely high honor. On another great bowling night, I got one hundred pins over my average for one game. Usually, I averaged somewhere in the 170's, but on that particular night of bowling, I got over 270 pins. Once again, I received recognition from the ABC for my game. Monday night was bowling night from my mid 20's to my early 80's, so that was a highlight of my week for many years.

Another one of my favorite hobbies that many people are familiar with has always been playing my mouth organ. Beginning with the Christmas program at the little Sump school in Dalton in 1930, and continuing throughout the rest of my life, my harmonicas have been faithful friends for a long, long time! I have at least 3 cigar boxes full of harmonicas...including the very first one that I played for that Christmas program. That old harmonica was called the "Goliath," and I can still play a tune or two on it, but it's a little rusty now. One of my specialties on my unique instrument is playing the mouth organ, by ear, with my nose! I won't even try to describe it because you really have to see it to believe it! ☺



Teaching Accomplishments and Awards

During my teaching years, I was involved in many extra-curricular activities in addition to my rigorous teaching regiment. One year, I was the chairman of the Agriculture Committee for War Savings Staff, and another year I served as the county chairman of the Wisconsin War Fund. I also served on the Marquette County Fair Board of Directors. In 1949, I became a Boy Scout Master and continued being a Boy Scout leader for the next 20 years. It was my honor and joy to sponsor the annual F.F.A. Father and Son Game Feed banquet for 18 years, and for an additional 15 years I had the privilege of sponsoring the Parent and Member banquet. Throughout the years, my students and I made, landscaped and maintained school forest and city entrance signs as part of the F.F.A. "Building Our American Communities" program (BOAC). My days were very full during this time as I was involved in several other BOAC projects including landscaping



and maintaining school grounds, screen planting the city dump, and initiating and managing a street tree-planting project for the city of Montello, a project for which we were awarded second place in the state of Wisconsin. Across the years, my

students and I designed and constructed over 75 farm entrance signs, several of which won national awards, including the national award in the Exchange of Ideas contest one year.

With the endless support of my loving wife and family, my students and I were able to achieve many great things during my 38-year-long career as a teacher of Agriculture. In 1948, my judging teams won the National Bronze Emblem Award in the area of judging poultry and eggs. In 1949, I was honored to receive the Wisconsin Poultry Improvement



Association Recognition Plaque and our judging team was also honored with the National Silver Emblem Award, which we were awarded with again in 1953, 1955 and 1956. In 1951, 1959, 1960 and 1962, in light of the excellent performance of our poultry and eggs judging teams, we were honored with the National Gold Emblem Award.



GOLD EMBLEM WINNERS in national poultry and egg judging competition, the Montello high school FFA judging team is shown above. The event took place at the national convention of the Future Farmers of America in Kansas City last week. The team, representing Wisconsin, is shown, from left, Jack Whirry, FFA advisor, Harry Kratz, Jon Whirry, Edwin Stelter and Val McReath. (Daily Register Photo)

Beginning in 1958 and continuing for six consecutive years, my judging teams won the National F.F.A. Award. From 1958 to 1962, I was fortunate to be presented with the Delkab Award. In the year 1960, I was very grateful to be presented with an Honorary F.F.A. Chapter Farmer Degree and



the following year, an Honorary State Farmer Degree. The year 1963 brought with it the presentations of both an Honorary F.F.A. American Farmer Degree and a Delta Theta Sigma Agriculture Fraternity honorary membership. In 1961 and 1964, my students took first place in the nation as winners of the Poultry Management Contest. The year 1964

brought the great honor of being awarded by the Montello Chamber of Commerce with their Distinguished Citizen Award. In 1965, to my great surprise, I was named the Wisconsin Teacher of the Year, at which time I was also given a Citation from the Wisconsin Legislature. In the following year, 1966, I was named Wisconsin's Outstanding Vocational Ag Teacher of the Year, another great honor. In 1967 and then 1977, I was presented with the American Legion Community Service Award and the State of Wisconsin Service Award.

Looking back across my years of teaching, I stand in awe of the long list of accomplishments and awards that my students and I were presented with during my 38-year-long career. I wasn't working for any of these things. I was simply striving to make a living and support my family to the best of my ability. I guess you could say that every dog has his day and my day was so long ago that I have trouble remembering it at times.



