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# *The Martinsons of Springdale*

By Dorothy Bliskey



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To my friends at the Mt. Horeb Public Library  
Dec. 14, 2005

I hope you enjoy the many memories and historical information in this book about the Martenson family of the Mt. Horeb area. It contains memories dating back to the early 1900s from relations still here and able to tell us what life was like nearly 100 years ago!

As a 1964 graduate of Mt. Horeb High School, my own family — the Schwarz family and my recollections of the 1950s and 1960s fill the pages of the Schwarz chapter.

There is no finer town than Mt. Horeb!

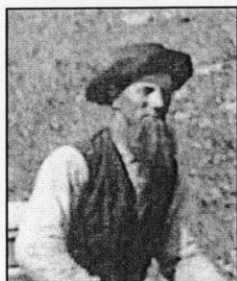
Author,  
Dorothy (Schwarz) (Kinby)  
Blisky

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Bliskey, Dorothy  
The Martinsons of Springdale

Mount Horeb Public Library  
Mount Horeb, WI 53572

# 150 Years of Martinson Family History 1854 - 2004

## Torkel & Barbro Martinson and their descendants



Torkel Martinson (1800s)

### *From Norway to Mt. Horeb*

*Written by Dorothy (Schwarz/Rindy) Bliskey  
Torkel and Barbro Martinson's great granddaughter*

### Dedication

The *Martinsons of Springdale* is written in honor of our Martinson family members who have passed on after living life to the fullest here on earth. We miss their presence and take direction from the powerful examples they set. For me, as well as for my nearly 40 first cousins, this includes our grandparents Clara and Martin Martinson and their parents: Barbro and Torkel Martinson and Karoline and Ole Anderson.

Three of our four great grandparents – Torkel, Karoline, and Ole were born in Norway. They immigrated to America in the 1800s. Torkel was 10 years old when he arrived in the Mt. Horeb area from Gudbrandsdalen, Norway in 1864 with his parents Marie and Martin Martinson. Torkel's wife Barbro was born in Dane County, Wisconsin in 1851, shortly after her parents immigrated to the United States from Norway.

My grandmother Clara Martinson's parents, Ole J. and Karoline (Folkestad) Anderson, immigrated to Mt. Horeb from Norway in the 1880s. Ole, who was born in Askvoll, Norway in 1849, arrived here with his half brother Jonas Einen in 1884. They settled in Dane County's Perry Township. Karoline, 22, arrived in Mt. Horeb from Sonnfjord, Norway in 1883 with her parents Hans and Karoline Folkestad. The Folkestads settled in Primrose Township, eight miles south of Mt. Horeb.

This book of historical facts and personal recollections is also written so that living descendants of Clara and Martin Martinson can embrace special times in their lives by reading it and passing it on to future generations.

With special love and gratitude, I also dedicate this book to members of my immediate family. I miss them so very much ... My father Walter Schwarz, my mother Benunie (Martinson) Schwarz-Berge, my sister Rosann (Schwarz) Jorns, and her husband Hub Jorns. My sister is the first and only one of our 38 first cousins to die. She passed away in 2002 from brain cancer. At this writing all the rest of the cousins are living. We range in age from age 32 (Charlie Martinson) to 72 (my oldest brother Don Schwarz).

The Martinsons come from sturdy Norwegian stock! Six of my nine aunts and uncles (my mother's brothers and sisters) are alive to tell their stories and are in the 80s and 90s. My mother Benunie, her sister Geneva, and brother Marty have passed away. Their absence has left a hole in our family, but their presence while on earth filled us with joy!



## Introduction

I proposed the idea of writing *The Martinsons of Springdale* in August of 2004 at the annual Martinson reunion and completed the book 15 months later. It begins with a look at my great grandparents, Torkel and Barbro Martinson. They began married life in 1883 on their Dane County homestead in Springdale Township, located about 18 miles west of Madison and four miles south of Mt. Horeb, Wisconsin. Their 103-acre property on Sharpes Corner Road, which Barbro had inherited from her family, consisted of a two-room log cabin home with separate log-structured summer kitchen, a dairy barn, tobacco barn, tobacco stripping shed, and other outbuildings on Sharpes Corner Road.

After a first-chapter review of my great grandparents and Norwegian ancestry, the focus turns to the many memorable stories about my grandparents Clara and Martin Martinson, who raised nine children on their family farm south of Mt. Horeb on Highway 92.

Chapter 2 illustrates, through first-hand accounts, just what life was like for the nine Martinson brothers and sisters who grew up on their parents' farm between 1911-1944. Humor, joy, and sadness fill their collective stories as each takes a look back at their youth. Six of the nine are alive to tell their stories. They range in age from 79-90.

Nine separate chapters – one on each of Martin and Clara's nine children – comprise the main portion of the book. Throughout the nine chapters, memories of rural and small town life in and around Mt. Horeb are recounted by the Martinson siblings and their children who are now adults -- shopping trips to Hoff's Store, hot buttered popcorn at Ollie's Main Street popcorn stand, Mt. Horeb High School fun and excitement, movie hits at the Strand Theater, and lefse that made Grandma Martinson famous!

Nearly 40 first cousins and all six of my remaining Martinson aunts and uncles have contributed greatly to the contents of this book. Memories that were dormant came to the surface in response to the 22 interview questions I asked. The results are proof that we have many excellent writers in the Martinson family. My job as the author was to research, reflect, and write my own memories. I also edited all the submissions and wrote connecting paragraphs and phrases throughout the book, tying everyone's comments together and adding some of my own. I hope you find the book fun to read.

## Thanks

The Martinsons are a proud bunch, with a sense of humor and love of life that is admirable. Without their input, this book would not have been possible. Following is a complete list of the nine sets of Martinson family aunts and uncles and their children who comprise the 38 first cousins I refer to throughout the book. Nearly 100 percent contributed to their individual chapters in the *The Martinsons of Springdale*.

In addition, several of the children of these 38 first cousins, including my own, put their thoughts and memories on paper. This younger generation tells what it's been like growing up in the Martinson family in recent years.

I am eternally grateful to the following relatives, and to a few of the younger generation, who reached back to re-open childhood doors. Their memories flow onto the pages of this book.

### **38 Cousins**

1. Donald
2. Rosann
3. Dorothy
4. Russell
  
5. Joyce
6. Jean
7. Bob
8. Ruth
9. Phil
10. Jim
  
11. Tom
12. Karolyn
13. Brad
14. Alice
  
15. Judy
16. Joan
17. Jerry
18. Jan
19. Joy
  
20. Rick
21. Becky
22. Bill
23. Rod
  
24. Chuck
25. Nancy
  
26. Danne
27. David
28. Sue Anne
29. Sheri
  
30. Jeff
31. Mark
32. Jim
33. Brian
  
34. Karen
35. Mary
36. Jayne
37. David
38. Charlie

### **Parents** (The 9 Martinson sisters/brothers are in **bold**)

- Schwarz, **Benunie** and Walter
- Dettwiler, **Geneva** and Alvin
- Grundahl, **Verna** and Bennie
- Martinson, **Gaylord** and Shirley
- Skindrud, **Alma** and Jerome
- Abplanalp, **Helen** and Alfred
- Showers, **Myrtle** and Milton
- Martinson, **Harland** and Martha
- Martinson, **Marty** and Lois

*(This book was written and published in 2005)*

**The Martinsons of Springdale**  
 follows the lives of Martin and Clara  
 Martinson and their nine children, shown below.



Martinson family (front l-r): Harland, mother Clara, father Martin, Gaylord; (back l-r) Helen, Myrtle, Verna, Marty, Geneva, Benunie, Alma. (1940)



Martin and Clara wed (1910)

At far right, oldest daughter, Benunie, tours the log cabin where she was born in 1911. The cabin, (right) is



located 5 miles south of Mt. Horeb on Sharpes Corner Road. It was home to Benunie's grandparents Torkel and Barbro Martinson. Her parents, Martin and Clara Martinson, lived there the first two years of marriage. When Benunie was a year old, her parents purchased a 160-acre farm 3 miles south of Mt. Horeb on Highway 92.

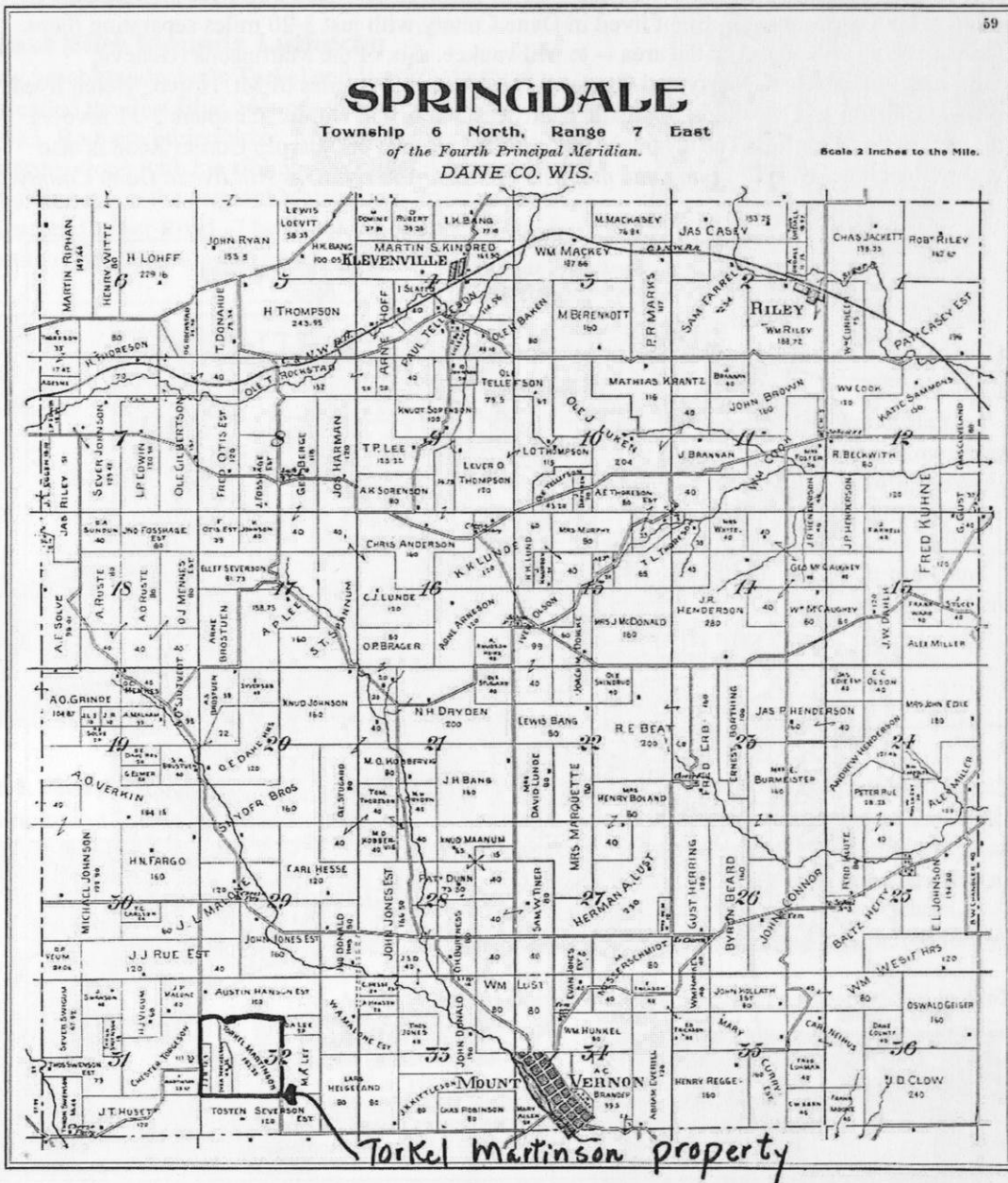


At right: Benunie was raised in this large two-story farm house, along with her eight younger siblings. This became the site for many family gatherings from 1912 to 1982. It is also the setting for Chapter 2 and Chapter 6.





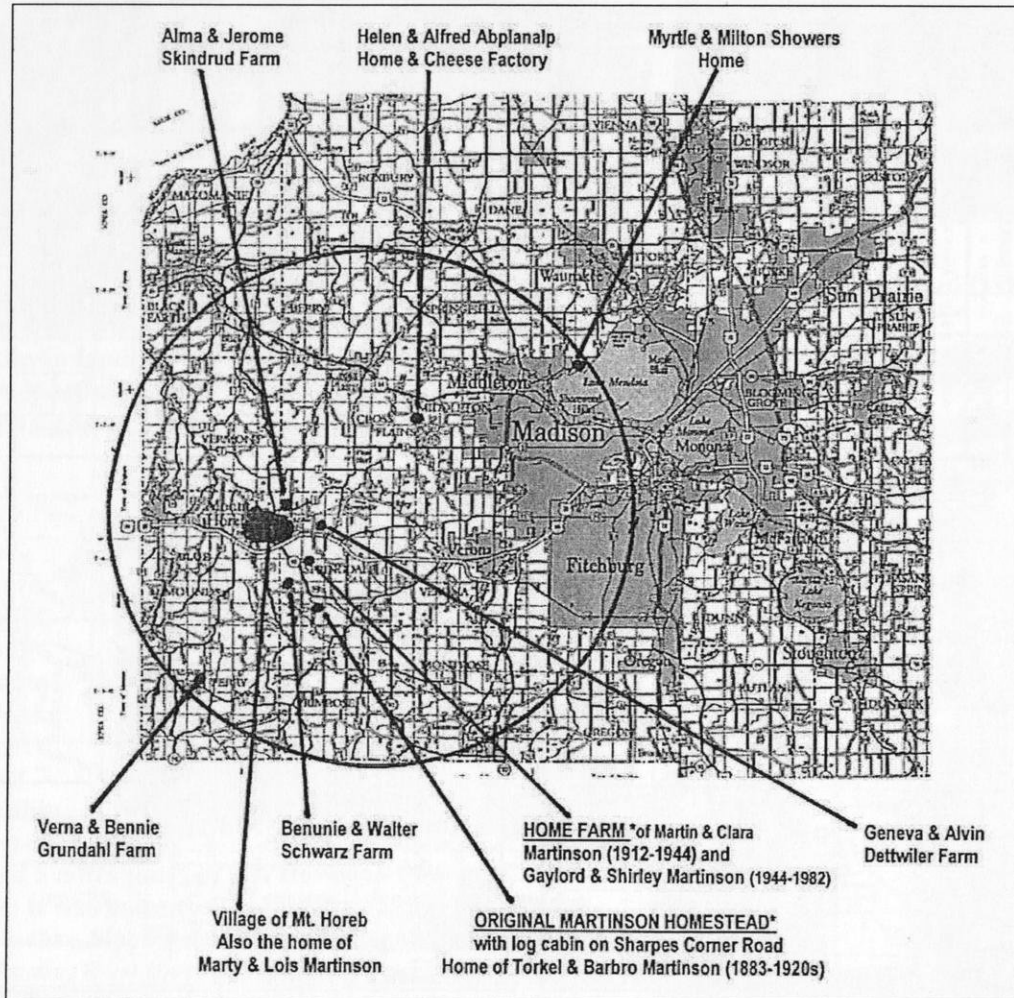
# Springdale Township in Dane County, Wisconsin



This map is an older version and shows the location of the original Martinson log cabin homestead and farm on Sharpes Corner Road. This tobacco and dairy farm was home to my great grandparents Torkel and Barbro Martinson, starting in 1883 when they married. Barbro had inherited it from her parents. My grandparents Martin and Clara Martinson also lived there from 1910-1912 when they were first married. My mother Benunie, who was the oldest of their 9 children, was born in this log cabin. In 1912, when Benunie was just one-year-old, Clara and Martin bought the farm on Highway 92. In later years it was referred to as the Martinson "home farm."

## Dane County, Wisconsin (partial depiction)

The circled area shows where 8 of the 9 adult children of Clara and Martin Martinson lived after they married. Eight lived in Dane County with just 3-20 miles separating them. Only Harland moved out of the area -- to Milwaukee. Six of the Martinsons (Geneva, Benunie, Verna, Alma, Marty and Gaylord) lived within 2-8 miles of Mt. Horeb. Helen lived near Middleton and Myrtle in Madison. Marty resided in Mt. Horeb. Chapters 3-11 revolve around these 9 families. The original Martinson homestead on Sharpes Corner Road is also within the circle. NOTE: Today, the majority of Martinson relatives still live in Dane County.



\*The ORIGINAL MARTINSON HOMESTEAD on Sharpes Corner Road is the setting for Chapter 1, *Setting Down Roots*. The Martinson HOME FARM on Highway 92 is the setting for Chapter 2, *Tidbits of Martinson Farm Life*, which features the memories of Clara and Martin Martinson's nine children growing up on their farm. It is also the setting for Chapter 6, which focuses on their son Gaylord, who took over the farm in 1944 and ran it until 1982.



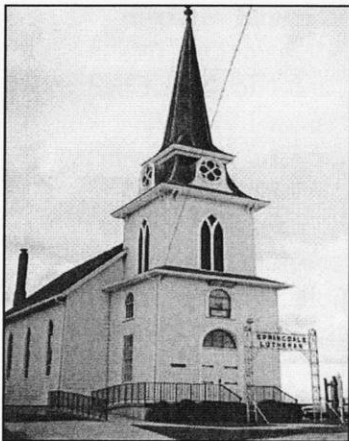
# Mt. Horeb Lutheran Churches of the Martinson family

## East Blue Mounds Lutheran

My great grandparents Torkel and Barbro Martinson attended the East Blue Mounds Church after they married in 1883. Both are buried there. My grandfather (their son), Martin, along with his siblings, attended this church while growing up on the original Martinson homestead on Sharpes Corner Road. The East Blue Mounds Church, south of Mt. Horeb, was torn down in 1963.



E. Blue Mounds (1852-1963)



## Springdale Lutheran Church

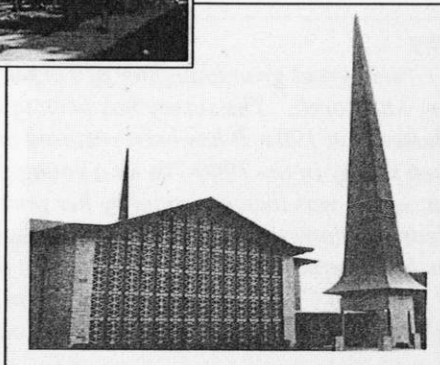
In 1912, two years after my grandparents, Clara and Martin married, they purchased their farm on Highway 92, three miles south of Mt. Horeb. A road extended from their farm, across the field, to the Springdale Lutheran Church on Highway 18, two miles east of Mt. Horeb. During their early years on the farm, they joined this church due to the convenient route and close proximity. Most of their nine children were baptized here.

At left, the Springdale Church as it is today. Some family members still attend this church.

**Mt. Horeb Evangelical Lutheran** -- In the 1920s, the road extending from Martinson's farm to the Springdale Church was closed. It became a farm field road. At this time, Clara and Martin Martinson, along with their nine growing children, joined the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Mt. Horeb. It is here that all nine children were confirmed and attended Sunday School. Many Martinson family members still attend this church today.



At left is the old church on Main Street. It was torn down in 1962 and replaced with the new church (below and at right.)



*What we are is God's gift to us.  
What we become is our gift to God.*

... Louis Hizer

## About the author

Dorothy (Schwarz/Rindy) Bliskey has been married to Brian Bliskey, her second husband, for eight years. They live in Fond du Lac where he works at Mercury Marine and she is a freelance writer.



In her first marriage, she and her husband Lennis Rindy were married 25 years. They resided in Madison the first five years. Over the next 20-year span they lived in the Rosendale area where they raised three sons -- Troy, Chad, and Ryan Rindy.

Troy, a computer systems administrator with his own business, lives in Oconomowoc and works in the Milwaukee area. Chad, a Walgreen's pharmacist, lives and works in Madison. Ryan designs medical equipment for GE Medical in Madison and lives in McFarland. Troy has three children: Joshua 13, Christopher 11, and Nicole 8. Chad, who is married to Karen, has a son Zachary, age 4. Ryan is surrounded by three daughters: 4-year old twins Grace and Jensen and their 2-year-old sister Ella. Ryan is married to Jody (formerly Preimesberger), of Mt. Horeb.

Dorothy returned to college in the early 1990s and received a Bachelors Degree in Journalism from UW-Oshkosh, with an emphasis in public relations, advertising, and English. She has been a professional writer for the past 20 years. Through Bliskey Writing Services, she performs as a freelance writer for magazines, newspapers, businesses, and organizations. Prior to starting her own writing business, she was the marketing director at a Fond du Lac organization for nine years.

Growing up on her parents' Lime Ridge Farm near Mt. Horeb, Dorothy was the second youngest of five children born to Walter and Benunie (Martinson) Schwarz. (A brother, Martin, died at birth.) Her mother Benunie was the oldest of Martin and Clara Martinson's nine children. The Schwarz farm was located high on a hill on Malone Road, four miles south of Mt. Horeb and just two miles from the original Martinson farmstead on Sharpes Corner Road. Dorothy has many fond memories of work and play on her family's farm. She also has fond memories of the one-room Malone School she attended, where one teacher taught all the students in grades 1-8. She and her siblings were among the third generation of family members attending this beautiful limestone school before advancing to Mt. Horeb High School and on to college.

### **Cover Photo – Torkel Martinson's surrey**

*The cover photo was taken by Joy (Martinson) Green, great granddaughter of Torkel Martinson and daughter of Shirley and Gaylord Martinson, Mt. Horeb. The surrey has been in the Martinson family since Torkel Martinson purchased it in 1901. It has been restored and is still used for special occasions. The picture was taken by Joy in the 1960-70s as a young girl growing up on her grandfather Martin Martinson's farm, which was then operated by her parents. As a child, Joy was an aspiring photographer who learned many of her photo skills through the Springdale 4-H Club. The surrey photo is from Joy's personal collection of "life on the farm" images she captured on film as a child. Many photos in Chapter 6, which centers on the farm her parents and grandparents operated on Highway 92, were taken by Joy. She is currently a professional dog sled photographer.*

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Note:

Chapter 1 begins with my great grandfather Torkel Martinson's arrival in Mt. Horeb from Norway.  
Chapter 2 focuses on his son Martin (my grandfather) and Clara Martinson raising 9 children on their farm.  
Chapters 3-11 each focus on one of their nine children as they marry, raise a family, and retire.

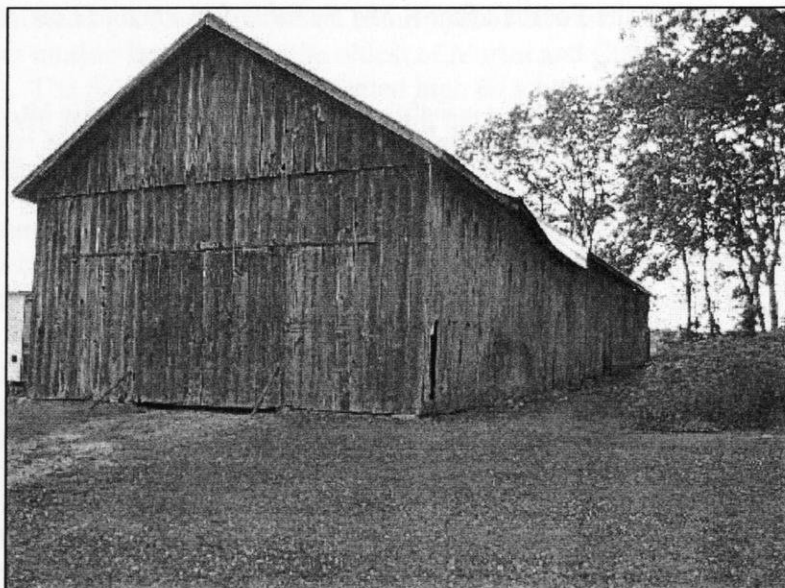




### **The Torkel Martinson Homestead**

Torkel Martinson (far left) oversees daily farm work on the original Martinson homestead on Sharpes Corner Road in Springdale Township. His son Martin, with hand on hip, is standing by the other buggy. The homestead was Torkel and Barbro Martinson's home beginning in 1883 when they married. Martinson family heirs sold it in 1946. This Dane County farm was the first of several Martinson family farms in succeeding generations. Most were located in Springdale Township. (Early 1900s)

At right is Torkel Martinson's tobacco shed as it looks today on the former Martinson farm on Sharpes Corner Road. It is one of the last standing tobacco sheds in southern Wisconsin. (2005)



## CHAPTER 1

### Setting Down Roots – The Martinson Homestead



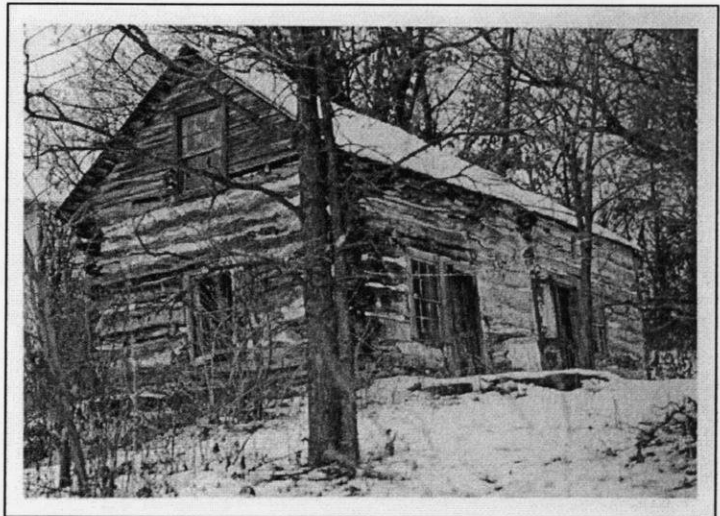
Excitement of a new venture, yet sadness at leaving beautiful Norway, filled the air in 1864 when 10-year-old Torkel Martinson immigrated to America from Gudbrandsdalen, Norway with his parents, Martin and Marie Martinson. Torkel, my great grandfather, settled near Mt. Horeb in Springdale Township, not far from the farm I grew up on in the 1950s-60s.

**Torkel Martinson hard at work on the farm (1880s-90s)**

Two decades later, Torkel's wife Barbro would give birth to Martin Martinson, my grandfather. In time, Martin's wife Clara (my grandmother) would give birth to my mother Benunie and her eight brothers and sisters. As the decades passed, each of Martin and Clara Martinson's nine children would create a combined family of nearly 300 – a social group in itself.

#### **My Great Grandparents**

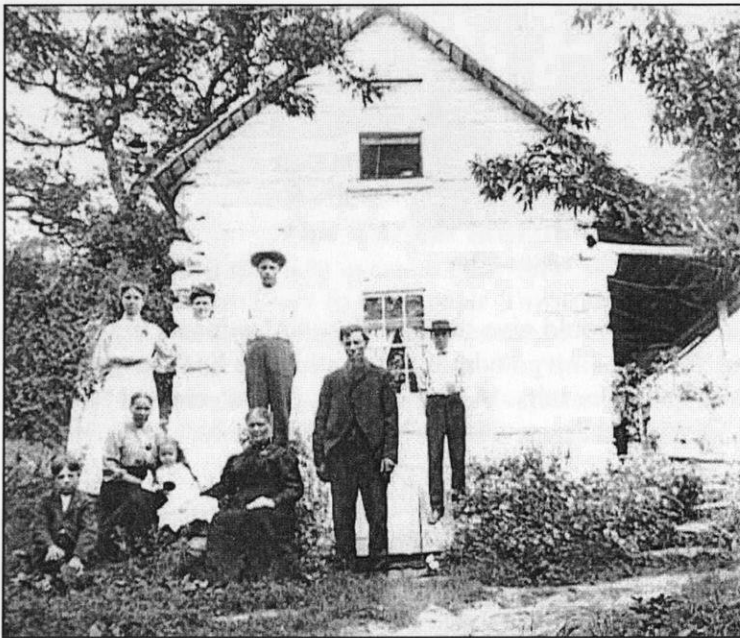
Years before Torkel married Barbro Shelstad, he had been a hired man on her parents' farm. Their marriage took place on June 19, 1883. Barbro entered the marriage with six children from her first husband, Jens Shelstad, who had died in 1881. It was Torkel's first marriage. Imagine being an instant father to six children: Susan, Lewis, Julia, Betsy Ann, Jens, and Samuel. Torkel and Barbro went on to have six more children: Martin, Olaus, Sever, Marie, Thomas, and Clara who died as an infant in 1894.



**Above is the log cabin that was home to my great grandparents, Torkel and Barbro Martinson, on their farm on Sharpes Corner Road in Springdale Township. My mother, Benunie, was born in this cabin on August 12, 1911. She was the first-born child of Martin and Clara Martinson. A year later they and my mother moved to a dairy farm on Highway 92, about two miles south of Mt. Horeb. Photo by Chuck Sholdt, husband of my cousin Joan (Martinson) Sholdt.**

Torkel and his wife Barbro were friendly, outgoing, and well-respected in the Mt. Horeb and Springdale area. They lived life to the fullest. They were strong Christians who served their East Blue Mounds Lutheran Church in leadership roles. A testimony to their social nature was the fact that more than 200 people showed up at a surprise 25<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary held for them.

Prior to her marriage to Torkel, Barbro had inherited her parents' log house, barn, and 10 acres of their farm land. It was located on Sharpes Corner Road in Springdale Township and was valued at \$250 at that time, in the late 1870s. Her parents, Lars and Julie Stensen, had initially purchased the 80-acre homestead in 1854 from the government at 75 cents per acre. Later, her parents bought more land where they built a two-room log cabin and a small log barn.



Barbro's parents eventually added two more rooms to the cabin. Barbro was raised here, along with her four siblings: Karoline, Helga, Anna, and Ole. The inheritance became the new home for Barbro and Torkel to begin their life together.

**At left, Torkel Martinson, with his long beard, poses with his children and wife Barbro, seated beside him. (1890s)**

Torkel and Barbro Martinson ran a successful dairy farm and tobacco operation while raising their six children in the late 1800s and early 1900s. The *Mount Horeb Times* (now the *Mount Horeb Mail*) wrote about him frequently during that era. An excerpt from one article, dated January 18, 1903 stated as follows:

*Torkel Martinson, Springdale, possesses the distinction of carrying home with him the largest check issued for a (tobacco) crop in this section this year, if not in the history of the tobacco industry in these parts. He had planted about nine acres which brought him the snug sum of over \$1,100.*

As of 2005, Torkel's tobacco barn still stands and must be one of the last in the area. Barbro died in 1923. Torkel Martinson died in 1930 at the age of 76. Sixteen years later, in 1946, the Martinson heirs sold their parents farm to Henry I. (Clara) and Albert E. (Thelma) Anderson. In 1970, Russ and Vergeane Martin bought this 189-acre farm on Sharpes Corner Road. Their son Guy Martin and his wife Martha live there currently. The cabin is gone but the tobacco shed remains.



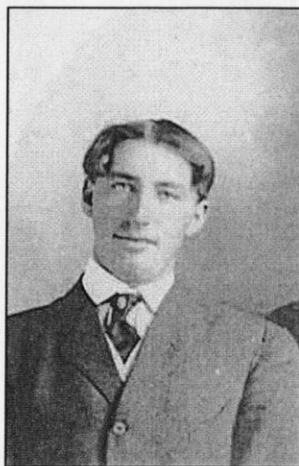
## **Torkel and Barbro's son Martin marries Clara Anderson**

Martin, the oldest of Torkel's six children, married Clara Anderson on November 24, 1910. She had grown up on a farm in Primrose Township with her parents Ole J. and Karoline Anderson (my great grandparents) just outside Mt. Vernon. Their farm house, admired by many at the time, was a beautiful structure inside and out. Clara, whose siblings were Jennie, Herman, Alpha, Albert, Orrin, Lillian, and Ruth, attended a one-room school near her home.

**Following are pictures of my grandparents, Clara and Martin Martinson as they courted in the early 1900s and then married in 1910.**



**A young Clara Anderson  
(above and below)**



**Martin Martinson**



**Courting era (1908-1910) -- Martin  
Martinson parks his buggy in front of  
Clara Anderson's stately farmhouse on  
Highway U near Mt. Vernon.**



**My grandparents, Clara (Anderson) and Martin Martinson  
on their wedding day -- November 24, 1910**



### **Planting more roots...**

#### **Clara Anderson and Martin Martinson begin life together**

My grandparents, Clara and Martin Martinson, spent the first two years of their marriage living in the log home that had been his parents' dairy and tobacco farm. It was located on Sharpes Corner Road, four miles south of Mt. Horeb in Springdale Township.

When their first child Benunie (my mother) was one year old in 1912, Clara and Martin purchased a 160-acre farm from Arne and Gurine Brustuen. It was also located in Springdale Township on Highway 92, just three miles south of Mt. Horeb. The land was originally granted to the State of Wisconsin by an Act of Congress on September 4, 1841. The first owner was John A. McFarland who purchased it in 1854. In 1943, Martin purchased another 22 acres from Henry O. Kittleson. The resulting 182-acre farm was operated by Clara and Martin until 1944 when they moved to Mt. Horeb. Their son Gaylord took over the farm in 1944 and owned it until 1982.

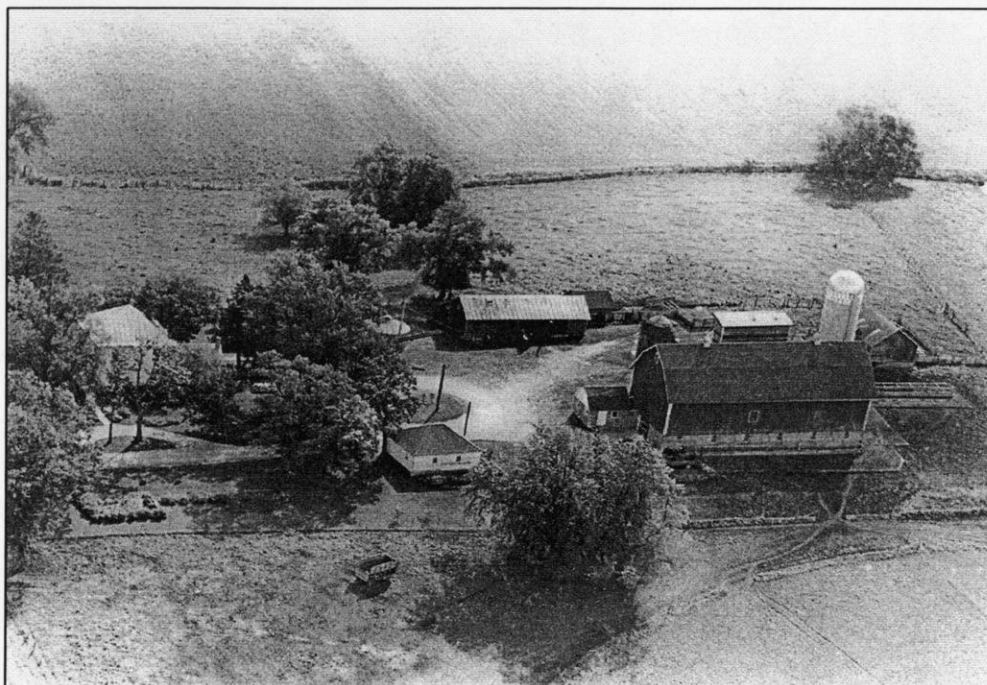
During their 32 years on the farm, Martin and Clara Martinson raised a family of nine children. A child was born nearly every two years over a 17-year span, from 1911-1928. Their children included the following six daughters and three sons who were born into the family the following years:

<b>Benunie</b>	1911, August 12
<b>Geneva</b>	1913, July 8
<b>Verna</b>	1915, April 19
<b>Gaylord</b>	1917, February 17
<b>Alma</b>	1919, April 7
<b>Helen</b>	1921, June 12
<b>Myrtle</b>	1923, August 16
<b>Harland</b>	1926, February 7
<b>Martin</b>	1928, May 5

**In this 1944-era photo, Martin and Clara Martinson pose with their nine children. Pictured (l-r) in the front row are Harland, father Martin, Martin Jr., their mother Clara, and Gaylord. The six sisters include (back, l-r) Verna, Helen, Geneva, Myrtle, Alma, and Benunie.**



Clara and Martin's son Gaylord and his wife Shirley took over the farm operation when they married in 1944. They raised five children – Judy, Joan, Jerry, Jan and Joy and continued farming 38 years before retiring in 1982. At that time they sold all but 22 acres of the farm. Shirley and Gaylord built their retirement home on the remaining acreage.



**The Martinson dairy farm, above, was in the family for 70 years. It was purchased by Martin and Clara Martinson in 1912. Their son Gaylord continued to operate the farm with his wife Shirley until they retired in 1982. In addition to milking cows, raising hogs and poultry was an important aspect of farming for both generations.**

Within a year after purchasing the farm in 1912, Martin Martinson built a new barn. But it wasn't until 1936, when the high line wires came through that major improvements in farming took place. In the 1930s, a dam was installed on the farm by the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC), a federal program started by President Roosevelt as part of his New Deal initiative. The primary purpose of the dam was to control soil erosion. In the 1940s, further improvements to the land included rotating crops and contour strip-cropping to conserve the soil. In 1950, the Martinson home was blessed with indoor plumbing, complete with running water. Other innovations followed. A barn cleaner, silo unloader, and bulk milk cooler improved farming conditions.

Martin Martinson, who was born in 1884, died from colon cancer at the age of 62 in 1946. His wife Clara, born April 21, 1891, died at age 90 of cancer in 1981.

The Martinson farm originally purchased by my grandparents in 1912 was in the family for 70 years. It has been owned by O.J. and Jane Ginther since 1982.

## Local Mt. Horeb newspaper reveals a sampling of the past

Excerpts gleaned from old *Mount Horeb Times* newspaper (now the *Mount Horeb Mail*) on file at the local library offer a look back at some of our family's births, deaths, weddings, accomplishments and social life. This listing was researched by Vergeane Martin whose family now lives on the original Martinson homestead on Sharpes Corner Road.

- *December 19, 1895 – Mr. and Mrs. Torkel Martinson are pleased over the arrival of a bright little boy (Thomas) at their home.*

- *October 21, 1897 – Torkel Martinson left last Tuesday for Wadena, Minnesota to visit his aged father who lives at that place. Charles Rue takes charge of the management of the farm during Mr. Martinson's absence.*

- *October 28, 1897 – Torkel Martinson returned from his western trip yesterday.*

- *January 4, 1900 – Mr. and Mrs. Torkel Martinson entertained a number of their friends and neighbors on New Years Day with a good old custom "Gjestebud." A pleasant and social time was enjoyed by all.*



**Torkel Martinson family (1899) are (l-r) Marie, Olaus, Torkel, Martin (tallest), Thomas (little one), Barbro, and Sever. (1898)**

- *August 22, 1901 – Torkel Martinson has invested in a new windmill. He is also sporting a brand new Monroe Family Surrey. (NOTE: The family still uses it now, more than 100 years later!)*

- *August 29, 1901 – Ever Mickleson and Torkel Martinson of Springdale are reported as having as fine looking crops of tobacco as ever was raised in the neighborhood, the former having six acres, most of which is shedded.*

- *June 1901 – O.A. Lee and J. Shelstad have built a summer kitchen for Torkel Martinson.*

- *January 28, 1903 – Tuesday was tobacco day for Mt. Horeb. Seven carloads were shipped. The price paid for the better grades was seven cents per pound. Torkel Martinson, Springdale, possesses the distinction of carrying home with him the largest check for a crop in this section this year, if not in the history of the tobacco industry in these parts. He had planted about nine acres which brought him the snug sum of over \$1100.*



•July 19, 1906 – Berry pickers are cautioned under penalty of law not to trespass on land belonging to undersigned in the towns of Springdale for berries or other fruit. – Torkel Martinson.

•February 14, 1907 – Mr. Torkel Martinson was the heaviest producer of tobacco, having seven acres which netted him \$1,160.

•April 1907 – Torkel Martinson was one of two supervisors on Springdale Town Board.

•July 1907 – Malone area will in all probability build a new school. They state it will be a solid stone building. Mr. Ayen has the contract for the entire job. Charles Lindstrom is mason, assisted by David Anderson.

•April 2, 1908 – Torkel Martinson attended the auction sale of his brother-in-law Ole Stenson near Stoughton.

•June 1908 – An article appeared on a surprise party for Torkel Martinson's 25<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary on Sunday. Over 200 attended.

•December 24, 1908 – Olaus and Martin Martinson, sons of Torkel Martinson, returned from the West Tuesday, spending several months in South Dakota and western Minnesota.



**Torkel Martinson**

•January 14, 1909 – Mr. Torkel Martinson of Springdale raised a fine crop of tobacco this year and was the first in the neighborhood to sell last fall, with S. Martin being the purchaser.

•September 16, 1910 – The family of Torkel Martinson are new residents of Mt. Horeb. Mr. Martinson is still lingering on the farm, assisting the boys with the fall work. After this is finished, he will also become a citizen here permanently.

•June 24, 1910 – Torkel Martinson returned Tuesday from the annual meeting of the United Lutheran Church held in Minnesota. After the meeting he visited relatives at St. James and had a very pleasant time, finding several more of his relatives there than he expected, having immigrated there from Norway.

•December 2, 1910 – Martin Martinson and Clara Anderson were married at the groom's parent's home on Thanksgiving Day. Rev. Gunderson spoke the words that united in hand, heart, and destiny Mr. Martin Martinson of Springdale and Miss Clara Anderson of Primrose. The groom was attended by his brother Olaus and Herman Anderson. The bridesmaids were Miss Marie Martinson and Miss Jennie Anderson. The contracting parties are well and favorably known and their many friends wish them a long and prosperous united life. They have gone to housekeeping on the farm of the groom's parents in the town of Springdale, which they have rented for the coming year. The Times joins in extending congratulations and well wishes.

•March 31, 1911 – H.B. Dahle moved into their large new dwelling house on North Second Street in Mt. Horeb (a B&B in 2005). Torkel Martinson moved into the house just vacated by H.B. Dahle and family, and to these the Times editor extends a kind welcome as future near neighbors.



**Torkel Martinson, (front/center) holds his hat as he poses with relatives on his 76<sup>th</sup> birthday (his last). The men in front are (l-r) his son Martin, son Olaus (*Shorty*), son-in-law Herman Anderson, and son Sever. (April 1930)**

- April 14, 1911 -- New village officers selected Torkel Martinson as street commissioner.
- October 20, 1911 – Martin Martinson bought the Arne Brustuen farm, consisting of 160 acres. Consideration \$103.13 per acre.
- January 1912 – Torkel Martinson may move back onto their farm in Springdale in the spring. Their son Martin who has worked the place the past year having bought the Arne Brustein farm will vacate the place in March. Mr. Torkel Martinson may rent his place however, and continue to reside in Mt. Horeb, which we think would be the proper thing to do.
- March 8, 1912 – Torkel Martinson moved to his former home in Springdale last Monday. We shall expect to see Mr. Martinson return to take up his permanent home here sometime in the near future after either selling or renting his farm, having reached the stage when he is entitled to a less strenuous life than the management of a large farm.
- February 1923 – Mrs. Torkel (Barbro) Martinson died at age 72. She was born in 1851. (See obituary at end of this chapter.)
- May 24, 1928 –  
The stone mason will start to lay the basement on the Torkel Martinson farm for the house that will be moved up from the Ever Michelson farm. Mr. and Mrs. H.I. Anderson will live in it. Henry is getting better than 900 pounds of milk each day from 22 nice Holstein cows. Who can beat that?

•July 5, 1928 – In an article about turning the Austin Olson farm into Little Norway, I quote, “Torkel Martinson has done much to beautify the place. He worked hard all last summer and is again on the job this summer, trying to make the place as typical of the surroundings of Norway as he knew them.”

•October 15, 1930 – Torkel Martinson died at age 76.

•January 21, 1932 – Mr. and Mrs. Martin Martinson announce the marriage of their daughter, Benunie Leona, to Mr. Walter Rudolf Schwarz, son of Mr. and Mrs. Rudolf Schwarz. The marriage took place Saturday, January 9, at Galena, Illinois. They were attended by Miss Verna Fritz of Belleville and Mr. Sylvanus Aavang.