JACK WHIRRY—OUTSTANDING IN THE STATE

—Daryl R. Moen Photo

Jack Whirry

It was pleasing to report that Jack Whirry of Montello high school has been chosen Wisconsin's 1965 Teacher of the Year.

The selection was surprising only in that among the thousands of teachers all over Wisconsin there is an army of competent and dedicated teachers.

Jack Whirry has been vocational and agricultural instructor at Montello for many years. It is in this role that he has been so influential in guiding young boys, from city and country alike, towards personal achievement and the better way of life.

Skill as a teacher has been demonstrated many times. He has directed Future Farmers of America judging teams to close to a score of state championships and several national championships.

It is in his daily work, however, that the fruits of skilled guidance are evident. He has helped hundreds of boys become capable and successful long after they have left school. Some of them have gone on to become leaders in the image of their instructor.

Beyond his role as an educator, Jack

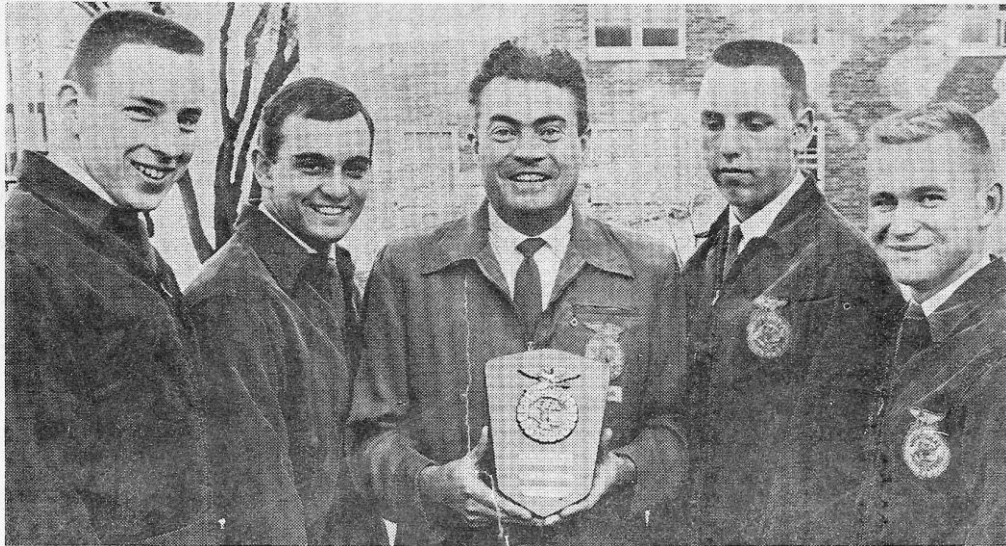
Whirry has long been active in community affairs. He has been a civic leader and worker.

All of Jack Whirry's teaching has been at Montello. This is noteworthy. Many capable teachers use a school the size of Montello's only to get a start in their profession and as a stepping stone to more lucrative contracts elsewhere.

Jack Whirry has preferred to stay among lifelong neighbors and friends, feeling that there he can do his best.

Jack Whirry will represent Wisconsin in a national contest. He should go far when the final choice is made.

MONTELLO F.F.A. TEAM GETS NATIONAL HONORS —



The Montello Future Farmers Poultry Judging team display the Silver Emblem award they won in the national contests at Kansas City last week. Left to right are: Jack Whirry, Tom Roidt, Jim Roidt, Ernie Hunter, Advisor Dennis Schmudla

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State News

SECTION 2



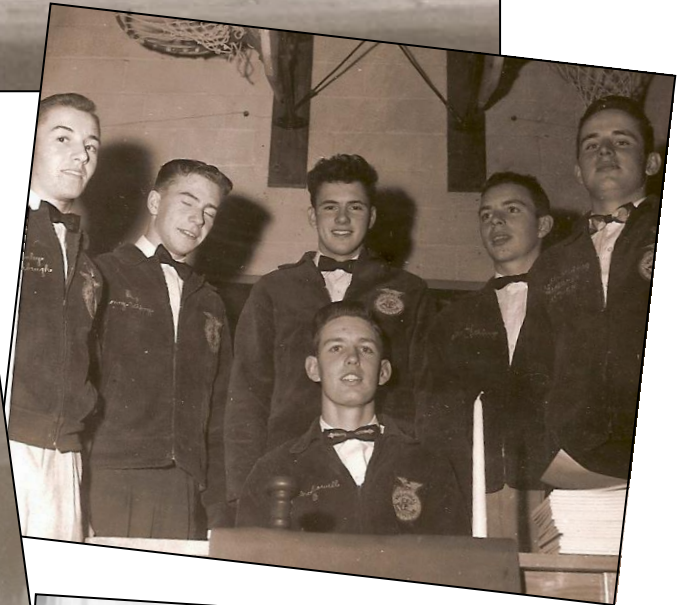
CHAMP TEAM — Here are the champion team representatives of the annual State High School Judging Contest held Monday on the University of Wisconsin campus.

In front, left to right, are Montello's high individuals and coach, Raymond Fleegal, of the poultry and egg team; James Roidt, dairy

products team; and Jack Whirry. In back, left to right, are Robert Kaas, Alma Center, crops; Terry Johnson, Gale-Etrick High school team; Richard Hass, Merrill High school management; and William Dick, Gale meat animal judging team.

—State Journal Photo by J.





National Honors For Jack Whirry



MONTELLO — Jack Whirry, (left) Montello high school's F.F.A. advisor and vocational agriculture teacher was awarded the honorary American Farmer Degree at the national F.F.A. convention at Kansas City, Mo., last week. This degree, the highest which can be given, was conferred upon 25 outstanding vocational agriculture teachers from throughout

the United States. Mr. Whirry was the only one from Wisconsin to receive this degree.

The ceremonies, part of the 36th national F.F.A. convention was held at the huge Kansas City auditorium. Over 10,000 blue jacketed F.F.A. members from 50 states along with their advisors and special guests attended the colorful presentation. National officers escorted

the 25 men to the stage where they were introduced to the audience.

Then, with the 125 piece national F.F.A. band playing background music, Kenny McMillan, National F.F.A. President placed a ribbon of blue and gold F.F.A. colors around each man's neck. Attached to the ribbon was the gold key of the American Farmer Degree.



Jack Whirry vocational agriculture teacher at Montello High School was one of three Wisconsin teachers honored recently for 35 years of service. The award was made at the summer conference and workshops of the Wisconsin Association of Vocational Agriculture Instructors (WAVAI).

Whirry honored for his teaching

MONTELLO — Jack Whirry, vocational agriculture instructor at Montello High School, was recently honored for 35 years of teaching vocational agriculture. The honor was conferred at the annual W.A.V.A.I. banquet at the University of Wisconsin-Madison recently.

Whirry has taught vo-ag at Montello High School for the past 32 years. Prior to that he taught for three years at Gibraltar Union Free High School, in Door County. The first four years at Montello, he also taught half days at Endeavor High School.

While at Montello he has had 63 students win the Wisconsin State Farmer degree in F.F.A. One student, Tom McDowell, was awarded the American Farmer degree, an award which is limited to one member in each 1000. Thirty of his judging teams, in various divisions, have won state titles and two Montello teams won first in the nation.

For 25 years the local F.F.A. chapter has been awarded a "superior" rating in the National Chapter Award contest and for the last five years the chapter has been area winner of the state B.O.A.C. contest.



'LOVE AND HATE'

Jack Whirry, center, Montello High School vocational agricultural teacher, is holding the wood carving of "Love and Hate" presented to him by Mrs. Bernard Cragin, left, a Montello artist, during a Montello High School assembly program Friday. Milford Schwitz, right, Montello High School principal, congratulates Whirry, who has been a teacher at Montello for 27 years.