### **Obituary of Mrs. Torkel (Barbro) Martinson**

February 23, 1923 (Excerpted from the *Mount Horeb Times*)

*Mrs. Torkel Martinson of the town of Springdale died February 7 and was buried at East Blue Mounds Church on February 10. The weather was fine and a large concourse of people followed the funeral and proved their respect and love for the deceased and sympathy with the family. The stalwart sons carried the dear mother to her grave. Rev. S. Gunderson, her pastor for the last 33 years, officiated.*

*Barbro Larsdatter Gullingrue Stensen was born March 12, 1851 in the same township where she spent her whole life and only a few rods from where she died. She was baptized, confirmed, and married in the same congregation to which the family had belonged since its organization.*

*In 1868 at age 17, she was married to Jens S. Shelstad, with whom she had six children, all living except the youngest who died when 20 years old in 1895. The husband, Mr. Shelstad, died in 1881.*

*On June 19, 1883 she was married to Torkel Martinson, with whom she also had six children. She leaves 31 grandchildren and one great grandchild, also two sisters and one brother.*

*Mrs. Martinson was a worthy representative of that grand type of womanhood who combined physical health and strength with those nobler qualities of heart, character and temperament. She proved this through all her life, particularly as wife, mother, sister, neighbor, and church member.*

*She lived to see all her children happily married and in respectable occupations. After a long life of perfect health, she began ailing three years ago. Her last year she was a sick woman, and the last three or four months she suffered very much. The deadly malady – cancer of the stomach – a very common disease among old people – overruled all human efforts of help.*

*In the meantime, God's Holy Spirit had created in her heart that conscientiousness of sin and mercy and that full confidence in the saving grace from above that enabled her to face death with joyful assurance of eternal Salvation. Our heartfelt sympathy goes out to the lonely husband, children and all the relatives.*



### **Obituary – Torkel Martinson**

Wednesday, October 15, 1930 (excerpted from the *Mount Horeb Times*)

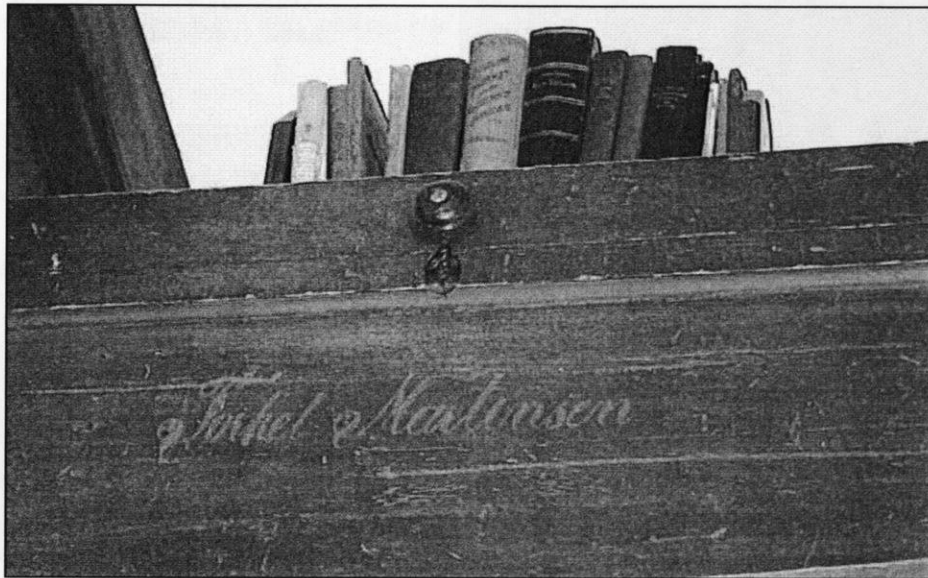
*Torkel Martinson was born on April 20, 1854 at Gudbrandsdaien, Norway. His parents were Martin and Marie Martinson, with whom he immigrated to America at the age of 10. He married Mrs. Barbara Shelstad, widow of Jens Shelstad on June 19, 1883 and settled on the old homestead in the town of Springdale. Six children were born to them: Martin, Springdale, Olaus, Mt. Horeb, Mary, Mrs. H.L. Anderson, Primrose; Sever, Mt. Horeb; Clara who died in infancy, and Thomas who died in 1930.*

*Mr. and Mrs. Martinson were among the pioneer members of the East Blue Mounds Lutheran Church. Upon the death of Mrs. Martinson in 1923, Mr. Martinson moved to Mt. Horeb, where he joined the Mt. Horeb Lutheran Church of which he remained a faithful member until death. Since retiring from the farm, he has made his home with his son, Olaus.*

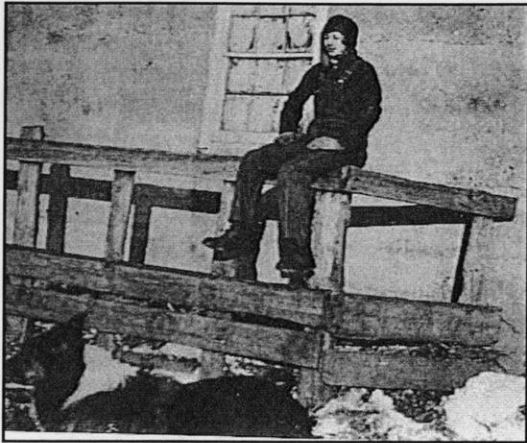
*Mr. Martinson was a man of firm, Christian character. He was blessed with a strong constitution, which finally broke down with complications of the lungs, and he passed away at the home of his son Olaus, Sunday morning, October 12, 1930.*

*Besides his children, he is survived by four step-children, Mrs. John Kittleson, Primrose; Mrs. Julian Solve, Hancock, Minn; Mrs Ed Barton, Blue Mounds, and Jens Shelstad, Primrose.*

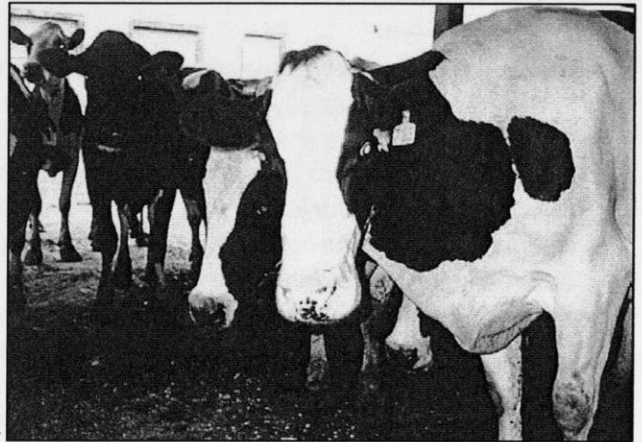
*His funeral took place Monday, October 15 at 1 p.m. from the home of his son, Olaus and at 1:30 from the Mt. Horeb Lutheran Church with burial in the East Blue Mounds cemetery. The Rev. E. R. Anderson, his pastor, officiated, assisted by the Rev. Hector Gunderson. Blessed be his memory.*



**Torkel Martinson's books and a trunk he brought from Norway.**



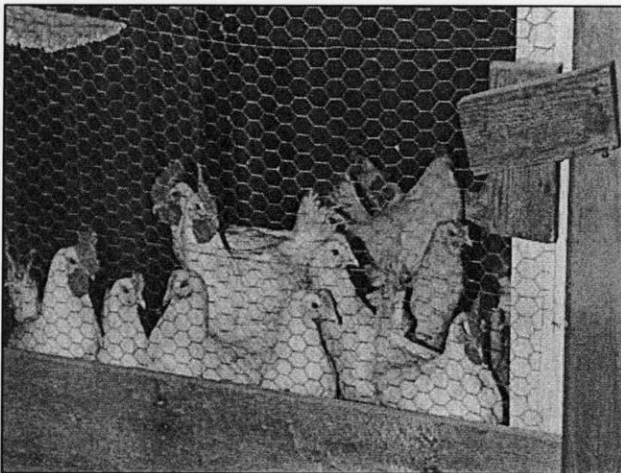
**Benunie taking a break the farm! (1920)**



**Martinson farm life  
1920s**



**Grandma's coffee pot and  
hand-crocheted tablecloth.**





## CHAPTER 2

### Tidbits of Martinson Life on the Farm -- From 1911 to 1944



Clara and Martin Martinson and their nine children in 1930. Front (l-r) are Marty, Myrtle, and Harland; middle (l-r) are Helen, Gaylord and Alma. Back (l-r) are Verna, Geneva, Benunie, Martin, and Clara.

It must have been quite a hectic household back in those days with nine children. Just imagine. No running water, no indoor plumbing, no refrigerators and – heaven forbid -- no television! Imagine Clara, mother of nine, trying to sew a new dress for a teenage daughter while little ones raced under foot, tangled the sewing threads, and argued over who had to carry in the next pail of water from the outdoor pump.

When calling for her oldest daughter Benunie to help referee, Clara discovers her in the parlor with the hired man – Walter. (Walter later became my dad.) The wooden spoon, carved by Clara out of a tree branch, may have been used for more than just making jelly. But from personal accounts of those nine children, now in their golden years, my grandma and grandpa were very patient and caring parents.

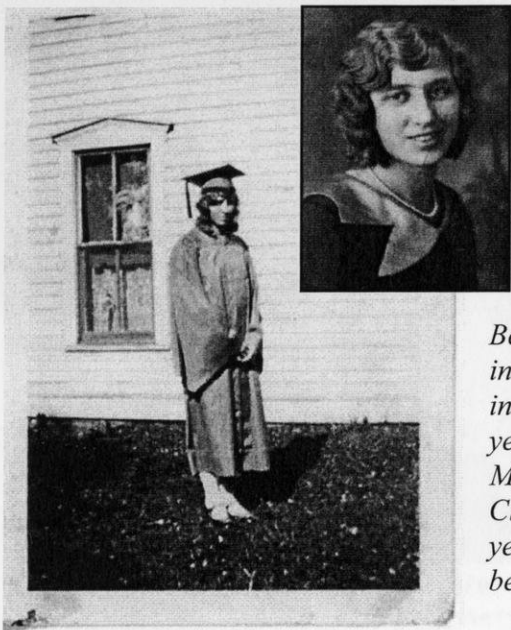
**Benunie**, born August 12, 1911, had tales to tell about her youth. The oldest child, she was the one who tended to a ton of farm work. On top of that, she had to help care for her eight younger siblings. She was a hard worker. And it probably started early, when she was first expected to watch over her brothers and sisters. I recall her telling how she was trying to make pie crust for the first time and lost her patience. She went out in the front yard and hurled the pie crust madly against the woodshed while her shocked but laughing sister Geneva looked on. The image was embroidered on a Memory Quilt made for my mother on her 75<sup>th</sup> birthday.



Benunie Martinson Schwarz (age 27)

Mother often reminisced about how, as a child, her parents' horse-drawn sleigh, with sleighbells jingling, skimmed over the snow-covered hills and valleys to reach the Malone School where all nine were students. (My dad Walter, their hired man, also attended the school.)

It's obvious that my grandparents, Martin and Clara, must have believed firmly in education because eight out their nine children went on to graduate from Mt. Horeb High School. That meant a lot of sacrifices for a farm family back then. Mother graduated in 1930 with 40 other seniors, including class president Lyle Johnson. Their class motto was "Not at the Top, but Climbing."



In the 1930 Mt. Horeb High School annual known as the Berohbok (Horeb spelled backward), seniors were listed with various sayings under each name. For Benunie it read "*Her modesty is a cannibal to her merit.*"

*The Berohbok went on to say, "During Benunie's four years in high school, she majored in English and Commercial work. She took part in the Declamatory work in her first and fourth years and was in the junior play, "Marrying Marian." She was a member of the Dramatic Club in her third year and Art Club her fourth year. Benunie is quiet, but her sunny smile will be greatly missed."*

**Benunie proudly graduated from Mt. Horeb High School in 1930.**

One of mother's high school teachers wrote a personal message in her annual. It read: *I have enjoyed your presence in class and in school. I appreciate your loyalty to me. May joy and happiness be your lot your whole life through. – H. Bogard, Principal and history teacher.*

Her English teacher Miss Hattie B. Cone wrote: *Dear Benunie: You and your car have always been ready to help out. May you always have the best of luck and happiness.*

Her home economics teacher wrote: *Here's to the senior girl who was always ready to do anything asked of her.*

In a poem written especially for the senior class, the lines about Benunie were: *"And oh how Benunie loves to drive! She is always ready to give anybody a ride."*

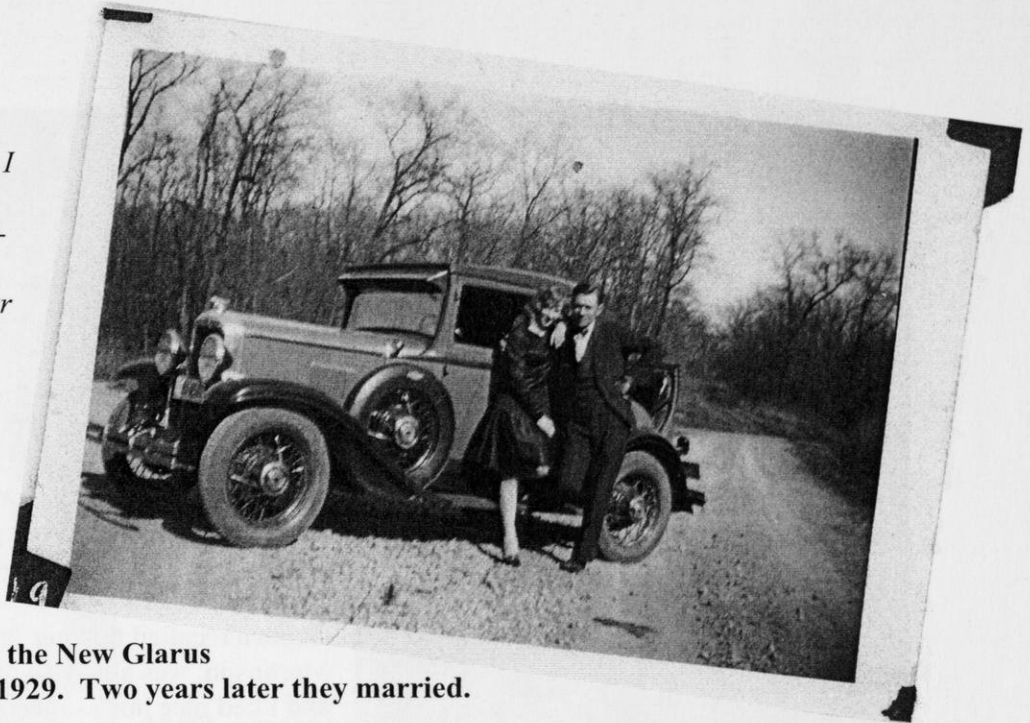
On the class calendar page, mother was listed jokingly at the 7 a.m. time slot. It read: *"Benunie Martinson walks arm in arm to the barn with the hired man."*

Classmates wrote in her yearbook too. Here are some of their comments...

*"Benunie, I'll always remember the good times we have had at noon and after school. You sure treated me square. I won't forget your sunny face!"*

*“Benunie, you attend dances as I do. You usually are with that red-haired guy! Always remember that night at Riley!”*

**My parents, Walter and Benunie, had lots of fun together. It’s evident in this picture taken at the New Glarus Woods Park in 1929. Two years later they married.**



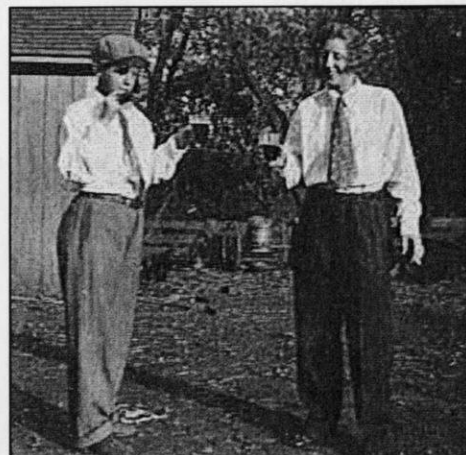
My Uncle Gaylord Martinson recalled a funny story about my mom and dad. “One time, when your dad Walter was our hired man and lived on our farm, he had a date. Your mother wasn’t happy about it. She hid his pants so he couldn’t go,” Gaylord recalled with a chuckle. That date obviously was not with my mother. Later they began courting. What a dickens she was!

As for her childhood, Mom had once told me about the annual excitement of seeing and hearing the giant threshing machine creep up the steep long driveway to the farm each summer. The powerful sound of the steam engine and its shrill steam whistle was a special highlight of life on the farm. *“The sight and sound caused us kids to drop everything and race toward it -- what a thrill to see it round the corner at the top of our driveway,”* I recall her saying.

Families gathered to help harvest crops before winter arrived. And of course, through mother’s old photographs, I know she liked to have fun.

With much sadness, but after living a good life, my mother, Benunie, died at age 87 in 1999.

**At right, my mother Benunie (on right) clowns around with her sister Verna in the 1920s, dressed in men’s clothes and acting the role (with a cigarette and drink to complete the image). Were they mocking men and advocating women’s rights – or just having fun? It was at a time when women’s rights were on the rise. Mother might be wearing dad’s clothes since he was their hired man.**







**Geneva**, second oldest of the nine children, was born July 8, 1913. (*Sadly, she died of cancer in July, 1995.*)

Geneva must have had to work very hard under the direction of her parents and older sister Benunie, with whom she became “best of friends.” Like Benunie, Geneva also graduated from Mt. Horeb High School. Obviously Geneva was pretty athletic in those days because she earned a letter sweater for physical fitness feats in the Girls Athletic Association!

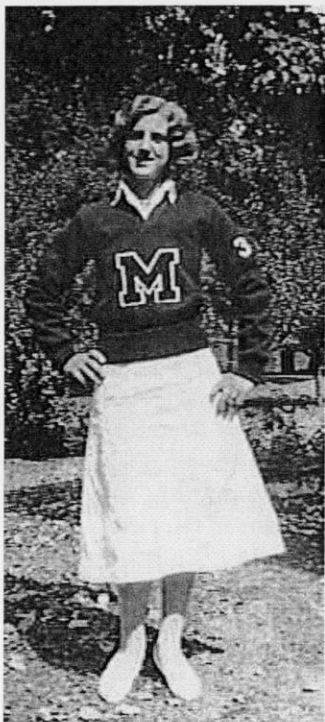
Geneva recalled that her father, Martin Martinson, was always a “spiffy dresser” and liked nice horses, according to her daughter Joyce Gust of Verona.

**At left are Martinson sisters (l-r) Verna, Geneva, and my mother Benunie – ready to work on the farm -- with dress shoes on?**

Geneva’s children recently recalled the story about their mother winning the honor of “Fall Frolic Queen” in 1936. A private family joke, they said, was that her uncle Sever Martinson, who owned the John Deere dealership in Mt. Horeb, may have stuffed the ballot box. The fact was -- she made a very pretty queen!



**Among Geneva’s court of honor as Mt. Horeb Frolic Queen are front (l-r) Verna Helmenstein Docken, Don Schwarz, Kip Thoreson, and unidentified girl. Back (l-r) Pat Murphy Henderson, Queen Geneva Martinson Dettwiler and Anita Fosshage Watson.**



At right, sisters Geneva and Verna pose with my dad, Walter Schwarz. (I wonder if mom was the photographer?)

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At left, Geneva proudly wears a letter sweater during her Mt. Horeb High School days, era 1931-32. The sweater was awarded through the (GAA) Girls Athletic Association for physical fitness accomplishments.

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**Verna**, the third child born to Clara and Martin Martinson, arrived April 19, 1915. She barely remembers her Grandma Barbro Martinson who died in 1923, but does recall visiting them in the log house where they lived on Sharpes Corner Road.

“Grandma was usually in her rocking chair,” Verna said. “There was a bed of petunias near the house. There was a summer kitchen just a short distance from the log house, and in it was a dumb waiter that went down in the ground where they kept food. They had kerosene lamps. I don’t remember her date of death, but Grandpa Torkel was around much longer. He stayed with his children and families. It seems he was at our house a lot. He always brought his clothes in a black satchel, which also contained peppermint candy for us kids as a treat.”

“My favorite holiday,” Verna continued, “was Christmas when there always was something for everyone. We had new toys and games to play. The tree was not fancy and was just a branch from a pine tree in the lawn. It was decorated with candles, strings of popcorn, and colored paper chains which we made. The candles were lit for a short time and watched closely. The lutefisk was brought from the store in dry form and soaked for days or weeks to restore it to be ready to eat.”

“All nine of us kids attended the Malone School. We had a desk adjusted to fit each one of us. All eight grades were in one room, and each class had a set time for each subject. Students were then called to the benches at the front of the room. It was also a good time for other students to pick up on their learning. At recess time, we played ball, went sleigh riding, and played other games in the snow. We usually walked to school unless weather

was really bad. In winter it was by horse and sleigh and with lots of blankets. We walked across the field, behind the barn, through the woods, and down the road close to Brustuen's farm," Verna recalls.

"I had no favorite teacher or subject. It was all interesting. I graduated with good grades in the spring of 1929 and entered Mt. Horeb High School in 1929. I graduated in 1933.



**In 1931, Verna returned to Malone School with other Mt. Horeb High School students to put on a play for Malone School students. Former Malone students pictured (l-r) are Mildred Funkhauser, Lena Bieri, LaVerne Johnson, Verna's sister Geneva Martinson, Wallace Fargo, Verna Lust, Verna Martinson, and Stanley Shutvet.**

**At far right is Malone teacher Sylvanus Aavang, a favorite among students.**

"Mom and Dad were very patient and loving," Verna continues. "We all had jobs to do, but we also had time for fun. We had no electric appliances so everything was work. Horses were used for farm work. I remember the first Ford tractor. Our home was heated with wood and coal stoves. All cooking and canning was done on the wood stove. Most food was grown and produced on the farm. We had a large garden and an apple orchard to raise food for canning and eating fresh. Our chickens supplied us with eggs and meat. In the spring, eggs were hatched for new chicks. Mom always helped with the milking and washing of milk utensils. She also made most of our clothes."



**Grandma Martinson's wash, frozen stiff!**



“Clothes were scrubbed on a wash board and hung outdoors to dry. In winter they were frozen like boards and brought in the house to finish drying. The bread was always homemade, along with other cakes, cookies, and doughnuts. To us, store-bought bread was a treat, but when we came home from school the fresh baked bread smell was wonderful!”

“Dad always said we didn’t have to go out to work as there was plenty to do at home,” Verna concludes. “I worked for a short time at Lunde’s when their youngest son was born, and then at Olson’s Restaurant in Mt. Horeb in 1936, before Bennie and I were married.”

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**Gaylord**, the first-born son, arrived on February 17, 1917. He remembers playing ball in summer and sledding in winter at Malone School, where he attended all eight grades.

“We walked most of the time,” Gaylord, now 88, recalls. “But sometimes Pearl Thousand, the teacher in Mt. Vernon, would pick us up.” Gaylord’s favorite subject was math. His favorite teacher was Sylvanus Aavang.

What comes to mind when Gaylord thinks about his dad, Martin, is that he was with him all of the time. “We were joined at the hip,” Gaylord said. A typical summer day for Gaylord and his dad was to get up early, do the milking chores, and then the field work – depending on the season. Milking and chore time rolled around again each evening.



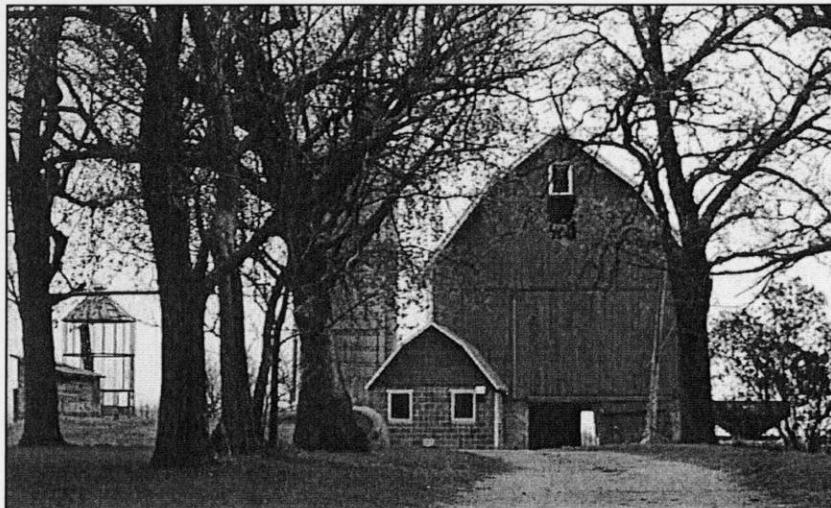
How were things different back in the early 1900s? Gaylord says transportation consisted of cars, but adds that horses were used in winter. The biggest changes and most notable inventions, Gaylord explains, arrived with electricity and the erecting of power poles.

**Martin, father of nine, pauses around 1920 for a picture during planting time. Horses were used in the fields into the 1930s.**

Gaylord recalls when his dad Martin and Martin’s brother-in-law Jens Shelstad bought their first tractor together in the early 1920s. He also can still visualize the first John

Deere tractor his dad bought in 1928 – a John Deere Model D, capable of pulling a gang plow with three 14-inch plows that could turn over three furrows at a time.

Bathroom facilities were much different back in the 1920s. Gaylord's recollections verify that. Both indoor and outdoor methods were crude compared to now. Gaylord says he and the rest of his family didn't go to the outdoor privy in the night – instead they used a jug or pot. One time, Gaylord recalls with a laugh, his sister Verna had to go in the middle of the night, and his oldest sister Benunie got impatient with her. "Verna couldn't find the thunder jug, as we called it. It was missing. So Benunie told her to piddle on the floor!"



**The barn on the Martinson farm, Highway 92**

Gaylord also recalls another incident concerning a hired man whose head shook due to a facial tick. "He wasn't the sharpest guy around and had a bad habit of leaving his clothes lay in piles on the floor," Gaylord said. Once Gaylord heard him ask, "*Where do I get the straw?*" Benunie, because she was the oldest of the nine children, oversaw a lot of the farm and household chores with her parents. She snapped back, "*Same place as you always get it.*" "Then she told him to hang up his darn clothes," Gaylord laughed.

Gaylord, like the rest of his siblings, has fond memories of his mother, Clara. "Ma had a huge garden and canned everything," Gaylord said. "She was a hard worker. When they butchered, she even cut up and canned the meat. She made homemade bread all the time, and if we ran out none of us liked the store bought bread as well. She also made pies all the time," Gaylord recalls.

But one of his favorite things she made was headcheese. "Some of our kids even like that," Gaylord says. "Mother could do just about anything. She cut hair and even made my overalls when I was young. I enjoyed everything about her."

"A typical day for my mother was not easy," Gaylord continues. "She milked the cows by hand, washed up everything in the barn, and then still did all the housework too."

Gaylord says his fondest memory is of the parties at different homes and exchanging work with neighbors like his friend Bill Steinhauer and his brother-in-law Walter Schwarz, my dad.



**Alma**, born April 7, 1919 was the middle child of the nine. “We had a very nice home life,” Alma said. “Our parents were kind, hard-working Christians and we went quite regularly to our Lutheran church services.”

Alma said the Great Depression of the 1930s hit when she was about 10 years old. “Money was scarce and with our large family we had to live off the farm as much as possible.”



The house on the Martinson farm on Highway 92

“Mom had a large garden so we had vegetables from that. We raised chicken, hogs, and cows so we had our own milk and meat,” Alma said. “There was a lot of canning of vegetables, fruit, and meat. Corn, peas, beans and meat were packed into quart jars and processed in a large copper boiler on top of the wood stove,” Alma explains. “Some meat was fried and packed into crocks, with melted lard poured over the top to preserve it. In winter we kept some meat frozen in a room that had no heat.”

“Our mother also made a lot of our clothes. She was always sewing and mending,” Alma continues.

“We all helped with the jobs to be done,” Alma said, noting there was house work, gardening, field work, and milking of cows. “There was no such thing as a milking machine back then. We milked our cows by hand. I helped with that,” Alma adds. “There wasn’t such a machine as a combine either, so the grain and corn were cut with binders into bundles. Then we would ‘shock’ them (*set them up in groups*) until they could be threshed (*separating the straw from the grain*). The corn was put in the silo with a silo filler machine,” Alma explained.

“There was no television back then, and we only had one radio and a victrola (record player). So we made a lot of our own entertainment,” Alma continued. “We had enough family to play softball, croquet, and other outdoor games. We also had indoor games such as dominoes, checkers, cards, and more. All in all, we had a nice life.”

“I don’t remember my Grandma (Barbro) Martinson as she died when I was quite young. But I remember Grandpa (Torkel) Martinson. He was a kind old man,” Alma recalls. He would walk from place to place. He enjoyed spending a few days with us, and he always came with a package of peppermint candies.”

Alma has lots of school memories from the one-room Malone School that so many of us in the family attended. “My first grade teacher was Miss Stocks, and I don’t remember her very well,” Alma said. “I learned my 3 R’s from Mr. Aavang, who was my teacher for the rest of the grades. He was a good teacher. If the weather permitted, we walked to Malone School. Sometimes a neighbor would come along and give us a ride.”

“I went to High School in Mt. Horeb, and since there were no school buses, I stayed quite a bit with my sister Benunie and her husband Walter,” Alma explains. “They lived in Mt. Horeb at the time. After high school I worked as a waitress at Berghs Bakery & Café for a few years.”

At her most recent class reunion, Alma was given the following humorous, yet thought-provoking essay. She thought it would be appropriate for this chapter. Here goes...

#### **A Bit of Humor on Life Before 1945**

*We were born before television, before penicillin, before polio shots, frozen foods, Xerox, plastic contact lenses, Frisbees, and the PILL. We were born before radar, credit cards, split atoms, laser beams, and ballpoint pens. Before pantyhose, dishwashers, clothes dryers, electric blankets, air conditioners, drip-dry clothes... and before man walked on the moon.*

*We got married first, and THEN lived together. How quaint can you be? In our time, closets were for clothes, not for “coming out of.” Bunnies were small rabbits, and rabbits were not Volkswagens. Designer jeans were scheming girls named Jean, and having a meaningful relationship meant getting along with our cousins.*

*We thought fast food was what you ate during Lent, and Outer Space was the back of the Riviera Theater. We were before house husbands, gay rights, computer dating, dual careers, and commuter marriages. We were before daycare centers, group therapy, and nursing homes. We never heard of FM radio, tape decks, electronic typewriters, artificial hearts, word processors, yogurt, and guys wearing earrings. For us, time sharing meant togetherness. A chip meant a piece of wood. Hardware meant hardware, and software wasn't even a word.*

*Back then, “Made in Japan” meant JUNK and the term “making out” referred to how you did on your exam. Pizzas, McDonalds, and instant coffee were unheard of. We hit the scene when there were 5 and 10 cents stores, where you bought things for five or ten cents. For one nickel you could ride a street car, make a phone call, buy a soda pop, an ice cream cone, or enough stamps to mail one letter AND two postcards. You could buy a new Chevy coupe for \$600... but who could afford one? A pity too, because gas was only 11 cents per gallon!*

*In our day, grass was mowed. Coke was a cold drink. And pot was something you cooked in. Rock music was Grandma's lullaby, and AIDS were helpers in the principal's office. We were certainly not before the differences in the sexes was discovered, but we were surely before sex change. We made do with what we had. And we are the last generation that was so dumb as to think you needed a husband to have a baby.*

*No wonder we are so confused, and there is such a generation gap today. But, we SURVIVED! What better reason to celebrate?*

**Helen**, the sixth child born to Martin and Clara Martinson, arrived on June 12, 1921. Three younger siblings would follow her into the family over the next seven years: Myrtle, Harland, and Marty. At the time of Helen's birth, Alma was just two years old.

### **School days, then married life**

Like her siblings, Helen also attended Malone School and endured the two-mile walk down wooded hills and into the Malone valley with the creek running through it. Once there, she joined in ballgames and other fun with schoolmates. Helen especially enjoyed the annual Christmas program with plays and poem reciting. Her favorite teacher was Sylvanus Aavang. It was her only teacher since she had him for all eight grades.

As a student at Mt. Horeb High School, Helen enjoyed math. "I enjoy working with numbers, but I also liked writing," Helen said. She graduated from Mt. Horeb High School in 1938 and went to work in Madison. In later years, she worked at the Wisconsin Department of Motor Vehicles.

She met her husband Alfred Abplanalp of Arena when he was employed at the Malone Cheese Factory during World War II. He was drafted into the Army, and their courtship began after he was home from the war in 1945. Helen reminisces about the fact Alfred served in the European theater. "He arrived at Omaha Beach in France on the second day of that bloody battle," she recalled.

After Alfred returned from the war, he started his own business as a licensed cheesemaker, with his first factory known as Barber near Barneveld.

Helen and Alfred tied the knot at a double wedding with his brother Harold and his wife Rachael on November 3, 1947. A single ceremony pronounced both couples "husband and wife."

### **Childhood memories**

Helen's fond recollections of her youth are vivid at age 84. She recalls her Grandpa Torkel visiting her family's farmhouse when she was little. "He'd bring an overnight satchel and would always pull out pink peppermint candy treats for us. He'd go from place to place, visiting his other children, like Shorty and Sophie Martinson and Sever and Elsie Martinson in Mt. Horeb."

One rather humorous childhood incident comes to mind for Helen. It involves a fondness for her mother's homemade sauerkraut. Not so funny was the fact Helen contracted a form of hepatitis as a young girl and became yellow with jaundice.

"I was real sick and couldn't eat," Helen recalls. "I was down in bed and missed about a week of school. Mother was trying so hard to get me to eat. She brought a bowl of homemade chicken soup to me in bed. It had a big gob of butter in the middle, and I refused to eat it. Instead I craved her sauerkraut and began eating it like crazy. She was disgusted I wouldn't eat her soup, but she was just glad I was eating something."



### **Favorite holiday as a child**

Fourth of July is a holiday that Helen remembers fondly as a young girl growing up on the Martinson farm. “We usually had ice cream. It was a real treat because there wasn’t such a thing as a freezer back then. So we would get ice cream on July 4<sup>th</sup> and eat it the same day.”

Helen also recalls that a substitute for ice cream was eating whipped cream with food coloring in it. “Mother would separate our milk into cream. She’d skim the cream off the top in winter months. Then she’d whip the cream until stiff, adding sugar and coloring.”



**Grandma Martinson and daughters gather around her kitchen table in Mt. Horeb. (1950)**

Although many relatives liked the headcheese Grandma Clara made, Helen did not. “I saw her butchering and picking the meat out from the cow’s head. Therefore, it didn’t interest me to eat headcheese,” Helen said. “Her Norwegian lefse was good though.”

“Mother was always working. I don’t recall her ever being sick. At night when we kids would be playing, she’d be crocheting or knitting. She had a large garden and it was always very hot work in the summer. She baked bread constantly -- raising it and punching it down. She made about 8-10 loaves at a time in one oversized pan.”

The process of making sauerkraut, and of eating it even while ill, is quite a memory for Helen. “We ate sauerkraut almost every Saturday,” Helen recalls. “I can still picture how mom made it too. A big cabbage shredder was used. Then the pieces of cabbage were placed in a large crock with salt and weighted down with a heavy plate. Months later we would pack it into two-quart blue Mason jars and eat it.”

### **Memories of her Mother**

Helen recalls her mother making lots of tasty food, but was especially fond of her sugar cookies.

“She made a lot of cookies when we were kids, and even into her later years,” Helen said. Cookies her mom (our “Grandma Martinson”) was famous for include: sugar, molasses, oatmeal, cornflake, pinwheel and many more. Imagine how many she had to make for a family of 11 – including nearly 40- grandchildren!

“One of my favorite bars Mother made was called Matrimony Bars,” Helen said. “They had a date filling between an oatmeal crust and topping.”

Helen also remembers her mother sewing dresses for all six girls. “She bought yards and yards of material and made us all clothes for school,” Helen said. “And she sewed with an old treadle (foot-pedal operated) machine.”

Her mother’s clothes washing and drying methods evoke vivid memories for Helen, especially in wintertime.



“I can still picture the long underwear hanging outside, frozen stiff. Then she would bring them indoors to thaw out and to completely dry. She’d put them by the heat register in what we referred to as the *Other Room*.” That is where we would get dressed too, because it was the warmest room in the house.”

**Martinson children gather with their parents Clara and Martin. (1939)**  
The six girls (l-r) are Helen, Verna, Myrtle, Geneva, Benunie, and Alma.  
In back are the three boys (l-r) Marty, Harland and Gaylord. (*Grandma Martinson still carried this photo in her billfold when she died at age 90.*)

### **Memories of her Dad and the Great Depression**

Helen’s memories of her dad, Martin, include recollection of him being a quiet and community-minded man. “He was on the Springdale Town Board, the Malone Cheese Factory and School Boards, and more,” Helen said. “He worked hard and was always very even-tempered.”

Helen recalls the Great Depression and the crisis situation that resulted when all the banks closed down. “The Depression was a real tough time. People lost all but a tiny percentage of their money that was in the bank at that time,” Helen said. “I remember my dad coming home from the bank and saying: *‘Well, I’ve got just enough money left for one big fat cigar.’*”

“While many farmers were losing their farms all around us, dad and mother were able to keep ours,” Helen said.

How was it possible to thrive during the Depression, with nine children in tow? The Martinson family was extremely creative and self-sufficient. They grew, harvested, raised, and canned everything needed to sustain a family of 11. More importantly, says Helen, the timing of when her dad had purchased the farm in 1912 made a difference.

### **Chores on the farm**

Although her older sisters helped a lot with farm chores, Helen says her duties were primarily of the household nature. She washed dishes, set the table, helped plant and harvest fruits and vegetables, mowed lawn, dusted and swept the house.

“Vacuum cleaners had not been invented, so we used brooms and carpet sweepers. Our lawn mowers didn’t have engines. They were the reel push kind with the exposed blades. But our lawns weren’t as nice or as big and lush as lawns are today.”

### **Fond memories**

“My fondest memory,” Helen says, “is just of everyone being together. I enjoyed being in a big family, and our farm was a good place to grow up. I especially enjoyed the carefree days of being a child... the simple pleasures of laying on the lawn and looking up at the stars, going out and playing Fox and Geese in the snow or playing cards, dominoes, and other games at night.”

Helen concludes by saying that, after her dad died in 1946, she moved back home briefly to help and be with her mother during that difficult time. A year later she and Alfred married.

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**Myrtle**, the youngest of the six daughters, was born August 16, 1923. She recalls her Grandpa Torkel Martinson coming to stay at their farm. “He always brought us peppermint candy. I still buy the same type in white or pink. He told us he liked staying at our place better than the other places he stayed with family. Maybe he told them the same thing. I liked his white beard.”

“I was born on the Martinson farm and lived there until I finished high school in Mt. Horeb. My summers during high school were spent helping Benunie, Geneva, and Verna. I also worked for Jim Hoff’s family and Melvin Wendt’s family when they had their babies.”



**Malone School on Highway 92 near Mt. Horeb**

### **School and Christmas memories**

“Christmas was exciting, with Malone School’s Christmas program and our church programs,” Myrtle said. “One year, I played the part of Mary, mother of Jesus. Christmas morning at our house was special -- especially the time my mother made me a table and little doll bed out of wood. When did she have the time? And it was very well made!”



My dad told us more than once that our mother could do anything -- and she could. Where there's a will, there's a way! I always have told my kids that too."

"My teacher for seven years at Malone School was Sylvanus Aavang," Myrtle continues. "And for eighth grade I had Frieda Thoni. I didn't really like the change, and our class made it hard for her. We all resist change. With our dad on the school board at Malone, we might have had it better than some."

"We walked to school most of the time -- down through the woods, past the "big rock" and then past the bulls in the pastures and the geese at Grinde's farm. My kids think we had to fight the Indians, but there were other dangers. Also, the winding creek was always a temptation -- in winter and with ice, especially. We were told by our mom and dad to stay away from it."

"During winter months, we would ride to school with my brother Gaylord or our dad in the milk truck to Malone Factory. We'd wait there until the teacher opened the school. Meanwhile, we watched Otto Bendicks making cheese, and many times I would go upstairs and visit with his wife Elsie," Myrtle says, adding that she attended all eight grades at Malone School.

"I graduated from Mt. Horeb High School in 1941, along with Milton who later become my husband. I don't think I had a favorite subject, but my English teachers were very good. American History was very interesting, but the teacher didn't make it so. I ended up going to business school and working with numbers all my working years."

"My fondest high school memory is when Milton picked me to be his prom queen during our junior year," Myrtle says, smiling. He tells me that the first time he saw me walk to the library in the Main Room, he knew he was going to marry me!"

### **Myrtle reflects on her dad, Martin**

"I always looked up Dad and wanted to please him," Myrtle says. "When I was growing up, I went along with him to town, to the feed mill, or to Uncle Sever's for John Deere parts. I tagged along and was his shadow."

"Dad ate popcorn one kernel at a time -- something I find very hard to do," Myrtle admits. "For the most part, I admired his determination. Life could not have been easy raising nine kids and having all of them turn out to be good, healthy individuals."

"On Sunday mornings all of us went to Sunday School at our Lutheran Church. Dad and mother always came later for church. I would be uneasy until they got there."



**Mt. Horeb Evangelical Lutheran on Main Street was the Martinson family's church.**

“We were supposed to sit still and not look around, but I would listen because my dad had a habit of clearing his throat,” Myrtle explained. “When I heard him do that, I knew they had arrived and were sitting behind us. Then all was good, and I could settle down.”

### **Fun and games**

“Much of the summer we lived outside, barefoot, playing games... rolling a cream can with bare feet ...throwing the ball back and forth over the shanty... playing mumble-pig with the shoe awl, or playing kick-the-can.” Myrtle explains. “Sometimes we would lay on the lawn or porch and count the cars going by on Highway 18.”

“When walking down the long hill of our driveway to get the mail, we would pick wild strawberries, gooseberries and cherries. We would carry home the ones we didn’t eat, using our straw hats as containers,” Myrtle recalls fondly. “I also just loved apples. As soon as our orchard was producing them, I’d gather up the front of my skirt and fill it with apples. Then I’d go and sit in a tree, the swing or the straw stack and eat them one at a time. Everyone told me I’d get sick, but I never did.”

### **Chores and daily living**

“We always had a lot of people at our table and lots of food. I never went hungry or never felt any of us went without. We raised our own animals for meat. Our mother’s garden produced vegetables and fruits which we helped her pick and can. We had electric lights, and I never used oil lamps in the house. Sometimes I stayed overnight with a girlfriend, and we’d have to carry an oil lamp to bed. It was a feather bed, which we didn’t have at our house,” Myrtle said.

“Outdoor toilets were the way of life back then, and chamber pots were used indoors for small children or when you were sick. When Milton and I bought our cottage near Tomahawk in 1960, we had an outdoor toilet and a “pot” for the kids at night. My kids seemed to enjoy roughing it,” Myrtle says. “When we were growing up, we didn’t know of anything else.”

“We three younger Martinson sisters (Alma, Helen and I) took turns doing dishes, shaking rugs, and sweeping floors. We helped carry firewood, but I hated going in the woodshed,” Myrtle admits. “I also had to carry water from the outdoor water pump and pick eggs in the hen house. I was kind of in the middle – some days I would help Alma and Helen. Other days I would do chores and things with our younger brothers Harland and Marty. I think it came down to whichever one seemed a better deal at the time!”

### **Myrtle recalls her mother, Clara**

“My mother was a person who could do anything – grow our food, cook it, cut our hair, sew our clothes, patch everything, repair our shoes, and whatever else we needed. She’d sit for hours, picking out walnuts and hickory nuts for all her wonderful baking. She was the best lefse baker! My mother seemed to be able to figure out most everything – no matter what you asked. Where there is a will, there is a way!”

“Mom was always washing clothes, making bread, baking cookies, and making or patching clothes,” Myrtle continues. “We wore patched clothes at home, but never when

we went out in public because *'people might think we were poor.'*" Myrtle recalls. "We had the Great Depression, but I never went without or felt we missed out anywhere."

### **Life in a big family**

"No memory stands out more than another, but with nine kids life was never dull," says Myrtle, who is now 82. "Memories are many ... We always had enough to play ball, even in the dining room sometimes. My older sisters and their friends danced in the living room. We carried warm bricks on flat irons to bed to keep our feet warm. And I remember the long underwear we had to stuff into our long stockings and try to make it look good!"