—Northwestern-Reetz photo

Our Wonderful Family

Time passed by so quickly and our children grew up fast. Before we knew it, they each found their life partners, were married and had children of their own. Our oldest son Jonny and his wife Betty settled in Madison, Wisconsin where the two of them raised their four children, Suzy, Lisa, Sarah and Joe. Our oldest daughter Merry and her husband David Larkin, made their home in Waupun, Wisconsin and raised two sons, John and Jed. Our daughter Jane married Phil Trahms and they raised their three children,

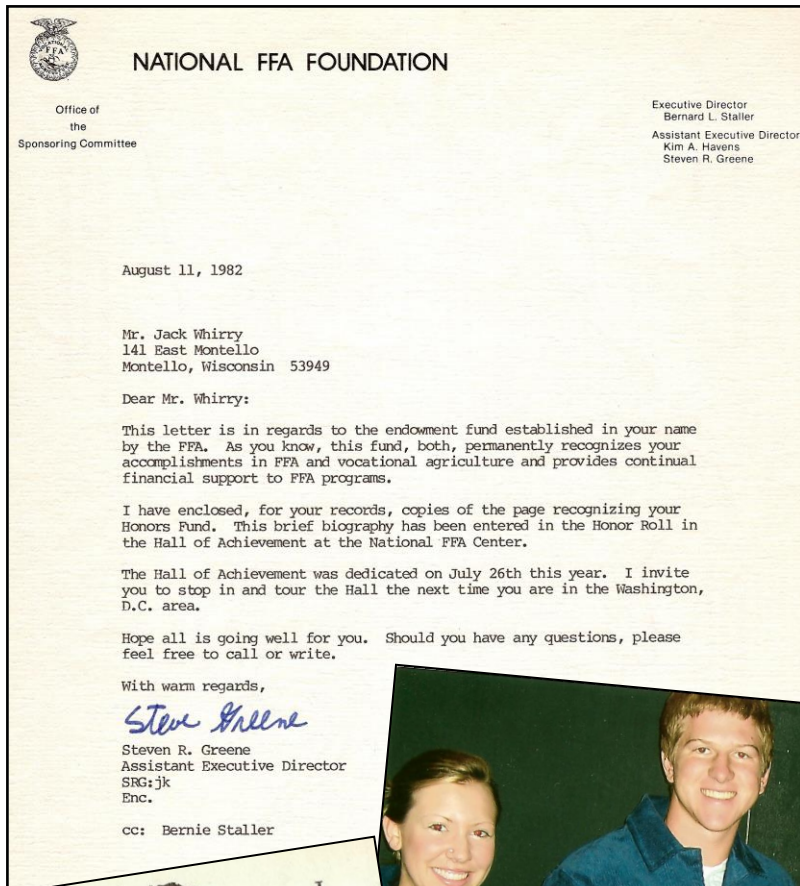
Matt, Emily
farm where I
in Dalton,
youngest
her husband
in Stevens
Both Mickey
very proud of
spouses, and



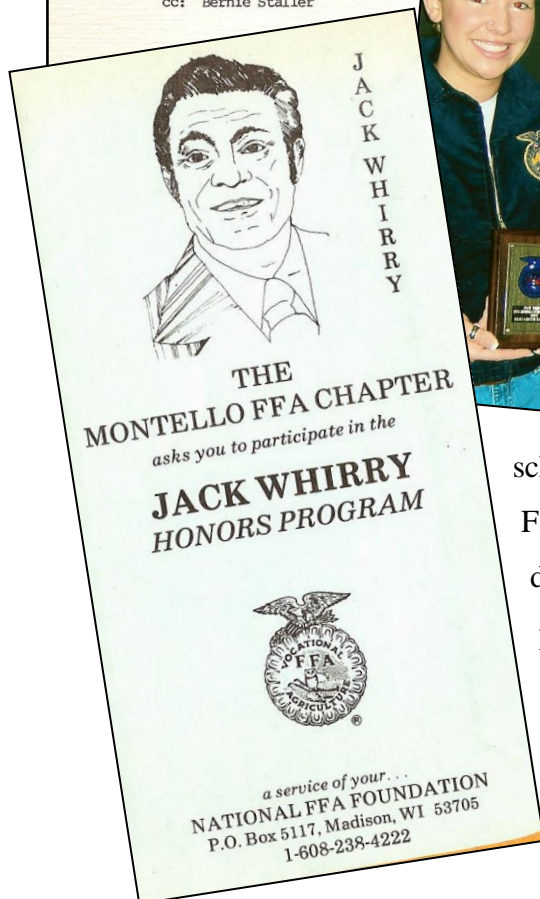
and Tessa, on the
was born and raised
Wisconsin. Our
daughter, Kathy and
James Lueptow live
Point, Wisconsin.
and I were always
our children, their
their families. We

couldn't have asked for a more wonderful family unit! The numbers only continued to grow as we watched our grandchildren marry and have children of their own. Our granddaughter Suzy married a man from Australia named Peter Taplin and the two of them have two girls, Amanda and Joanna. Lisa married Tom Jisa and they have three children, Ben, Molly and Estella. Sarah has a little girl named Lillian. Joe married Dawn from Colorado and they have two boys, Jakob and Summit. Jed married Beth from Minnesota and they have three children, Sarah, Samuel, and Ella. Matt married Rosie from Iowa and they now have four kids, Jack, James, Emma, and Anna. Emily married Christian Neef. Tessa married Michael Muscanero and they have two little ones, Madeline and Mason. Altogether, Mickey and I had four children who gave us eight grandchildren who then gave us 17 great-grandchildren. The lives created because of the love that Mickey and I shared for 59 ½ years, our precious family members, are what we both considered to be our greatest accomplishment of all!

Retirement Years



After 38 years of teaching agriculture at the age of 58, I retired from my position as Vocational Ag teacher at the Montello High School. Upon the occasion of my retirement, I received the great honor of another Citation from Wisconsin's Legislature, this time for establishing a National F.F.A. honors endowment in my name, a



scholarship program awarding F.F.A. students for their involvement in and dedication to the F.F.A. program. At the time that this program was founded, I was the first Vo-Ag teacher in the U.S. to participate in the F.F.A. National Honors Endowment Program. I guess you could say

that I was a bit of a pioneer. Anyway, since the establishment of that program, it has been my privilege to give over \$10,000 in Agricultural Scholarships to Montello Ag students.



These two photos show area residents as they are being presented with this year's Soil and Water Conservation awards.

In the top photo, Marv Ahlstrom of Westfield receives his award for being chosen as Outstanding Coop-

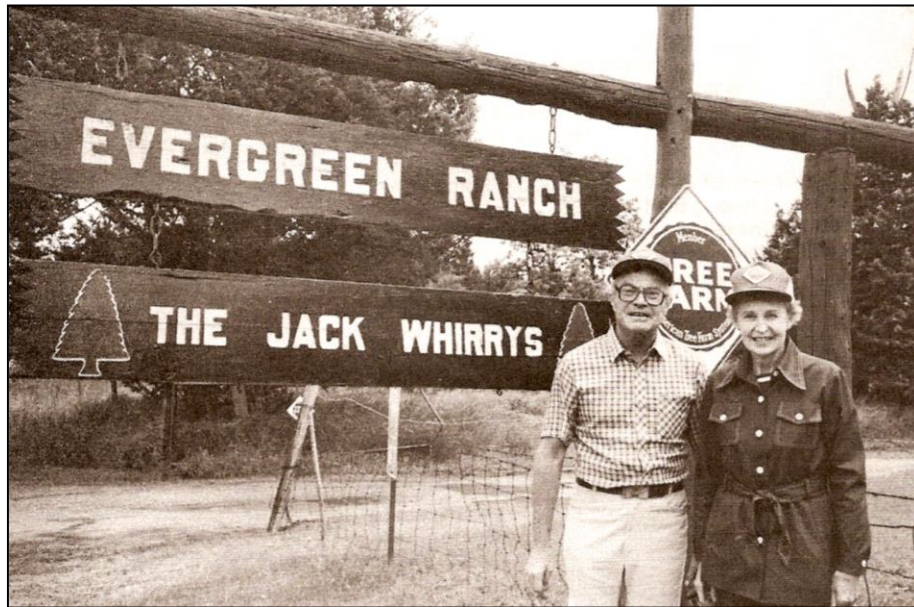
erator from Harvey Jones, chairman of the District Soil and Water Conservation program. The bottom photo shows Jack Whirry and his wife as they are presented with the Forest Management award by Mr. Jones.