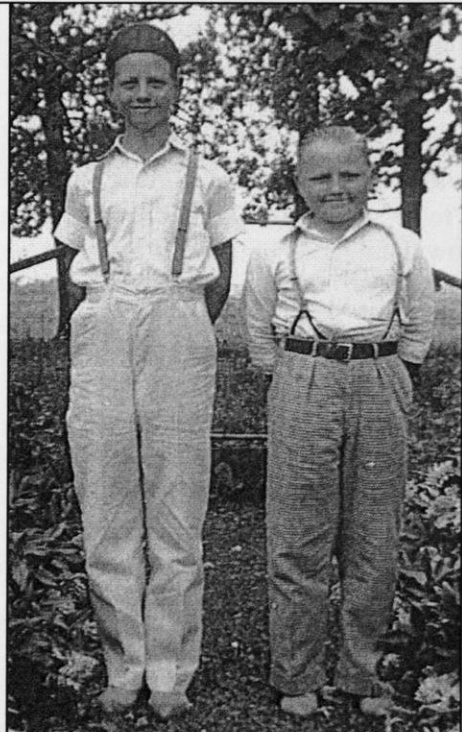
"Another memory is all of us packed three-deep in the Oldsmobile. Another is the cold night when my sister Benunie and her husband Walter had their wedding dance," Myrtle reminisces. "It was so cold that when Mom grabbed the door handle of the car it broke off in her hand!"

"Thinking back, most of my childhood was good. Maybe we didn't have everything, but we had what we needed. It's too bad a lot of kids today couldn't have some of what we had. I've always said there is *'something good about everything,'* but I haven't figured out what is good about Milt and my life right now. But it's God's plan, not mine," Myrtle concludes.

*(NOTE: Currently, Milton resides in a nursing home due to ill health, while Myrtle lives in their Madison area home.)*

**Harland**, born on February 7, 1926. He has crystal clear memories of growing up on a Wisconsin dairy farm during the 1930s and 1940s with six sisters and two brothers. "It was indeed a wonderful time. I didn't realize at the time how fortunate and blessed I really was," Harland says.

"My brother Martin Jr. was the youngest of us nine children, and I was the second youngest," Harland explains. "Two years and three months separated us. Consequently, we were very close all through our growing up years. We all called him "Junior" until he started school. However, our Malone teacher insisted we start addressing him by his proper name, Martin. She said Junior wasn't his name. It took me awhile to get used to it because Martin was also my dad's name. I didn't understand the meaning of Junior, but it was during this time his nickname Marty evolved. He was called Marty from then on."



**Harland and Marty (1937)**



Harland continues with his memories of growing up on the Martinson farm...

I remember Santa Claus bringing tricycles for Christmas when I was five and Marty was about three. Our dad found them in the summer kitchen Christmas morning, where Santa had left them the night before. We started out racing and chasing each other around the large kitchen and through the doorway into the living room. We were nicking furniture and scraping doorframes as we raced. We all knew our Ma, Clara, was some kind of a Saint. This indoor tricycle commotion didn't last very long though.

We rode our tricycles outside on the concrete sidewalk for the rest of the winter, whenever the snow was shoveled off. When spring came, we chased each other all around the yard. We also had a big red Radio Flyer wagon which we rode down the farm driveway.

**Photo: A tricycle on the sidewalk by the Martinson farmhouse awaits its rider!**



I vaguely remember my Grandfather, Torkel as the elderly gentleman who was sometimes present at our dinner table. He had a beard, which often was streaked with tobacco juice. I don't remember where Grandpa Torkel was living at that time. My sisters told me he stayed with us on the farm sometimes. He also stayed in Mt. Horeb with our Uncle Olaus ("Shorty") Martinson. He would walk the 3-4 miles between the two places. I was four years old when Grandpa Torkel died in 1930.

Christmas was always filled with anticipation, and Thanksgiving was special. But, my favorite holiday was the July 4<sup>th</sup> holiday. Pa always had a good supply of firecrackers for us to blow up. Marty and I had so much fun blasting tin cans into the air and trying to blow dandelions out of the lawn.

On July 4<sup>th</sup> Pa would usually bring home a large container of ice cream from the Mt. Horeb Creamery. We had no refrigeration at that time, so the ice cream was in a large metal container which was kept cold inside an ice-filled canvas bag. We'd play a lot of fun games. There were ballgames where we batted fly balls and played "work-up." Hide and Seek, Croquette, and Kick the Can were fun too. We also pitched horseshoes. Pa threw lots of ringers playing horseshoes. He was also a sharpshooter with a croquette mallet. With 11 people in our family, there were always enough of us to play many games. Often my sisters' boyfriends would be there, as well as aunts, uncles, and cousins.

### **My one-room school days at Malone**

I remember some things of my first year in Malone School, like the small desk I was assigned to near the front row...and the chairs at the very front of the room where we sat for our class sessions. I remember learning to read from the Jack-and-Jill placards.

The school had no running water or indoor plumbing. Our water was supplied by a well on the school grounds, which we pumped by hand. The restrooms were two outdoor privies or outhouses. The girls' was on the north side and the boys' was on the south side.

We not only had studies and homework, but were also assigned duties. Some tended the flag. Others brought the water into the insulated drinking container, which was at the back of the room. Some cleaned the blackboards. Others cleaned the chalk erasers.

The school had two rooms inside the front entrance for coats, caps, boots and lunch buckets. The girls' was on the left side and the boys' on the right. There were no lockers. We were assigned designated hooks to hang our coats and caps so there would be no fighting for space.

A removable stage was stored in the basement when not in use. This stage was assembled in the front of the schoolroom for the Thanksgiving program and left up until after the Christmas program. The teacher and the older students did much of the work of setting up and taking down the stage. Some parents and Mother's Club members also helped. Students put on programs for parents. We memorized parts for skits and recitals. It was a memorable experience. I am sure the parents were mostly proud, but also embarrassed at times by their children's antics.



**Harland with nephew Russ Schwarz and nieces Dorothy Schwarz Bliskey and Joan Martinson Sholdt at a 2005 Malone reunion.**

Recess at Malone was filled with memorable experiences. There were always ball games spring and fall -- softball and football. Springtime was also a time we spent practicing for Play Day, when all of the schools in our district got together for all sorts of running and jumping races. Ribbons were awarded to the best three or four in each contest. The final event of the day was a softball game made up of the best players from each school.

Wintertime recesses were lots of fun. The sloping yard at Malone was ideal for sledding and skiing. We would also ask for permission from the neighboring landowners, Richard Grinde to the north and Alva Lust on the south and east, to sleigh and ski on their property. This allowed us the use of the whole hillside from Highway 92 all the way to the creek, which ran through the valley below. We built ski jumps out of packed snow, watered down and frozen into solid ice. I did okay but Art Sutter out-jumped me most of the time. Marty seemed to have the fastest sled on the hill.

We would also ice-skate on the creek when it froze over. Our skates were the old-fashioned type, which we clamped to the bottom of our shoes with the use of a key.

When I was in first grade my sisters Myrtle, Helen, and Alma were also there. We always walked unless the weather was really bad. It was close to two miles, one way, when we



followed the road. In the spring and fall, we often took a shortcut through the south woods. By following the old road going south out of the barnyard and down the cattle lane, we would exit onto Highway 92, just south of the large rock outcropping at the southwest edge of our farm. This shortcut may have cut off nearly a half-mile.

**Harland Martinson (tallest boy) stands with students in front of their one-room Malone School in 1940. His brother Marty is standing next to Miss Rose Wittwer. She was Harland's favorite teacher.**

During really bad weather, we usually received rides from one of our family members, and sometimes neighbors. On occasion on really cold winter mornings, we rode along in the truck when the milk was hauled to the cheese factory. The Malone Cheese Factory was only a short walk from the schoolhouse. We would be too early for school, so Otto Bendicks, the cheese maker, would allow us to wait inside the factory where it was warm.

Marty and I continued walking to school most of the time. We had one shared bicycle and took it sometimes in good weather, riding double. On the steeper hills we took turns riding and walking.

I attended all eight grades at Malone School in the 1930s. I was the only one in my class most of the time, with only about a dozen pupils in all of the eight grades combined. I had three teachers throughout the eight grades. Sylvanus Aavang was there during my first years. He was okay, but rather strict. Some of the older boys gave him a difficult time. Freda Toni was my next teacher. She was a little too lenient and wasn't accepted very well. Some of the older girls kind of rebelled at times. Miss Toni directed some very good neighborhood plays, using some of the former Malone students in the cast. Gaylord was one of the cast members. I think some of my sisters were also in the plays. At least one of those plays was performed in Mt. Horeb as well.

Marty and I were dressed like little Indians in one of our school programs. Ma made us Indian buckskin trousers out of feed sacks. The imitation buckskin trousers had red



fringes going all the way up the outside seam. Our little Indian tribe performed rain and war dances.

Rose Wittwer was the Malone School teacher during my last several years. She was my favorite teacher, not too strict or lenient, just really nice. Miss Wittwer was a farm girl, like one of us and often joined us at play during the noon hour. She made school a fun time. Students would do anything for her. She was slow to criticize, preferring to teach with praise and encouragement. I will never forget her. I met her once many years after I graduated from Malone. It was at Ma's funeral. She was a special teacher and friend.

I did well in all of my subjects and had no real favorites. I tested the highest of the eighth graders from the entire school district. Miss Wittwer was so proud of me. This was also a good reflection on her teaching skills.

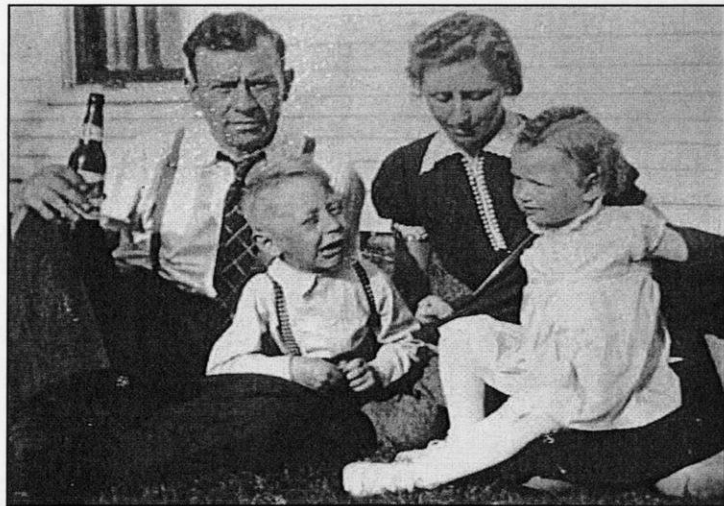
I graduated from Mt. Horeb High School. In the 1940s, there were no school buses. At the start of my freshman year, my sister Myrtle and I would walk the half-mile down the farm driveway to Highway 92 at the bottom of our hill. Medford Marty from Mt. Vernon would then pick us up on his way to the Mt. Horeb High School. Getting home after school got to be a problem since Medford stayed after school for football practice. Pa wanted me home as soon as possible after school to help with the chores. Sometimes we walked the four miles home. Other times we got rides.

#### **Staying with Benunie and Walter Schwarz**

During January and February of my freshman year, 1940, Myrtle and I stayed in town with my brother-in-law Walter Schwarz and his wife Benunie, who was my oldest sister.

Walter Schwarz was the buttermaker at Evan's Creamery at that time. Rosann was a baby and Donald was a busy little brother getting into everything.

Walter had set up a wood working shop in an upstairs room. In it were a jigsaw, a planner, a table saw, and a turning lathe. He taught me how to use all of those machines, which really helped during my Manual Arts class in high school.



**Walter and Benunie Schwarz gather with son Don and daughter Rosann in 1938. Harland stayed at their Mt. Horeb home occasionally during high school years in the early 1940s.**

Walter was a great guy. He gave me my first bicycle. It was really an old antique, which his boss, Mr. Evans, had given him. I believe the wheels had wooden rims. It was difficult to ride and nearly impossible to keep the rims lined up so they wouldn't wobble.

Then one day a few weeks later, Walter and Benunie drove into our farmyard with a brand new bike they had just bought at the Gamble store. It sure was a beauty with chrome fenders, chrome handlebars, balloon tires, luggage carrier, a bright red frame and red handle bar grips. I may have been in seventh grade at that time. Marty would have been in fifth grade. We sure treasured that bike and made lots of good use out of it.

I would have tried out for football, basketball, and baseball but Pa expected me home in time to help with chores. So after my freshman year, I received my driver's permit. He allowed me to drive to high school from then on.

One fall, Pa kept me out of high school for two weeks to help pick the standing corn. It was late in the fall. The weather was cool enough to have occasional snow flurries. Pa used a husking pin fastened to the fingers of his right hand. Gaylord and I used husking hooks strapped to the inside of our right wrists. The wagon box we threw the corn ears into had one side about three feet higher, called the bang board. As we snapped the ears from the standing corn, we husked and hurled them against the bang board.

A team of horses, Dick and King, pulled the wagon. Dick was a high-spirited black beauty. King was an outstanding sorrel with a flowing blonde mane and tail. They would move forward and stop on command. This was the way we worked our way back and forth following the rows across the acres until every corn ear had been picked and the corncribs were overflowing.

I believe this was the last year we picked corn by hand. Pa purchased a one row New Idea corn picker the following year, which operated from the power take off on our Model B John Deere tractor.

### **Harland's favorite subject at Mt. Horeb High**

I enjoyed school and was on the honor roll list most all of the time. Science class was very interesting and the experiments were lots of fun. I did well in English class. One of my English teachers advised me to continue my education in the field of Journalism. Algebra and math were challenging. Manual Arts, wood and metalworking was right down my alley. Of course, Gym class was fun playing the sports of the season: touch football, basketball, and baseball. I did well in all sports and really enjoyed those times.

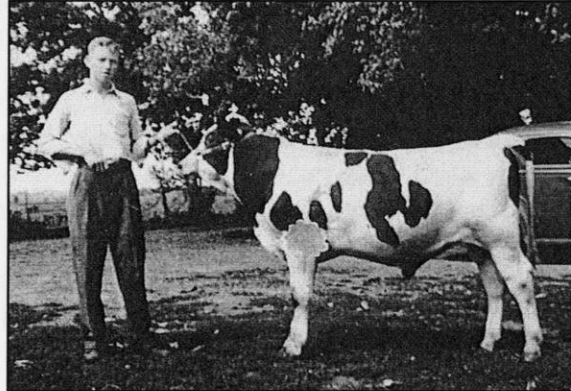
We had one teacher who would line us up like we were in the army and teach us marching formations. This was during the years of World War II.

Agriculture class may be my most memorable. Even though I was born and raised on a dairy farm, there was lots of knowledge to be gained from the class. My class project one year was raising a Purebred Holstein bull calf. He took Reserve Grand Champion at the Dane County Fair, which was held at Stoughton, Wisconsin. We would have gone on to the State Fair; however, this was during World War II. For some reason the competition was canceled that year.

### **A bull named Joe**

After winning Reserve Grand Champion, my Ag teacher, Mr. Owens, insisted I enter the showmanship competition. This was my first fair and show ring experience. I didn't

really know what I was getting into. It was a hot summer day and the judges were taking their good-natured time. My bull calf, Joe, weighing in at around 500 pounds was becoming increasingly agitated. I tried to keep him calm the best I knew how, but eventually he started to buck. I didn't know what to do. He had never acted like this before. I held tightly onto his halter and pushed my hip into his side. He went off balance and landed on his side. I thought, "*Oh my God, what did I do now.*" I expected to be disqualified, but Joe scrambled to his feet and calmed down for the rest of the competition.



**Harland and his bull named Joe!**

I was surprised and very proud when the judges selected us for third place. Mr. Owens had been watching at the ringside and congratulated us as we left the ring. He told me what I did by instinct in the ring was my only recourse in that situation. It was an experience I will never forget.

Joe stayed on as our herd sire for two years. I don't think he remembered all of the hours we spent together when he was a calf, as he became ugly and very bad tempered. Shortly after Joe started charging and ramming our pickup truck in the pasture one day, Pa called for the cattle truck. Joe was hauled off to the slaughterhouse.

### **My Dad**

Martin, my dad, stood around six feet two inches tall and weighed in at about 200 pounds. He spoke fluent Norwegian which helped to give his English a slight Norwegian brogue. His J's sounded like Y's. For example, the word "just" often sounded like "yust." His V's sounded like W's and his W's sounded like V's, etc.

He would get down on the floor on his hands and knees to play with us when we were small. We would ride on his back and roughhouse on the kitchen floor. As we grew older, he gave us chores to do and taught us responsibility. I don't remember him ever getting angry with us. He was always encouraging and complimentary. I remember one of our neighbor friends saying he wished he had a dad like Marty and I had. He worked hard and played hard.

My dad (we often called him "Pa") enjoyed a beer and maybe a little blackberry brandy when the cold winds blew. He could throw lots of ringers pitching horseshoes and was a good shot with a croquette mallet. He would enjoy a cigar on occasion around the house, but not around the barns and in the fields. There he usually had a cheek full of chewing tobacco. He was very fire-conscious. He discouraged anyone from smoking around the barn and other outside buildings.

Pa had a strong faith in God and made sure we all attended Sunday school and church services regularly. We attended the Mt. Horeb Evangelical Lutheran Church on Main



Street in Mt. Horeb. Most of my sisters became Sunday School teachers. Ma was active in the Church Ladies' Aid organization and Malone Mothers' Club. Pa was active in community affairs. He was a member of the Malone School Board, the Malone Cheese Factory Board, and the Springdale Township Board. He was popular, well-known, and respected by everyone.

What did I like about my dad, Martin? Everything.

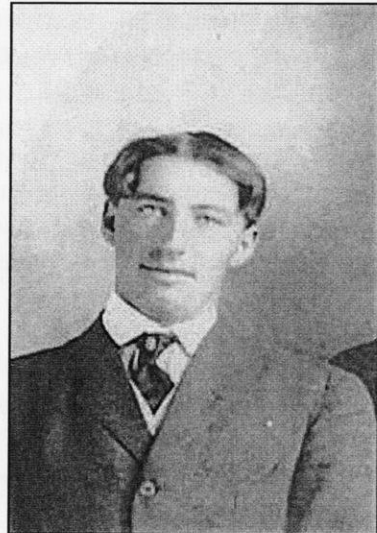
I can still hear his laugh. It was unique and infectious. Pa always enjoyed a good time.

When we were little, Pa would always bring a bag of candy or gum when he came home from a trip into town. We had to share the candy. We may have ended up with only one or two pieces each after it was divided, but it was a special treat.

I remember Pa getting dressed up in a ridiculous disguise and traveling around the neighborhood -- ragamuffin with some of the other neighbors. They would barge in on other neighbors who would try to guess their identity and give them treats. Then those neighbors would often join them with their ragamuffin onto other neighbors.

The practice of Ragamuffin was a festive activity engaged in by Norwegians around the Christmas holiday. I believe it was brought over from Norway. I don't think that practice is continued any longer here.

So what did I like the most about my dad? I guess it was that he made me proud to be his son. He was honest and trustworthy. His word sealed with a handshake was as good as his signature on a legal document. As he walked along the street, he would nod and greet everyone. He told me to always recognize everyone. *"If they don't choose to greet you back, that's their problem,"* he said.



**Martin Martinson, my dad (1910)**

Pa was not a hunter because he was not fond of the flavor of wild game. He had the philosophy to never kill anything unless it was to be eaten, unless, of course, it was a pest or a varmint. Blood did not make him squeamish. He did much of his own veterinary work with the cattle, castrating hogs and dehorning yearling cows. We did all of our home butchering and sometimes would help neighbors with theirs. He had no qualms when he needed to put down a steer or a hog to put meat on our family table.

My dad never wanted to see an animal suffer. He always strived for a fast, clean kill. During one steer-butchering occasion, the kill did not go as planned. A thirty-two-caliber slug in the forehead from Pa's single shot rifle had always put the steer down. This time the steer just shook his head, as if chasing off a fly. Pa quickly put the one extra shell into the gun and fired. Again, the steer just shook his head. Even though the steer wasn't showing any signs of pain, it had taken two rifle slugs in the forehead. Pa grew frantic.

Looking around, he spied a pick-ax nearby. With a mighty swing, he buried the sharp prong end of the pick ax in the center of the steer's forehead. The steer went down and would never feel pain again. Crude? Perhaps. Cruel? No. It was a fast, clean kill -- unorthodox, but very effective.

The steer's skull was around the farm for years. It may still be there. Visitors were always curious how a round bullet could make a square hole in a steer's forehead. After reviewing Pa's philosophy, I am convinced Marty was like Pa. Marty must have given up hunting because he did not care for the taste of wild game either.

### **Was Martin Martinson a fancy dresser?**

At the Martinson reunion in 2004, my nephew, Robert Dettwiler asked me what my dad (his grandfather) was like. His neighbor, Thore Spaanem told him Pa was a fancy dresser.

Well, Pa always dressed nicely and appropriately for the occasion, but I am not sure if I ever considered his dress as being fancy. For church services, weddings, funerals, and other special occasions, he was always clean-shaven. His facial features, nearly the appearance of leather, burned by the wind and the sun from long hours in the fields were often softened by a light dusting of talcum powder. He wore a full dress suit including the vest, a white dress shirt, a regular necktie, dress shoes, and a felt hat. In winter a heavy topcoat, neck scarf, ankle spats, toe rubbers, and dress gloves were included.

For informal family gatherings, Sunday get-togethers, neighborhood pot-lucks, reunions, and so forth, he usually wore dress slacks, a long sleeve white shirt with the sleeves cuffed below the elbows, a necktie, and a felt hat.



**At right, with hands on hips, is Harland's dad, Martin Martinson. Joining him are (l-r) his half-brother Jens Shelstad, younger brother Olaus Martinson, and (possibly) his uncle Ole Stenson. (1908)**

For other rather informal occasions such as school, cheese factory, township board meetings, farm auctions, etc., he would often wear newer (no patches) bib overalls, a blue cotton work shirt, a necktie, a light brown suede leather jacket, and a felt hat. During that era of the Great Depression and shortly after, this type of attire was fairly common for country gentlemen.

### **Chores and field work**

A typical summer day in the Martinson household varied according to the particular summer. Chores also varied according to the seasons.

Marty and I always had chores around the barns and in the fields. Pa usually found things we could help with. We normally did not have household chores because we had six older sisters.

We pail-fed the baby calves milk until they were old enough to eat solid food. Then there was always scraping and sweeping the barn driveway, cleaning under and behind the cattle and seeing they had enough bedding of straw or corn fodder. Silage topped with ground feed was to be fed to the cows. Then when they were through eating their silage there was hay to be spread in their mangers for them to eat.

The hay was pulled loose from the upper hayloft, pushed down into the cattle area through the hay chutes, and then spread out along the mangers. Marty and I did not do all of this work by ourselves, but we were expected to help from very young. We assumed more and more of these responsibilities as we grew older.

There were pigs to help feed. Ground grain was mixed with whey, making a thick fluid type mash. This mixture was made in a large feed vat and poured by pails into the long hog troughs for feeding. In cold weather, we would heat this mixture by building a fire under the vat in a stove-like enclosure called the feed cooker. The pigs would come running through the snowdrifts and all for this warm meal. There were chicken feeders to clean and fill. Their watering fountains needed to be cleaned and filled with fresh water. Fresh bedding needed to be spread on the floor and, of course, eggs to be picked.

In the summer, the calves were left out into the calf pen on the east side of the house. The east side apple orchard was also a part of the calf pen area. The calves had a water tank and a feed trough in their pen area. Marty and I always checked to make sure the calves had fresh water and feed.

Most of these cleaning and feeding chores were completed before breakfast. The chores we helped with after breakfast depended on the season.

During the spring planting, we would help pick the stones and rocks out of the fields, which had worked to the surface while the ground had been plowed and disked.

After the corn came up, Marty and I took turns riding the extra seat, which Gaylord had installed on the tractor drawbar. This seat was closer to the ground and allowed us to uncover the small hills of corn which had been accidentally covered during cultivating.

### **Haying season**

During the haying season, Marty drove the tractor on the hay wagon while Gaylord loaded the hay. A hay loader attached to the rear of the wagon brought the hay up into the wagon, as Marty followed the windrows of hay around the field.



I helped around the barn unloading the hay loads as Marty and Gaylord brought them in from the field. When I was real young, I would lead the horse hitched to the hayfork rope, which drew the hay up into the mow.

For many years we used two different style hayforks for unloading the hay. The older model had two long tines, with trip levers near the tine tips. The newer model was known as a grapple fork. This one had four tines which were spread out and pushed into the top of the hay load. The grapple fork resembled a huge spider.

### **Shocking the grain**

When the oats and barley were ready to be harvested, Marty drove the tractor on the grain binder and Pa rode in the seat on the grain binder, operating the controls for cutting and bundling the grain. I would help in the field shocking the grain bundles. Shocking was kind of like making a tent with the grain bundles. The butts were placed on the ground and the tops with the grain heads leaned together forming an "A" shape. This kept the grain heads off the ground so they could ripen and stay dry.

Long-sleeved shirts and full-length pants were required for shocking grain as the dried leaves on the grain bundles could chaff your skin raw. Gaylord and I did a lot of the shocking, but sometimes, our sisters who were still home also helped.

Shocking grain on really hot days could be brutal. As a result, I recall shocking grain by moonlight on occasion. I especially remember one clear night after the milking was done and our whole crew shocked an entire field by moonlight. Our work crew included my sister Benunie, her husband Walter Schwarz, and several of my sisters and brothers.



**Bringing in the crops the old way! (1920s)**

### **Threshing crew time – Fall harvest**

About a week after all of the grain had been cut and shocked, the threshing run began. This was an exciting and busy time when about 10-12 neighbors joined together to share the workload. They would go from farm to farm, threshing the grain.

When Marty and I were really young, we would wait and watch to see who could be the first one to see the threshing machine coming to our farm from across the neighbors' field. I vaguely remember Elie Kobbervig with his big Rumley tractor. But my memory of Joe Lingard with his new Farmall tractor is very vivid.

If the wind was right, we could hear the threshing rig coming before we could see it. Then all of a sudden, there it was slowly coming to our farm over the rolling hills. I still visualize Joe Lingard driving his Farmall tractor and pulling the large impressive "Red River Special" threshing machine behind it into our farmyard.

Marty and I could sometimes ride with the grain haulers and carry fresh water to the bundle pitchers in the field.

Then the year arrived when we were considered members of the working crew. Pitching bundles in the field to load the bundle wagons was usually the starting assignment. Our hands would blister badly the first day, which really smarted during milking. After that, calluses formed, turning the skin on our hands and fingers to leather.

Each day, whichever farm we were threshing on would provide the noon and evening meals. The strenuous work created huge appetites. The camaraderie was jovial. The farm ladies and their daughters served meals comparable to the most lavish Thanksgiving dinners served, with all of the trimmings.

As the years progressed, Marty and I graduated to driving the bundle wagons. A team of horses pulled the wagons. We would pick up a load of bundles in the field and drive to the threshing machine. Joe Lingard, the threshing machine operator watched the unloading very closely. He wanted to see a steady stream of bundles on the conveyer belt top to butt going into the machine. If we got too energetic and overlapped the bundles, he would give us a stern look and shake his head. He knew an overloaded machine did not separate the grain from the straw efficiently.

Pa and Gaylord stacked the straw on our farm when we threshed. Walking behind the blower as it cycled back and forth above the stack was a sweaty, dirty job on a hot summer day. At about age 14, I took Pa's place. Gaylord and I then did the straw stacking. Gaylord could build good solid loads of hay, and he also could build good solid straw stacks. The stacks we built together stood firm in the strongest of storms.

After the grain harvest was finished, the second crop of hay was ready. We went through the haying process again.

Once the second crop of hay was in the barn, the corn was ready to go into the silo. The corn was cut and tied into bundles with a corn binder. Wagon loads of bundles were hauled to the silo filler which was powered by a drive belt from the tractor pulley. The bundles of corn were blown into the silo with this machinery.

Silo filling usually started the first part of September, shortly after school started. Marty and I missed out on the silo filling during the day. But, we always had our morning and

evening chores to do. Pa also wanted us home as soon as possible after school to help with the late afternoon silo filling.

Marty and I helped inside of the silo sometimes, working the inside blower pipe. Filling the silo with corn silage was kind of like canning corn. The main difference was that this “can” was 14 feet in diameter and over 30 feet tall! We would direct the blower pipe and keep tramping the silage to pack it down to maintain a fairly level surface. As the silo filled, we helped Pa install the silo doors and seal them with a mixture of blue clay.

As Marty and I grew older, we helped load the bundle wagons in the field and then graduated to the status of bundle haulers.

After the silo had been filled, the remaining corn in the field was allowed to ripen. After it was ripe, it was cut and bundled with the corn binder. The bundles were set up into shocks. These corn shocks were built by setting the bundle butts on the ground and the tops together using three bundles to start, like a tripod. Then we would keep adding bundles all around the shock, until it was four or five feet in diameter. Using a rope, the top part of the shock was drawn firmly together, and tied with binder twine, creating a very solid corn shock.

These shocks were allowed to stand and dry late into the fall. When the corn ears were thoroughly dry, the bundles were loaded into wagons and hauled to the corn shredder. The shredder, operated by a drive belt from the tractor pulley, separated the corn ears from the leaves and the corn stalks. The shredded leaves and stalks, called corn fodder, were blown into the upstairs barn loft to be used for cattle bedding. The ears went into a wagon and were hauled to the corncrib, where they were shoveled into the crib by hand, using a large scoop shovel. Marty and I helped out on all the phases of the operation.

### **Winter on the Farm**

The final fieldwork for the season was finished in late November or early December. There wasn't much milking through December, January, and February. This was a resting time for the cows, before their new calves were delivered. Their milk production slowed down and stopped for a short while.



**Path from barn to house on Martinson farm around 1940.**

This was wintertime in Wisconsin, cold windy days and usually lots of snow. The cattle were kept in the barn, all of the time, except for an hour or so, while their stalls and



gutters were cleaned and fresh bedding was put down. Feeding, cleaning, and taking good care of the livestock during the winter months created extra farm chores.

Winter was also the season to work in the woods. Gathering wood to fuel the furnace and the kitchen range, and wood to make fence posts was hard work. Most of the trees in our woods were white oak, black oak, and burr oak. These were all dense hardwoods that burned slowly and created a lot of heat. White oaks were good for making fence posts.

Pa and Gaylord did most of this work as Marty and I were in school. By the time we got home from school during those short winter days, darkness had already fallen. But Marty and I did get to help in the woods on Saturdays and on holidays like Washington and Lincoln's birthdays.

All of the work was done by hand with axes, crosscut saws, splitting wedges, and sledgehammers. Blasting powder and dynamite were used to blow apart the knot-filled, hard-to-split logs.

Working in the woods was hard work, which would warm one up in a hurry. The standing trees provided some shelter from the winter winds. So even though the temperatures may have been in the teens, the jackets came off.

The small limb ends were piled into brush piles to form shelter for wildlife. The rest of the limbs were cut into sections small enough for two men to stack into long, neat piles. Longer limbs and trunks were split into sections using splitting wedges and sledgehammers. The very hardest-to-split logs were split by drilling a large hole a little over halfway through, packing dynamite into the hole, and blasting the log apart.

The log sections with the straight grain were used to make fence posts. These were stacked into a separate pile.

After enough wood had been cut and stacked to last through another year, we would call the neighbors to exchange wood sawing with them. A crew of about six to eight men can saw a lot of firewood into chunks and sharpen a lot of fence posts on a winter day.

### **Building Fences**

Everything had its own season. The season to plant, to cultivate, to hay, to harvest oats, to fill the silo, to shred corn, and to cut wood. But the times in between seasons were not idle times. There were always fences to build and repair. Things needed to be painted. There were weeds to pull and hoe in the garden. Bull thistles, burdocks, and other large weeds needed to be cut in the pastures and all around the farm.

Days too wet for fieldwork were good days for fencing. We would hitch the team of horses onto the wagon with the flat rack, and load up enough posts for our job. Then we would drive to the tool shop for the barbed wire, staples, hammer, wire cutter, staple puller, crowbar, large sledgehammer, axe, milk can of water, wire stretcher, a measuring stake, and a posthole digger.

Pa, Gaylord, Marty and I could build many rods of fence in a day. First the large end posts were dug into the ground using the posthole digger. The barbed wire was laid out from one end post to the other. This was done by running a crowbar through the spool of barbed wire to serve as an axle. One of us on each side of the spool picked up the crowbar and walked the fence line. The spool of barbed wire unwound as we walked. Then the end post braces were set against the brace posts. The wire was stretched just tight enough to make a straight line between the end posts. Pa, using the crowbar, made the postholes while following the barbed wire.

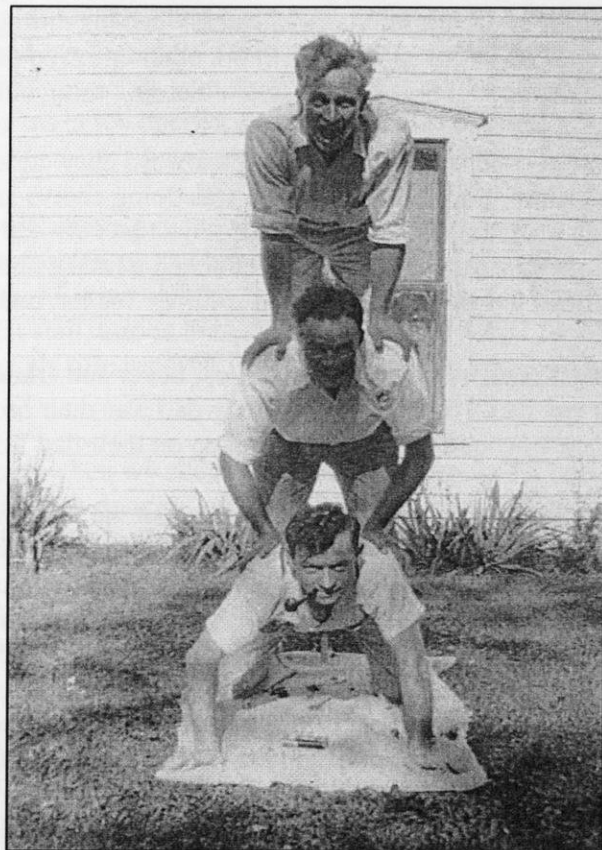
Marty poured a little water into each hole. I set a post into each hole and held it in position as Gaylord pounded it into the ground. After all of the posts were in the ground, two more lines of barbed wire were rolled out. These were stretched at the various heights on the end posts, where Pa wanted them to be. As Marty and Pa gathered up the tools and unused material, Gaylord and I walked the fence line, stapling the wires onto the posts. I set the wires onto the measuring stake and held them against the post, while Gaylord stapled them to the posts.

Some days Marty and I helped Ma in the garden, pulling and hoeing weeds. We also carried a bucket of water with one hand and a small stick in the other to swish the potato worms into the bucket while we walked along the rows of potato plants.

### **Time for fun and games**

Some days, between morning and evening chores, Marty and I were free to do whatever our imaginations allowed. There were fly balls to bat, croquette to play, and horseshoes to pitch. We made our own slingshots out of a forked tree branch and thick rubber bands cut from old inner tubes. The leather slings we'd cut from tongues of old work shoes.

We made wooden guns that shot rubber bands. The barrels were nearly 24 inches long. The rubber bands were nearly an inch wide and were cut from old inner tubes. The bands were stretched the length of the barrel and held in place by a trigger mechanism. They generated enough power to fly a good distance. Marty and I became fairly accomplished with these guns, shooting flies off the barn doors and around the hog pens.



Harland's "acrobat" brother-in-laws (bottom to top)  
Walter Schwarz, Alvin Dettwiler, and Bennie Grundahl  
(1938)

I remember harassing Walter Schwarz, Alvin Dettwiler, and Bennie Grundahl with these rubber band guns. Marty and I would sneak around and see how close we could fire the rubber bands in front of them, without hitting them. Those rubber bands could really sting if they hit bare skin, so we got chased lots of times.

Marty and I also made bows from flexible tree branches and arrows from old tobacco-spearing lathes. The bowstring was made from binder twine. The arrows had an empty 22-bullet cartridge for a point. The fletching was made from small chicken feathers, fastened on with string and glue.

Loud shrill whistles were fashioned from hollowed-out branches of the elderberry bush. And when the apples were in season, lots of them fell to the ground and were wasted due to being wormy or to birds pecking at them. The bad apples were fair game for us to have some fun. Marty and I would each select a flexible apple tree branch 3-4 feet long. We would sharpen the smaller end and push it through an apple. It was amazing how far we could fling the apple, using the branch in a whip-like motion!

Being full of energy and mischief, Marty and I wanted to feel grown up. So we tried smoking. Our first attempts were out in the cornfield, when the corn silk on the corn ears had dried. We rolled the corn silk into strips of newspaper, trying to copy our sister Benunie's husband, Walter Schwarz, who was rolling his own cigarettes at that time. We put one end in our mouth and lit the other end. We usually got a couple of puffs before we started coughing, and the whole flaming thing burned up.

We even tried chewing tobacco. Pa always chewed tobacco, and of course, we wanted to be like him. Sometimes while Pa was doing chores around the farm, he would leave his pouch of Redman chewing tobacco in a slot between two boards by the horse stalls. A few of those times, Marty and I snitched a little of his tobacco and experienced and practiced the art of chewing and spitting. We learned real fast not to swallow.

This reminds me of a tale my uncles, Sever and Olaus Martinson, were telling us about after my dad's funeral in 1946. My dad was their brother. They reminisced about some of their boyhood exploits growing up on their dad Torkel's farm.

Sever and Olaus went on to explain about the time the three of them found a bunch of chewing tobacco and wanted to hide it where their dad Torkel Martinson wouldn't catch them with it. So they hid it in the rafters of the tobacco shed. While they were all up in the rafters, Torkel walked in. He wanted to know what in the world they were all doing crawling around in the rafters. They said they were pulling down pigeon nests. Torkel thought this was a good idea because of the mess pigeons could make. Then he said he could even see some of the nests from the ground and told them to get rid of all of them. Of course what Torkel actually saw was the clumps of chewing tobacco the three brothers were trying to hide!

Fun times between morning and evening chores often included our entire family of brothers and sisters. We'd play work-up softball games, touch football, croquette, Hide and Seek, Kick the Can, and Pigtail Over the Shanty to name a few. Sliding down the metal machine shed roof was exciting fun, too. In winter, sledding, skiing, and playing



Fox and Geese circles in the snow was a thrill. Large piles of loose hay in the hayloft became playtime pleasures as well. We would climb the ladder to get on top of the large wooden beams crossing the hayloft. Then we would jump into large pile of loose hay below.

We had all sorts of inside games to play in bad weather and cold winter days. We played ping pong on our large kitchen table. We had a neat hockey game played by two players at a time, which we also played on the kitchen table. We had all sorts of card and board games, regular checkers and Chinese checkers. The sisters would usually stir up a batch of taffy candy and pop a large container of popcorn.

Blizzards made extra work. Just getting to the barn, hog house, and chicken house was difficult. Feeding the livestock and cleaning pens and stalls while trudging through snowdrifts was always challenging. When the cattle had all been fed and bedded down, the games came out. Taffy was boiled, cooled, pulled into long thin strips, and cut into pieces. Popcorn was popped. We really didn't care if we couldn't see the barn from the house because of the blowing, drifting snow causing a "white out."

### **Air rifle discovery**

Another fun adventure with Marty was when we discovered the air rifle, which was going to be our Christmas present. I believe we may have had a premonition about getting an air rifle because of some remarks we had overheard. We also thought we might have surprised Gaylord and Walter target practicing with it in the barn. Because, they acted like they were trying to hide something when we opened the barn door one day and surprised them.

Anyway, we searched and searched for it when no one else was around. There was a large box stall, which had been used for horses, on the left side just inside of the large sliding barn door. We no longer had many horses and this stall was used for a feed room where sacks of feed were stored. In that stall, buried beneath a pile of empty feed sacks, we found this impressive looking Daisy air rifle repeater, with a lever action and peep sights. Wow!

We could hear BBs rattle in the magazine when we shook the gun. So we cocked it and took a couple of practice shots at the big barn door at the other end of the barn driveway. If that door is still there, the dents our BBs made should also be there.

We tried to fake the feeling of surprise on Christmas morning. Our early discovery tarnished the thrill we should have experienced when we received this wonderful gift.

### **Hunting Buddies**

During the months and years to follow, Marty and I became very proficient hunters. The droves of sparrows, pigeons, and blackbirds, which were drawn to the feeding pens, were fair game. All of the other birds were protected, which we honored.

I was a good shot if I had a support to rest the gun on, or something to lean against. But Marty was so good he could just bring the rifle to his shoulder and bring his target down.

He could out-shoot me any day. As the years passed and we graduated to live gunpowder, the thrill of the hunt seemed to diminish for Marty. We may have hunted a few squirrels and pheasants together. I remember scouting fence rows and woodlots between our farm, Shutvet's, and Docken's farms for deer with Marty, but we didn't see anything. He accompanied me one time to Necedah when I was bow hunting for deer. Marty didn't have a bow. He just came to watch. We had so many good times hunting together when we were young. He was the best hunter I ever hunted with.

Who knows why the thrill of the sport, which he was so good at, escaped my brother Marty. I sometimes think it may have been during the time he was in service. However, he seemed to be losing interest in the hunting sport even before that.

### **A busy household**

Getting nine kids to sleep at bedtime never seemed to be a problem. However, there were some fun times. The sound of mice gnawing on the woodwork after all the lights were out was not unusual. Then again someone would make sounds imitating a mouse gnawing just to annoy the others.

I don't remember anyone walking in his or her sleep. But sometimes, someone would start talking in their sleep, which could be fun for the listeners and embarrassing for the talker. Those listening would start asking personal questions, and the talker would sometimes answer. I remember Gaylord being one of the talkers.

Mealtime with our large family was often like a party. Marty always had to have his own special spoon, which was actually the sugar spoon. When we weren't waited on fast enough, Marty and I would stand up on our chairs and reach for whatever we wanted, that is, until we were taught better manners.

Doing all of the farm chores and fieldwork was often a family affair. We worked hard and played hard. Pa always said that work really wasn't work if you enjoyed what you were doing. All six of my sisters often worked alongside the men. There didn't seem to be much distinction between men's work and women's work. We did all of the milking by hand until most of the girls married and left home. The girls were actually our best milkers and, of course, Ma was right there with all the rest of us.

### **Blizzard of 1942**

One blizzard I will never forget was on November 11, Armistice Day. I believe the year was 1942. I would have been a junior in high school and Marty a freshman. The storm started early in the forenoon. By noon we had a whiteout. The high school principal closed the school at noon and sent everyone home. All of us who were still at home were put to work getting the livestock into shelter.

All of the cows and horses were bedded down in the barn. The young stock from the pasture across Highway 92 had to be brought home and put into the barn.

I especially remember Marty and I helping Ma find her chickens and get them into the chicken house. This was a problem, because during the summer and early fall our

chickens were allowed to roam the farmyard at their own free will. We found them huddled together in small flocks all over the place, wherever they could find shelter from the wind. Many of them were completely buried in the wet, clinging snow which was driven by the blizzard-force winds. We were able to find most of them and get them into the chicken house before they froze to death.

This was the same storm that surprised duck hunters along the Mississippi River and across the state. I think there were some hunters who perished in that storm of '42.

Marty and I had another winter experience I have never forgotten. I think it was during my junior year also. We were on our way home from school in our family car, a 1935 Plymouth. The steepest part of the half-mile drive up to the farm was covered with hard-packed snow. This hard-packed snow had partly melted during midday, and had glazed over again late in the afternoon. We were less than halfway up the steepest part when the wheels began to spin, and we slid sideways. There were ditches on both sides of the road. We were lucky to stop without going into either one. There we sat, crossways on this narrow, one-way road. We couldn't go forward or backward. The road was so slippery we had trouble standing.

After some creative thinking, we decided to try turning the car by hand to face down the hill. The car slid sideways easily on the slippery surface. We were able to turn it and drive back down the hill. At the bottom we put the tire chains on, turned around, and proceeded back up the hill to the farm.