By the time of my retirement in 1978, the tree farm that we had purchased and planted in 1957 and named the *Evergreen Ranch*, was a well-established plantation that demanded many hours of my time nearly everyday all year long. The whole family was involved in various stages of our forestry practices. Some of the jobs that the tree farm required of us included pruning of

the crop forest trees and shearing Christmas trees during the summer every year.



With the late fall came the harvesting of regular pulp wood and large-sized pulp wood called bolts. Then, during the months of November and December, we would harvest our Christmas trees by having people come to the farm to cut their own tree.



Through the years, we also did some wholesale Christmas tree business. Every spring, we plant new tree seedlings to replace the trees that have been harvested the year before. Usually, spring was also the time of year that I spray the trees with chemicals for weed control, disease, and insects. Needless to say, work on the tree farm fills my days, and those of my family, and keeps us busy all year long.

All of our hard work paid off in 1980, when Mickey and I were awarded the Wisconsin Tree Farmer of the Year title. Another honor quickly followed when two years later, we received the title of U.S. North Central Regional Tree Farmer of the Year. These honors were accompanied with many prizes which included a portable generator, a chain saw, numerous mugs, caps, suspenders, and other miscellaneous items that were advertising the National Tree Farm Organization.

On June 16, 1999, I was honored beyond belief when I was awarded the highest state honor that could be bestowed on an adult involved in the FFA organization and vocational agriculture. At the annual dinner held during the state FFA convention, with my beloved wife Mickey, our four children, their spouses, and some of our grandchildren present with me, I went forward to receive my great honor.



After that night, I was officially inducted into the Wisconsin FFA Hall of Fame. I barely even knew that there was such an award available when I received notification that I had been selected to be a recipient, due to my contribution to the FFA through the years. The event



was sponsored by the Wisconsin FFA Foundation, Inc. of which my good friend, Don McDowell, was the first national head.



Whirry receives award



CONTRIBUTE

Roland Minter, president of Captain Hendrick Aupaumut Chapter of the Sons of the American Revolution, awarded the Good Citizen medal to Jack Whirry of Montello this past fall. Whirry was awarded for over 60 years of dedicated service to the community. He taught agriculture at Montello High School for 35 years. His students, as members of the FFA, won numerous awards, two national championships and 38 state first places, and 70 of his students received the Wisconsin Degree, the highest in the state. Whirry himself has received numerous honorary state awards over the years. Pictured from left is Don Hall of Montello, past president, and Jack Whirry.

An Ag teacher from Waupaca that I've known ever since I began to teach, named Charlie Larson, was the state president of the Wisconsin Sons of the American Revolution. Together he and my friend Don Hall nominated me for the Sons of the American Revolution's Silver award, a high recognition from their organization presented to various individuals for their outstanding service to the community.

Like so many other awards, I didn't know that there was



such an honor given until Don contacted me about my nomination. I was surprised and honored by their unexpected recognition.





Mickey and I had many wonderful years of retirement together. We went on several trips overseas including Alaska, Hawaii, the Holy Land and Europe, during which we made many very special memories. As the years passed, many beautiful days were spent together out at the tree farm shearing trees and making Mickey's dream come true...a little cabin in the woods, where countless special family gatherings were held and quiet peaceful days were enjoyed.

The darkest day of my life came on December 8, 2000, when my beloved wife and constant companion for nearly 60 years quietly slipped away to heaven. She was a wonderful wife, mother, grandmother, great-grandmother, aunt, sister, and friend as well as a very talented seamstress and homemaker...I couldn't have asked for a more beautiful person to share my life with. My memories of her are some of my most precious possessions and I miss her every moment of every day. She was and will forever be the love of my life.



In my Mickey's absence, my closest companion and buddy was my faithful dog, Jake. He was a birthday gift from Mickey years ago and was a cherished pet from the moment we brought him home. Jake and I would take trips out to the tree farm almost daily and then in the evenings, we would head back to Montello where he would devotedly lay by my chair while I would do my reading. He was a great friend, but he grew very old and tired and it was with a broken heart that I had to let him go in 2006. Maybe Mickey needed him in heaven with her more than I needed him here with me.



A Tribute to Mr. Whirry

By Jeanne Walters

When the good Lord was creating Ag Teachers, He was into His sixth day of "overtime" when an angel appeared and said, "You're doing a lot of fiddling around on this one." And the Lord said, "Have you read the specifications on this order? He has to be completely washable, but not plastic, have 180 movable parts...all replaceable. Be able to run on tea and left-overs, have a saying for everything that the kids won't forget, a pickup truck that can be automatically transformed into a limousine, strong and durable for criticism, but can't criticize." And



then He said it needed six pairs of hands.

The angel shook her head slowly and said, "Six pairs of hands...no way!"

"It's not the hands that are causing problems," said the Lord. "It's the three pairs of eyes that Ag teachers must have."

"That's on the standard model?" asked the angel.

The Lord nodded. "One pair that sees through upright books, when he asks, 'What are you kids doing?' when he already knows. Another set here in back of his head, that sees what he shouldn't but what he has to know, and of course the ones here in front, so that he can look at a student when he has goofed and say, 'I understand' without so much as uttering a word."

"Lord," said the angel touching His sleeve gently, "go to bed and finish tomorrow..."
"I can't," said the Lord, "I'm so close to creating something so close to myself. Already I have someone who can heal a bird's broken wing, plant a flowering crab tree and make it grow, and take a bus load of judging teams to Madison and come back in one piece."

The angel circled this model of the Ag teacher very slowly. "It's too soft" she sighed.

"No, he's tough," said the Lord excitedly. "You can't imagine what this Ag teacher must endure and come through smiling."

"Can't he think?" the angel asked.

"Not only can he think," the Creator said, "But he can reason and compromise."

Finally, the angel bent over and ran her fingers across the cheeks. "There's a leak" she protested. "I told you, you were trying to put too much into this model."

"It's not a leak," said the Lord. "It's a tear."

"What's it for, if the Ag teacher is supposed to be so strong?"

"It's for joy, sadness, disappointments, pain, sorrow, and pride. He too shall have a tender spot and emotions." "You are a genius," said the angel.

The Lord looked somber, "I didn't put the tear there, it came by itself."

This model was finished and delivered to a small farm in Buffalo Township on September 27, 1919 to Mr. and Mrs. James Whirry.

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Page 30b	Jack pictured in back row on far left with his elementary school mates
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Page 31b	(Left to Right) Norma Hernkind, Jimmy Foley, Tom Foley, Jack Whirry, Betty Lou VonderSump, Georgia Heath, Mabel Fleegal, Earl Duffy, Hoyt Heath, and Dorothy VonderSump
Page 32a	Jack as a boy
Page 32b	Jack is pictured 4 th in from the left with Hoyt Heath on his back
Page 33a	Jack and his classmates on Arbor day
Page 33b	Jack on the steps of the Capitol building in Washington D.C.
Page 33c	Close up of Jack in Washington DC
Page 34	Jack's elementary school diploma
Page 35	Jack stacking hay
Page 36a	Jack's high school graduation picture
Page 36b	Jack's graduating class
Page 37a	Jack-college days
Page 37b	Jack and Faville (Fay) Bayles
Page 38a	Jack and Fay jamming on the mouth organ and guitar
Page 39b	Jack with his trio buddies (left to right) Fay, Jack, and Grant Bessey
Page 39a	Jack and Fay studying
Page 39b	Jack the farmboy
Page 40	Jack sitting on a car bumper
Page 41a	Young Mickey with short hair
Page 41b	Mickey scribbled the little note on the back of her picture
Page 41c	Jack and Mickey...the two love birds
Page 41d	Mickey posing with Jack's famous radio
Page 42a	Jack posing with Jack's radio on the UW Madison campus
Page 42b	Mickey posing with Jack's radio on the UW Madison campus
Page 43a	Jack in background of LIFE Magazine picture taken at Sahara restaurant