#### **Harland recalls his mother, Clara Martinson**

Clara, my Ma, was very special. She was a hard worker, a good mother and teacher, and always fair and fun. She was good at milking cows and helped in the barn every morning and evening. She washed the milk cans and other milk utensils. During the haying season, she was there to lead the horse used to pull the hayfork up. She was in charge of the chickens and the vegetable gardens. She was a professional seamstress, making lots of dresses for herself and her daughters. Making alterations on all sorts of clothing, men and women's both, came easy for her. She used a sewing machine with a foot pedal and was always working on some project. She did lots of crocheting, embroidery, and needlepoint work. She replaced lots of knees on Marty's and my overalls and patched lots of rips and tears on our work and play clothes. She seldom sat idle, as her hands were always busy sewing, knitting, or doing something creative.

#### **Mother's contribution to our farm economy**

Going into town for trading" was an expression often used in the 1930s-40s like "going shopping" is used now. This was during the Great Depression years. A shopping trip into town for supplies was usually accompanied by a case or more of eggs for trading at Hoff's store in Mt. Horeb. During the fall and early winter season, there was often a crate or two of plump young chickens for trading at the Farmer's store.

Ma was in charge of the chickens. Marty and I helped her with them sometimes. She had special nesting boxes for her brood hens. Besides those home-hatched chicks, she would purchase 100 to 200 day-old chicks from the Mt. Horeb Hatchery. Her chicken project



was very beneficial. Our large family had all of the chicken and eggs we needed for our own use. We also had extra eggs and chickens for grocery trading.

Ma was a very good cook. We always had lots of homemade bread, cakes, pies and cookies. At butchering time, she was in charge of cutting the hog and cattle carcasses for table use. She canned a lot of the meat. Some was ground for making hamburgers, summer sausages and bologna. She made smoked hams and dried beef. Ma also made the best headcheese, pork hocks and pickled pig feet.

All of the vegetables in her gardens that couldn't be consumed fresh, were canned. We always had home canned corn, beans, peas, apples, and tomatoes. We had homegrown potatoes, homemade sauerkraut and all sorts of pickles. She even made root beer for us kids and home-brewed beer for the adults.



**Harland's mother Clara Martinson (left) with her sister Ruth Osmundson. (1950s)**

Our mother took time to play with us kids, and she enjoyed a good joke. I remember her laughing so hard tears ran down her cheeks. Her favorite comic character was Dagwood Bumstead in the comic strip, *Blondie*.

*"I will always remember a small round hole in the screen on our kitchen screen door," Harland continues. "We were told Ma did that one day when the older children were still quite young. They played in the yard area not far from the kitchen door. On this particular day, before we children had gone out to play, she saw a large rat in the play area. She took Pa's rifle, put a bullet in the barrel, and shot the rat by firing the bullet right through the screen on the screen door!"*

My upstairs bedroom was right above the room where Ma and Pa slept downstairs. Most nights after us kids were in bed and the lights were out, I could hear Ma and Pa talking. I couldn't understand what they were saying, but I knew they were enjoying their private time together because they laughed a lot. They were probably telling each other about all of the crazy things and mischief us kids were getting into, among other things.

For all of the work Ma had raising her family and helping around the farm, she still found time to be active in the Malone School Mother's Club. She was also active in the Lutheran Church Guild and the Ladies' Aid. She baked lots of cakes, pies, and cookies for church bake sales.

What did I enjoy most about our Ma? I guess like Pa, I was always so proud of her. She could do anything and made me feel important. She taught all of her daughters her skills of cooking, sewing, and housekeeping. She taught all of us right from wrong and how to

live and play together as a family. She taught us to respect and help each other. She played with us and laughed with us. She took the slivers out of our fingers and bandaged our cuts and scrapes. She made sure we were all dressed prim and proper for Sunday school and church services.

Life was a lot different during her lifetime than it is now. Some may call it a hard life, but it was the only life she knew. I know she enjoyed her life and was so proud of her husband and family.

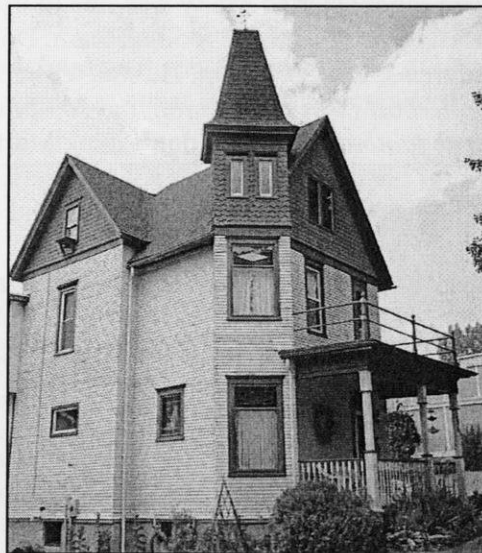
I would telephone my mother nearly every week when she was in the nursing home in later years. The last time I called her was Christmas day, 1981. She was in the hospital. My sister Verna Grundahl answered and told me Ma was in a coma. Verna said she would place the phone by Ma's ear. She thought Ma could hear, even though she couldn't talk. I told Ma how much I loved her and wished her the very best. Verna told me she was sure Ma heard me by her expression. Ma died two days later, December 27, 1981. She was 90 years old when the Lord called her home.

My fondest memory growing up on our family farm was all of the fun times our family had together. First and foremost was the fun we had just being an active farm family. We worked hard and played hard. We learned to help and respect one another from our parents. I am sure this is why we are all still close friends to this day.

### **Changes**

The year 1944 held many changes. My folks bought a house in Mt. Horeb and moved there with Marty who was in high school. I graduated from Mt. Horeb High School that year. My brother Gaylord married Shirley that year. They rented our farm from Pa and Ma and hired me as their hired man.

Pa returned to the farm from their new home in Mt. Horeb almost every day to help us. He would drive into the farm just about the time we finished breakfast, assisting with the farm tasks of the day. He helped us on the farm nearly two years until his death in 1946. The Lord called him home in the fall that year. He was 62 -- a young man by today's standards.



**Harland's parents, Clara and Martin Martinson, bought this house on 2<sup>nd</sup> Street in Mt. Horeb in 1944.**

I was probably closer to Pa during the last two years of his life than I ever had been. We worked together closely, just the two of us. His vim and vitality began to fade and he was diagnosed with colon cancer. He continued coming to the farm, doing whatever he could. There were times he would stop whatever he was doing, close his eyes, and hold his back. This also happened one day when I was helping him replace a fence post behind

the machine shed. When the pain had passed, he stood gazing far into the distance. Then he looked at me and smiled, but his eyes were misty as he said, *“This post is going to be here long after I am gone.”*

During his last years, he told me of his desire to live long enough to set Marty and myself up on our own farms, but this was not to be. The Lord had other plans for him and for us.

In the fall of 1946, Pa was operated on for colon cancer. The operation appeared to be successful, but then complications set in. He needed another operation to repair something that pulled loose. The stress was too much for his heart, and the Lord took him home. Our whole family, including Ma, my brothers and sisters, and some of their spouses were present when Pa took his last breath. I stood among the family members that encircled his bed, not wanting to believe his time had ended.

I have often wondered how different my life may have turned out if Pa could have been there to help me get started farming.

Looking back, the year of 1944 was when I also lost my closest companion, Marty. I didn't really lose him -- we just weren't together that much anymore since he moved to Mt. Horeb with my parents and I remained on the farm. Sometimes he came along with Pa and helped around the farm, but he found jobs in town to earn spending money.

When school started Marty was free to try out for sports. He became a star player on the Mt. Horeb High School football team. During his senior year, in 1946, their team won the conference championship. He was written up in the *Wisconsin State Journal* as *“Butterball Marty Martinson, the 209-pound senior guard who anchored the Mount Horeb football team.”* I don't think Marty cared for the nickname “Butterball” because most of his 209 pounds was solid muscle. I was so proud of him, and I still am. He was not just my brother, he was my close and constant friend and companion.

After 1946, Gaylord and I worked the farm and shared farm work with our sister Benunie and her husband Walter Schwarz who had a farm on Malone Road, just 2-3 miles south of our farm. Walter and Benunie had taken over the operation of his parents' farm in 1942. We worked back and forth helping each other out with various farm tasks.

*Learn more about Harland's life after leaving the farm in Chapter 10, which focuses on his life with wife Martha and their four sons in Milwaukee. Harland is the only of the nine Martinson siblings who did not continue living in the Mt. Horeb area.*

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**Marty**, born May 5, 1928 was the youngest of the nine Martinson siblings. Nicknamed “Junior” in his younger years, Marty was only five years older than his nephew Donald Schwarz, who was the first-born grandchild of Marty's parents Clara and Martin Martinson.

Although Marty died suddenly in 2001, just a month after he turned 73, his wife Lois fondly recalls some of Marty's stories. “He told me of his younger days -- about hoeing



thistles and many other farm tasks,” Lois said. “He used to imitate to me how he would call the cows home from the pastures for milking time.”

“Marty also walked two miles to the one-room Malone School, but said he was lucky if his dad was going to the Malone factory next door because then he got a ride,” Lois said. “He told me long ago that his favorite teacher was Milly Nygard.”

Marty indicated they hardly ever had a Christmas tree, but that he always got socks. “They always had good food to eat, and his mother was a great cook! It was a close-knit family,” Lois says, as she reminisces.

Lois recalls how in school other kids always wanted to trade sandwiches with Marty because they liked his mother’s homemade bread better than their store-bought variety!

“Marty was a straight-A student and in the “Top 10” of his high school class – he was very intelligent,” Lois revealed. “He was very athletic too, and he had the nickname of “Butterball” as he was on the front line of a Mt. Horeb High School championship football team. He was very good,” she smiled. “His football team went on to win the state championship in 1946.”

Drafted by the Army in 1950, Marty was at the top of his class in the NCO (non-commissioned officer) academy, according to Lois who so proudly remembers him.

Lois didn’t know Marty’s dad Martin, who died in 1946, but she knew his mother Clara very well. “I loved Clara’s cookies, lefse, and headcheese – it was the best! She could do anything – knit, crochet, bake, and more. She was a very neat lady,” Lois remarked.

**Martinson brothers, Marty (left) and Harland (right), hold the Great Horned Owl that threatened their mother’s chickens one night in 1932. Freddy Funkhauser, who had been helping with corn shredding on the Martinson farm, shot the owl with his rifle.**



## Family Favorite Recipes of Grandma Martinson

Mrs. Clara Martinson is making lefse every day now that Christmas is near. She makes it for her family as well as many other people in the community.

Here is her recipe for lefse, and it is tried and tested.

### LEFSE

5 lbs. potatoes, cooked  
shortening  
salt  
milk  
flour

Cook 5 lbs. of potatoes and while they are warm add 4 or 5 tablespoons of shortening. Salt to taste.

If potatoes are dry, add a few tablespoons of milk.

Mash all together and before potatoes are cool put through ricer to remove all the lumps.

When potatoes are cold, add about 1½ cups flour or less, just enough to make a dough.

Make into balls the size of one lefse (little bigger than an egg.)

Store in refrigerator about an hour, then roll thin using flour to prevent sticking.

Bake first on one side then on the other on lefse grill.



Mrs. Clara Martinson...busy making lefse now

### From the Mount Horeb Mail....

Grandma Martinson's lefse recipe and the article above appeared in the *Mount Horeb Mail* in the 1950s or 1960s. She was known as one of the best lefse makers in Mt. Horeb. Grandma made her lefse for Olson's Restaurant for a time, as well as for many others who called in their orders. Of course, she made lefse by the dozens for her large family, especially at Christmas time. (*Uff dah!*)

Grandma Martinson's lefse recipe is reprinted on the next page for all generations to enjoy. Make some for your next Christmas gathering – *or any time!*

## Grandma Martinson's Lefse

*There is nothing better than Grandma Martinson's lefse, spread lavishly with butter and sprinkled lightly with brown or white sugar! Some liked cinnamon in the sugar for a different taste. Grandma's lefse was a special treat for all of us in the Martinson family.*

5 lbs potatoes, cooked  
1 ½ cups flour  
5 Tablespoons shortening  
Salt to taste  
Milk (a few tablespoons, as needed)

Peel and cook potatoes in water until done. Drain. While warm, add shortening and salt to taste. Add a few tablespoons milk if potatoes are dry. Mash all together. Before the potatoes are cool, put mixture through ricer to remove all lumps.

When potatoes are cold, add about 1 ½ cups (or less) flour -- just enough to make a dough. Make into balls a little bigger than an egg. Store in refrigerator about an hour, Roll very thin with a rolling pin (preferably a grooved lefse rolling pin). Use flour to prevent sticking when rolling.

Bake on lefse griddle – first on one side, then on the other side.

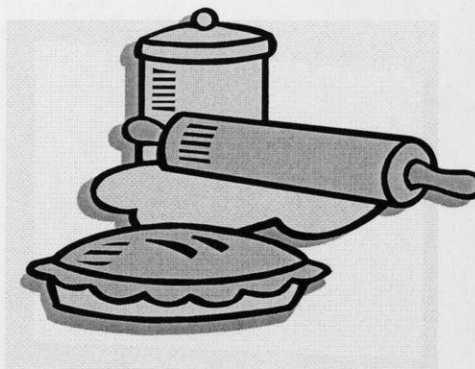
Additional notes: Remove from griddle. Cool. Fold each circle of lefse in half and in half again. Store in plastic bag in refrigerator or cool place. When serving, spread each lefse with butter, fold in half, and roll it up in jelly-roll fashion. Let guests spread their buttered lefse with either white or brown sugar if desired.

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## Grandma's Fresh Berry Pie

3-4 cups berries (any kind) 1 cup sugar  
1 cup water 3 Tablespoons  
cornstarch

Boil 1 cup of berries with 1 cup of water. Strain. Add 1 cup of sugar and 3 tablespoons of cornstarch. Boil until thick, and then cool. While thickened mixture cools, place remaining 2-3 cups berries in baked pie shell. Pour thick mixture over remaining fresh berries in baked pie shell. Top with whipped cream. Chill.



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Grandma Martinson's handwritten recipes for Headcheese and Dandelion wine follow. The Headcheese was a favorite among some of her grandchildren. (See the chapters on



her sons, Marty and Gaylord.) Grandma's Dandelion Wine recipe was submitted by her son Harland, who used her recipe to make wine as a hobby later in life.

### Head Cheese

boil head, heart & tongue and about 1/4 of liver or less, save the water it is boiled in, ~~grind~~ the meat add salt, pepper a few onions cut fine (2 quindrum) a little allspice a sage to suit taste add this all to water it was boiled in, boil a little then add oat meal, and boil until thick, it takes quiet a lot of oat meal, when cool ~~and~~ slice fry until brown in a little lard  
(I cook liver to it salt cut in strips) & strain the water while hot

Cool the water so the fat comes to the top and ~~skim~~ <sup>skim</sup> it off. the water jells when ~~it~~ cool

(boil head till meat comes off the bone) takes about 2 1/2 to 3 hours or more

### Dandelion Wine

CHARA MARTINSON'S WINE (GRANDMA MARTINSON)

- 1 qt dandelion blossoms
  - 1 gallon water
  - 1 lemon cut in slices (not peeled)
  - 2 1/2 t sugar
- put in kettle and boil 5 minutes  
pour into jar when cool a 2 tabl  
spoons yeast keep in warm place  
3 days, strain & bottle

## Grandma's Molasses Cookies

*(These are Grandma's tasty cookies that have cracks and sugar on top!)*

1 cup sugar

1 teaspoon cinnamon

¼ cup molasses

¾ cup shortening

2 teaspoons or less ginger

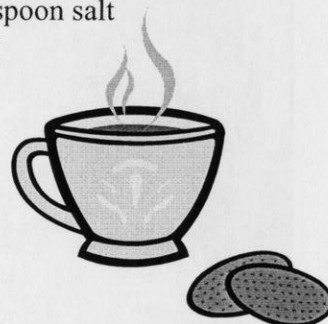
1 teaspoon baking soda

2 ¼ cup flour or less

1 teaspoon salt

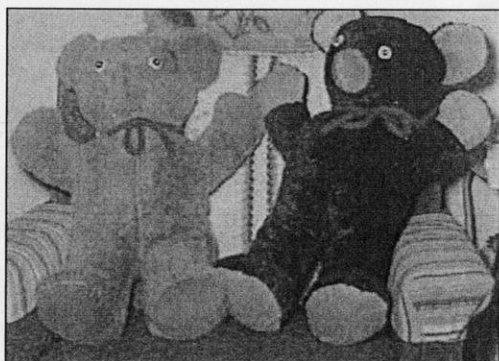
1 egg

Mix dough. Roll into balls. Dip top of ball in sugar. Flatten with a greased glass bottom. Place on greased cookie sheet. Bake on bottom rack 5 minutes, then middle rack of oven 5 minutes at 350 degrees.

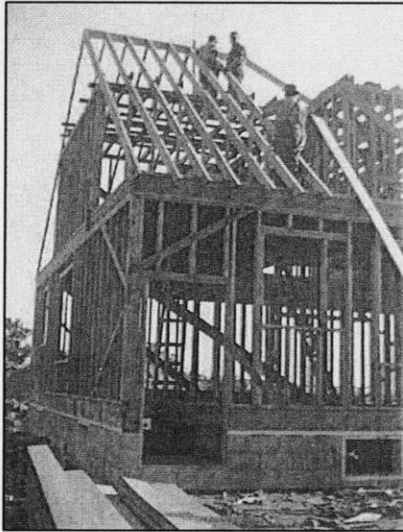


**Grandma Martinson (1975)**

**Teddy Bears made by Grandma**



**A sampling of grandkids at Grandma's house, 206 Second Street, Mt. Horeb (1949)**

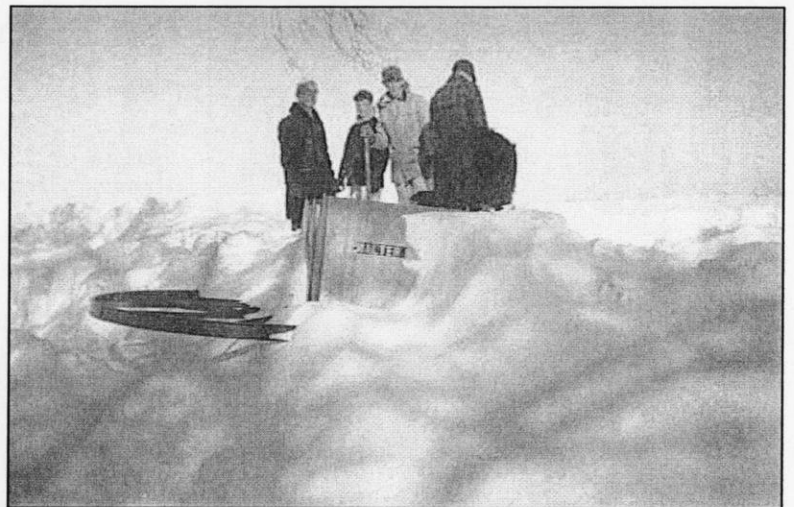


Above, Walter Schwarz builds a new house on his farm. (1949)



### Schwarz "Lime Ridge Farm" pictures

At right, Walter Schwarz and neighbors, the John Thomsons, dig out after a blizzard. (1959)



Below (left) Benunie Schwarz in Norwegian dress as she leaves her house to work at the Kaffe Stue in Mt. Horeb. (1993)

Below (right) Dorothy Schwarz heads out for her first day of first grade at Malone School. (1952)





### CHAPTER 3

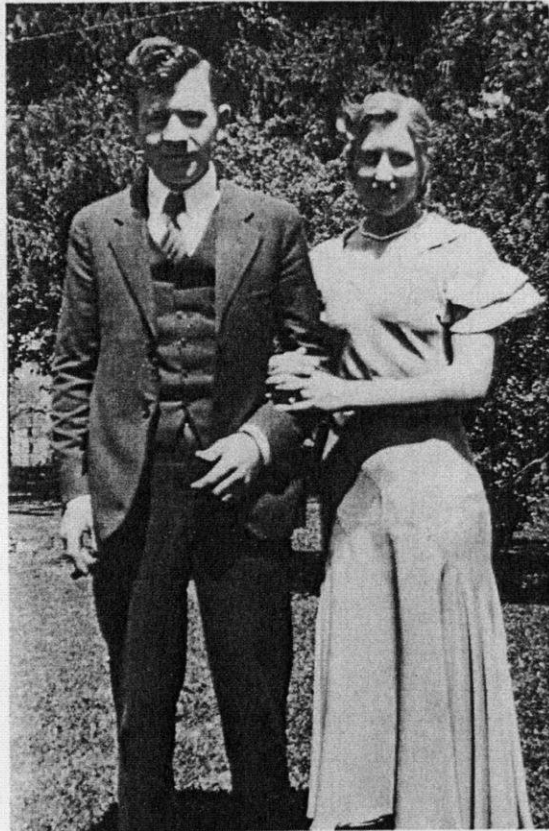
#### **Benunie Ventures on Her Own with Walter – *Life of the Schwarz's***

Back in the 1920s, it must have been unusual for the oldest of nine children in a hard-working farm family to attend and graduate from high school. My grandparents, Clara and Martin Martinson, obviously believed strongly in education. Their oldest daughter, Benunie (my mother), graduated from Mt. Horeb High School in 1930. Seven of her eight brothers and sisters also are M.H.H.S. alumni.

Mom's high school Berohboks (yearbooks) were interesting discoveries for me. I found them in her closet and read excerpts aloud to her when she was about 80 years old.

I had to chuckle at some of the hand written messages. Like my own high school Berohbooks from the 1960s, a lot of information can be gleaned.

It seemed she got pretty good grades. I even found her report cards that verify it. However, her science teacher commented that she would do even better if she didn't argue so much. According to my mother, she had her own science theories. Although Mom appeared quiet at times, her assertive nature rumbled beneath.



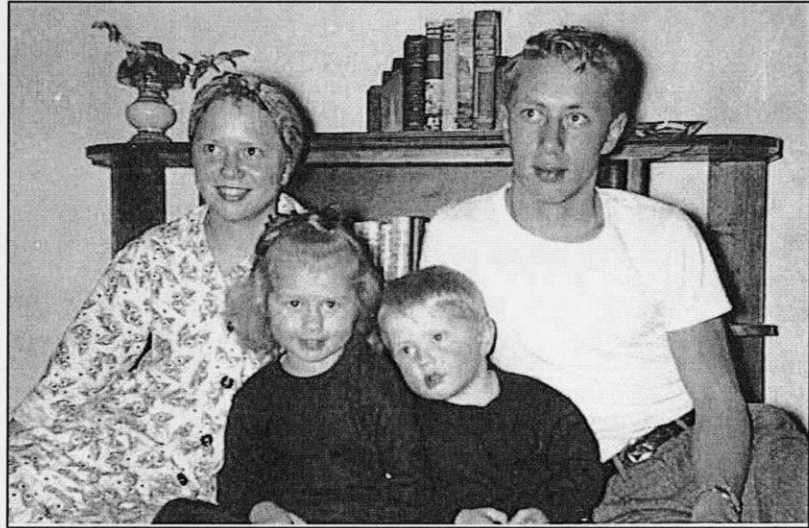
**Benunie Martinson married Walter Schwarz (1932)**

Another message in her yearbook indicated she'd been spending some time with the red-haired hired man on the Martinson farm. Eventually he became my dad, Walter. They got married during an elopement in Galena, Illinois on January 9, 1932. It's ironic, because her grandfather, Torkel Martinson, met his wife Barbro the same way. He was the hired man on the farm of Barbro's parents.

During their first 10 years of marriage, my dad and mother lived on Garfield Street in Mt. Horeb, where dad worked as an award-winning buttermaker for Evans Creamery. Ten years later, in 1942, they moved onto Malone Road in Springdale Township to take over the farm his dad Rudolf Schwarz had purchased in 1921. The 160-acre dairy farm was later named Lime Ridge Farm because of the lime kiln and quarry located on it.

## Children enter the picture

Between 1933 and 1948, Benunie and Walter had five children. Four survived and went on to build careers and families of their own. Their third child, Martin, died shortly after birth in 1942. He is buried next to Walter and Benunie in the Mt. Horeb Cemetery.



The Schwarz children in 1950 are (front) Dorothy (4) and Russell (2) and (back) Rosann (14) and Don (17).

### *Donald, the first-born*

In February, 1933 my oldest brother Donald was born. He was the first grandchild of Clara and Martin Martinson. Don married his high school sweetheart, Carol Einerson from Daleyville, in 1956. Both graduated from UW-Madison. Don went on to earn his PhD in Educational Administration. He taught agriculture on both the high school and college levels and later became an administrator in the Milwaukee Area Technical College system. He retired at age 59 in 1991. Don and Carol have lived in their home in New Berlin, Wisconsin since 1974. In recent years, they joined the Sons of Norway group there.



Carol and Don Schwarz pose in their back yard in October, 2005, just 8 months prior to their 50<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary.

They have three sons. Paul, 47, married to Lauren, is a professor of plant science at North Dakota State University in Fargo. Mark, 44, is a horticulturist living in San Diego, and David, 36, lives in England where he works as a financial analyst for Kohler. Many of Don and Carol's vacations take place in the cities where their boys reside.



### ***Rosann arrives***

My older sister Rosann was born July 15, 1936. (Ten years later I would come along.) At 19 years of age, Rosann married Hub Jorns, who was my brother Don's college friend and fraternity brother. I remember seeing my mother Benunie crying while hanging laundry outside as Rosann drove away with her hubby to move to Iowa. It was a sad time for mom. She had depended on her oldest daughter in so many ways. They were truly best friends. Rosann was also the built-in babysitter for Russ and me – the “tag-alongs.” We were only 6 and 9 years old at the time. I imagine we could be quite a handful for a busy farmwife.

**Don and Rosann Schwarz on a lazy day in 1940, visiting Grandma and Grandpa Martinson's farm.**

Eventually, Rosann and Hub moved to Sturgeon Bay, Wisconsin where they spent the majority of their married years, living along the beautiful shoreline in Door County. They raised their children in Sturgeon Bay, where they owned the Jorns' Pontiac-Buick car dealership. Our family spent many wonderful years visiting my sister and her family in beautiful Door County.

Ironically, Rosann and Hub died shortly after retirement. Both were only in their 60s. Rosann died from cancer in 2002 and Hub from a heart attack in 1997. They left behind three grown children: Doug, Debbie and John -- all who are working in the automotive industry. They also had seven grandchildren Danielle, Molly, Jacquelyn, Jason, Kaitlyn, Jacob, and Jenna.

**At right, Rosann and our mother Benunie enjoy the farm and the floral beauty of mom's garden. The year was 1993. The three of us were heading to Spring Green to celebrate mother's 82<sup>nd</sup> birthday.**



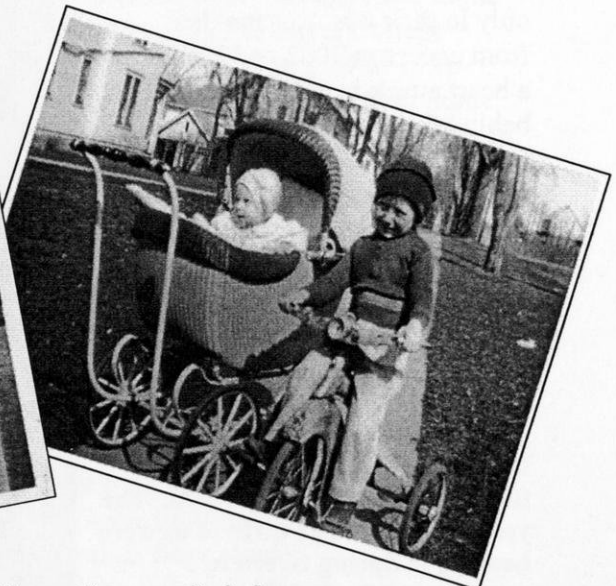
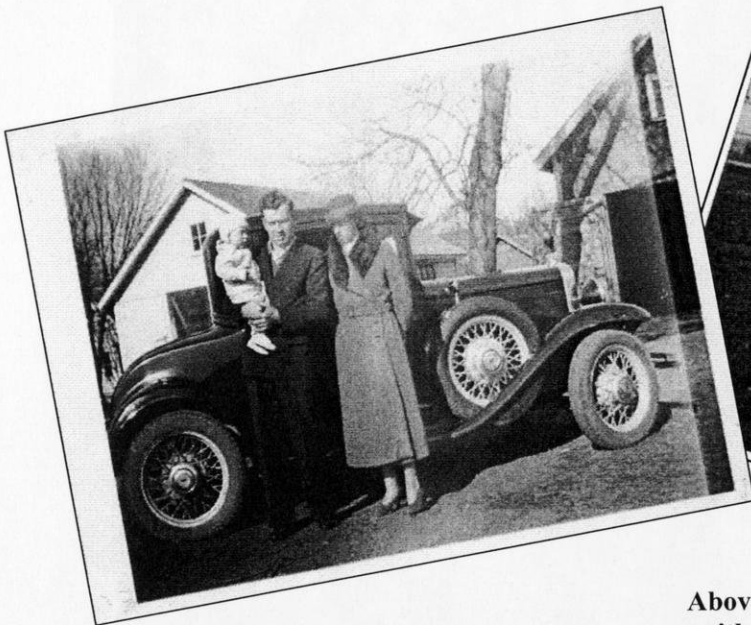
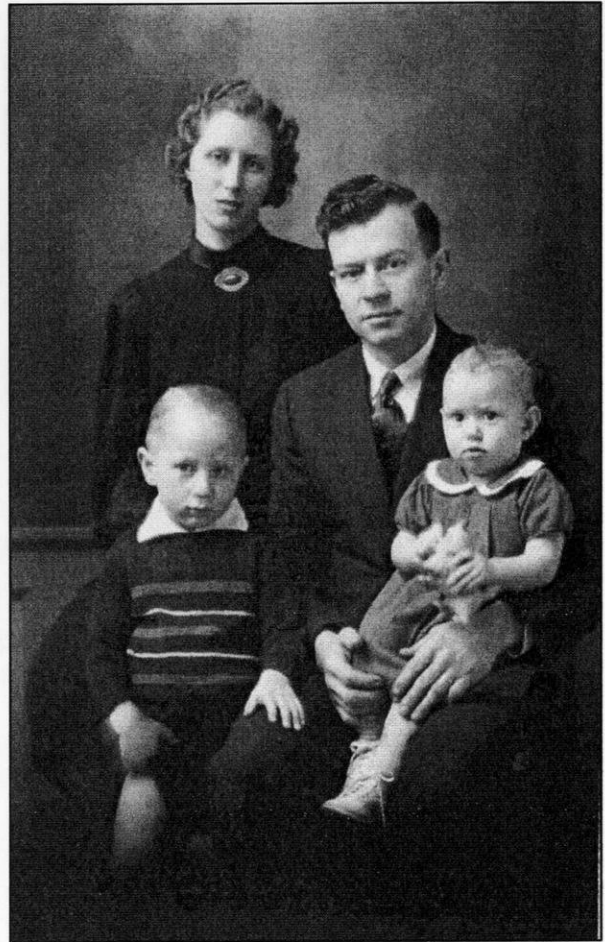




During their first 10 years of marriage, (1932-1942) Benunie and Walter Schwarz lived in this house on Garfield Street in Mt. Horeb prior to taking over his dad's farm on Malone Road four miles south of town.

At right, Benunie and Walter with their two oldest children, Don and Rosann. (1937)

Below, Benunie and Walter and first-born son Donald by their Garfield Street home in Mt. Horeb. (1934)



Above: Rosann sits in buggy with brother Don beside her. (1937)

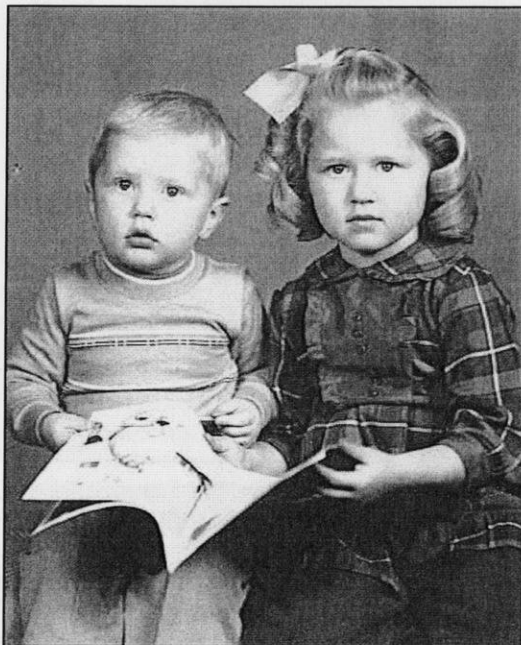


***Dorothy debuts!***

As Benunie and Walter's youngest daughter, I entered the family on May 20, 1946. A little more than two years later, on November 8, 1948, my little brother Russell was born. Mom said I was quite jealous. "Take him back," I told her when I saw my baby brother for the first time. Russ is and always will be "The baby," and I love him dearly.

***At left:***  
**Russell and Dorothy Schwarz in 1948.**

***At right:*** Russ and Dorothy in 1950.



I married Lennis Rindy in 1966 when we were in college at UW-Madison. Lennis graduated with a mechanical engineering degree in 1969. His first job was at Gisholt Machine Tool Company, Madison, where we lived until 1971 when Gisholt was sold by its parent company, Giddings and Lewis, in Fond du Lac, Wisconsin. Lennis was transferred to work in Fond du Lac the summer of 1971. By that fall we moved there.



*Christmas 1974...*

**Ryan, Lennis, Dorothy, Troy, and Chad Rindy celebrate Christmas (1974)**

Our three sons were all born in Madison during our first five years of marriage. So, it was quite an eventful trek two hours north with three little boys under the age of five. Troy was born in 1967, Chad in 1969, and Ryan in 1971, just before we moved north.

In 1974 we moved west of Fond du Lac, raising our sons in a country home on two acres near Rosendale. Family members and friends had years of fun gathering around the backyard firepot at the Rindy homestead. It was home to "the Rindy boys" and the central gathering spot for family and friends from 1974-1996.

In 1991, I returned to college to complete a degree I started 25 years earlier. It became my new focus as my 24-year marriage came to an end. Being a student at the same time my three sons were in college was quite an experience. While they washed their clothes and partied on weekends at our Rosendale house, I cooked and studied. Ryan tutored me through college algebra the summer of 1993. There was a college graduation nearly every six months in my family. In 1994, I earned a Bachelor of Science Degree in Journalism from UW-Oshkosh. I was so happy to have my mother attend. At 83, she was finally able to see me graduate from college. My three sons were also very proud.



**Dorothy and her mother Benunie toast Dorothy's 1994 college graduation with a cup of coffee!**

Three years later, in 1997, I married my second husband, Brian Bliskey. Again, I was overjoyed to have my mother attend this special occasion. Brian and I reside in Fond du Lac where he works at Mercury Marine and I work as a freelance writer.



**Brian and Dorothy Bliskey celebrate their 1997 wedding.**



**Dorothy gathers with her three sons (l-r) Ryan, Chad, and Troy Rindy on Mothers Day 2005.**

My three sons have given me seven Rindy grandchildren. Joshua is 13, Christopher 11, Nicole 8, twins Grace and Jensen 4, Zachary 4, and Ella is 2. Brian has a daughter Kelli in Seattle. He also has a son Kent who lives in Fond du Lac with his family: Becky and

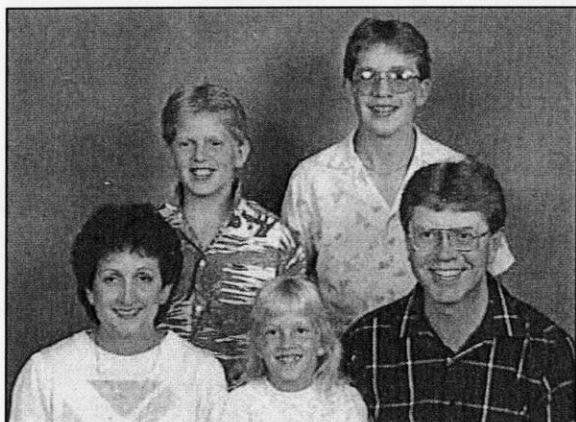
daughter Jordana (12), and Brooke – a baby girl born to Kent and Becky in October 2005. Brooke is my husband Brian's first blood-related grandchild.

***Russell, the "baby" of the Schwarz family***

My younger brother Russell married Barbara (Pearson) of Beaver Dam in 1969 after receiving a Bachelor of Science Degree in Agriculture from UW-Madison. As a student, he stayed in the same fraternity house as our older brother Don had 15 years earlier.



Russ and Barb went on to have three children, all of whom are now grown and married. Andrew works at the University of Phoenix in Des Moines, Iowa. Jeremy is a regional loss prevention manager with Zale Corporation. Melinda is studying to become a physician's assistant at Iowa State University. Russ and Barb live in Charles City, Iowa where Russ works in corn research. Russ and Barb have three grandchildren – Cailen, Benjamin, and Maxwell.



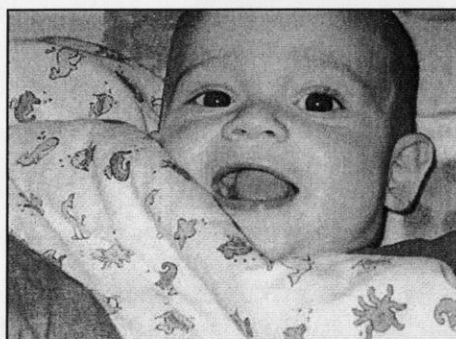
**Russell and Barbara Schwarz and family in 1984. Children: Melinda, Jeremy and Andy.**



**Jeremy marries Edie in 1997. Seven years later baby Maxwell arrived (below).**



**Russ and Barb at Melinda's 2001 wedding**



**Melinda and Eric engaged in 1999.**



**Andy and Traci, Cailen and Ben (2004)**

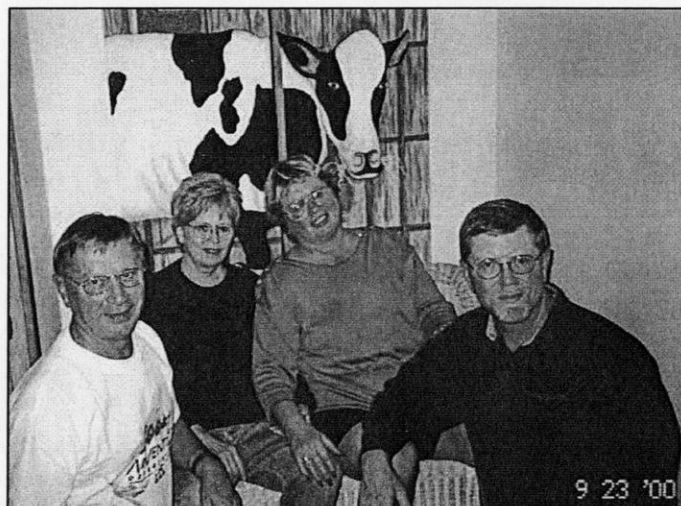


**Don Schwarz family, (l-r) Paul, David, Carol, Mark and Don outside their New Berlin home in August 1997.**



**Jorns family (clockwise) Rosann, Doug, Hub, Debbie and John. (1976)**

**Below: The Schwarz “kids” at The Barn – a bed and breakfast in Iowa are (l-r) Don, Rosann, Dorothy, and Russell. (2000)**



## Memories of Grandma Clara and Grandpa Martin Martinson

### Don:

I remember Grandma at the wood-fired cook stove, canning meat in jars. I recall how really, really good it tasted. Mother, Geneva, and others were helping by cutting meat at a table outside. I don't remember much about Grandpa, except that he liked to tease me. (He died when I was 13.) An incident I remember is when Grandpa, Dad, Gaylord and others were going to butcher a steer. Grandpa tried to hit it on the head with a hammer to knock it out. He missed and it ran away.



Grandma and Grandpa Martin Martinson with the first four of nearly 40 grandchildren are (l-r) Rosann Schwarz, Joyce Dettwiler, Tom Grundahl, and Don Schwarz (1940)

People have told me about the time, around 1938, when Grandpa got cases of beer for the men in the threshing crew to celebrate the end of the threshing season.

Everyone was sitting on the lawn near the spot where the milk can stand used to be. Grandpa let me taste his beer a few times. I acted silly and danced around. They all laughed at me. I heard later that Mother was mad. I bet Grandpa caught the dickens from her. I recall the beer tasted pretty good, and it still does!

### Dorothy:

Sadly, I never knew my Grandpa Martinson because he died the year I was born – 1946. From what I've heard, he was an awesome dad. Gentle, kind, patient, very social, friendly, community-minded, a strong Christian, and attentive to his wife and children. My Grandpa (Martin) Martinson was about 6' 4" tall. In his younger years, the ladies might have said he was the *"tall, dark, and handsome"* type!

I know my mother was very upset when he died. Since I was just a few months old, my aunt Huldah and Harold Pick took care of me during the time of his death. Huldah, who was my dad's sister, used to tell me the story often of how I snuggled between her and Harold in bed when I was just a few months old during that time.

Memories of Grandma Martinson and the house she lived in at 206 S. 2<sup>nd</sup> Street in Mt. Horeb are vivid. It was a white two-story Victorian home on a corner lot. It had a steeple on it, which I thought made it look like a castle! Grandma's house was a



convenient location, just a block from the feed mill and the ‘uptown’ area, making it a handy place to go for a visit with Grandma while Dad was grinding corn at the mill or Mom was grocery shopping.

After entering Grandma’s front door, the jingling of her wind chimes at the end of her long foyer hallway signaled that someone was coming to visit. I’d usually find her either putting a puzzle together, sitting in her rocking chair crocheting, or baking in the kitchen. Yummy treats awaited! Maybe some cornflake or sugar-topped molasses cookies, doughnuts, or homemade potato chips (my favorite).

Chatting for a while, I’d leave Grandma alone to do her crocheting, and skip out her front door to the front porch swing. The wooden slat swing was a popular spot for us kids at Grandma’s house. Cousins packed into it for a cool, relaxing ride. I can still feel the breeze through my hair as we would swing back and forth, talking and laughing.

Grandma’s house always had the aroma of coffee brewing and cookies baking. The smell is so real that it overwhelms me even now when I think of it. Once in a while the scent returns, like a flashback in time, when I enter someone else’s home that emits similar aromas. Memories have a way of evoking a sense of touch, taste, smell, and a vision ever so clear.

**Russ:**

Grandma Martinson was always crocheting. And I mean always. Once, when I was about six, I was playing with an open face fishing rod and reel. Dad had borrowed it from his good friend and neighbor, Bill Steinhauer. I wasn’t supposed to be playing with it, but of course, I did. And as those old open face reels will do, it developed a huge tangled snarl when I tried to cast it. I knew I was in trouble, so I hid it.



**Grandma’s House at 206 S. 2<sup>nd</sup> Street in Mt. Horeb, as it looks in 2005. There no longer is a porch swing -- a favorite spot for many grandchildren during the 1950s-1970s.**

Sometime later, after days of fear and dread, Grandma Martinson was sitting in our living room, crocheting after a hot afternoon of picking blackberries in our woods. I don’t recall how I approached her about that snarl, but I snuck the rod and reel out of hiding and into the living room, where I watched her magically fix it for me.

Every time I have a fishing pole in my hands now, I think of that incident. I related this story to my kids when I untangled their fishing lines.

I also remember playing with toy soldiers at Grandma's house. She had a bunch of Army green, plastic toy soldier action figures. They were 2-3 inches tall. I recall playing with them on her living room floor in pretend battle as Walter Cronkite narrated a TV program called the Twentieth Century, a show that was about the flying fortress dropping bombs. I felt like I was in the Army. Eventually I did become an army officer -- 45 years later.

At Disneyworld in Orlando in 2001, these same figures were as big as life in many of the same poses -- complete with green faces and puddle footing on their feet. They were just like the 2-inch plastic Army guys I played with at Grandma's house, but these guys were real! It really took me back to that moment in Grandma's house, but of course, she was crocheting.



Four generations in 1970 are (l-r) baby John Jorns, mother Rosann (Schwarz) Jorns, grandmother Benunie (Martinson) Schwarz, and great grandmother Clara Martinson at Rosann and Hub Jorns' Sturgeon Bay home.

## Christmas memories

### Don:

As the oldest grandchild, I remember Christmas on the farm with Grandma and Grandpa Martinson before they retired and moved to Mt. Horeb. Christmas presents were always fun, but I also remember lutefisk and lefse. We always had lutefisk. Grandma was the lutefisk chef, and it always had to be cooked just so. She cooked it right because I really liked it. I remember Grandma was in charge and would stay right at the wood stove as it cooked. Sometimes she let my Uncle Bennie Grundahl help her cook it. Grandpa, Bennie, Dad and other men were always outside laughing and doing something with the lutefisk before Bennie brought it in for cooking. Looking back, I bet Grandpa had a "jug" out there.

### Dorothy:

My brother Russ and I loved Christmas. In our younger years Christmas could be scary. Christmas Eve was spent at Grandma Martinson's house with all the cousins. There was lutefisk, lefse, and gifts from Santa -- who scared the little kids sometimes. How we all fit into her house, I'll never know!

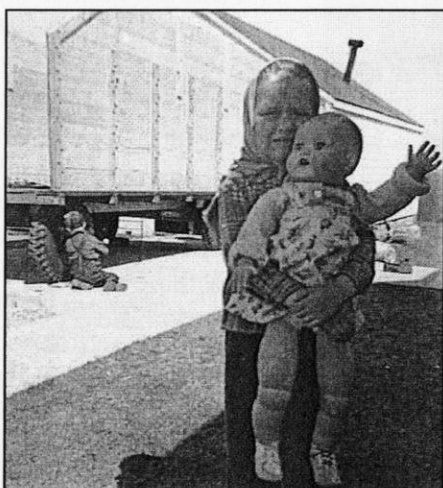
As we grew older and wiser, each Christmas Russ and I were on a mission. We'd go on search patrol for anything that looked like a potential gift from Santa. In the barn hayloft,

in the closets, the garage – no place was off limits for finding hidden gifts. Often they were tucked away behind other things. Our sneaking around occurred at a time when we suspected Santa Claus just might not be real.

I remember finding a load of gifts one year. They were stuffed into the closet underneath our stairs. That finally convinced me. It could have been the same year we actually heard making noise on top of our house roof, near the chimney. I think dad must've been up to his tricks. Although I was somewhat disappointed to find out it was all a hoax, I wouldn't have wanted it any other way. It was fun being fooled.

**Photo:**

**The last Christmas in our old house, in 1949, we gathered with some of our Martinson clan cousins -- the Dettwilers. (Their mother Geneva was my mother's sister.) Front (l-r) Jean Dettwiler, Dorothy Schwarz, Phil, and Dolly Dettwiler. Back (l-r) Bob and Joyce Dettwiler, Russell, Rosann and Don Schwarz. Baby Jim Dettwiler was asleep. Picture was taken in the original house on our farm. The house was vacated when my dad Walter built us a new house on the farm in 1950.**



**Dorothy plays with her "big doll" and Russ "fixes" wagon wheel in background.**

Christmas Eve was filled with anticipation. It was hard to get to sleep as I thought about what Santa might bring. I envisioned him coming down our chimney and getting stuck –unable to make his delivery -- maybe dead from the fall! As I laid in wait under my cozy comforter upstairs, I kept thinking I heard him on the roof or rustling around downstairs. Eventually I slept, but I was up earlier than ever on Christmas morning. Russ and I would wake each other up and race down the stairs to the living room. Sometimes Mom would just be coming into the house from the morning chores -- probably with little sleep since she was up all night wrapping our gifts.

One Christmas I got my "big doll" which was the doll of any little girl's dreams. It was nearly three feet tall and had a soft rubbery body that felt like a real baby. My brother Russell's outgrown newborn baby clothes fit her well, so she had an endless wardrobe.



In addition, both of my grandmas sewed clothes for her. My doll's big blue eyes opened and closed ever so gently, and she had a soft baby smile which made her very cuddly. I took my doll everywhere. One time I even brought her along on the Merrimac Ferry when we went to visit friends. Eventually I outgrew her, and she began to deteriorate. For a few years though, she was my constant companion.

The process of making fake snow for our Christmas tree was such fun. Mom would get nice big bars of Ivory soap, cut them into thin slices, add hot water and beat the two together in her Sunbeam Mixmaster. In minutes, we had fresh smelling and creamy textured fake snow. We'd take our hands and dip them into her big mixing bowl, grabbing handfuls of the imitation snow. Then we'd slide our hands gently over the tree branches, from the inside toward the outside of each limb. How wonderful our tree looked with freshly fallen snow on it! After a little drying time, ornaments were hung.

Mother was very crafty and creative. She had neat ways of wrapping gifts, presenting food, and arranging centerpieces. At Christmas our gifts were always wrapped with her special touch. A Christmas I remember well was when I got some new jewelry and discovered it hanging on the Christmas tree branch, like an ornament! I especially remember an emerald ring I received that way. Mom's unique presentation was a clever way to eliminate some gift wrapping and save time.

After our Christmas morning gift opening, we would go to church for the Christmas service at Evangelical Lutheran in Mt Horeb. Mother, who had a distaste for commercialism, reminded and taught us the real reason we celebrated this holiday.



**Benunie holds a scared little Russell. His older brother Don Schwarz was playing Santa and had just entered the room at Grandma Martinson's house. Aunt Alma and cousin Becky Skindrud join the family fun. (1950)**

**Russ:**

Mother always felt sorry for the ugliest Christmas tree, so of course that is what we'd have in our living room. Dad used to get so angry putting up the tree, because the tree stand was a poor design. I felt the same way years later when I put up our family tree.

When I was 12 years old, I discovered a box of full-size, hand-powered woodworking tools in the hay mow. Of course, they were going to be my Christmas presents, but I had tried them all before they were actually given to me! Dad didn't know. I still have many of them today. The memories of that box in the haymow are never far away.

## Grade school memories

### Don:

Since my folks still lived in Mt. Horeb in the late 1930s, I began grade school in town. I remember my kindergarten teacher, Miss Pfulger, and also recall my Mt. Horeb Grade School friends Tom Gesme, Ron Wirth, and Dave, Neal and Norma Fosshage. The six of us all graduated from Mt. Horeb High School together in 1951. From the end of third grade through eighth grade, I attended the rural one-room Malone School. We moved from Mt. Horeb to take over my Grandpa Rudolf Schwarz's farm on Malone Road in 1942. The farm had been in our family since 1921. I really liked the country school and recall the enjoyment of walking there from our farm on Malone Road.

### Russ:

Putting on the annual Christmas program -- complete with plays, recitations of short poems from memory, and treats are great memories of Malone School days. We'd push the desks out of the way and hang a curtain across the front of the room. Olive Thomson always helped with the program. My Aunt Huldah, who had no children, became distraught at one play about old people because it hit her that she'd have no children to take care of her in old age. This was at the time that her folks (my Grandma and Grandpa Schwarz) lived in the upstairs of her house -- under her watchful eye.



**Dorothy bikes home from Malone School (1957)**

### Dorothy:

From our hilltop farm on Malone Road, it seemed like a two-mile trek to the one-room Malone School at the bottom of the next hill. It probably wasn't much more than a mile, but it was always an adventure to walk or bike it most days. On cold or rainy days, we often caught a ride with John Thomson, our neighbor at the end of our quarter-mile long driveway.

**Benunie leads Dorothy down the Malone School driveway for her first day of first grade. Olive Thomson made the dress Dorothy is wearing. (1952)**



John Thomson was a botany professor at UW-Madison, and had moved to Malone Road with his wife Olive in 1951. They had four sons at the time -- Dennis, Norman, Doug, and Rod who was my age. Later they had a daughter, Elizabeth.

Some mornings Russ and I would walk to Thomson's house to catch a ride with their dad, John. We'd step inside to wait. (Have you ever tried popcorn as a breakfast cereal? I saw the Thomson boys do this once, and tried it myself. It's pretty tasty!) Once the boys were ready, we'd grab our lunch pails and books and pile into their dad's car. One time someone slammed the car door on my fingers. My "pinkie" is still crooked.

My very first day of school stands out because Olive Thomson made me a beautiful dress -- navy blue with Swiss embroidery at the hemline. The lovely fabric was from the Swiss Lace Factory in New Glarus. Although my Grandma Martinson was a talented seamstress, I guess my mother never picked up that same interest.

I can still feel the wind in my face as I rode up and down the hills to Malone School on my bike. After turning left out of our farm driveway, it was an exhilarating downhill race to see how fast I could go and how far I could coast up the next hill. Once my bike stopped coasting uphill, I'd get off and walk it to the top. Then I'd pedal like crazy to get over the hill for my final descent. The tricky part was being able to stop at the bottom of the last hill where it crossed over busy Highway 92 to enter the Malone School driveway. With a stop sign at the bottom of this final hill, there was always the chance of a collision with something much larger, if I couldn't stop. My foot was riding the brake most all the way down this last hill. I can still hear the squealing of the bike brakes each time I stepped on them. Usually my brother Russ and the Thomson boys were on their bikes too. We raced to see who could get there first.

**A Malone School tour in 2005 reunited Rod Thomson and Dorothy Schwarz, classmates at Malone School from 1952-1960. With them is their first grade teacher, "Miss Hannah" (second from right) and Rod's oldest brother Dennis. The bottom of the final hill on Malone Road is in the background. Miss Hannah is now Mabel Brenum.**



Often we'd walk to school. If John Thomson had given us a ride in the morning, we only had to walk home. Our walks or bike rides home were more leisurely, since we didn't have to meet the deadline of the 8 a.m. school bell ringing.

Two things usually happened on the way home from school, depending on the season. Both involved "finding" after-school snacks along the way. Black walnuts were one treat. I remember a certain walnut tree along the route had a huge rock under it. I'd pick



up a walnut, cradle it in a dimple of the large rock, and crack it with a smaller rock. Nothing tasted better than a fresh walnut on the walk home from school! (To this day, black walnuts are my favorite nut. I have some in my freezer that uncle Gaylord picked out of the shells.)

Another treat along the route home were the grapes in Olive and John Thomson's yard. Russ and I would stop with their boys and grab a handful of luscious purple grapes when in season. The taste of that particular grape each fall always reminds me of the Thomson family.

Grade school days were great. The sound of the school bell, the sight of friends running around the yard playing Pump-Pump-Pull-Away or Fox and Goose, or riding the merry-go-round our dad built are all quite vivid. The smell of the country air and the sounds of spring birds singing while we played are crystal clear. Lunch hour and recess were favorite times. Childhood memories of sharing lunchtime with friends and cousins come to the surface as I recall eating lunches I packed in my tin lunch pail. Usually it was a bologna sandwich, a piece of fruit or a tomato, and one of mom's good cookies.

Occasionally a thermos of hot soup was clipped into the top of my barn-shaped black

lunch pail. A store-bought Twinkie was a rare and treasured treat! In the one-room school setting, it was usually pretty quiet. The rest of us were reading or studying at our desks while the teacher had a class up front. Often, one of the older kids would take over the class if the teacher needed to work one-on-one with a student.



**Malone School students in 1958 with their teacher Mrs. Ringhand. As a seventh grader, Dorothy Schwarz is the tallest girl in the middle of the back row. Her brother Russ is fifth from the left in middle row. Cousin Joan Martinson is fourth from right in middle row; cousin Jerry Martinson is seated at far right in the first row.**

Looking back, it was a great teaching experience for the older students. I felt honored to be asked to help my younger schoolmates learn. Little did we realize we were learning valuable lessons as impromptu teachers. This was a unique opportunity, which most of us didn't appreciate until we were adults.

My favorite teachers were Mabel Hannah and Rose Einerson. I also enjoyed Mrs. Gilbertson and recall her telling me I'd "go places" with my writing some day. I think it was after a couple of assignments – one where we had to write a short story and another where we had to write our own obituary... perhaps a prediction of what our life might become? My short story was very scary – even to me. I created the plot during walks home from school. It gave me the chills.

## Typical summer day

### Don:

On early summer mornings, it was so enjoyable to go out to the pasture with our dog to bring the cows in for milking time.



Thomsons, our neighbors, are (l-r) front: Joan (wife of Dennis), Olive, Elizabeth, Olive's mother Edith Sherman. Back (l-r) Dennis, John's sister Sheila Feustel, John, Doug, Norm, and Rod. (1963)

It was always a treat to get the bales in the north end of the hay mow stacked up high enough so I could study the pencil drawing my dad made of an Indian village on the inside of the barn boards. He was quite creative and skilled. Because the barn boards have a half-inch gap to ventilate the hay mow, the bright contrasting sun light from outside always made viewing the drawing very difficult. The drawing is about 3-4 feet in diameter, just above the end beam. Dad told me he was 13 when he drew it.



Partial view of Walter's drawing in the Schwarz barn.

I also recall an incident that happened when I helped Dad attach a 4 x 4 “all-night” light pole to the old garage roof. It was the shed we used for parking our pickup truck. I was on the roof, holding the 4 x 4 as Dad drilled and bolted it. I had been concerned about constipation at that time and had consumed some Exlax prior to helping with the project. Of course, it began working as I was holding the pole. When Dad finally had secured the pole, I was very eager to get to the house. However, the eight-foot leap from the roof to the ground was almost a natural disaster, as was the race to the house. A few miserable stops were needed to control my innards. I have been very careful with my use of such products ever since.

## High school memories

All four of the Schwarz children graduated from Mt. Horeb High School – Don in 1951, Rosann in 1954, Dorothy in 1964, and Russ in 1966. Don’s favorite subjects were English, Speech and Agriculture. However, he found band practice to be a highlight for a very special reason.

### Don:

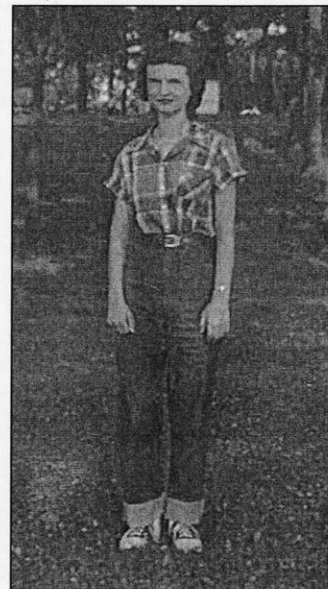
One day in April 1950, during my junior year, our band director Mr. Vogt was conducting the annual installation of new senior band members. I was in the back row of the sax section with my baritone saxophone when, WOW, this cute little girl with dark hair, carrying her alto sax,



Don and Dorothy (1948)

came in and sat down right in front of me. After band, I said to my friends, *Holy Cow, did you see that cute little girl that joined the sax section today? Who is she? Where did she come from?*

One of them said, *Where have you been? Her name is Carol. She’s a freshman. She’s from Daleyville. She’s a hottie! Why don’t you take her to the Prom?* I did... and now you know the rest of the story!



Carol -- Don’s high school sweetheart, now his wife!

### Dorothy:

High school was a mixture of trying to fit in socially and academically. Coming from a one-room school, we had to “prove” ourselves more than the kids from town -- or so it seemed. After the first few months of my freshman year, when initiation was over and I had performed countless deeds for the almighty seniors, I finally adjusted and “fit in”



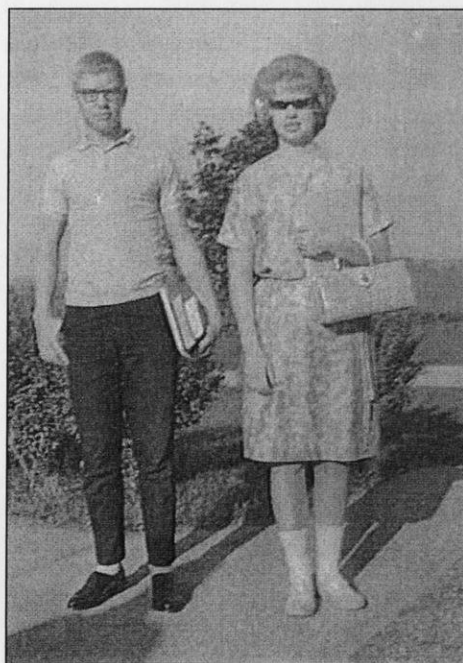
socially. I guess that was, partially, the reasoning behind freshman initiation. I wonder if they do this anymore. I doubt it.

Bus rides were long and a social experience as well. Singing in Glee Club and Chorus, rehearsing for class plays, and editing the high school newspaper with my classmate Carla Frye were school activities I thoroughly enjoyed.

My favorite subject was English. I was enthralled with English classes taught by Mrs. Vivian Stone, and I recall being in Miss Skaife's English class when President Kennedy was assassinated in 1963. A few nights later I stayed up all hours writing a poem about the assassination. While sitting in chorus one day, I hummed a melody and turned my poem into a song. As a member of a 4-H hootenanny singing group called the Chansonairres, I went on to sing it as a solo throughout 1964. The group included my cousin Joan Martinson, neighbor and classmate Carla Frye, classmate Susan Greve, and schoolmate Dorinda Philmore. We sang at competitions, the State Fair, and performed at many civic organizations and events.

The highlight was singing my Kennedy song at high school graduation and on Madison TV during a March of Dimes Telethon. My dad had the poem copyrighted for me.

My freshman year and half of my sophomore year of high school were spent at the old brick building on Academy Street – the same one my mother and her sisters and brothers attended. During my sophomore year, however, we moved to the new high school at its current location. The year was 1962. I remember it as if it were yesterday -- the entire student body carrying locker supplies from the old to the new high school. My friends and I were trudging along singing "*Duke, Duke, Duke...Duke of Earl*" as we walked those four or five blocks. I still think of it every time I hear that song on an oldies-type radio station. By the way, this was the same year that all one-room schools were closed by the State of Wisconsin. Perhaps the old high school was being vacated for the influx of grade school students coming to Mt. Horeb.



**Russ and Dorothy head to the bus for first day of school in 1963. Dress codes at Mt. Horeb High didn't allow girls to wear slacks until the 1970s.**

**Russ:**

My favorite subject was physics. It all made perfect sense. A prominent high school memory is my FFA pheasant-rearing project. I was chosen to head the three-year project throughout my sophomore, junior, and senior years at Mt. Horeb High School. I had a pen of 300 birds on our farm.

Each summer chicks would arrive, and we'd outfit our 12-by-12-foot chicken brooder house for them -- complete with heat lamps, chicken feeders, and quart jar glass water containers containing marbles (to trick the chicks into pecking the water). I remember one cold, windy, and rainy spring morning when my folks and I, after cleaning up in the milk house, sat on the cold paper feed sacks in the brooder house. We were enjoying the smells of the chicks, feeling heat from the lamps, and just watching the scampering, peeping baby chicks. As they grew, the chicks would be let out to a small attached and roofed pen. A Christmas tree farm in Mazomanie supplied "cull-trees" to scatter around the pen for rousting at night.

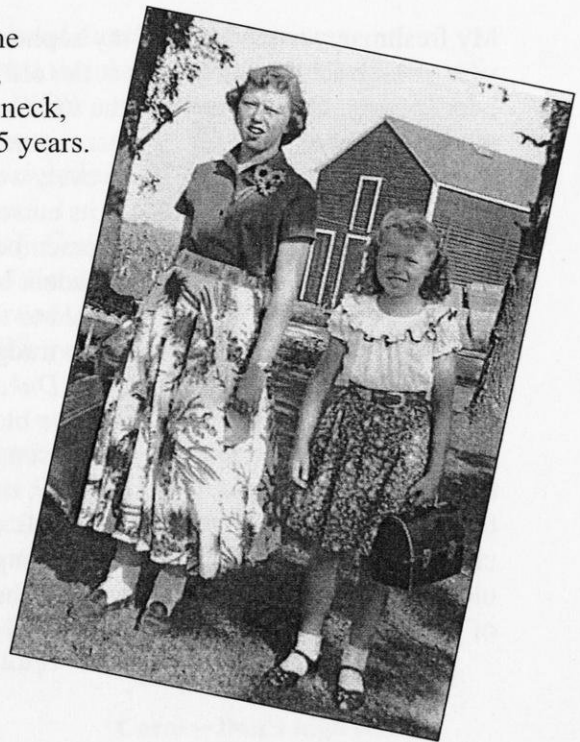
I recall the great disappointment I felt when many birds died in a rain storm from drowning with their heads held up as they crowded together in fright. Another time, a raccoon got in and killed a bunch of birds, prompting us to string electric fencing around the pen near ground level.

During countless hours spent sitting in the pen observing the birds, I came up with a shrill, screaming, vibrato whistle that always sent them scrambling for cover. On many occasions since then, when I have been in the field and in proximity of pheasant pens, this sound still brings about the same response.

I hunted these birds only once, and when one of the teachers I was hunting with reached into a thicket, grabbed one of my tame pheasants, and wrung its neck, I'd had enough. I wouldn't hunt them again for 25 years.



**Russ and Dorothy, up from their naps!**



**Rosann and Dorothy ready for first day of school in 1954 (age 18, 8)**

## Fond memories of Dad



Walter Schwarz at 14 on his Confirmation (1924)

### Don:

My dad Walter was always a teacher. He seemed to know so much even though he didn't go beyond eighth grade at Malone School. He was patient and always understood the person he was teaching.

One memory I have of dad is from 1953 when my college fraternity brother Hub Jorns and I were at UW-Madison earning degrees in agriculture. I brought Hub home to visit our farm for the first time. (Hub later married my sister Rosann.) When we arrived, Dad said, *"It's time to castrate the pigs. You guys are ag students, so you should know what to do. Go do it."*

We didn't know anything about the task we were about to perform. Dad laughed and laughed. A couple of pigs didn't make it through the surgery. Hub never forgot that incident.

I remember another lesson. A driving lesson when I was about nine in the summer of 1942. Dad had bought a new hay rope and, of course, it was all twisted. He put it in the back of our old 1932 Dodge coupe truck. (Dad had removed the rumble seat and built a truck box.) We drove out into the cow pasture.

Dad said, *"We'll tie the end of the rope to the truck and pull it around the pasture until the twists spin out of it."*



Don sits on the running board of the new 1935 Dodge his dad, Walter, just bought. (1935)

Dad gets everything ready, starts driving, and then says, *"I have to watch the rope, so I'll stand on the running board. You slide over and steer."*

"I can't drive," I said. *"Sure you can,"* Dad replied. "No, I can't drive," I repeated.



Dad said. *"I'm on the running board. We'll hit the fence if you don't steer. Now make a big circle...Just steer. See, you're driving. Now, turn the switch off and we'll stop."*

Dad checked the rope and got back on the running board, *"It's still twisted; we'll have to pull it some more...Turn the switch on,"* he said.

"I can't drive!" I exclaimed. Dad said, *"Well, you just did!"*

I replied, "OOoooooh!"

*"Now push that floor pedal down with your left foot"*

"Oh, I'm too short," I responded.

*"Stretch! And pull the shift lever down to your right hip,"* Dad said.

"Aaaaaaach!"

*"Stretch again. Press that other lever with your right foot."*

The engine started.

*"Good, now let the clutch out with your left foot,"* Dad instructed.

I did.

"Oh!" I yelled as the truck lurched ahead.

Dad stumbled off the running board, tripped and fell. He jumped back up and said, *"You should let the clutch out more slowly. Now you're driving. You're on your own!"*

**Don:**

Looking back, I didn't realize what Dad was really doing. He was making it a driving lesson when I really thought it was about getting a new hay rope. I'm sure more lessons followed from Dad, but I only remember this one.

That summer I regularly drove truck and tractor. I have a few questions, though, on this driving story...

- Did Dad have this all planned?
- Did he fall off or did he jump off the running board?
- How come the throttle was set just right?
- Did the rope really need to be pulled?



**Walter Schwarz shovels out from a blizzard on the farm -- 1959**

**Russ:**

My dad, Walter Schwarz, was a hard worker and a very comical guy. He always made people laugh. He was also very creative, a problem solver, tough as nails, and still motivates me today, 35 years after his death.

A few of Dad's philosophies that drive me to this day are as follows:

*"I don't care what you do, just do something!"*

*"If you aren't gonna do it right the first time, when are you gonna do it over?"*

*"To keep things together best, don't put all your nails in the same direction."*

**Russ:**

Dad had a great sense of humor, and brought out the humor in others. I recall mealtime with Uncle Gaylord Martinson and neighbor Bill Steinhauer, during times spent sharing field work and harvesting crops together. They were always poking fun at each other, their wives, and us kids. After these big noon-time summer meals, we'd all go outside and nap for 15 minutes on the bumpy lawn, under the breezy shade of the burr oak trees.



**Russ, 3, wonders what to do next as he "helps" his dad Walter build a wagon. (1951)**

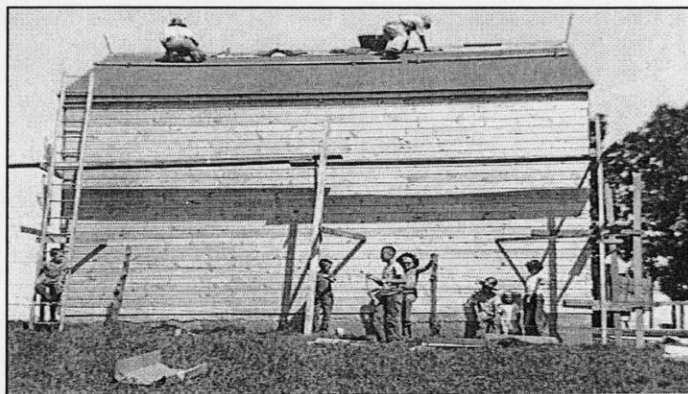
For having only a grade school education, Dad was very smart. I recall marveling at his ability to do math in his head. Each month I would watch him with wide eyes as he would total up the month's daily milk sales record. It was a column of 28-31 entries of three and four-digit numbers. His pencil would slowly descend the column, never stopping and never touching the paper. Dad was always murmuring the running total, writing down numbers only at the bottom. He'd get done in lightening speed, put it away with a complaint about the milk prices, and go on to other chores. When he'd leave, I'd take out the same milk record and try to do the adding just like he did. I still challenge myself with math like that to this day, trying to do it as fast as he could. He acquired a taped adding machine, but I don't think he ever saw a calculator. Dad would have had a lot of fun learning all of these new technologies.

Like most family farmers of the 1950s and 60s, Dad did all his own repairs and building construction. Nothing short of a major injury or lack of material ever stopped him. I recall Dad throwing up in the gutter of our dairy barn during milking when he had the flu.

Dad always had scabs and bruises on his fingers, hands, and arms from the lonesome work of farm implement repairs, welding, woodworking, moving livestock, and general chores. It was not unusual to see him with a bloody handkerchief wrapped around a finger. Stitches were out of the question.

**Dorothy:**

Recently I discovered some letters my dad received. Mom had stacked them together and secured them with rubber bands in a box. They were fun to read. Most were written during their first 10 years of marriage, from 1932-1942, when they lived in Mt. Horeb on Garfield Street. Dad worked as a buttermaker for Evans Creamery then was quite skilled at it.



Walter and crew build a granary on the Schwarz farm. (1948)

Mom told me more than once that Dad's job at the creamery was a good one and gave him the income to buy a new car, even though it was during the Depression. His buttermaking skills got them through tough times.

In a letter dated April 10, 1940 dad was commended by Golden Churn Laboratories in St. Louis, Missouri for high scores in buttermaking competition. He was a member of the National Creamery Buttermakers' Association. The letter read, as follows:

*Dear Mr. Schwarz:*

*We, and Arthur Vernon, extend our heartiest congratulations to you upon your excellent scoring of 93 in the Fresh Butter Contest of the National Creamery Buttermakers' Association. With best wishes for your continued success.*

*Respectfully yours,  
Golden Churn Laboratories,  
Leon Adler, Sales Manager*

Dad's prize winning butter had been judged on flavor, body, color, salt, and style. The original scorecard stated it received a 93 and was tucked into an envelope, indicating he had been at the national convention.

Two years later, Dad quit his job at Evans Creamery to take over his parents' farm just south of Mt. Horeb on Malone Road. At that time, in February, 1942, Walter and Josie Evans, the owners of Evans Creamery, wrote the following letter:

*Dear Walter,*

*In appreciation of your fine mark while with us, please accept this check as a token of goodwill. With all sorts of good luck and success to you and your fine family.*

*Most Sincerely,  
Walter and Josie Evans*



**Dorothy:**

People gravitated toward my dad, Walter. He was a humorous, outgoing guy who had a reputation for being the “life-of-the-party” type. Dad liked cars and driving fast. He was rather dare-devilish and would do almost anything for a laugh. A real practical joker. I’m sure it must have been one of the things that attracted my mother to him, yet, sometimes it made her mad. She thought he got a little carried away. There were lots of card parties and other family gatherings at our house at night where Dad would be telling a joke, acting silly, and everyone would be laughing. I was upstairs in my bedroom trying to sleep. The laughter kept me awake. I’d sneak down and listen, then go back up to bed again.



**Benunie and Walter celebrate 25 years (1957)**



SEPT 1954



**Walter and Benunie took two trips in the 1950s with friends and relatives, as shown above. At left: Walter (in center) troubleshoots the Kodak while his wife Benunie and good friend Bill Steinbauer look on. They were on a trip out West with Bill and his wife Orpha. (1954)**

**At right (l-r) Walter’s dad Rudolf Schwarz, Benunie’s mother Clara Martinson, Walter’s mother Rosa Schwarz, and Walter enjoy the Black Hills area while Benunie takes their picture. The five were on a trip together in 1951 or 1952.**

In addition to the huge number of relatives that formed our social network, my parents had a king-size network of friends. Mom remained in touch with high school classmates, such as Wilma Swiggum and Florence Field. Wherever she and Dad went, it seemed friends surrounded them. Our house was grand central station at times.

A childhood friend and Springdale Township neighbor of my dad's, Lester Shutvet, was in the Army during the early years of World War II. Letters sent to Dad by Lester in 1941-42 are quite intriguing. I discovered them just a few months ago in a box of my mother's keepsakes. Evidently he was first stationed in Texas and wrote from his base there. I never learned if he was sent overseas during the war, as the letters were written while he was beginning his training.

Following are some excerpts from Lester's letters:

*Hello Benunie and Walter, (Sept 22, 1941)  
Received your package and letter. A nice piece of work. Sure got a big kick out of reading your letter. I am leaving for Fort Sam Houston at San Antonio this week. The weather is swell here. I will write when I get settled at the new camp.*  
- Les

The following letter was written by Lester shortly after Mother and Dad moved from Mt. Horeb onto our Lime Ridge Farm on Malone Road.

*Hello Friends, (September 6, 1942)  
I received your letter some time ago and a very interesting letter it was. I always get a big kick out of your letters, besides a lot of news. I'm glad you all like the farm, and if I had my choice I'd be back there myself.*

*I suppose you have everything licked except the corn, and some of that will soon be going in the silo. I see in the paper they are going to freeze the price on farm products. Just to make sure the farmer doesn't make any profit I guess.*

*I am getting rather sick of this place. A fellow can't work up to anything here it seems. You see, we are just on Detached Service from Ft. Sam Houston, and they hold all the good ratings in there. I have been working in the office here for about three months and got some good experience out of it. Now I want to get some place where I can make use of it.*

*This is the big week in Mt. Horeb (Fall Frolic). Suppose you folks will be up to do a little celebrating. I bet it will be as wet a time as ever for some of them. Of course I can't holler as I used to get rather soaked myself at times. I say used to because I haven't taken on more than I could handle all summer. A man can't afford to get too tight in San Antonio or you'll wake up with a knife in your back.*  
- Les

## Social life

### Don:

Our social life centered on the family – the Martinson and Schwarz relatives and the Malone School.

### Russ:

Church, cousins, aunts, uncles, grandparents, 4-H, school activities, and neighbors made up our social life. Olive and John Thomson were our nearest neighbors. John was a botany professor. They had a daughter and four sons.



Schwarz farm summer help included (l-r) neighbors Dennis Thomson and Irvin Steinhauer and Mike Schoeben, a Schwarz cousin from Milwaukee.

All four Thomson boys were older than me. Each summer they would help us bale hay and straw, and at summers end dad would pay them \$100 to split between them. The pay scale may have been kind of slight, but no one complained because throwing bales, loading wagons from the baler, mowing hay, driving tractors, and acting out feats of strength, all substituted for summer baseball and other “city-kid” activities. It was all part of growing up on a farm in America’s Dairyland.

This same Thomson family represented 10-20 percent of our local one-room Malone School, where the student count varied from 20-29 students annually during my years



Malone School 1924 -- In front (l-r) Myrtle Shutvet, Geneva Martinson, Huldah Schwarz, Eleanor Kobbervig; back row (l-r) Verna Lust, Benunie Martinson, Lena Bieri, Leora Brown, and Matildah Gust.

there from 1954-1962, when it was closed. (I was in the last graduating class from Malone.) That last year I carried first grader Elizabeth Thomson to school on the back of my bike.

My folks took pride in the fact that they had both attended Malone School. Malone School served the Malone valley which ran along Highway 92 between Mt. Horeb and Mt. Vernon.



Only one family of our Martinson cousins attended Malone School with us -- the Gaylord and Shirley Martinson family consisting of our cousins Judy, Joey, Jerry, and twins Jan and Joy. We all have a special bond based on Malone School and our shared memories.

Other nearby cousins, however, got involved with Malone School in softball game competitions. The Dettwiler cousins (three boys: Bob, Phil, and Jim) formed a fearsome core of unbeatable ball players from the nearby Springdale Center one-room school. Our pathetic team always got slaughtered when we met. Talk about coed -- we couldn't field a full team of upper grade ball players unless the girls played. And they were our bigger and better players anyway!



**Russell reunites with Isabel Leinau, his eighth grade teacher at Malone in 1962 when the school closed. (Photo: 2005)**



**Above: A Malone School ballgame takes place (1959)**

A huge part of our formative years was 4-H. This would not have been possible without the parent leaders. It seems like every member's parents were experts in one topic or another. I was proud that my dad was the woodworking leader, and I remember the pride I felt when woodworking project members came to our house for meetings. Dad was extremely gifted when it came to construction and woodworking. He built most all the outbuildings on our farm and even built a new house for our family in 1950. He built houses, garages, and kitchen cabinetry for others.

Showing dairy cattle was the "coolest" thing to do in 4-H. We got to stay overnight in the dorms at the Dane County Fairgrounds so we could be there 24 hours a day to care for our livestock. Sometimes we even got to sleep on the bales of hay in the barns (really cool). Not much sleeping got done.

Preparing for the fair was sometimes traumatic, because the Dane County Fair was held in mid-June. With late-May Bible School, chores, hay-making, and a touch of procrastination, it was always a rush to get the cattle trained to be led with a halter in time. I remember one summer, dragging my unruly yearling behind the "H" McCormick

tractor to get her in control... I don't think I placed very high that year in any category, especially showmanship!

Our weekends seemed to center around our Mt. Horeb Evangelical Lutheran Church. Wednesday nights were choir practice; Saturday mornings we had confirmation classes, and Sundays were of course, for worship services. It was ironic that the early 8 a.m. service, which was followed by Sunday School, was mostly attended by the dairy farm families. The 10:30 a.m. service seemed more heavily populated by town folks. I always felt it was unfair that the choir Dorothy and I sang in always sang for the later service. It seemed the farmers were slighted, even though most slept through the sermon anyway.

Family gatherings at our cousins' homes was a short Sunday afternoon activity for our dairy farm family in the 1950s-60s. Sunday morning was, of course, early church and Sunday school -- then home to quickly finish chores. If we were lucky we could leave home by noon, but only after quickly eating our roast beef, boiled potato, and green bean dinner that had been in the oven during church. A short drive to any of our cousins' places never took more than 10-30 minutes, though it seemed like an eternity.



**Fun at the Dettwiler farm! Gathering are the Schwarz and Dettwiler children (clockwise) Jean Dettwiler, Dorothy Schwarz, Bob and Phil Dettwiler and Russ Schwarz. (May 30, 1951)**

Once there, the women would start gathering the deserts and sandwiches that everyone brought. The men would go outside to eyeball the newest farm implement, some improvement to the milking areas, new seeding for the upcoming hay crop, a new car or pickup truck, or major improvements to an outbuilding. Of course, all the men had a fresh pack of Lucky Strikes (*No filters, please... remember the jingle: LSMFT*)? Each also had an ice cold bottle of Schlitz, Blatz, or Hamms beer -- straight from the washtub full of icy water.

The other young male cousins and I usually played tag, chased and teased the little girl cousins, played catch with a softball (no baseballs, please), threw apples or tomatoes at each other, ran through the barnyard, climbed in the haymow, and generally made nuisances of ourselves around the place. Occasionally we'd sneak a couple of bottles of beer from the washtub and hide from the mothers while we passed the bottles and maybe got a little silly. We never worried if the dads saw us because they seemed to think it was OK. Eventually all the males ended up playing cards. The men settled on a couple rowdy hands of poker, and we kids laid on some beds upstairs and played hearts.

About 3:00, the women would start calling us to come and eat before everyone had to go home to milk their cows. These Sunday family get-togethers were always way too short. But I can almost visualize each gathering entirely, like they were yesterday.

The drive home was sad, and the Sunday evening chores were truly a drag.

## How things were different back then

### Don:

One big difference is we used to have lutefisk, at least once in a while.

### Dorothy:

Life was slower-paced 40-50 years ago. At the time it probably didn't seem so, but as the decades have flown by and as technology has developed at lightning speeds, lives have become chaotic.

We were an active family, as were all our Martinson cousins. Grandma Martinson's house in Mt. Horeb was the place our parents came to pick us up when we were done with band practice, FFA, school trips, play practice, confirmation class, Bible Camp, Springdale 4-H Club, and other activities.

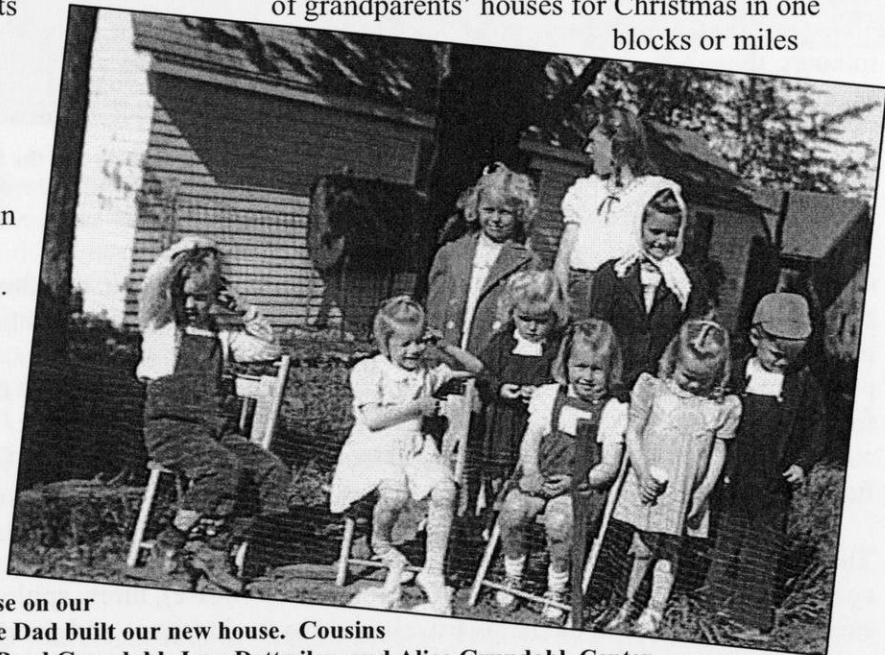
Families don't live in close proximity as they did in the 1950s and 60s. Those who do are lucky. It takes more work to make family gatherings happen now. Back then, we could go to both sets of grandparents' houses for Christmas in one blocks or miles

day. Just a few separated them. Eight of Grandma Martinson's nine children and their families lived within 30 minutes of her house in Mt. Horeb. Only Uncle Harland Martinson lived farther away, in Milwaukee.

**Photo:** The picture illustrates the ease of family get-togethers.

This gathering was in 1948 at the old house on our farm, two years before Dad built our new house.

Cousins (l-r, front seated) are Brad Grundahl, Jean Dettwiler, and Alice Grundahl. Center three smaller children (l-r, standing) are Dorothy Schwarz, Dolly Dettwiler, and Bob Dettwiler. Back three are Karolyn Grundahl, Rosann Schwarz, and Joyce Dettwiler.





I can't let this section slip by without mentioning fallout shelters. While they don't seem prevalent in our society now, they were in the 1950s-1960s when I was growing up. They were the result of the Cold War. Fears that Russia would strike U.S. land were constant. We had fallout shelter drills in school, in case of attack. We knew locations of the safe places to take cover in every building we entered. I had nightmares throughout those two decades, and even later. In my dreams, the sky was filled with Russian planes bombing our farm and we were all running for cover. When Dad built our house in 1950, a room in the basement was referred to as "The Cold Room" for storing extra food, but it was really a fallout shelter in disguise. This was the place we would go if an attack would occur. Our mother had enough food supplied in there to last a year! She continued to stock it well, into the 1990s. When we cleaned out her house for the farm sale in 1996, some canned food was decades old. My bomb-filled nightmares ceased about 20 years ago, but briefly came back to haunt me after the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks on U.S. soil.

### **Life-changing Inventions**

#### **Don:**

Around 1943 Mother ordered a folding canvas bathtub from the Sears catalog. Before that we took our baths in the galvanized washtub. We set up the new tub in the woodshed, which was not heated. This was wonderful. We could stretch our legs out in the warm water, which Mother had heated on the wood stove in the kitchen.

I remember an invention of Dad's. He made his own version of the self-unloading wagon. The sliding end-gate worked like a charm.

#### **Dorothy:**

As with other Martinson cousins my age, the invention of the television was the dramatic purchase our family made in the 1950s. We thought we were on the cutting edge of technology. Prior to watching television, our shows came via radio. I recall the Whiz Kids, and thinking my brother Don was one of them. As my oldest brother, he seemed so smart. I looked up to him, and still do today. Other radio programs I recall were the Jack Benny Show, Miss Margie, and the Fibber, MaGee and Molly show, to name a few.

Pizza, believe it or not, seemed to have been "invented" when I was a teenager – at least in America. Until I was a junior in high school in 1963, I had never eaten pizza. It arrived in our kitchen as a box mix. I recall several at-home dates where we played cards or other board games and made "homemade" pizza from a box. It was a highlight of an evening out with my boyfriend Lennis (later, he became my first husband) and our good friends Janet Basthemer and Bob Hustad. We "double dated" with them in the 1960s.

After the box mix pizzas emerged, pizzerias began popping up all over Madison. Our favorite pizza place when on a double date with Janet and Bob was Lombardino's in Madison. I believe the restaurant is still in operation. It was a delicious way to end a fun evening after driving around the Square to show off your car. It was the cool thing to do after seeing a movie at one of the theaters on the Capitol Square.

Another invention in the 1950s was the bulk milk cooler. It was the modern way to capture and cool all the milk from our 30-cow herd. Dad was usually one of the first to purchase a “new invention.” We had a large stainless steel milk cooler and qualified for Grade-A pick up to the milk plant in Mt. Horeb. I remember riding with Dad in our pickup truck to the Malone Cheese Factory to deliver our milk contained in individual milk cans. Each can was about three feet tall. The back of the pickup truck was filled with them. Our bulk milk cooler, with an agitator that kept stirring the milk, held and cooled all the milk from two rounds of milking.

## **Fond memories of our mother**

### **Don:**

The first thing that comes to mind is Mom’s chocolate chip cookies and cookie dough. On another note, I have been told that she dressed me like a little prince... and why not? She was the queen!

### **Dorothy:**

Mother’s cooking was THE BEST. Doesn’t every kid think so? I wrote a newspaper article on mother for the food section of the Fond du Lac newspaper in 1992. She had been visiting me in Rosendale, and as she was stirring up a batch of cookies, I took her picture. At the time, she didn’t realize it would be used in an article I was about to write on “Mom’s Good Cooking.” She didn’t like the idea, but I noticed the article taped to her refrigerator later. (“Modest” was her middle name.)

Mom set a good example with her cooking and baking. It was an art. One thing was for sure -- she *always* used butter. Margarine was a swear word at our house.