Page 43b	Jack (close up of same picture)
Page 43c	Jack with sun-dial in the garden
Page 43d	Mickey on a Wisconsin blanket (Jack took the picture from up in a tree)
Page 44a	Jack and Mickey at Jack's UW Madison Graduation
Page 44b	UW Graduation Day (left to right) John Griffith, Roy Melvin, Fay Bayles, Jack and Mickey
Page 44 c	Jack's college diploma
Page 45a	Mickey in saddle shoes
Page 45b	Jack pictured in front of Frank and Laura Churches' house where he lived his first year in Fish Creek
Page 45c	Jack and Mickey's wedding day (left to right) Mickey's sister June, Mickey, Jack, and Roy Melvin
Page 46a	Mickey on the steps of their first little house in Fish Creek (now an Irish gift shop)
Page 46b	Jack and Mickey...young and in love
Page 47	Snow from the Christmas blizzard in 1941
Page 48a	Gibraltar high school building in Fish Creek
Page 48b	A post card addressed to "Coach" Jack Whirry
Page 50a	Jack spraying apple trees for a community service project
Page 50b	An Endeavor Ag class early in Jack's teaching career
Page 51	Jack and his Ag boys posing with a Montello sign that they built (left to right) Dennis Schmudlach, Jim Roidt, Dewey Roidt, Jack
Page 52a	Ag boys posing with Muirland school forest sign (Jon Whirry is the second boy pictured in from the left and Jack is in the center back)
Page 52b	Ag boys working in the school forest
Page 52c	Placing a sign
Page 53	Jack with Ag boys
Pages 54-59	History of Montello F.F.A. Judging Teams during Jack's years of teaching
Page 60a	FFA Emblem
Page 60b	Jack with Ag boys
Page 61	(Left to Right) Jack, Janie, Merry, Kathy, Mickey, and Jonny
Page 63a	Jack hunting with his buddies
Page 63b	Jack posing with Jeep, Jack and Mickey's beloved black cocker
Page 64a	Jack and Jonny hunting
Page 64b	Jack and the rabbit he shot with his bow and arrow
Page 64c	Jack golfing
Page 65a	Jack playing the harmonica with his nose
Page 65b	Jack playing the harmonica with Jim Hamilton on the piano
Page 66a	Family farm signs made by Jack and the Ag boys
Page 66b	FFA float in the homecoming parade
Page 67a	Jack and Jon Whirry and other members of a champion judging team (newspaper clipping)
Page 67b	Jack with a judging team
Page 68	A newspaper clipping from when Jack was named Wisconsin's Teacher of the Year in 1965

Page 69a	Jack with FFA judging team
Page 69b	Jack with FFA judging team
Page 69c	Jack with FFA judging team
Page 69d	Jack with FFA judging team
Page 70a	Daggett sign congratulating Jack and the winning judging team
Page 70b	Jack with FFA judging team
Page 70c	FFA officers with Jon Whirry (second from left)
Page 70d	Jack with FFA officers with Jon Whirry (center) President
Page 70e	Jack with FFA judging team
Page 71	Newspaper clippings of teaching honors received
Page 72	Jack's family (left to right, back row) James and Kathy Lueptow, John Larkin, Amanda, Suzy, Peter, and Joanna Taplin, Betty and Jonny Whirry, Janie and Phil Trahms, (left to right, front row) Beth, Jed, David, Sammy, Merry, and Sarah Larkin, Jack Whirry, Emily Neef, Tessa, baby Madeline, and Michael Muscanero, James, Matt, Jack, and Emma Trahms
Page 73a	Letter from the National FFA Foundation
Page 73b	Three recipients of Jack's FFA scholarship (left to right) Elizabeth Kreiser, Brian Daggett, Jack, and Sarah Sue Hendrickson
Page 73c	Brochure regarding the Jack Whirry Honors Program
Page 74a	Jack and Mickey being presented with the Forest Management award
Page 74b	Jack's Tree Farm certificate
Page 75	Jack and Mickey posing by the entrance to their Evergreen Ranch
Page 76a	Jack and Mickey at the FFA banquet the night that Jack was inducted into the FFA Hall of Fame
Page 76b	Jack with his loving supportive family at the program with close up of joyful Mickey and Jack
Page 77a	Jack being presented with his Hall of Fame award
Page 77b	Jack standing with his awards
Page 78a	Jack being presented with his certificate from the Sons of the American Revolution
Page 78b	Sons of the American Revolution Emblem
Page 78c	Sons of the American Revolution Certificate
Page 79a	Jack and Mickey on vacation in Hawaii;
Page 79b	Beautiful Mickey
Page 80	Jack with his special dog, Jake
Page 81-82	A tribute to Jack written by one of his FFA students