Pies were an area of expertise for Mom. She made pie after pie after pie! I don’t remember any that flopped. It’s pretty ironic, since she had quite a memorable (and terrible) pie crust making experience at home on the Martinson farm as a young girl. Her sisters and brothers still talk about the time she was so frustrated trying to make pie crust that she went outside and threw it against the woodshed on the Martinson farm.

At some point, she taught me how to make a perfect pie crust. Again, butter was a rule. The butter was fairly soft and blended into the flour with a hand-held pastry blending tool. A pinch of salt and a little water were worked in ever so carefully and without much mixing so as not to toughen the crust. Then the roll-out process... On a floured cloth pad on the surface of the counter, she carefully began to pat out the ball of dough she had refrigerated. Like an artist with a paint brush, she created the fragile ball of dough into a flat pie crust, using the rolling pin as a tool to wrap and lift the delicate crust into the pie plate. After filling the crust with homemade berry, peach or apple filling, Mom rolled the



**Benunie in her traditional Norwegian Bunad costume.**

top crust in the same manner, lifting it carefully over the pie. Crimping the edges together with her fingers and then a fork, she went on to create cut designs in the top crust so steam could escape during baking. (Boil-overs were messy in the oven!) Moistening the top crust with milk, she then sprinkled it lightly with sugar and cinnamon.

After the required time in the oven, the freshly baked pie cooled on our red Formica counter top. It was ready for tasting, with ice cream melting into the still-warm filling.

Oh, the heavenly scents that came from our kitchen! I learned so much about baking and cooking from Mom. How to pan fry a T-bone steak. How to make the best fried eggs.



How to make bread the old fashioned way. How to make homemade doughnuts. How to skim cream off the milk and whip it. How to make rock-hard candy with a cold water test ... and the list goes on and on.

Sometimes we clashed, or literally crashed, in the kitchen. We both got so wrapped up in our creativity that we'd accidentally bang into each other. Or Mom would get upset at the mess I was making. She was much neater in the kitchen than I was.

I miss mom, and I miss her cooking. One question I have. How come we ate the same meals, but I grew a lot bigger than her? Some things just don't seem logical.

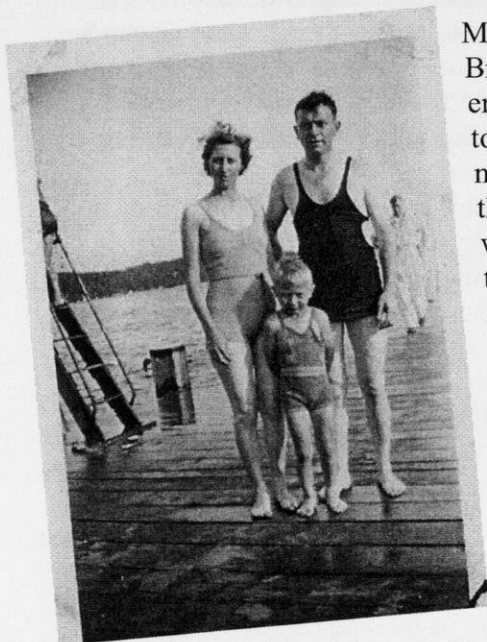
**Benunie and daughter Dorothy before going out to dinner for Benunie's birthday in August 2003.**

All joking aside, mom set a great example in the weight watching area too. Slim and trim all her life, she says she dieted to get her slimmer figure back after she gave birth to my younger brother Russ and I in the late 1940s. She was approaching 40 then. But she quickly put her "portion control" and "eat sensibly" motto to the test. She was successful in getting her brief weight gain off, and she kept it off for a lifetime.

During my growing up years, she was constantly setting the pace for me to follow with controlling a sensible weight. One problem: I wasn't paying attention. She got her pregnancy weight gain off. It was something I never could do. Yo-yo dieting became a way of life for me, and sad to say it still is... but hey, is meticulous weight watching really what's important in life? Somehow, I don't think so. Yet part of me thinks I should believe that. I guess mom's example still tries to get through to me!



Mother loved the outdoors – whether she was gardening, mowing lawn, tending her prairie, going on a picnic, or just relaxing with friends by the picnic table or campfire pit.



Mom had her favorite picnic sites with a view, like Brigham's Park or Blue Mounds State Park. She also enjoyed Donald's Rock, a picnic spot Russ and I went to with our folks in the 1950s-60s. It was just two miles from our farm. Although the park is no longer there, the "big rock" remains. It was just a little park with picnic tables and a huge rock for climbing. On the way to the top, picnic tables awaited those brave and strong enough to carry their picnic supplies uphill. Mom and Dad found it a nearby relaxing escape from the farm after the work was done.

**At left,  
Benunie and Walter have some  
Summer fun with Don in 1935**

Our mother, Benunie, "Ben" as her sisters called her, seemed to like doing farm chores almost more than tending to household duties. Actually, she was a very hard worker in both settings. She usually wore layers of clothing and a head covering that resembled an elastic nightcap with a ruffled edge. This was for the purpose of keeping her hairdo looking and smelling good, even though she was doing barn chores. Her mother, our Grandma Martinson, kept Mom supplied with a variety of these outdoor "barn caps" – which she used for any outdoor job, even berry picking in the woods. Heaven forbid if she was on her way to town on errands and had forgotten to remove her barn cap!

#### **Russ:**

Mom's cooking was great. I recall walking home from school and as I made my way down our quarter-mile long driveway and got closer to the house, I could often smell something baking. Usually it was bread. Often it was chocolate chip cookies with walnuts in them. My favorite, though, was doughnuts, which were too hot to eat immediately. But shortly, I'd dip them in sugar and have some with a glass of milk. What a great snack before chores began! I seldom even took time to change out of my school clothes, as Mom would ask me to. She also would yell at me about not letting the screen door slam on my way out to do chores. Of course, it always slammed.



**Russ Schwarz works with Phil Pinch, near Rosendale. He is preparing a corn test plot on their farm. (1994)**

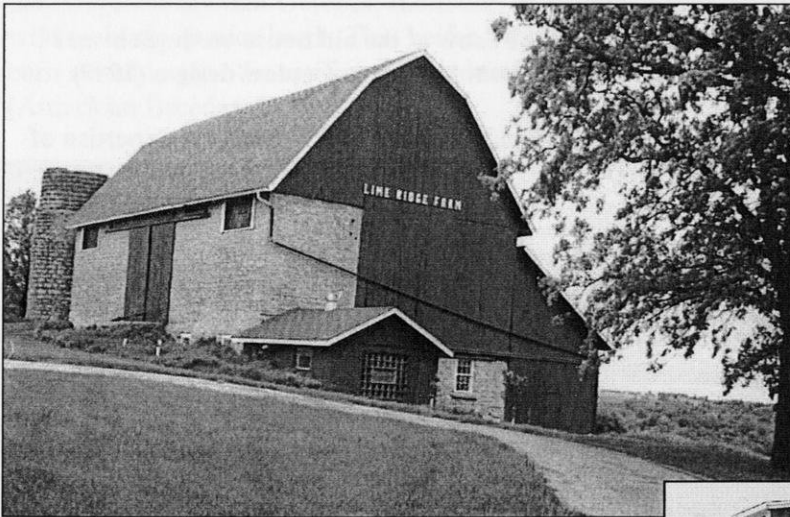
Another fond memory is what my mother told me about my first job. I was 10 or 11 and had worked on our farm for years, but never for pay anywhere. Our neighbors, Bill and Orpha Steinhauer, had a commercial strawberry patch, and they called for help with weeding. I don't recall any excitement to do weeding, but for pay... wow!

Mom told me to try to be Steinhauer's best weed puller. I must have done just that, because although there was lots of goofing off among the other kids, I was nose-down in the weeds. I only remember the first row... it took forever. The pigweeds and foxtail were so big, but my row next to the Fargo driveway was clean. The strawberry plants were going to make it. I can still visualize that long row, nice and weed-free.

In my adult life I have applied that same advice to the hundreds of kids that I have had working for me in my seed corn plots. Like me, every one of them learned what it means when they say: *"It's a long row to hoe!"*

### **Recalling days on the farm**

Russ remembers the role mother played in helping to "harvest" our own animals for our family dining table.

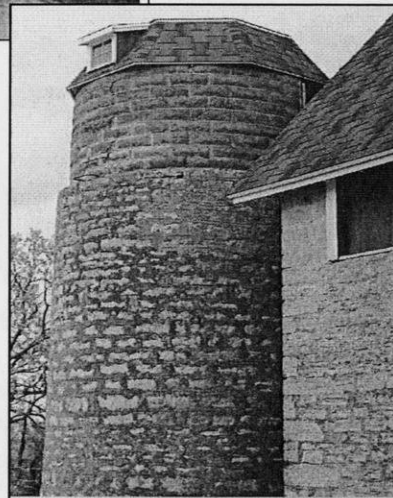


As a farm family, we were quite self-sustaining. Store-bought meat and eggs were a rarity. Gathering eggs was tricky, as the roosters weren't very nice and the hens got pretty protective about their eggs being snatched from under them.

**Limestone barn and silo on Lime Ridge Farm – the farm was in the Schwarz family 75 years, 1921-1996.**

Catching and preparing our chickens for the freezer was an ordeal – an experience that made Russ and I squirm. Looking back, it is a million miles away from the store-bought, boneless chicken breasts we buy now. It amazes me to think of the work involved in harvesting and preparing chickens for our farm freezer.

"Dorothy and I had to catch the chickens and bring them to dad at the chopping block, where he would



grab them by the legs, place their head between two nails, pull back on the legs, and chop off the head,” Russ said. “Then he’d toss the headless chicken to the side and reach for another, destined for similar fate. Our next job was to pick up the lifeless birds, hold them upside down to drain the blood, and give them to mother for the feather-plucking process.”

“Dad and Mom would clean up the nearly naked birds by plucking and burning the pin feathers with a blow torch or with wood alcohol,” Russ explained. “Next mom would proceed to the basement where she would gut, cut up, and wrap the chickens for convenient meals from our freezer. I loved to eat chicken, but not for a few days after that,” Russ grins.



**Walter plows snow at the old house on the Schwarz farm, testing out his own snowplow design. (1949)**

Mother’s menu choices also included pork and beef, thanks to the butchering expertise of Dad and Grandpa Schwarz. Pigs and cows we raised often became table food for us.



**Russ and Dorothy revisit the old house on their home farm.**

“We always had Holstein cattle,” Russ said. “So when a black Angus calf was born to a Holstein heifer, Dorothy and I quickly adopted it as a pet. It was so cute. We named it Aggy the Angus. It became as tame as a dog and would even follow us around the house yard without the need for fences.”

Russ envisions a time when Grandpa Schwarz killed a large pig with a hammer in order for mother to put some tasty pork chops on our table.

“I was amazed how easily and quickly my Dad or Grandpa Schwarz quickly dropped the hog with a hammer blow between the eyes,” Russ recalls. “They then hoisted it by the back legs to a tree limb, where local butchering expert, Edwin Offerdahl, put his knives to work.”



“We had no idea that our folks had bred that animal for the freezer. I am sure they warned us not to grow too attached to Aggy, that her days were numbered. But I still recall the horror when she succumbed to Dad’s 22-rifle and when Edwin went to work with his knives again. We ate the meat (at least I did), but I recall teary-eyed revulsion as mom cooked it. Nowadays, dining establishments feature Angus beef. I think of Aggy the Angus every time I take a bite of it.”

**A wild story of Walter’s last days of farming — *Benunie the superwoman***

Russ recalls a chilling story about Mother and Dad during the last three months of Dad’s life, when he was dying of cancer. It was late in the fall of 1968. Russell’s recollection illustrates Dad’s last effort to be a farmer and take care of his family.

“Dad was ailing and weak but not yet bed-ridden,” Russ says, recalling the day 36 years ago as if it was yesterday. “Mom had asked me to leave the college fraternity and live at home to help with the chores, milking, and crop work. I did so, while also continuing classes and dating my future wife Barbara.”

“Mother worked like a superhuman, as dad began to fail,” Russ says as he vividly retells the story. “Early that October, mom and dad decided it was way past time to get one very wild and large heifer bred. This heifer had eluded their every effort to get her tied up in a barn stanchion for the artificial inseminator to do his job – to breed her with an ABS (American Breeders Service) sire.”



“The three of us finally separated the wild heifer from the herd and drove her into the north end of the barn. It was a cold, windy morning, and I can still see Mom in her red plaid barn jacket, white dish cloth scarf over her head. She was positioned at the partially shut north barn door, legs spread and arms out to discourage the heifer from any attempt to go back toward the herd. Dad and I chased the heifer into the head stanchion, and when it was yanked shut she went crazy and somehow pulled out,” Russ said.

**Benunie enjoyed fall days and her garden.**

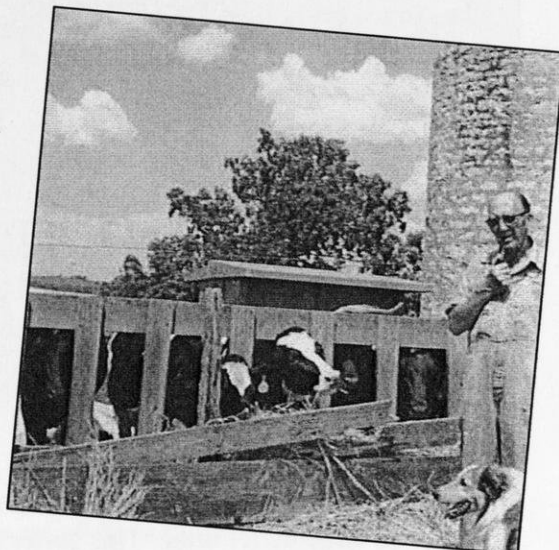
“The heifer ran with loud bellowing sounds toward Mom at the north barn door. Mom evidently discouraged her from going for the opening where she was jumping, yelling, and waving her arms. But, instead, the heifer jumped at the window in the door, knocking the door off its track and smashing Mom under it and onto the cement which was covered with cow manure.”

“I don’t recall how seriously she was hurt, but no doctoring was needed,” Russ recalls. “Dad ran after that heifer, yelling that she’d be ‘*blood in the snow by winter.*’ I always wondered why we didn’t butcher her right then and there, but dad probably knew that the freezer didn’t need meat just then, that he was too ill to do it, that mom needed immediate attention, and that Edwin the butcher had to be scheduled.”

“Dad died that January. It would be a year before I returned to live on the UW-Madison campus. Meanwhile, I settled into farm life again and helped Mom with her grief,” Russ said.

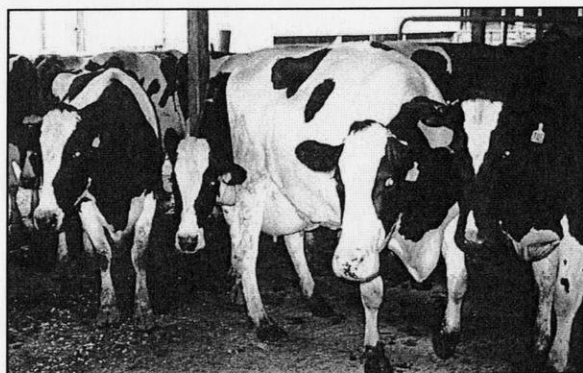
“We didn’t forget Dad’s promise of “blood in the snow.” His mission to support and protect the family seemed to be on my shoulders now,” Russ says with a faraway look.”

“Two months later we scheduled Edwin to butcher the wild heifer. It was a warm March morning, and she was still unapproachable. I couldn’t get within 100 feet of her, and she would always run for the protection of the herd,” Russ recalls.



**Scene of the wild heifer story 7 years later when Benunie was married to Olav (above, right).**

“After a long winter, manure was deep in our barnyard. My plan was to sneak up on her at the feed bunk and shoot her with my deer rifle,” Russ explains. “I filled the double-sided, 40-foot long feed bunk full of sweet smelling silage. As our dairy herd crowded in to eat, I watched the wild heifer begin to eat on the west side of the bunk, in the middle of



the herd. I snuck up behind the cows on the east side, directly across from her. Slowly, I crept between the cows. Directly across from her, with the rifle to my shoulder I aimed, as I anticipated she would raise her head.”

The heifer’s reactions were amazingly fast, and so were mine.

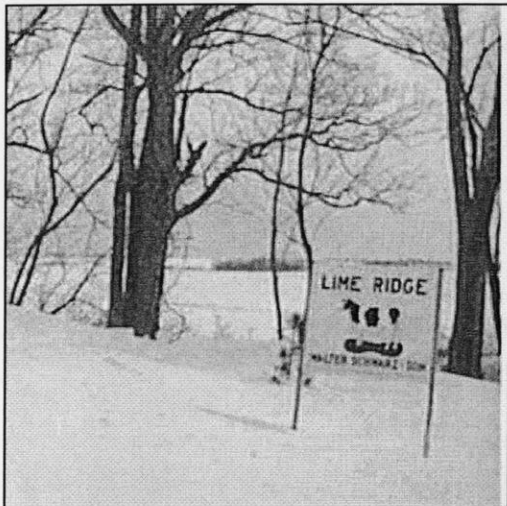
Her head came up about four feet from my rifle muzzle. I sighted with both eyes open because my rifle scope was in the way. She dropped in her tracks. However, that heifer still had a surprise in her bag of tricks...

Her head came up about four feet from my rifle muzzle. I sighted with both

All the cows had scattered with the crack of the rifle, but in moments they came back to this downed and dying heifer, curious and aware that something was wrong,” said Russ.

“Edwin the butcher approached her shoulders in the deep manure, preparing to administer the bleeding stroke. Our friend and neighbor, Bill Steinhauer, was only a few feet behind

him. Edwin, straight-legged with his knees against the heifer's shoulders, was bent over at the waist -- and as the knife passed, the heifer lurched. Edwin, with his feet stuck in a foot of manure and stiff-legged against the heifer's shoulders, fell backward. His arms went flying, with the knife still in his hand. Behind him, Bill could not react fast enough.



Edwin's tight grip on his knife accidentally brought the blade right across Bill's upper chest, just below the top button of his fully buttoned barn jacket. The knife had cut the heifer cleanly, finishing her... but Bill was luckier. It only cut his coat. Dad's promise of blood in the snow came true, but the heifer went out fighting," Russ concluded.

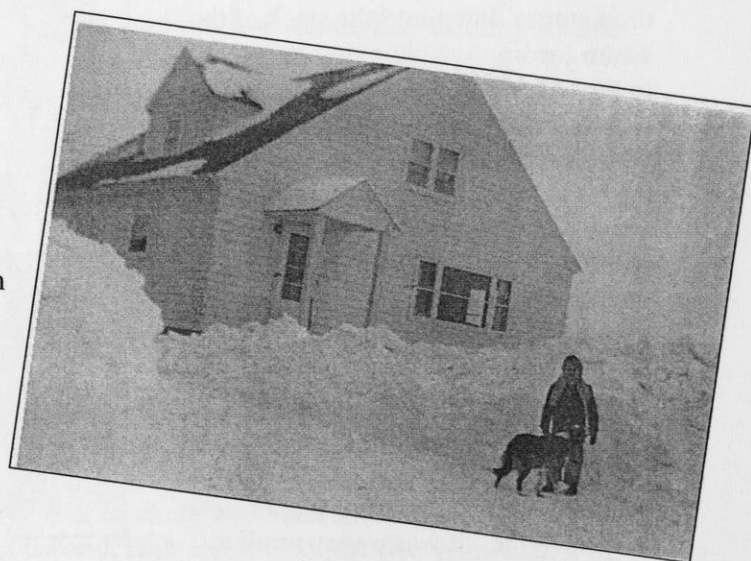
"It was a different emotion watching Edwin do his work on that wild heifer than it had been on Aggie the Angus. Our freezer was full again, and we had wild stories to tell as we ate and shared the meat with family and friends."

"Mother never seemed to want to talk much about it," says Russ. "Final memories of this wild heifer, Dad's passing, and our uncertain future were surely troubling. At the same time, finishing Dad's mission was probably a healing thing for her. I can still see Mom during many milking times that spring and summer, standing at that north barn door, looking out and weeping while she leaned on that repaired barn door."

### **Fond memories growing up In our family**

#### **Don:**

I didn't live at home much during the early 1950s. Instead, I worked at Gaylord and Shirley Martinson's farm (formerly our grandparents' farm) during my last year or two of high school and into college years. Dad and Gaylord were always working together so it wasn't really like being away from home. There are lots of fond memories of working together on the farm.



**Snow galore as Dorothy and her dog play in 1951  
by their "new" farm house built in 1950 by her dad.**

Don justified his retirement in 1992 at age 59 partly because he had worked hard on the farm since age nine. "Dad had been running the farm for more than a year prior to our move there in 1942," Don says. "He did this while also working at Evans Creamery as a



buttermaker. Dad and Mother were both focused on farming as a family operation. We kids did what we could do, and it was fun to be involved. Nothing could be better than that.”

### **Don recalls boyhood days with sister Rosann**

Don likes to reminisce about his younger days with Rosann, his “little” sister. He was three years older and had many good times with her.

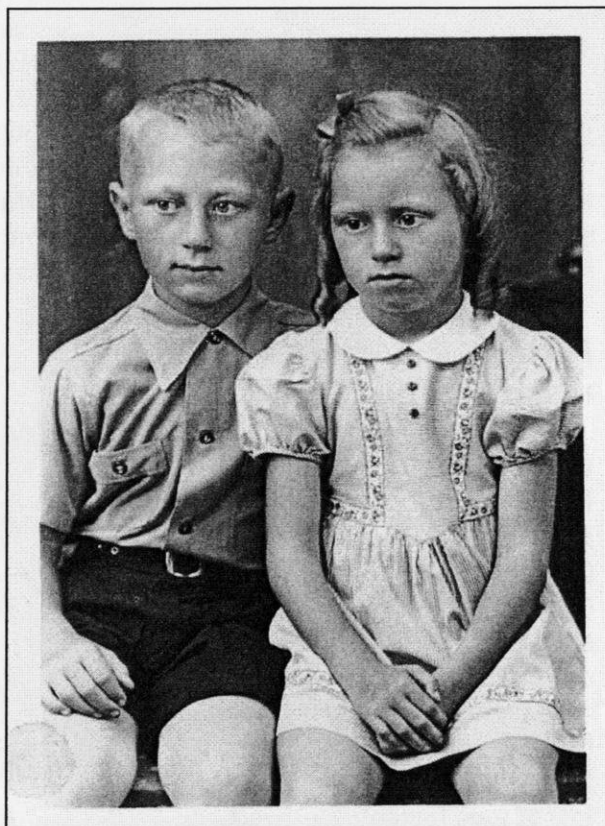
“I remember those early years, 1933-1942, when we lived at the corner of 5<sup>th</sup> Street and Garfield in Mt. Horeb. Rosann and I were both very young. (Our younger sister and brother, Dorothy and Russell, were more than 10 years away from entering the picture.)

Rosann and I both had so many friends within the five blocks surrounding our house. There was always something to do. It was in these days that Rosann and I waited 11 months each year for Santa Claus. Also it was during this time that I informed her there was no Santa Claus -- such a dumb thing for an older brother to do!

Playing marbles was a big thing... shoot them out of the ring and they were yours. If “they” shot them out they were theirs!

Gene Martinson and Rod Hustad liked to take us up on the 6<sup>th</sup> street viaduct over the train track where we’d try to drop stones down into the stack of the steam locomotive chugging its way up to the Mt. Horeb Depot. The engineers would shake their fist and holler at us. I don’t know if they were mad at us or if they feared for our safety. Many, many trains came through Mt. Horeb in those days. I don’t know how they could keep them from running into each other. It seemed like there was a train every hour.

Some days we would go up to the Mt. Horeb Depot and wait for the passenger train that ran twice a day from Madison to Lancaster. This train did not have a steam engine. It was a very modern diesel/electric mail and passenger service. We knew it as the HOOT’N’ANNIE, and it moved very slowly. It had other names, like Puddle Jumper and some that need not be repeated. Often at the depot, the train crew would toss Dentyne gum to us kids on the platform.



**Don and Rosann Schwarz (1940)**

In summer we liked to go to Gene Martinson's house on 8<sup>th</sup> Street. It had a good view of the railroad tracks. We loved to watch the steam trains struggle into Mt. Horeb. It was a tough pull uphill those seven miles from Klevenville in the Sugar River Valley to Mt. Horeb -- which lies on top of the Military Ridge. Often the train would be split at Klevenville or Riley and the engine would pull it up in two sections. Then with one engine it was on to Platteville, Lancaster, and Fennimore.

Sometimes instead of splitting the train, multiple engines were used for the Klevenville to Mt. Horeb pull. I distinctly remember triple steam engines on the uphill pull. I may have seen as many as four engines.

Rosann and I were not very old when our parents would let us go farther from home. I remember we were sent to the little west side grocery store just behind the Mobil Gas Station at 3<sup>rd</sup> and Main Streets to buy bread. Mother would give us a dime. Since bread was only nine cents, we got to put the penny in our banks. Later on, bread went up to 10 cents and then to 11 cents.

In 1940, Grandpa Schwarz was injured on the farm. As a result, Dad started working two jobs -- his regular job as buttermaker at Evan's Creamery in Mt. Horeb and, then, as a farmer to help his dad out with chores and the crops.

Dad started running the farm in 1941, and in March of 1942 we moved to the farm. Grandpa and Grandma Schwarz retired to Mt. Horeb, where they lived upstairs above Uncle Harold and Aunt Huldah Pick -- my dad's sister.



Rosann & Hub Jorns at the farm. (1957)

Life on the farm was wonderful. Country school and a brand new set of friends were great. We didn't lose our village friends, we just didn't see them as often -- only on Saturday nights in town and in church on Sunday.

Both Rosann and I had jobs, right from the start of farm life. We enjoyed that because both of us liked to work. They were little jobs at first, but very quickly we had more responsibility.

#### **Dorothy remembers sister Rosann**

My sister Rosann is the only one of the 38 Martinson cousins who has passed away. Rosann died of brain cancer when she was 66. Her husband, Hub Jorns, died just five years earlier of a sudden heart attack at age 63. They both loved life and lived it to the fullest. Still, they were much too young to leave us.

Rosann was a quiet, yet fun-loving person to be around. In many ways, she was very much like my mother. Both were clean freaks, meaning their houses were always

spotless. As a young mother, I bet Rosann, like mother, rarely sat and ate with the family. When time permitted, she joined in – about the time they were done eating.

Rosann could come up with a clever comment or humorous remark when you least expected it. That's what I enjoyed about her. She was 10 years older than me, so I don't remember much about her until she was in high school. What I do recall is that we shared a bedroom. She was a teenager and I was her annoying little sister. I can still hear the twangy tunes and announcer's voice on the Chicago WLS radio station's Barn dance show she listened to when I was trying to sleep. A tune she liked plays over and over in my mind... *"Hey, good lookin, what 'cha got cookin? How about cookin something up with me?"* It was 1953, just prior to the advent of rock and roll. By 18, Rosann was dating Hub, a fraternity brother of our brother Don. At 19 she married him.

While in college, Don had invited Hub Jorns to visit our farm for the first time. Rosann was barely out of high school then. I recall Hub, about 12 years ago, telling me the story of that day when he first met Rosann.



*"Don and I were in your parents' basement. I saw this great looking pair of legs coming down the steps, and that's when I first laid eyes on your sister,"* Hub told me. *"Later on, I asked your brother if he'd mind if I asked Rosann out on a date. He gave me the go-ahead,"* Hub smiled. She was 18 and he was 21. Less than a year later, on December 17, 1955, they were married.

At our one-room Malone School, Rosann said Miss Marty was a favorite teacher. Miss Lavon Marty was actually a sister to our Aunt Shirley Martinson.

Rosann loved to draw. She was a good artist and focused on sketching horses. It's ironic because to my knowledge, we never had a horse. But she did enjoy country western music, Dale Evans, Roy Rogers, Gene Autry and other Old West heroes and singers.

**Queen Rosann at Mt.Horeb High**

Rosann was on homecoming court as a junior, but I always admired the picture of her in the formal she wore as Queen of the Midwinter Ball at Mt. Horeb High School in 1954. The theme was "Let Me Call You Sweetheart," and Cornelius (Corny) Fink was King. As a seven-year-old, I remember sitting on his lap when he came to pick Rosann up. I thought he was a nice guy. Forty years later, after Rosann's husband Hub passed away and Rosann was suffering with brain cancer, Corny visited her to share mutual health concerns as he, too, had cancer. It's proof that friendships from our youth can survive.

When Rosann and Hub were first married, they lived in Iowa where Hub worked in his initial sales job out of college. Their oldest son Doug was born in Iowa in 1957. It wasn't long and they moved back to Wisconsin. Mother was relieved. Hub began



working for his brother Arnold Jorns, who owned a lumber company in Oconomowoc. Rosann and Hub moved to Oconomowoc, and in 1959 their daughter Debbie arrived. During their brief time there, Hub built three new houses for their growing family -- each one a little bigger and nicer. However, before they had a chance to move into their third Oconomowoc house, they ended up moving to Sturgeon Bay. Hub's brother, who owned a car dealership there, had suffered a heart attack. Things weren't looking good, and Hub was asked to come and help run the business.

Hub went into partnership with his brother, Edgar Jorns, and later took over the car dealership. Together Rosann and Hub owned the Jorns Pontiac-Buick Dealership in Sturgeon Bay for a span of about 30 years, from approximately 1965-1996. They also purchased and operated the Jorns Chevrolet Dealership in Kewaunee, which is presently owned and operated by their daughter Debbie and her husband Peter Beane.

In later years, I grew to know my sister better. As adults, it finally seemed that our age difference was irrelevant. Lennis and I, along with our three boys had fun-filled weekends in Door County, visiting Rosann and Hub. It was the perfect place to set up our camper and turn Memorial Weekend into a family affair. Mother, Don, Russ, and other relatives often joined us there. Rosann and Hub's lovely home along the water, just three miles north of Sturgeon Bay, was the gathering place.



**Uncle Harold Pick, brother Russ, my son Ryan Rindy, and Russ's daughter Melinda at Jorns in Sturgeon Bay. (1989)**

Rosann and Hub knew how to throw a party – whether it was four people or 50. With a series of decks surrounding their raised ranch and a meticulously kept lawn reaching to the shoreline, their home and fun-loving spirits were like a magnet drawing us in.

They had built their house with their own hands when first moving to Sturgeon Bay in the 1960s. One-by-one, they carried the rocks from their shoreline to create their very own double-sided, two-story fireplace. The beautiful stone structure extended from the basement level up and into the living room area, where it became the focal point.

I always loved going to their house for an overnight visit because Rosann and Hub were so enjoyable to be with. From 1992 through 1996, when I was dating my husband Brian Bliskey, we went there nearly twice a month -- like clockwork. You see, Brian's brother Dean also lived in Sturgeon Bay. Since Brian had scheduled a visit to his brother's house every other weekend, it was only natural that I go along and see my sister. So when Brian stayed at his brother Dean's house, I visited Rosann and Hub. In hindsight, I'm so glad I was there frequently. Now they are gone, and there isn't another chance.

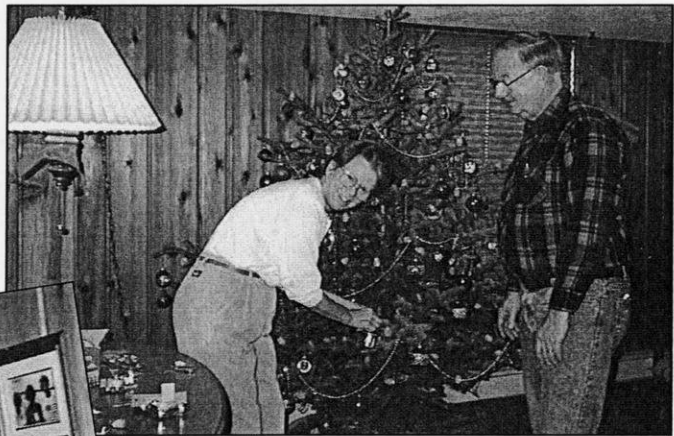
On those weekend visits, Hub and I had some really good talks about life. That's how Hub was... he'd get inside your head. (It must have been the salesman in him.) The first time he met Brian, it was as if Hub was my father figure... *What do you do for a living? How long have you worked there? Where do you go to church? How many kids do you have? Where does your brother work?* And on, and on, and on he went. Brian and I chuckled about it years later. "He really was checking me out," Brian said, noting that Hub wanted to be sure he was trustworthy.



**Rosann, Doug, Hub and Debbie in their living room (Christmas 1963)**

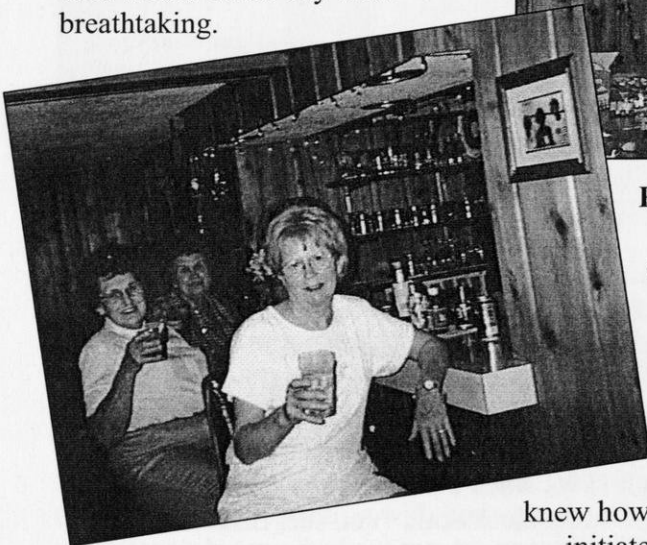
Most all, the philosophical talks and belly laughs took place downstairs at "Hub's Bar." The basement level of their house looked nothing like a basement. It was finished off and featured a fourth bedroom, bathroom, kitchen and laundry room, family room, bar, den, and storage room. Their magnificent stone fireplace was doubled-sided downstairs. You could sit in front of the fireplace in the open family room, or you could enjoy it from the other side where the cozy knotty pine den beckoned you to sit and relax with a book from their library shelves.

The exterior wall of their house that faced the water was all windows on both the upper and lower levels. Views across the blue waters of the bay were breathtaking.



**Rosann & Hub decorate tree (1995)**

Still, I found Hub's Bar the most unique and warmly remembered part of their home. Maybe because it was the place to relax and talk. Discuss life. Fix world problems. Meet new people. Hear Hub's latest jokes. Have the best cocktail ever. Hub the bartender. He knew how to be a great host, mix a good drink and initiate a good time. Not that my sister didn't.



**Above, Rosann enjoys Hub's bar with his sisters-in-law (l-r) Arlene and Blanche Jorns. (1998)**

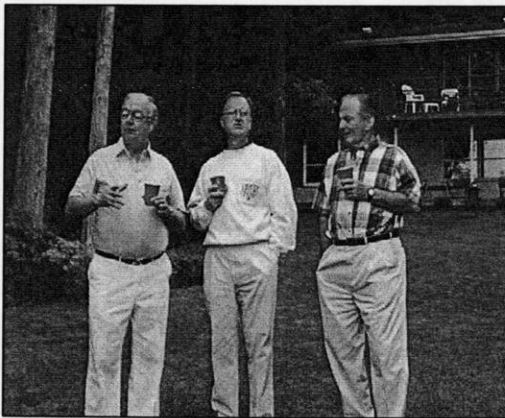
But Hub was the planner. She was the follower. And a good one she was. Rosann joined the fun and often instigated a lot of the activities and the laughs.

Rosann and I spent many memorable shopping trips on drives further north into Door County. Sometimes, our mother Benunie was visiting too and would join us. It was just one more “highlight” at the Jorns’ home. I can’t begin to describe how much I miss sharing time and space with Rosann and Hub.

My brother Don and his wife Carol probably feel as I do. After all, Don and Rosann were close as kids, and the fact she married his college buddy must have brought them even closer. As couples, they spent a lot of time together during those 40 years after college – fixing and building things together, going on weekend excursions, golfing, snowmobiling, dining out, or just socializing at each other’s homes.



**Carol and Don Schwarz and Rosann and Hub Jorns enjoy the moment at Debbie Jorns’ wedding in 1985.**



**Above (l-r) Hub and our Schwarz relatives, Mike Schoeben and Jerry Murray, enjoy Hub’s back yard (1994).**



**Above right, Dorothy’s husband Brian and his brother Dean Bliskey visit on the Jorns’ picturesque deck. (1993)**

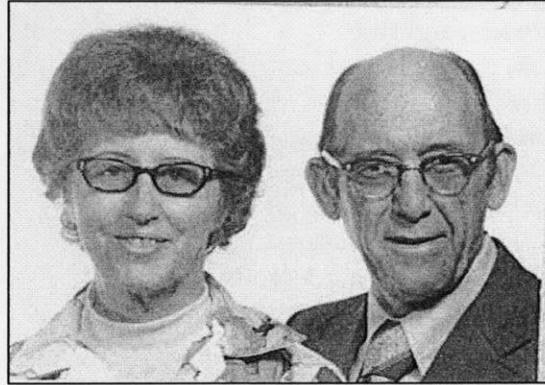
**At right (l-r) Rosann and sister Dorothy shop in Door County. (1998)**





## Changes for Mom

After our Dad died of cancer in 1969 at age 58, Mother tried to keep farming for a year, with the help of my brother Russ who was a college student at UW-Madison. However, it was too much for them, and operating a farm wasn't in Russell's future. Mom sold the cows and machinery. At age 58, for the first time in her life, she searched for work off the farm. She tried waitress work and hated it. She cleaned rooms at the Gonstead Clinic and Motel in Mt. Horeb. She even got a temporary job at the Department of Transportation in Madison through her sister Helen Abplanalp who worked there. But the job she held the longest was at the Dane County Home near Verona, where she worked in the kitchen. She made good friends there and worked long enough to have a nice little retirement package by the time she was in her late 60s.



**Benunie married Olav Berge June 21, 1973**

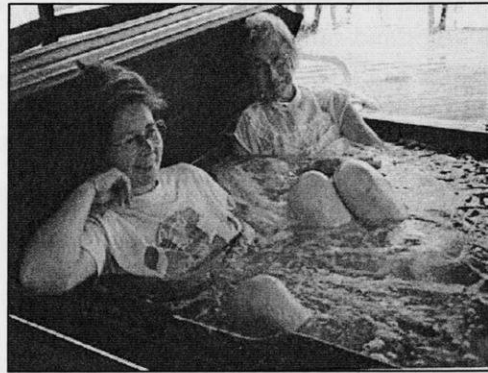
During Mother's working years in the 1970s, she met Olav Berge and married him in 1973. My Aunt Huldah Pick had introduced them at a wedding dance. It was strange for me to go home to the farm for the weekend, with three little kids, and find my 60-year old mother preparing to go out on a date. Dad had died so young, four years earlier. I was glad that Mom now had someone special in her life again. My three boys enjoyed their new "Grandpa Olav" and found him to be so silly and fun. He referred to them as girls each time he saw them. "*Goodbye girls,*" Olav would say as we left the farm after a visit. No matter what, he always seemed to have a candy bar or something they treasured.

It was sad, seven years later, when Olav died from cancer, just as my dad Walter had 11 years earlier. Mother should have been a nurse, because she went about taking care of Dad and Olav as if it was her profession. She was a genuine person and caretaker.

Not one to sit around and mope, my mother Benunie went about her life. At 69 and newly retired, she was single again. With Olav at her side, she had evolved into a very active senior citizen. She always had been a member of the Malone Mothers Club and was her church guild at Mt. Horeb Evangelical Lutheran. However, now her activity level mushroomed. She was also a tour guide at Little Norway and joined the Sons of Norway and the Mt. Horeb Historical Society. She was a volunteer in the Mt. Horeb Main Street "Information Hut" where she gave out smiles, information, and positive strokes on her home town. At home on the farm, she dove headfirst into gardening, keeping the farm buildings and property looking good, trying new recipes, entertaining friends, and walking for visits to her neighbors, John and Olive Thomson.

But the last 17 years of her life were enhanced greatly by the constant presence of Olav's daughter Audrey and her husband Larry Dietrich, neighbors on the Malone Road hill "next door." Shortly before Olav died in 1980, Audrey and Larry had purchased the

Johnson farm on Malone Road. Suddenly, mom's newest neighbor was her step-daughter, Audrey! Over the years, the two became best of friends. They were like "girlfriends" on a mission, doing everything together. Larry enjoyed mom's presence, humor, and pies. When she died, he said Malone Road would never be the same.



**At right, Audrey and Benunie enjoy a hot tub on a summer day. (1992)**



**At left are Larry and Audrey Dietrich in 1988.**

As the mother of three young boys and living two hours north of Mt. Horeb, I appreciated the relationship mother was building with Audrey and Larry. She was so happy, and I truly believe they enjoyed her company as much she did theirs. During these same years, I began to develop a close friendship with Audrey and Larry that continues today. Their home is now our "home away from home" when we visit them, our children and others.

But the story of Mother doesn't end here. In her golden years, after Olav died, she continued to bounce from one social activity to another. Nothing kept this 70-something gal in her rocking chair! Longtime friends, relatives and neighbors like the Thomsons and Dietrichs filled her life, but there was more in store -- namely, Otto and Quinten.

These were two special men who increased the beauty of her life -- and she theirs -- for many years. Mom met Otto Rhiner through the Senior Citizens group in Verona in the 1980s. He was a retired farmer who still lived on his farm, about seven miles from Mom. The two did everything together. They had so much in common -- from farming to flowers to cooking. Until his death, Otto and mother were inseparable. His family accepted her into their homes just as Audrey and Larry had done. Otto's unfortunate terminal heart ailment had mother, once again, acting as a best friend and nurse. She literally pulled up stakes temporarily and took care of Otto as he slowly faded away to the inevitable many weeks later. His family said she made his last days so much more enjoyable than if he'd been in a nursing home.

Sometime later, perhaps in 1988, Mother developed a close friendship with Quinten Stenseth, also a retired farmer who lived on his farm in Springdale Township, about three miles from our farm.

Mom spent much of the last decade of life, living it to the fullest with Quinten. Though they never married, and lived on separate farms three miles apart, there was an almost

daily ritual of visits back and forth. At my son Troy's wedding in 1990, they looked at each other and said (jokingly, I think) "*Maybe we should be next?*"

Quinten was an intelligent, sociable, fun-loving friend for mother those last years of her life. They went out to eat, socialized with her brothers and sisters, his family, our family and had fun going to apple orchards, plays, senior citizen events, and just visiting each other on their farms. The simple things in life were what they liked best.

Mother was devastated when Quinten died of a stroke in January, 1994. From then on, she began to have bad luck herself. A year later she was also heartbroken at the death of her dear sister Geneva Dettwiler.



**Benunie and Quinten enjoy the Norwegian Kaffe Stue in Mt. Horeb. His family is in back, and Dorothy's friend JoAnn Clausing is at left. (1992)**

**Below, Benunie has fun driving Quinten's tractor on his farm. (1992)**



**Benunie and Quinten (1993)**

In August 1994, just six months after losing her friend Quinten and just a day before we were all going to help celebrate her 83<sup>rd</sup> birthday, Mom fell down the stairs. She broke her shoulder and wrist and managed to crawl to the phone in the living room for help. After three months of recuperation in the nursing home, she returned home to the farm. A tough lady, she was determined to maintain her independence as long as possible. She managed to do so another 18 months. She even drove again. But after Quinten and her sister Geneva died, and after her fall, she was never quite her bubbly self anymore. Starting in 1996, mini-strokes and a series of ailments confined her to the nursing home in Mt. Horeb for her last three years of life. She died on my 53<sup>rd</sup> birthday, May 20, 1999.



## Benunie Remembered (1911 – 1999)



**Benunie at 17 (1928)**

Watching my mother fade away was heartbreaking. She went from being an energetic 83-year-old to a frustrated lady her last few years. Perhaps we were the ones who felt sad and frustrated? Though she still had her pretty smile, we had no idea what she was saying or thinking. I must admit they do a fine job at Ingleside to make residents and families feel at home. But it's never quite the same anymore. She shared her room with Sophie Johnson. Ironically, Sophie and mother were neighbors on Malone Road during the 1940s-50s. They were in the Malone Mothers' Club together.

Mom suffered greatly those last two or three years, as did the family. Mini-strokes, pneumonia, a broken hip, congestive heart failure and a downward spiral weakened her, physically and mentally. She wasn't herself those last two years.

At the funeral home visitation, I had prepared slips of paper asking friends and relatives to jot down their memories of Mom if they wished to do so. Questions they had the option of addressing were as follows:

**What do you feel was unique about Benunie?**  
**What did you enjoy most about her?**  
**What fond memories come to mind?**

Following are some of the replies...

*"Her pleasant smile and happy voice. Visiting with her...she always had so much fun."*

*- Dorothy Johnson, friend*

*"She liked to do things her way... she didn't always follow the crowd. The most enjoyable thing is that she was my mother and she loved me – and I loved her. Fond memories I have are of her and dad taking me to church and also of coming home from school to the smell of cake, cookies or bread baking."*

*- Rosann Jorns, daughter*

*"Her strength to live on in spite of life's difficulties – and live she did! What I enjoyed most was her laugh. What was inspiring to me was the fact that Benunie loved her brothers and sisters – I saw her deep difficulty in watching Geneva die, and I admired her unfaltering love and caring. Her pie making brings fond memories -- she made pies with a group of children at Bethel Horizons at my request, bless her! We spoke often of that fun morning when I saw her at Ingleside, while visiting my Aunt Grace."*

*- Ann Dettwiler, niece*



**Benunie at 83 (1994)**

*What I found unique about her was that she was always smiling... always pleasant. Her Norwegian heritage was inspiring.”*  
- unsigned

*“What we found humorous about Grandma was the incident about 12 years ago when she got run over by a reindeer on the way to our house for Thanksgiving. Also, the time when she was leading the charge after Doug and Sonya’s wedding with root beer schnapps at 2:00 in the morning!”*

- Debbie Beane, granddaughter

*“What was unique about Grandma was the fact she could continue to live on the farm by herself and take care of the whole place. What I enjoyed most about going there was playing games like Yahtzee. Some of the fond memories I have from when I was a kid are of exploring the land and buildings on the farm and making and eating lefse. I also recall the limburger cheese smell in the basement.”*

- Chad Rindy, grandson

*“Things we enjoyed with her and about her were her smile, our friendship, the Kaffee Stue, the Sons of Norway, dancing, and the fact she was such a loveable, caring and sharing person.”*

- Gladys and Milo Grundahl, friends

*“Benunie’s ability to rise to any occasion was a unique quality. What I enjoyed most about her was her wit, humor, grace, and enthusiasm to stay active...Also, her ability to learn new things and meet new people. An inspiring quality she had was that she was always looking forward to the future, even in the midst of sorrow and pain. My most memorable experience with her was making lefse under her constant supervision and training for 10 years -- before allowing me to mix it up or roll it out!”*

- Audrey Dietrich, step-daughter



**Benunie with great granddaughter Danielle Beane around 1990**

*“She always had a smile. She was a great listener. She made me feel that what I was doing was worthwhile.” - Russell Schwarz, son*

*“Grandma Noonie made coffee with a lot of milk. She was nice, and she was funny!”  
- Danielle Beane – great granddaughter*

*“Her smile was unique. She had a wonderful sense of humor and thoughtfulness.”  
- Unsigned*

*“Benunie was interested in everything! Her sense of humor was most enjoyable. I especially remember and enjoyed the visits we had – we had great conversations.”  
- Bill Olson, Olson’s Flowers & Gifts*

*“Benunie was loyal to her husbands. She kept busy, which I like to be. She was a good cook! I liked how she was silly at times, and she smiled often. She was an ambitious woman.”*

- Sharon Binder, Russ Schwarz’s sister-in-law

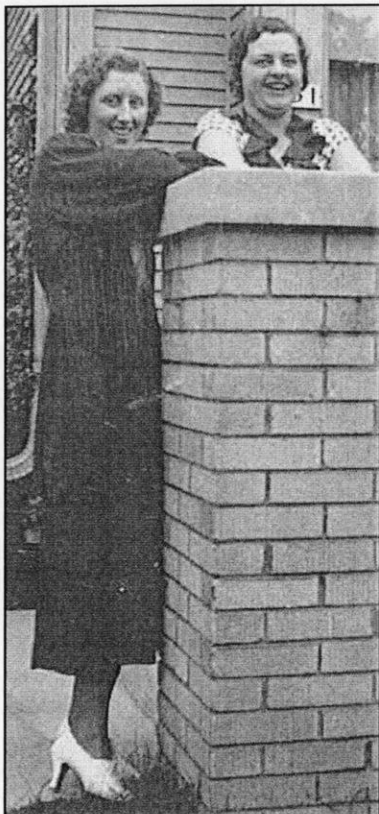
*“I enjoyed how she poo-pooed everything through laughter. I remember picking raspberries at her place and walking on the farm. A humorous memory is the fact she kept us in her basement – it’s where we did our best crafts!”*

- Lynn (Berge) McCollister, step-daughter

*“I enjoyed working with her at elections. I enjoyed visiting with her. She was a classmate of my mother, Kathleen Conners. Most memorable about her are her pies.” - Pat and Harold Crabb, friends*

*"Benunie and I were good friends for many years. I was one year younger than she... we always enjoyed talking over building our farmhouses. We just had built on my home farm, and then she and Walter built theirs. They waved or stopped in many times and Carl and Walter discussed their chimneys, garage doors, etc. to decide which kinds they liked and for what reasons. I know how she loved the farm. It was the lovely setting on the hill. I also remember many parties at the Malone School when Shirley (Martinson) would invite Carl to the programs. We enjoyed that. Well, we just never know... we have to accept whatever happens, but it's never the same again. There are many memories of the old days."*

- Hansie Buechner, friend



*"Aunt Benunie was very special to me. You have my sympathy on her passing."* - Chuck Abplanalp, nephew

*"Our sympathy card, with all of its flowers and outdoors look made me think of Benunie. She was precious to many!"*

- Don and Maxine Dimick, friends

*"Benunie was a great inspiration to us, especially during the many months of illness when she continued to smile each time we visited her. God be with you all during this sad time."*

- Helen, Willis, and Gene Martinson – cousins

*"I'll always remember how happy she looked at Dorothy's wedding, just two years ago. It was a comfort to her to know how happy her daughter was."*

- Kay Zinecker, Dorothy's friend

*"Benunie was a gracious lady in her day."* - Russell & Delores Jelle, friends

*"Benunie is at peace with Jesus now. May her peace be with all of you. She was a wonderful person and a very special sister."*

- Harland (brother) and Martha Martinson

#### **Benunie (left) and her sister-in-law Matildah Gust in the 1940s**

*"Benunie was a lovely woman. We are so glad to have known her."* - Russ and Vergeane Martin, friends whose family now owns the original Martinson log cabin farm on Sharps Corner Road

*"Believe me, our hearts were with you in the loss of your mother. We are grateful for the endearing association we had as close neighbors for 45 years. All good things have to end, but the memories will always be treasured. We experienced many things together, but there were still ways in which Benunie always kept me guessing. John and I continue to function despite the drawbacks of our ages. We enjoy our place so much and have a hard time cutting back. We have made a memorial to Olbrich Gardens in your mother's memory."*

- Olive and John Thomson, neighbors

*"Dear Russell – I read in the Wisconsin State Journal on Sunday of your mother's passing, and I wanted to offer you and your family my condolences. Your mom's obituary brought back fond memories of her and of our old neighborhood."*

- Bonnie Loeffel (Malone schoolmate)



*"Benunie will always have a special place in our hearts. We just loved her so much. The farm (Lime Ridge) is not the same since she left... We really miss her."*

*- David and Mary Powell, friends and renters of the Schwarz farmland*

*"Mom was my hero... the person I looked up to.... The person I turned to in times of sadness, joy, confusion and when I needed advice. She was the person I admired most in my lifetime. Once in a college class, when asked to write a paper on a hero in our lives, I didn't write about President Kennedy or any other famous person. It was mom that I chose to write about. She was an inspiration to me and set an example for me to follow. She went through hard times, losing dad at a young age. In spite of it, she carried on with a zest for life that I have not seen in many other people. I loved her more than words can express. She knew it when we wrote poems together – or when we went for an evening drive to smell the wild flowers and things growing along the roadside. She is now up there with Dad, and they are my Guardian Angels."*

*- Dorothy Bliskey, daughter*

*"Our thoughts and prayers are with you all. Benunie was one very special lady! So many wonderful memories!"*

*- Sheri & Dennis Rodefeld (niece)*

*"To Russell and Dorothy & families: -- I'm so glad I had the good fortune in my life to know your mom. She was so kind and good-natured – just a really pleasant gal to work with at church and wherever else I met her. I also know she raised some mighty fine kids and you will pass those values on to your kids, and that's what it's all about."*

*- Vivian Stone, Russ and Dorothy's high school English teacher*

*"Many of us have great memories of times spent with Benunie – she was a special lady."*

*- Lowell & Dolores Hansen, neighbors*

*"All of you have my sympathy. Now we have to remember all the good times our parents and us kids had together over the years. There were many!" - Dolly (Dettwiler) Olson (niece)*

*"To Don , Rosann, Dorothy and Russell -- Surely this recollection will be one of many you will receive regarding your mother. The Maurer Reunions were where our paths crossed. You could be certain that lovely smile would greet you. There was a gentleness and goodness that was ever present. She was a pleasure to be with. The obituary was especially warm and loving. The "long and blessed life" was surely true, yet one knows she was a woman of substance and faith. I liked her a lot. You were all very lucky to have her for your mother. Surely she is an Angel of the Highest Order now."*

*- Donna (Lossenegger) Sheil (great niece)*

*"She always said what she meant – she never beat around the bush! Benunie was always pleasant to me and so nice."*

*- Brian Bliskey (Dorothy's husband)*

*Dear Dorothy and Brian, we are so sorry to learn of your mother's death and regretted we received the news while traveling and were unable to attend her service. From all I do know of her, she was a true lady, and we were both struck by how many interests described in her obituary coincide with our own. She is as ever a real presence on the farm in our heavy evening blossoms, bluebirds, berries, and vista. The red counter top recalls her efforts and great joys. It was such a joy to have you at the farm that day last summer. We look forward to seeing you again, anytime."*

*- Sue and Michael Steighorst, current owners of Schwarz farm)*

*"We will always remember Benunie for the wonderful fried cakes and treats she brought to the garage in Mt. Vernon. She was a wonderful person. With our sympathy and prayers..."*

*- Harland & Nona Erfurth, Mt. Vernon Garage owners*

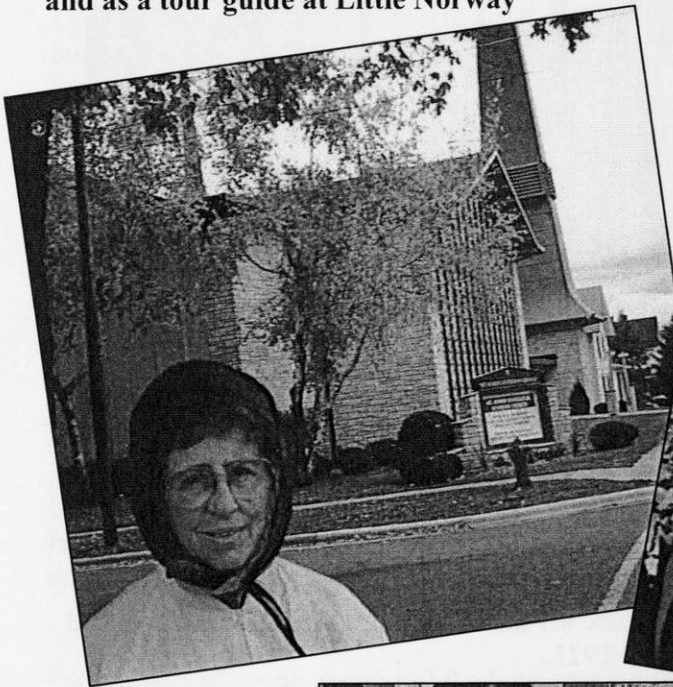
*"Benunie was a special aunt to me. My thoughts and prayers are with you at this time."*

*- Jim Dettwiler, Benunie's nephew*

*"Benunie's kind, gentle and loving manner endeared her to many. Many, many pleasant reminders and memories surface at this time – may they bring comfort to all of you. Even though the last years were not as pleasant as they should be, she still had a smile when you came to visit her. My brothers and I were grateful for the kindness and care she gave to our dad, Otto, in his declining health and especially her friendship that made his twilight years ever so pleasant. Now, may she rest peaceful – a rest she so richly deserves with her Creator."*

*- Lloyd & Shirley Lueschow (daughter of Benunie's deceased friend Otto Rhiner)*

**Benunie at her church, her garden,  
and as a tour guide at Little Norway**



## Changes and Grandchildren's memories

My three sons, Troy, Chad and Ryan Rindy have fond memories of visiting our family farm. Located high on the Malone Road hill, Lime Ridge Farm is a place my husband Brian and I refer to as paradise. A city boy, Brian had no idea how much the rural tranquility, hilltop views, and the good cooking and hospitality of my mother would draw him in! It was a powerful force he quickly grew to like. He was awestruck with the beauty of the Mt. Horeb area when he first began visiting there with me during our "dating" years in the early 1990s. My mother was a vibrant, active, and single senior citizen then. She was also courting, and in her 80s then.



**Aerial view of Lime Ridge Farm (1957)**



**Present owners, Mike and Sue Stieghorst, added a porch to two sides of the house.**

It seems as we get older, we appreciate everything so much more. Little things mean a lot. Things that seemed insignificant now take on more meaning. That's how it is with the farm. To see my mother have to sell Lime Ridge Farm in 1996 was heart-wrenching. It had been in the Schwarz family for 75 years – since my grandfather Rudolf Schwarz bought it in 1921.



In hindsight, family members, perhaps, could have purchased it, but the timing wasn't right. However, the new owners, Mike and Sue Stieghorst, love the place. They have kept it much the same as it was. I have toured the house and sat on the new porch they added. I've seen them plant trees and potatoes. Buildings have been painted, re-roofed and kept looking nice.

After my uncle Harland and aunt Martha Martinson's 50<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary party the summer of 1998, my sister Rosann joined Brian and me for a tour of the house. There, in

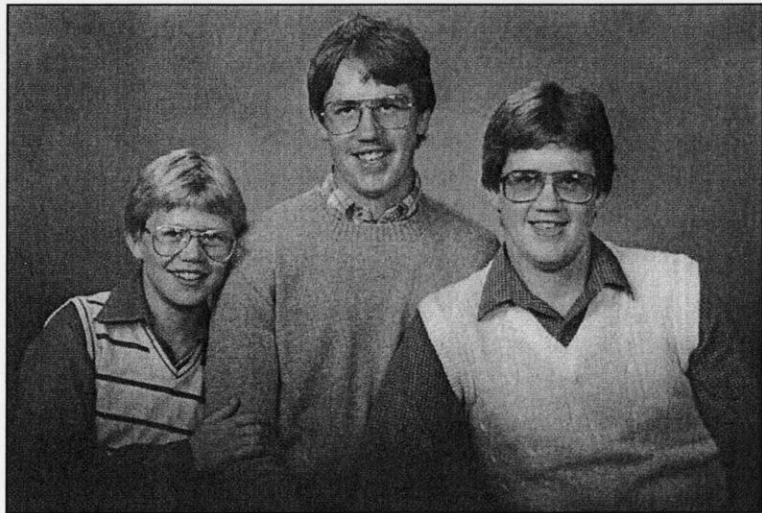


the 90-degree heat, we sipped a glass of refreshing lemonade on the new porch added by Mike and Sue. While it was sad to realize Mother no longer lived there, I was happy to see the tender loving care the new owners had put into it. Friendly and welcoming, they have turned every room into a special place for the two of them. But in each room, something of the Schwarz family remains. Our presence is still there. My dad built the house with his own hands in 1950. From the unique vestibule by the front door to the unusual upstairs closets with a hidden passageway between them, the house is alive with memories. Visions of cousins running up and down the stairs, aunts and uncles playing cards in the dining room, and my own kids running for the candy hidden in the flour bin fill my head when I return for a visit. It's surreal.

### **Dorothy's children – “The Rindy Boys”**

All three of my and Lennis Rindy's children – Troy, Chad and Ryan Rindy -- went through their school years in Rosendale, a little town of less than 1,000 residents. Located between Waupun and Oshkosh, Rosendale is well known for its Peony Gardens but also as a speed trap.

We lived in our Rosendale home from 1974 to 1996, raising our three sons. All three were in college (Troy was out already) when I decided to return and complete my degree in the early 1990s. Troy, now 38, has his own computer business in the Milwaukee area. Chad, 36, is a pharmacist at Walgreen's in Madison, and Ryan, 34, is a medical equipment designer in Madison.



**Rindy boys (l-r) Ryan (10), Troy (14), and Chad (12) (1982)**

I was a stay-at-home mom until the boys were in the upper grades, but I was far from bored. On the contrary, life was extremely busy and interesting with three boys involved in so many things. When they were Cub Scouts, I was the Cubmaster of the Pack. In the 1970s it was a rarity for a female to be in this position. For seven years I led the pack meetings and helped den leaders plan their meetings. Lennis built the Pinewood Derby race track, which is still being used at Rosendale Cub Scout races 30 years later. As a mechanical engineer, their dad was especially skilled at helping our boys build and race fast pinewood derby cars. They were top place winners consistently, often competing against each other. One year after the race, I made a race car cake to celebrate their feats.

Having been a Springdale 4-H Club member in my youth, it seemed only natural for me to be a project leader when the boys took an interest in joining 4-H. Troy, who at age 10 began working at our neighbor's farm, showed cattle at the Fond du Lac County Fair. Troy, Chad, and Ryan were into rockets, woodworking, art, gardening, and photography projects. In adult open class, I was even able to enter my jellies, jams, pies, cookies and

more. Getting projects ready for the fair was interesting to say the least. I remember last-minute fair jitters and deadlines. Garden produce picked just hours before leaving for entry day... photos still being glued onto display boards... paint drying on an art project as we headed to the fairgrounds. I recall one of my sons getting his model rocket entry stuck in our tree just before leaving for the fair. It was a true test of *lack* of patience.

Little League was a sport all my boys took part in, with their dad as a coach. For many years the boys had fun when their dad played ball on the Rosendale "Over 30" softball league. Many summer nights, celebrating wins and ignoring losses, were spent with other ball players' families at John-John's in Rosendale, the team sponsor. Kids were everywhere – inside and out – playing hide n' seek and having a great social time.

Our two-story farmhouse was nestled in the country, just two miles from Rosendale on Schmoldt Road. It was a narrow back road that school buses used as a test route when determining whether or not to cancel school on a snowy day. Needless to say, we were snowbound a lot.



**Burning our Christmas tree!**

One of the highlights of our country home was a back yard fire pit. It was the centerpiece for family gatherings and parties with friends. Often we'd just have a fire by ourselves because we all enjoyed it so much. Over the years, the bonfires reached so high that the large basswood tree near it was partially destroyed. Our back yard was the focal point for many graduations and parties of all kinds. Each spring, around Easter, it was a tradition to burn our Christmas tree over the first campfire of the year. It signaled the advent of spring and another year of backyard socializing.



**This fire pit was the main place friends and family members gathered in the Rindy backyard in the 1970, 80s, and 90s.**

I loved to light candles indoors. It was a way to add coziness and atmosphere, much like the fire pit did outside. One year, I had all of my Schwarz family for Christmas. Hub Jorns, my sister Rosann's husband, had an experience none of us will ever forget. A new sweater he was wearing started on fire during the gift opening! He evidently had backed

into my living room built-in bookshelf to take a picture. Little did he realize that three holes were burning through his sweater. When Hub started to jump and yell we knew something was wrong! His new sweater hadn't lasted very long.

Troy at 17

### Troy Rindy's memories

My oldest son Troy, now 38, has many fond memories of visiting my family's Lime Ridge Farm near Mt. Horeb. He and his brothers would explore the fields, the old house and the two-story lime kiln, which had been fascinating to kids for generations. When I was a young girl, I led cousins on a hike through the fields to see our lime kiln. Now, as a young mother, I was dragging my own boys through the fields down the hill to view the mysterious old relic, built into the side of a hill. The years have not been kind to the lime kiln,



which was used to harvest and make lime more than a century ago. Trees and vines hide it from view. Brickwork that formed the chimney and fireplace is slowly collapsing. A hundred years ago, huge chunks of limestone were dumped down this approximately 20-foot high and 6-foot wide chimney, where the stone was burned to produce lime. Several lime kilns dotted the Mt. Horeb area in the late 1800s and into the 1900s. As a child, walking to the top edge of that 20-foot drop was a frightening thrill.

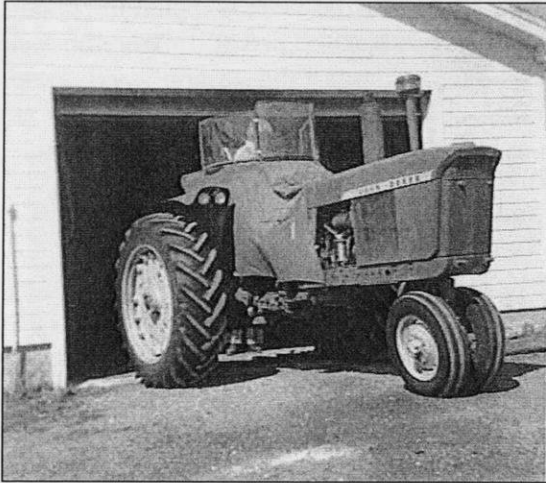
One step too far and we'd fall into the raging fire below... or so we imagined. I'd warn my cousins not to go any farther. Years later, my kids got the same tour.

Troy has warm memories about visiting his Grandma "Noonie," which was the grandkids' version of Benunie. (Some even referred to her as Grandma Banana.)

"Grandma always had a smile when we arrived," Troy recalls fondly. "The first thing we'd do is head toward her candy drawer to see if there were any Tootsie Rolls. I loved to explore the house and farm, and I'd always find something I hadn't discovered previously."

Troy was fascinated with Grandma's John Deere tractors. While the John Deere riding lawn mower was fun to drive, Troy says the John Deere-60 is what caught his eye.





**John Deere tractor and Benunie in the driver's seat!**

“When I was about 14, I traded up from driving Grandma Noonie’s lawnmower to joy-riding the John Deere ’60 tractor with a front-end loader and the two front tires next to each other,” Troy said. “I would sometimes try to imagine what it must have been like to farm back in the days when that tractor was new. I would drive it in the fields and loved the barking sound of the John Deere putt-putt-putt being emitted from its stack. I think of that quite often when I’m riding my Harley now. I get on it and its sound reminds me of that old John Deere.”

“Grandma Benunie was very kind, warm and generous,” Troy said. “She was always smiling. Maybe it was that half-bottle of beer she sometimes drank before going to bed. She didn’t dump out the other half. Instead she’d cork it and save it for another night.”

Troy also was observant of his grandma’s ice cream snacks. “Grandma Noonie is the only person I know who ate vanilla ice cream with saltine crackers,” Troy remarked. “Looking back, I am now wondering why I don’t do that today. It was a good combination!”

“Above all, I think I enjoyed the fact that older age didn’t discourage her from trying new things. I don’t remember her exact age at the time, but the “boyfriends” she had, the bowling, watching Badger games, and her zest for life is what I really admire most about Grandma Noonie.”

“Oh, and let’s not forget about the deer incident on Highway 41 near Oshkosh,” Troy smiled, as he recalled the frigid day around Christmas, 1987. “We were on our way up north to visit our cousins, the Jorns family. We were traveling in two cars. I was driving my car ahead of Grandma’s car, which was being driven by my youngest brother Ryan. My mom and Grandma were in that car -- Grandma in the rear passenger seat and mom in front with Ryan,” Troy explained. “A deer decided to take its life in its hands and attempted to cross busy Highway 41, a four-lane route north from Milwaukee to Green Bay. The deer ran into the passenger side of the car and smashed out the window right by Grandma’s head. It literally had the crap scared out of it. The mess was all over the inside of the rear window and in Grandma’s right ear!”

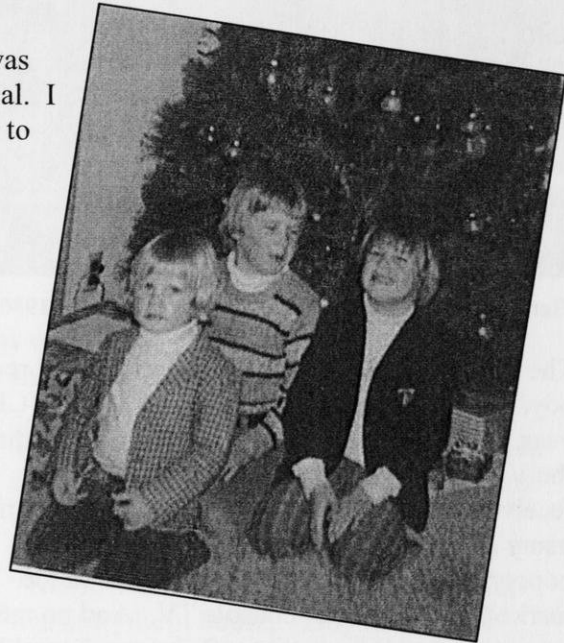
As for his Great Grandma Martinson, Troy (like most of us) remembers going to her house for homemade cookies and lefse. “Her home was always warm and inviting” Troy added.

“My mother, Dorothy, loves to cook and bake, too,” Troy said. “I remember her making homemade doughnuts, cookies, theme cakes, caramel corn, popcorn balls, caramel apples, and lots more when I was a kid growing up in the Rindy household in Rosendale. Once in a while, she would get distracted and forget about food cooking or baking in the

kitchen. It would come out smoking and she would claim that it wasn't burned, just *crispy brown*," Troy laughs. "My friends and family will hear me say that sometimes too, when I'm cooking."

"Holiday time at our house was fun. Mom was into all the holidays, and each one was special. I liked the traditions that carried on from year to year... such as fondue with twice-baked potatoes on Christmas Eve... carving pumpkins around Halloween (we still do that)... and sending or making Valentine's Day cards."

"I remember going out and getting our Christmas tree every year on Thanksgiving weekend," Troy continues. "We'd bring it home and Mom would put on Christmas music. We'd listen to her favorite (vinyl) record album, Little Drummer Boy by the Letterman. Then we'd decorate the tree together."



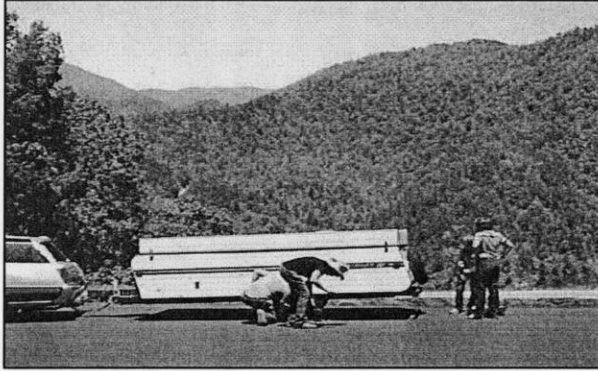
**The Rindy boys (l-r) Ryan, Troy, and Chad – Christmas in Rosendale (1974)**

Like all three of the Rindy boys, Troy went to school in Rosendale. He began in Elkhart Lake when we first moved to the Fond du Lac area from Madison in 1971. Troy entered third grade in Rosendale in 1974 when we bought our country home on Schmoldt Road.

Troy fondly remembers grade school fun like playing King of the Mountain on snow piles during winter recess time.

During his high school years, Troy says his favorite subjects were math and related courses such as geometry and computer programming. As his mother, I recall that computer classes had not yet come into vogue in the early 1980s, but by the time Troy was in his last year or two of high school, 1984-85, they arrived. Troy excelled in this area. His teachers and fellow students seemed mystified by his computer knowledge, which he appeared to grasp quicker than anyone at the time. Needless to say, that has been his career.

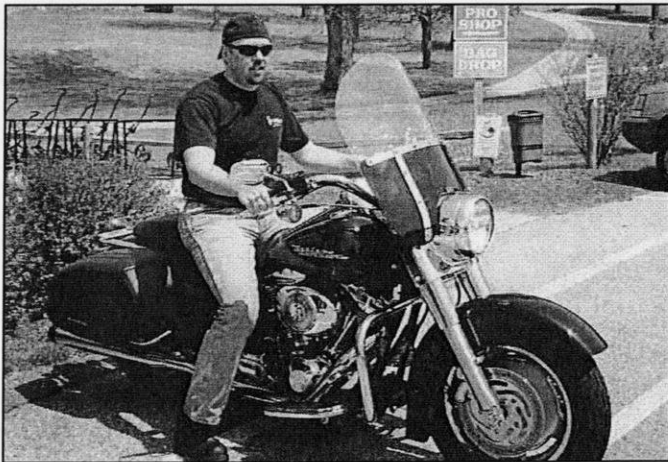
Troy describes school activities that revolved around agriculture classes as being of interest to him also. He joined FFA and worked on our neighbors' farm (Terry and Karen Madigan) from about age 11 until 18. He was their hired hand. It gave him his first work-for-pay experience, as well as a love for the farm. At times, he was with the Madigan family so much I began to call him "Troy Madigan." When we'd go away as a family, he'd often stay with them on the weekend to help with chores.



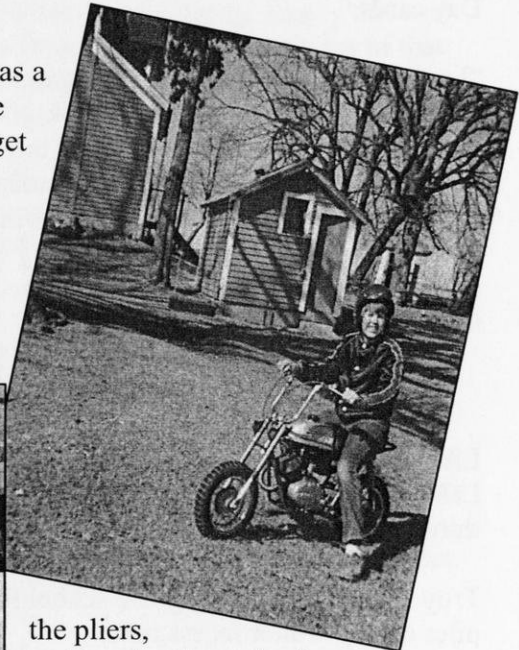
**Flat tire in Smoky Mountains (Disneyworld trip 1980)**

When we could get away with our boys, it was usually on a camping or canoe trip. Troy recalls a 1980 vacation highlight -- a family camping trip to Disneyworld in Florida. "We went there, pulling our camper through the Smoky Mountains," Troy said. "I remember stopping in Gatlinburg, Tennessee on the way, and I have taken my own kids there several times since then."

The VCR was an impressive invention Troy recalls as a boy. "We got a new Curtis Mathis TV and VCR one year. My parents paid a fortune for it. They didn't get the VCR for recording the three channels we received, but to watch rented movies. I remember many movie nights where mom would make popcorn, and dad would pour us cokes on ice. That marked the end of our console TV. And no more 'remote control' by getting off the couch, grabbing



**Troy rides his Harley (2005) and his mini bike (1978)**



the pliers, and turning the stub of what used to be a channel changing knob. Now we had real remote control! I currently have that old Curtis Mathis TV in my bedroom."

For other fun, Troy said he occasionally "terrorized" his brothers. "I had to find something to do in the country with only three TV channels -- ABC, NBC, CBS," Troy grinned. "There wasn't even a FOX network back then!"

Seriously, though, Troy recalls a host of things that sustain his fond childhood memories.

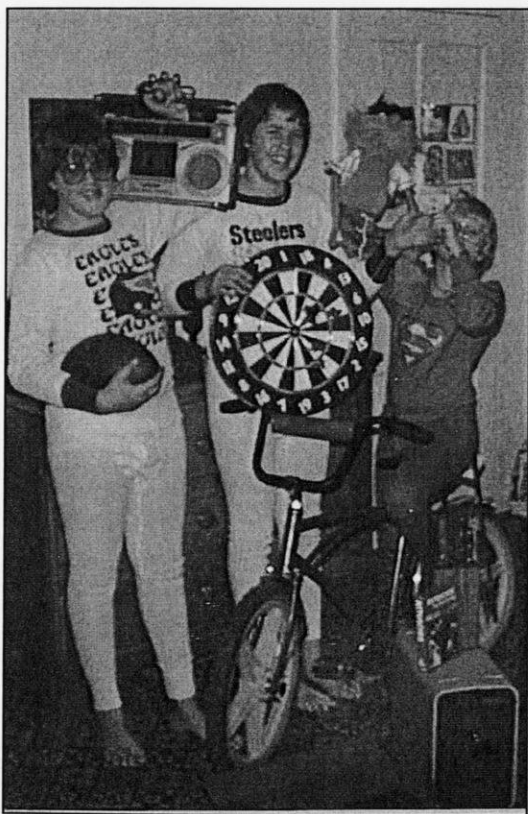
"I really enjoyed all the outdoor activities like camping, campfires, volleyball, playing catch, playing with toys, riding snowmobiles, building my go-kart and mini-bike," Troy said. "All of these things stand out as fond memories."



Troy describes his dad, Lennis Rindy, as being a very social person. “He played softball for John-John’s Stop n’ Go Inn in Rosendale,” Troy says. “I remember going to watch him play, but as a kid there wasn’t too much watching... I was busy playing with the other kids at the ball diamond. After the game we would all gather at the team sponsor’s business, and we’d play with the kids some more,” Troy explained.

“I also remember all the outdoor things we did with our dad like going on camping trips, canoe trips, and hiking excursions. We did so much camping,” Troy laughs, “that when we arrived at a campsite, we could set up our campsite in minutes. Everyone had their specific responsibilities. Our pop-up camper would magically transform itself in minutes.”

“My mother, Dorothy, doesn’t have an enemy on this earth,” Troy says. “She is very caring and would do anything for the people she loves. However, she is quite gullible.”



**Chad, Troy and Ryan Rindy (Christmas 1981)**

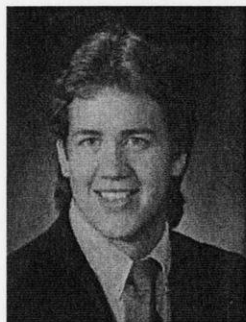
Troy relates a story from the 1970s when he and his brothers were quite little. The three shared an upstairs bedroom that was equipped with two sets of bunk beds. “We only had heat in the first floor of our two-story farm house,” Troy said. “The upstairs was heated by allowing the downstairs heat to make its way up the steps. My brothers and I shared a bedroom directly above the living room. We had one of those cast iron grates in our bedroom floor, which was supposed to let heat come up through the floor. For some reason, my parents carpeted over it (probably for privacy when they were in the living room). Anyway, one night after we were tucked into bed, my brothers and I (probably mostly me) got out a pocketknife and cut a small slit in the carpet covering the grate. Mom was sitting on the couch directly below. We tied a giant black rubber tarantula to the end of a 10-foot piece of string. Then we gently lowered it down through the small slit.”

“We knew we had lowered it down far enough when we heard the blood-curdling scream from below,” Troy laughed. “Boy, if you could have heard us boys snickering after the screams that came from the living room! Then we quickly pulled the spider back up through the floor, hid the evidence, crawled back into bed, and acted like we’d been sleeping the whole time!”

“We’d also fooled Mom with rubber snakes in the fridge behind the milk -- or rubber mice inside a cook pot in the pot and pan cupboard. Then there was Chad with his fake rubber vomit. Yes, we got mom all the time... you’d think after the first few times she’d be less gullible. Maybe we were just plain ‘mean’ to her for the cheap laughs.”

“All kidding aside, my mother is a very giving woman,” Troy concludes. “She does anything for the ones she loves. I remember Mom writing a Halloween story for me to take to elementary school. The school staff liked it and actually read it over the loud speaker to the entire building. I thought that was really cool. I still have that story in my scrapbook.”

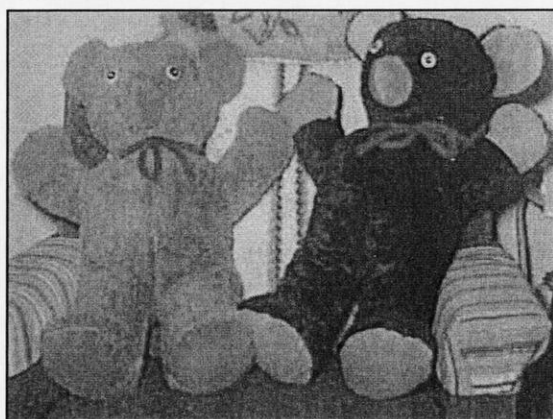
### Chad Rindy’s memories



My second son, Chad Rindy, now 36, has clear memories of his Great Grandma Martinson. He was just 12 when she died.

“I remember her handmade teddy bears,” Chad says. “My brothers and I cherished them. They were well made, but ours went

through a lot. They had to survive several drastic surgeries (G.I., ocular, reconstructive, and plastic) by Mom, the teddy bear surgeon,” Chad explains. As his mother, I recall sewing his teddy bear’s eye back on. It was a nail-biting experience for little Chad.



**Grandma Martinson’s handmade teddy bears were given to oodles of grandchildren and great grandchildren over the years.**



**Chad Rindy (1) Troy Rindy (3)**

Chad recalls enjoying Grandma Martinson’s front porch swing, and he was intrigued by her puzzles. “Inside the house,” Chad says, “she often had a puzzle spread out on the table. I was at the age where it seemed like her puzzles had a million pieces. My memory is not quite clear but I vaguely remember one of those million-piece puzzles that she kept in a mason jar, and it was simply all dark red. I don’t know if it came that way or it was painted, but I was amazed by that. It’s funny -- I never saw it put together -- just stored in the jar.”

Closer to home in Rosendale, where Chad grew up with his brothers Troy and Ryan, Christmas was his favorite holiday. “We read Christmas stories, sang songs, participated

in church Christmas skits, and enjoyed family gatherings with cousins. It was a month-long time of fun and anticipation,” Chad says, fondly.

With a sentimental look, Chad says his favorite Christmas tradition growing up with his mom, dad, and brothers was fondue. “I’ll always remember our special Christmas fondue dinners. We haven’t continued this yet, but I have the supplies at home. We’ll start that tradition up again this year.”

“Another tradition was putting an orange in the Christmas stocking. Grandma Benunie did it for our Mom, and our Mom did it for us. Now I’m doing it for our little boy Zachary who is four.”

**Photo below: At the Rindy home in Rosendale, Chad looks at Christmas fondue selections as his mother Dorothy lights candles and Ryan (at right) can’t wait to eat! (1981)**

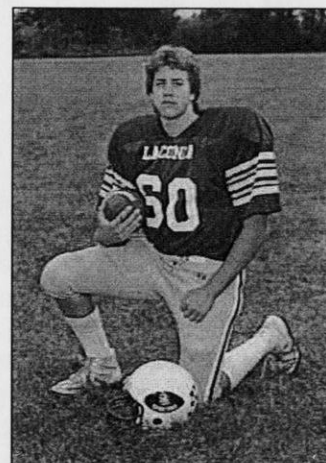


“We had a lot of apple trees,” Chad explains. “My brothers and I would build tree forts and shields, and we’d have apple fights. Of course those led to stained clothes and real fights. We’d play baseball or ride our bikes into town to visit friends. My dad coached a lot of our Little League teams and it seemed like we played ball all summer long.”

“Summer wasn’t all fun though,” Chad continues. “We had chores to do. Now, I use green Palmolive soap at work, and it reminds me of doing dishes when I was a kid. We also had two acres of lawn to mow and a large vegetable garden to help tend. It was so big that I could barely hit one of my brothers with a tomato or strawberry (more stains) when I would fling it across.”

Grade school fun that surfaces for Chad includes playing dodge ball, soccer, and kickball at recess. He also fondly recalls some of his teachers, a few girls, writing stories, doing arts and crafts, getting bit by an older student, jumping off the swings, and watching a kid named Mike eat worms at recess.

A typical summer day, Chad says, was spent playing with his brothers, neighbors and friends.



**Chad in high school football**

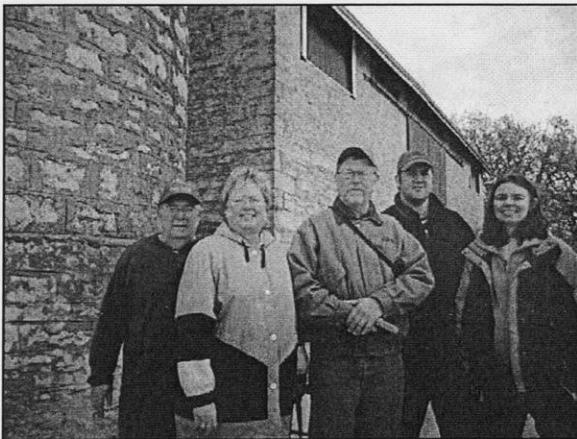
Farm work on Rosendale area farms kept Chad and his brothers busy in summer too. “When we were younger, we picked rocks. That was fun,” Chad said, with a grin. “Then on to bailing hay, which was more fun. Finally, we graduated to doing chores and



milking (even more fun). Actually it was hot, sweaty work -- but enjoyable because the neighbors we worked for had kids our age.”

As for high school experiences, Chad was a talented athlete in wrestling, football, baseball, and track. He was pursued by various colleges for his football playing ability. However, he chose to attend UW-Madison and get a good education, letting the temptation of football go by the wayside. In high school Chad liked the sciences, mathematics, and art the best. As a pharmacist, Chad puts his math, science and “people skills” to work every day.

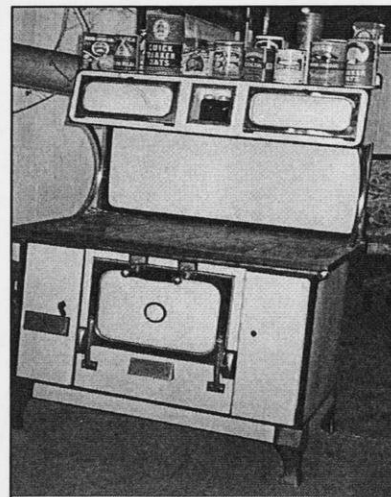
New inventions Chad recalls are in the high tech area. The remote control is one. “I was going to say the TV remote was hot when I was a kid, but in the 1970s my dad had three of them already --Troy, Ryan, and me! Really, though, what amazed me was our first Atari game console,” Chad explains. “We had Pong and Tank Command. Later on, we had Space Invaders and a cheesy version of Pac-Man -- a square Pac-Man that ate dash marks! As lame as they look now, I could play those for hours, in fact for days-on-end. It makes me wonder where technology will be in another 25 years.”



Visiting Lime Ridge Farm (l-r) Brian and Dorothy Bliskey, Russ Schwarz, Chad and his wife Karen.

“Inside the house, Grandma always kept the candy jar on a lower kitchen shelf. When the Tootsie Rolls, gumdrops, and butterscotches were gone, we'd force ourselves to eat those red, anise flavored candies as a last resort. She always had a variety of nuts in the shell, sitting on the old cook stove in the basement. They would be as much fun to crack open, as to eat! She usually had Dad's Root Beer or Orange Crush in returnable bottles in the basement too.”

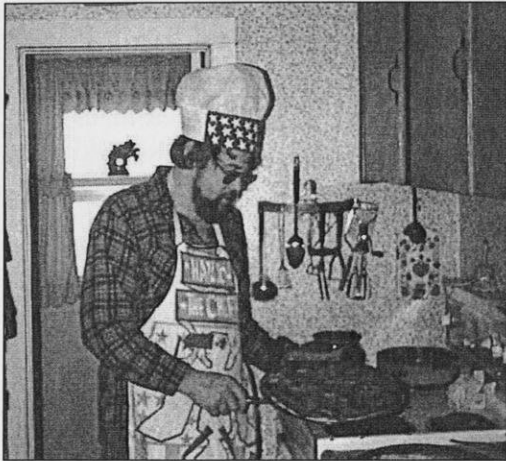
“I enjoyed going to Grandma Noonie's farm near Mt. Horeb as a boy. We didn't grow up in the hilly area of Wisconsin, so we loved the hills on the way to Grandma's house. She had that oval loop of a driveway, which became our tricycle Nascar track. Exploring the farm buildings was an adventure to us kids. It was a great setting for good games of hide and seek,” Chad says.



Old stove in the Schwarz basement.

“My brothers and I would check the inventory and make sure to remind the adults where Grandma's pop was when we needed some more sugar. We also liked Grandma's homemade lefse.”

“Upstairs at Grandma Noonie’s, we liked to drop things down her clothes (laundry) chute which extended from the second floor hallway down to the basement laundry area. It was fun until somebody caught us. I think we sometimes made Grandma nervous. Often when you’d fetch stuff from the clothes chute landing spot in the basement, you could get a whiff of Limburger cheese from the store room nearby. And, although Grandma didn’t have the best games at her house, we’d always find Yahtzee, a puzzle, or that other game with the tiny little wooden pieces you could put together.”



**Dad making his homemade pizza (1983)**

“In describing my dad, I’d say he was like the father on *The Wonder Years* TV series,” Chad says. “He enjoyed doing things with us kids and our friends, like camping, playing softball, coaching Little League, canoeing, and having bonfires. We still do some of these activities today, although not as frequently as we’d like.”

“Dad was entertaining and threw good pizza parties. He made great homemade pizzas with a ‘from scratch’ recipe. Maybe he got it at the Madison Lombardino’s Restaurant he and Mom liked so well when they were young.”

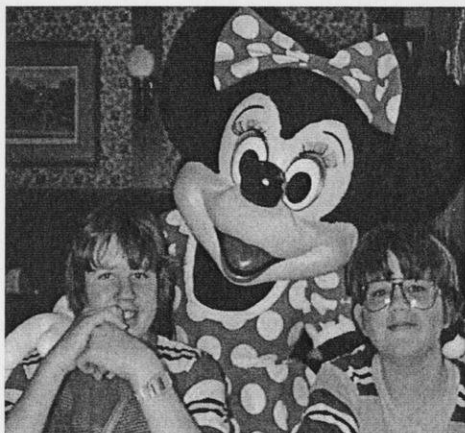
“My dad was the disciplinarian,” Chad says. “I remember one time I dented the car, prior to actually having my license. Dad saw it and assumed it was my older brother who had done it. He didn’t say anything – he just steamed inside the house. Finally, Dad confronted my brother (the one who was usually in trouble), only to find out it was me. I thought he’d blow up, but I think the astonishment diffused the anger. He may even have smiled.”



**Enjoying a summer day and our camper are (l-r) Ryan, our neighbors Justin, Kerry, and Mark Madigan and Ryan’s brother Chad (Rosendale home, 1979)**

“We took numerous ski trips to the Upper Peninsula of Michigan and several canoe trips on the Wisconsin and Flambeau rivers. But our biggest trip was in 1980, when we got out of school for two weeks and pulled our camper to Disneyworld. Highlights were the Smoky Mountains, Disneyworld, and Florida,” Chad continues. “In fact, it was the ultimate camping and travel adventure to go on when you’re a kid. I felt like Ulysses in *The Odyssey*.”

“On the way to Florida, we camped in the mountains, visited caves in Tennessee, stayed in hotels, and were introduced to grits at a Big Boy in Georgia. I especially liked Sea World and Disneyland with its huge waterpark. This preceded the Dells’ waterparks.”



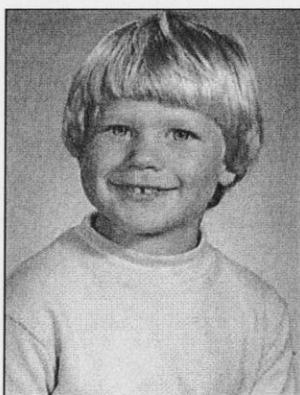
**Troy and Chad Rindy at Disneyworld (1980)**

“In describing my mother, Dorothy, all I can say is she loves her family and friends. She knows everyone, it seems,” Chad says. “Mom enjoys social gatherings -- reunions, holiday parties, or just sitting on the deck. She took good care of us kids, and I’m sure it was not always easy with three boys so close in age. She took part in all of our adventures and had fun -- although she did get flattened by a reckless skier once!”

**Ryan Rindy’s memories...**

My youngest son, Ryan Rindy, now 34, was 10 years old when his Great Grandma Martinson died at age 90.

“I don’t remember much about Grandma Martinson except that she was old,” Ryan said. “I thought it was cool to tell my friends that my great grandma, who was still alive, was born in the 1800s. I remember riding in her wheelchair at the nursing home. My brothers and I would see how long we could stay up on two wheels.”



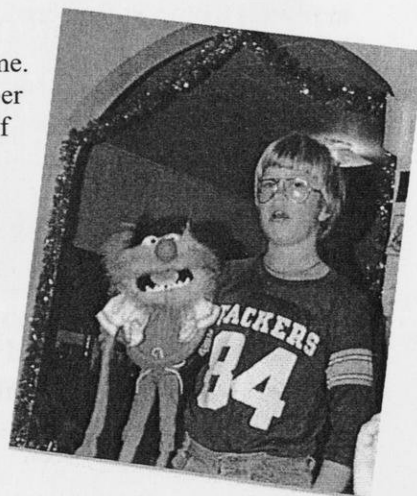
**Ryan Rindy, 6 and his great grandma Martinson, 89**



“I remember the teddy bear my great grandma Martinson made for me. It was a good childhood friend when I was a wee lad. I still remember cruising around with Teddy in my Big Wheel, feeding it spoonfuls of my cereal, and tossing him into the air. My teddy was black with a red nose and paws – and it had buttons for eyes.”

“Christmas was my favorite holiday growing up. No school, brand new toys, getting together with cousins and eating lots of cookies. Who wouldn’t like that as a kid? I still love all of those things, but now it is even more meaningful because I appreciate it for its true meaning, the birth of my Savior.”

**Ryan Rindy with his Sesame Street pal (1979)**





“School memories I remember involve snow and playing King of the Hill,” Ryan continues. “The biggest and oldest kid was up there, and he threw me off the snow hill like I was a rag doll. After I got the wind back in me, I charged up as fast as I could and knocked him over.”

Subjects Ryan liked best in school included art and shop class. It was a great start to the industrial designer career he now has. He graduated in Industrial Design from UW-Stout in 1994. By the way, UW-Stout is where he met Jody Preimesberger, who became his wife in 1997. Ironically, she is a Mt. Horeb girl and went to high school with many of Ryan’s second cousins.



#### ***The Rindy ‘Mud Bowl’ party***

“At the Rindy homestead we had huge bonfire parties,” Ryan said. “Our place was ‘party central.’ At one, a constant downpour began after my friends arrived, so I moved it into our big metal shed. Hours later, people were getting cars stuck everywhere. Mud sprayed upward as each tried to help push the other out. Deep ruts were everywhere. There were mud fights, mud wrestling, mud slides, and mud in the house. Mom came out in her nightgown, hollering at me.

**Rindy’s metal shed, site of Mud Bowl party, is in background. (l-r) Troy and Chad Rindy and Russ Schwarz do traditional Christmas tree burning over first Rindy campfire. (1995)**

Fortunately, a father of one of my friends had a lawn care business, and he said I could borrow his lawn roller to flatten the rugged terrain from the muddy party. Unfortunately, he woke me up at the crack of dawn because he needed his tractor in a couple hours. So with mud in my hair and one eye open, I drove back and forth over hundreds of bumps. After cleaning up the entire the mess, I slept the rest of the day. People who had been there affectionately refer to it as *The Mud Bowl Party*.”

#### ***My Grandma Noonie***

“It must have been one of us grandkids who couldn’t pronounce Benunie, so we called her *Grandma Banana*. Then somehow, it got changed to *Grandma Noonie*. I know my grandma was social, but to me she was quiet, gentle, and caring. I remember asking her for some cereal. By some method she determined it was stale. She then proceeded to spread it on a pan, put it in the oven, and in a few minutes I had warm crispy cereal and milk. I still use that method today.”



**Ryan and his “Grandma Noonie” (1993)**

#### **Ryan recalls his “Grandma Got Run Over by a Reindeer!”**

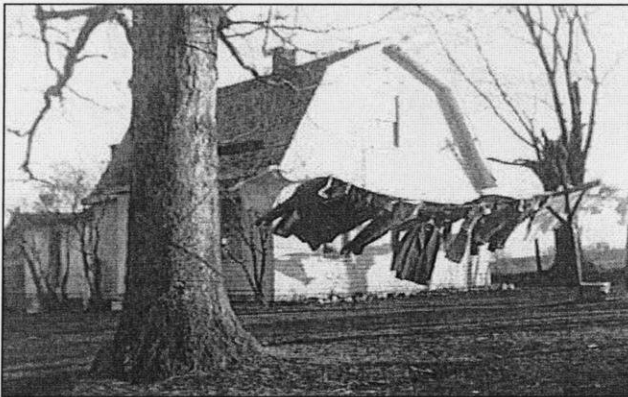
“Let me elaborate on the deer incident mentioned by my cousin and brother Troy,” says Ryan. “It feels like longer ago than 12 years, because I remember having a pretty freshly laminated driver’s license. Or maybe it just felt like I was taking my driver’s test again with Grandma in the back

seat and Mom in the passenger seat... *'Am I driving too fast, am I tail-gaiting, did I signal and check my blind spot? I don't want to give Grandma a heart attack,'* I thought to myself. Oh, did I mention it was Grandma Noonie's car I was driving? The year was 1987 or 1988, and we are going up Highway 41 north to the Jorns' family Christmas. There is this huge open field. Being a hyper and very alert driver, I spot a deer when it's just a tiny speck on the horizon. *"It is way ahead of me. It is running straight for the highway,"* I say to myself. *If that deer doesn't change course, someone is going to nail it!*

"I start calculating the speed the deer is traveling and the speed I am traveling. This is a possible collision course, I start thinking. So, I slow down...hmm...I should speed up...well maybe I should slow down, speed up. I didn't want to cause any elevated heart rates, so I didn't say anything. But grandma started asking questions as her head jerked forward and back. *'Oh, \_\_\_\_\_, a deer!'*" I yelled."

"The car behind me was following too closely for me to slam on the brakes. I slowed down quickly, but it was destiny. The deer jumped in the air, kicked out both passenger side windows, and banged up the roof as it flew over the top of the car. I pulled over. My mom Dorothy, sitting next to me, had glass all over her, but wasn't hurt."

"I turned around and asked Grandma if she was alright. She said *'Yes'* with a stunned blank stare on her face. I asked myself, *'What the heck is that steam rising behind her head?'* Well, it



**The old house on the Schwarz farm, vacated in 1950, became a place to "discover" on Grandma's farm years later. (1947)**

seems the deer got the you-know-what scared out of it -- two big piles of it. One behind Grandma's head to the left and one behind her head to the right. It was one of the most amazing things I have ever seen. There was glass and deer poop all around Grandma, but she didn't have one bit on her. I guess that tells you something about her. After that deer accident, my cousins and all our relatives continued to sing *Grandma Got Run Over by a Reindeer* every Christmas."

"I loved exploring at Grandma's farm," Ryan continues." My cousin Jeremy Schwarz and I got into some mischief on old Lime Ridge Farm. Add two pre-teen boys, a BB gun, and an old car and what do you get? Yep, broken windows. Of course, we had to get rid of the evidence. Our not-so-brilliant idea was to haul the glass to the farm's old vacated house where my mother Dorothy was born and drop the pieces down the deep abandoned well. We spent an hour dropping each piece in the well opening, waiting for it to descend and crash in the dark abyss. The sound was awesome. We got caught when Uncle Don saw a missing window and no glass in to be found. The experience was not pleasant. Once again, sorry about your car Uncle Don!"



**Cousins (l-r) Ryan Rindy and Andy Schwarz play with Grandpa Olav at Schwarz farm. (1973)**

“My Grandpa Walter Schwarz died before I was born, but I remember Grandma’s second husband Olav Berge, who was the only Grandpa I had,” Ryan explains. “I recall Grandma Noonie shaving his head. I liked his Norwegian jokes. Every time we would leave Grandma’s house, Olav would wave goodbye to my brothers and me and say, ‘Bye girls, bye-bye girls!’”

**Typical day at our Rosendale homestead**

“A typical summer Saturday growing up near Rosendale,” Ryan continues, “was the alarm going off. We had to keep the windows closed so the cool night air would remain in the house as long as possible. (We had no air conditioning.) Then we would eat some cereal and watch cartoons.”

“Soon Dad would yell out the day’s chores. *‘Mow the lawn, weed the garden, pick strawberries, haul some bricks, and help fix the water pump in the dark and cold spider-infested basemen,’*”

“Intermingled with chores were a lot of game-type activities with my brothers. One of them was apple fights in the three chicken-wire clad forts we each had created in the apple trees. Chicken wire was awesome for shredding rotten apples and spraying your brother or friends with apple bits and worm guts. *I need more apples...crap! Down the tree. Out into the open.* That’s when your opponent would use the nice firm apples to put a welt on the



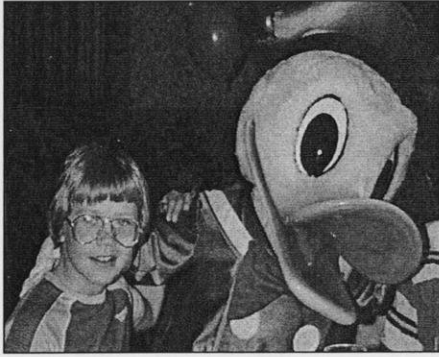
back of your head. Since I was the youngest I had a lot more fun inviting my naive friends over and sharing the techniques I learned from my older brothers.”

**Dorothy (front of plow) after two snowbound days in her Rosendale house. (1991)**

“In the winter we would get these huge snow drifts,” Ryan recalls. “One year we got so much snow the highway plow got stuck. The snow piles were so high after the plow went through that my Dad was about a foot away from touching the power lines. Every year we would have at least 8-foot piles of snow on the side of the road. It was great winter fun digging tunnels and building huge snow forts. When I wasn’t in snow tunnels or apple trees, I was drawing, building model cars or constructing with Legos.”

“My fondest memory is when my folks bought a pop-up camper, packed it up, and drove to Disneyworld. I was 10, and it was truly magical,” Ryan says with a faraway look. “During the trip, we stayed at about six different campsites including some in the Smoky Mountains. We were like an Indy pit crew, setting up and tearing down camp in blazing speed.”

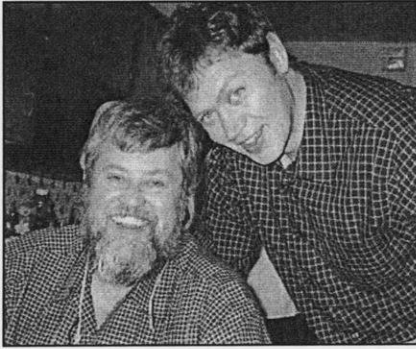




**Ryan with Donald Duck on a Disney breakfast cruise (Disneyworld trip 1980)**

“My dad was an engineer. He was always fixing or building things,” says Ryan. “I remember helping him put a new clutch in one our station wagon. I was amazed how he wasn’t afraid to tackle such a project. Often I would help him. ‘Give me the 5/16<sup>th</sup>... I need a paper towel... shine that light over here,’ Dad would say. Along the way, I’d ask him questions, like: *What’s that part for? What are you doing?*’ When I got older, I started giving him suggestions on what to do. He dismissed most, but occasionally I’d amaze him. The experience motivated me to find solutions and figure out how things work. It is one factor I credit to my becoming a product designer.”

“Dad hardly missed a sporting or major event we kids were involved in during our youth. He took tons of pictures and videos with the full-size, on-your-shoulder VHS camera when it first came on the market. All my friends called him *TV Lenny* after the American TV guy,” says Ryan.



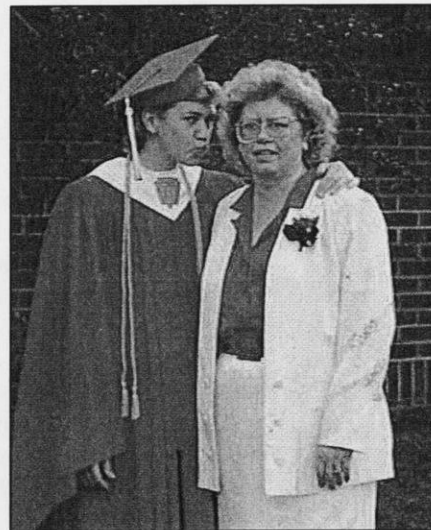
**Ryan with his dad Len Rindy (2005)**

“My dad was comical. He was always making people laugh. We had chickens for a short time, and he took one to a Rosendale bar as a joke. He showed his friends how he could hypnotize it – a trick he had learned as a New Glarus farm boy. Dad is an outdoorsman. He loves camping and loved living in the country. He spent much of his time working on projects in our pole building, referred to as The Shed. He’d get quite dirty and greasy. To cool off, partially clean up, or perhaps for a laugh, he would take showers in the privacy of our back yard with a hose. He is quite a character,” Ryan chuckles.

### ***My mother, Dorothy***

“Mom was a social butterfly. She was always having her friends over for coffee or going somewhere with them – shopping, to a meeting, to someone’s house for a gathering, or some other event,” Ryan explains.

“On occasion she would pack us up to go visit Grandma two hours away in Mt. Horeb. She was a stay-at-home mom and did a lot of things a loving mother does. She cooked, cleaned, shopped, and took care of us when we were sick. She got involved in our activities like Cub Scouts, 4-H, and confirmation to mention a few. I still remember reading and discussing the Bible with my mom in her waterbed (*Remember when they were the rage?*) and her quizzing me on the books of the Bible. Mom’s insistence on me going to church and getting confirmed was what kept God’s hand on me while I did my own thing. It helped me to have a strong faith today.”



**Ryan with his mother Dorothy at his high school graduation in Rosendale (1989)**

“My mom was pretty gullible. We loved playing pranks on her,” Ryan smiles. “My brothers practiced on me first, like when I was two years old. They waited until I was sound asleep, climbed under my crib, shook it violently, and made loud groaning noises. I think that was my first memory of life. Maybe it explains why I wake up at the slightest sound and have to walk around with a golf club, checking every nook and cranny of the house.”



**Rindy boys' home near Rosendale. (1974-1996)**

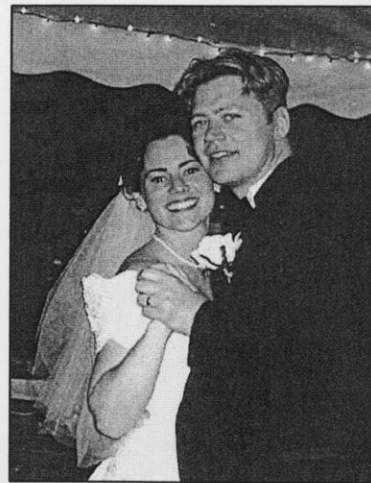
“Anyway, we had an older house that originally only had round grates in the floor to let the heat rise up to the second floor. The metal grate in our bedroom was right above the living room couch. Mom and Dad were watching TV on the couch, so we pulled the carpet back, tied a big rubber spider to a string and lowered it in front of my mom’s face. She screamed, to put it mildly. We had a lot of fake stuff that made mom scream. A fake mouse found its way to the refrigerator, fake fly in an ice cube, and more. She fell for each one.”

“Mom was also sensitive. I recall her crying during a McDonald’s commercial about an old guy who worked there,” says Ryan. “She was always drinking coffee... probably to keep up with three rambunctious boys. It made her go to the bathroom a lot, and this drove us nuts on car trips. She was always late. I think it taught me patience, as sometimes I’d wait 30 minutes for her to pick me up after school or after some event. But most importantly, she loved us very much.”

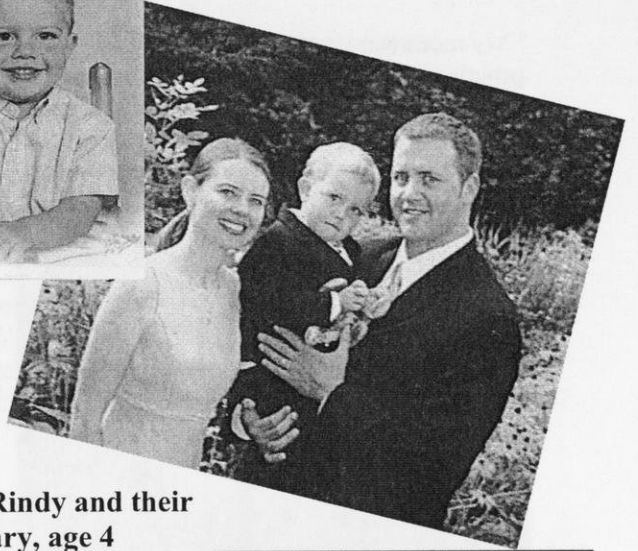
“One key invention when I was a kid was the TV remote control. Prior to that, the youngest member of the family was the remote control. In my family, that meant I was the remote control,” Ryan said. “We also had the first video game console ever produced...Pong. It was very cool at that time. The whole concept of renting movies also happened when I was in middle school. That was a paradigm shift -- *go to Curtis Mathis and pick out a bunch of movies to watch at home whenever you want to watch them, with no commercials, and you could even stop it and rewind it ...Wow!* Another life-impacting, non-TV related invention for me was Expert Builder Legos. They were not your ordinary brick and blocks. These babies had gears, pulleys, motors, rack and pinions, levers, axles, you name it! I made a working wind-up clock and a remote control gizmo for my boom box. Legos helped build my skills and interest in becoming a product designer.”



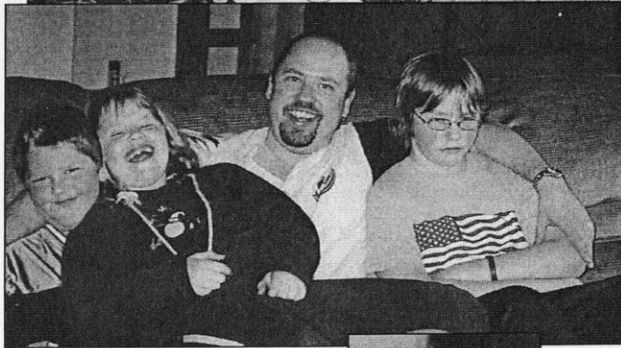
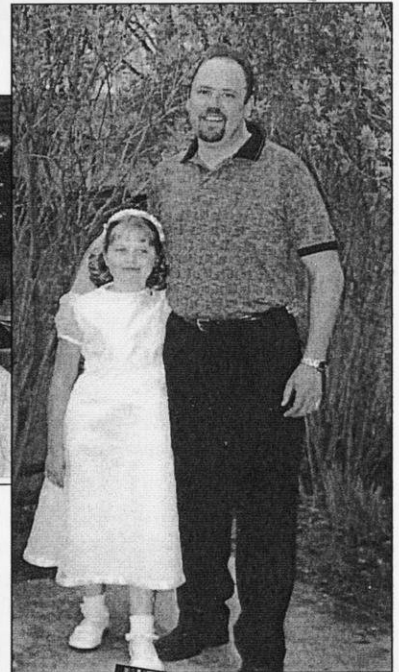
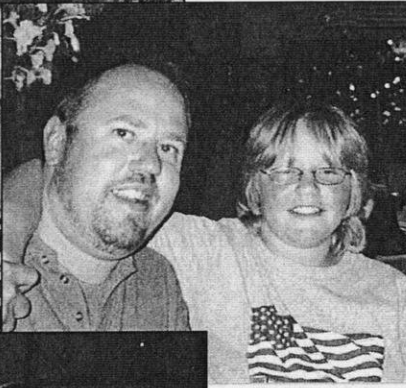
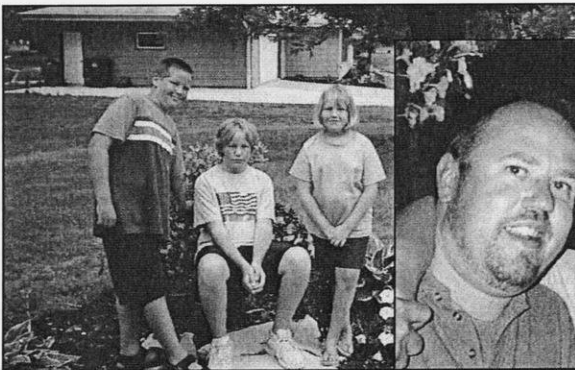
**Ryan and his wife Jody hold their three daughters (l-r) Jensen, Ella, and Grace. (2004)**



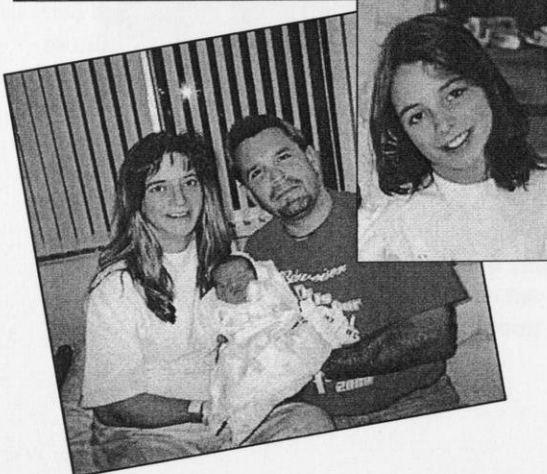
**Jody and Ryan marry. (1997)**



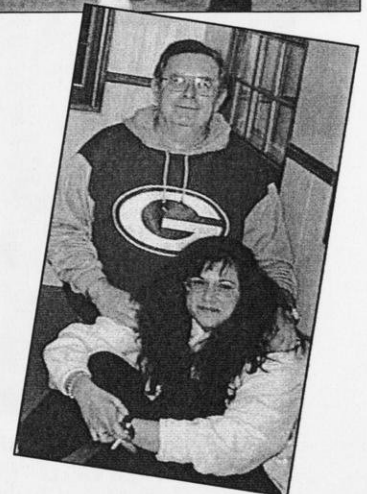
**Chad and Karen Rindy and their son Zachary, age 4**



**Troy and Sharon Rindy's children: Nicole, 8 Joshua, 13 Christopher, 11**



**At left is Brian's son Kent Bliskey and family: Becky (holding baby Brooke) and at Kent's left shoulder is Becky's daughter Jordana, 12.**



**At right is Brian and his daughter Kelli.**



### **Rosann and Hub's children recall good times**

My sister Rosann's three children also have fond memories of time spent on the Schwarz farm too. Doug, the oldest grandchild of Walter and Benunie, recalls working in the field with and doing chores with Grandpa Walter. Doug was just 12 when my dad Walter died from lung cancer in 1969.

"Grandpa would let me drive the John Deere and do chores in the barn," Doug recalls. "But Grandma always made me take naps. I didn't like that, because I'd rather be out helping Grandpa."

Doug currently has Dad's John Deere 60 tractor that he was so fond of as a kid. He uses it to plow his long driveway in Sturgeon Bay where he lives with his wife Sonya and their two children Jacquelyn and Jason.



**Rosann and Hub Jorns**

### ***Debbie Jorns remembers...***

Debbie, who is two years younger than Doug, fondly recalls visiting the Schwarz farm. "I loved to go there and spend time with Grandma and Grandpa, but it was strange how Grandma Noonie made us take baths. She'd fill a plastic wastebasket with warm water outside on her back lawn. Then she'd put me in it with a bar of soap and a towel nearby. I don't know if it was my make-do swimming pool or a bathtub."

"I enjoyed naps at Grandma's house but really never slept. It was fun to have my Aunt Dorothy lay there and read to me."

When reminiscing about her parents, Rosann and Hub, Debbie's voice becomes softer. She must miss them terribly. "My mom was an expert seamstress," Debbie recalls. "She made everything – my clothes, our drapes, and more. She also built me a really nice dollhouse – even made the miniature furnishings and decorated its tiny walls. I played with it forever. Mom was Miss Neat and always had the house just so. I wish I could be more like her."

As for her dad, Hub, Debbie recalls him as being the social organizer in the family and being Mr. Neat with the grounds surrounding their Sturgeon Bay home. "We didn't dare walk on the lawn and trample it after he had mowed it," Debbie said. "We were supposed to take the pathway along the edge of the lawn. He was meticulous about the yard, and in everything else he did too."

When Debbie was 10, she wrote a letter to her Grandpa Walter, who unknown to her, was quickly losing his life to cancer. It was about a month before he died. The letter, written on December 8, 1968, read as follows:

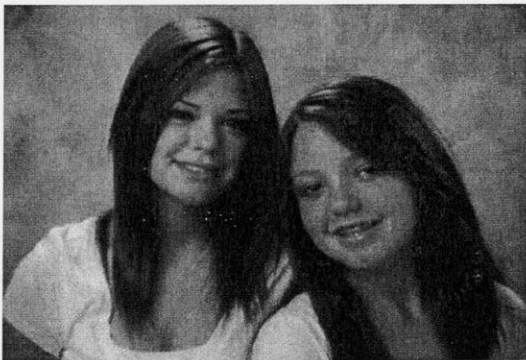
*Dear Grandpa,*

*How are you feeling? It seems like you were in the hospital a long time. My gum chain has 127 gum wrappers on it. We all went snowmobiling yesterday. I brought my friend along with me. I learned how to drive the snowmobile. Today we got our Christmas trees. We got a pine tree for downstairs and a Spruce for upstairs. See you when we come down for Christmas.*

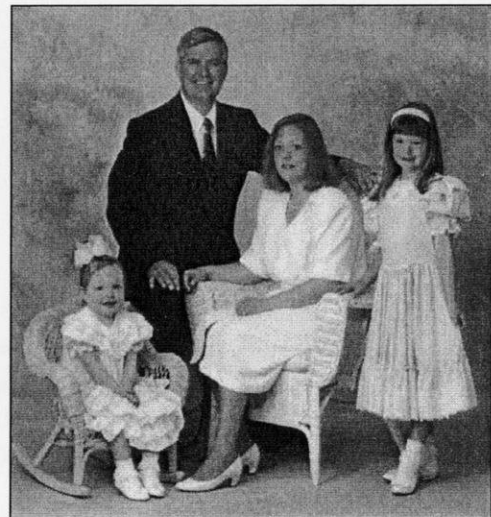
*Love Debbie*

In 1985, Debbie married Peter Beane. They live in Kewaunee where they own and operate Jorns Chevrolet. They have two daughters: Danielle, 17, and Molly 13.

**At right are Debbie and Pete, with daughters Molly (left) and Danielle (right) in 1995.**



**Danielle, 18, and Molly, 13. (2005)**



### ***John Jorns' recollections***

Rosann and Hub's youngest child, John, arrived in November, 1969. He was the third grandson born to Benunie and Walter Schwarz during the same year Walter died. John's cousin, Chad Rindy, arrived first on New Years Day, followed by new cousin David Schwarz (Don and Carol's youngest son) in March. John came along 10 years after his sister Debbie and 12 years after his oldest brother Doug.

"What I remember about going to Grandma Noonie's house is that her coffee pot was always on," John said. "She drank a lot of coffee, and we ate lefse in her dining room."

John also recalls smelling limburger cheese for the first time while visiting Grandma. "My step-grandpa, Olav, gave me my first experience smelling limburger cheese," John laughs. "Olav ate it all the time, and I think Grandma Noonie liked it too. We could

always smell the odor coming from an ice cream pail Grandma kept in the refrigerator,” John said. To this day, John says he has not tried limburger cheese.

“I also remember cutting the grass at Grandma’s and getting to use her John Deere tractor. Grandma was a lot of fun, and we liked to joke around with her. I remember at my brother’s wedding she liked the root beer schnapps,” John chuckled.



**Checking out Rosann and Hub’s boat and pier in Sturgeon Bay are (l-r back) Ryan and Chad Rindy; (l-r front) Jacque and Jason Jorns. (1994)**

John’s parents, Rosann and Hub, are missed greatly by the Jorns children and grandchildren. What John misses most are the cocktail cruises he would go on with his mom and dad across the bay to the Potawatomi Park area. “We’d sink an anchor and sit there, dining on Kentucky Fried Chicken and our favorite beverages,” John recalls.

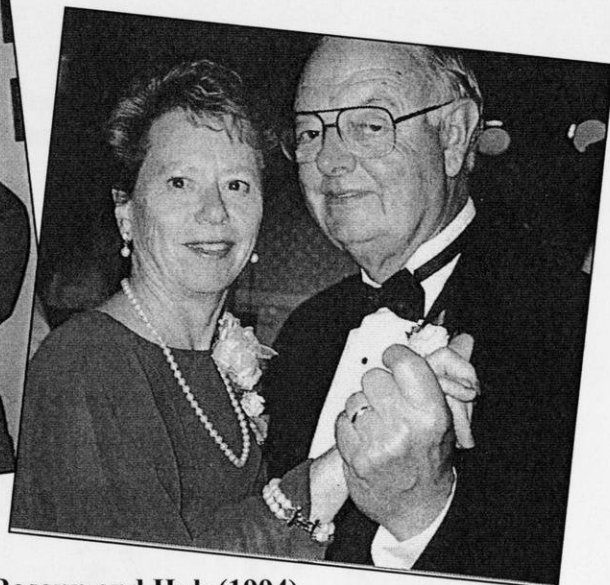
While John liked his mother’s cooking, he says water chestnuts were not his favorite ingredient. “My mother had this idea that everything had to have a little crunch in it,” John laughs. “She would put water chestnuts in everything. They have no taste. I didn’t like biting into them, but I loved her tuna salad.”

Two experiences come to mind immediately when John thinks of his dad, Hub. “Great memories are going to get the Christmas tree each year together and riding with him when he’d make a house call to sell a car,” John said. “Dad had a good way of dealing with customers, very personable,” John explained. “If a customer couldn’t get into the Jorns dealership, Dad would drive the car that interested them to their home. That way they could see it. About 95 percent of the time he’d sell a car that way.”

**Hub sold a car to Alma and Jerome Skindrud in June 1994 at John’s wedding. Jerome is in the car. Standing with Alma are her daughter Becky and son-in-law Mark Mostrom. Hub is at right.**



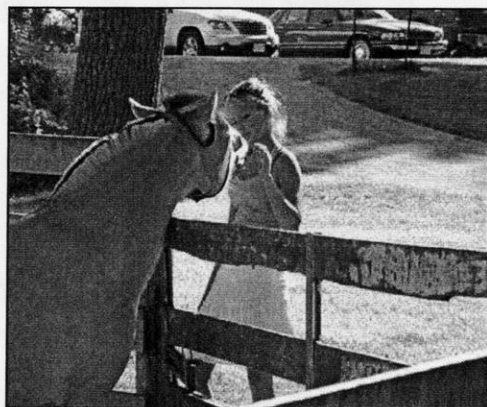




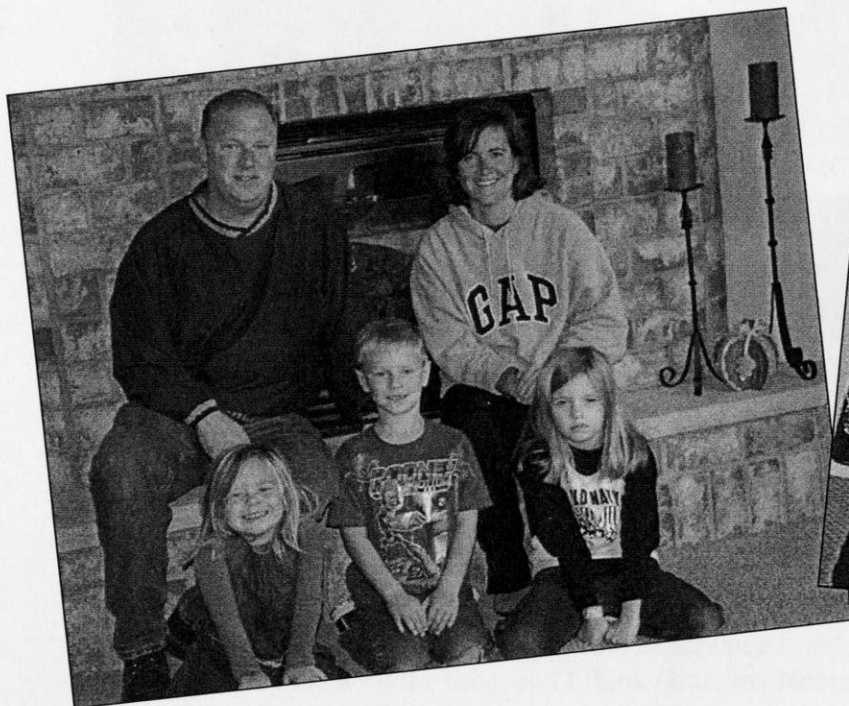
Rosann and Hub (1994)

Above: Sonya and Doug Jorns with children Jacquelyn and Jason (2004).

At right, Jacquelyn greets a Norwegian Fjord horse on a visit to the farm of her great, great, great grandfather, Torkel Martinson. The farm is now owned by Martha and Guy Martin, and its log home is where her Great Grandma Benunie was born in 1911. (2005)



Below: John and Chris Jorns and children (l-r) Jenna, Jacob, and Kaitlyn (2005). Below, right: Benunie and Jacque spend a special moment together at Dorothy's house for Christmas (1993)

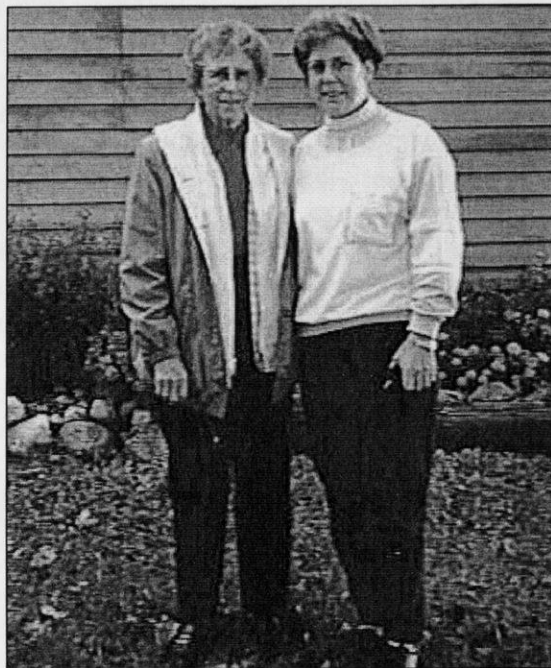


## **Audrey and Benunie**

*Audrey (Berge) Dietrich grew fond of my mother, Benunie, over the years. It all began in 1973 when Mom married Audrey's dad, Olav Berge. I will let Audrey tell the rest of the story...*

Dad and Benunie tied the knot at the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Mt. Horeb on June 21. He said he picked that day because it was the shortest night and day of the year.

This newlywed Norwegian couple spent their honeymoon night at the Alphorn Motel in the little Swiss town of Monroe. Two months later they went on a honeymoon trip to Norway, where my dad was born," Audrey explained. "Benunie was now an official member of the Berge clan."



**Benunie (Schwarz) Berge and Audrey Dietrich on a visit to Dorothy's house. (1992)**

Our family's heritage and backgrounds were the same, Swiss and Norwegian farmers. My Dad was born in Norway and came to America as a young boy and my mother's father came from Switzerland. Both families were farmers. The Berge's farmed in the Basco, Primrose, and Daleyville areas and the Rhyner's farmed in Dayton, Wisconsin.

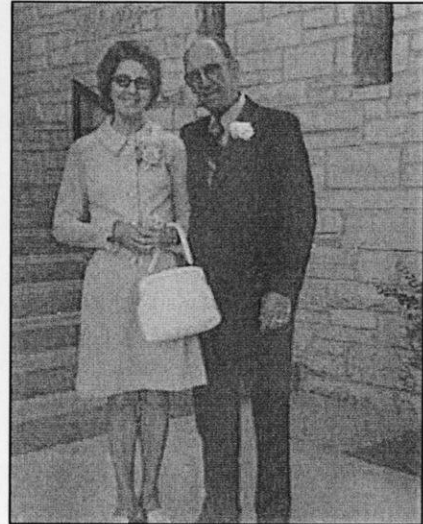
As a young man, Dad was acquainted with Harold and Huldah Pick and Bennie Grundahl. If I have my story straight, he may have dated Huldah. They would have met at dances. Dad loved music and was a wonderful dancer. They settled into life on Benunie's farm on Malone Road.

At first, Benunie didn't seem all that thrilled to be a part of our family and rarely attended family gatherings. She was still working and was always too busy. Dad would come alone and, although he didn't say much, we could tell he was frustrated. We decided to have a surprise birthday party for Benunie, but were not sure she would attend. In fact, she told Dad she couldn't go because she had too much to do. Well, Dad said he got mad at her and that she changed her mind. Benunie was so surprised and couldn't believe that our entire family would gather to celebrate her birthday. The rest is history, as they say. Benunie was an integral part of our family for the rest of her life.

As a family we owed a debt of gratitude to Benunie for the happiness and care she gave to Dad. Although too short, they had a wonderful life together. She was devoted to him during health and sickness. Within a year of their marriage he was diagnosed with colon cancer. In an all too familiar roll as caregiver, just as she had done for her husband Walter, she was once again caring for a husband with cancer. I was always amazed at her resilience and positive attitude each and every day during this difficult time.

Dad and Benunie made the best of their time during the five years his cancer was in remission. He worked on a nearby farm, doing what he loved and teaching a young family the intricacies and pros and cons of farm life. They continued to go to dances, visit family and friends, and take trips together.

In May of 1980 my husband Larry and I bought the farm on Malone road, just one-half mile from Dad and Benunie's place. By this time the cancer had returned, Dad was receiving chemotherapy and was quite ill. I was able to help care for him in the evening, but little during the day as we owned a self-service gas station. I ran it seven days a week. Sometimes Benunie would bring Dad up to the station so she could run errands.



**Benunie and Olav marry. (1973)**

By September of 1980 we closed the station and I was available to help more with his care, and take him to his appointments but Benunie was still the main caregiver. Dad passed away on November 3, 1980.

I am happy to say Benunie remained a big part of my life, as well as my family's lives. We became good friends and relied on each other. Benunie had a thirst for knowledge



**Audrey and Benunie share a laugh in Audrey's kitchen (1994)**

and was always interested in expanding her horizons. She was an avid supporter of Wisconsin Public Television and enjoyed the wonderful programming they offered. I would often find her reading the encyclopedia when I stopped to have a cup of coffee with her.

I never tired of sitting at the kitchen table visiting with Benunie. We would watch the birds that flocked to her feeders and often would tour her garden to see the latest flowers in bloom. Although she loved most varieties of birds, her favorite was the sight and sound of the Cardinal. Benunie and I discussed everything from sex to social security. She thought of me as her age at times, asking about my social security or Medicare. And of course we solved many social problems -- if only someone would have listened to us.

During the next 10-12 years, Benunie enjoyed the companionship of Otto Rhyner and Quinten Stenseth. Larry and I became a part of their lives and grew to become good friends with them. Benunie seemed attracted to farmers. Both Otto and Quinten were



friendly outgoing men who enjoyed the same things as Benunie. They enriched her life, as she did theirs.

Benunie taught me how to make lefse. I was an apprentice for about five years before she allowed me to roll it out or boil the potatoes and mix the dough. One time I used the Kennebeck potatoes I had grown, and she was not pleased. She admitted, though, that they had a good flavor. I still make lefse using her recipe and methods, except for putting the flour outside to keep it cold. (She kept hers in her garage.) Larry now turns the lefse



and takes it off the griddle for me. He wouldn't have made it with Benunie though, because he watches television and doesn't pay close enough attention.

With Benunie as my teacher, we also made doughnuts, Krumkaker, Rosettes, Fattigmånd Bakkels and Romme Grot together. She made hundreds of Fattigmånds for the Kaffee Stue



hosted each July by the Son's of Norway in Mt. Horeb.

**Benunie, at center, with six Sons of Norway members and friends on each side of her, enjoys the group's annual Christmas event in Mt. Horeb (1993). In top photo, Benunie (far left) rides on the Viking ship, a float used in Mt. Horeb area parades. (1994)**

It was obvious that Benunie had a passion for her Norwegian ancestry and customs. She owned two Norwegian costumes, called Bunads, which she wore for Sons of Norway events. When she worked at the Kaffee Stue in Mt. Horeb, she was decked out in her "every day" knee-length Bunad. It was made of washable cotton. When she took part in a parade and represented the Sons of Norway by riding on their Viking Ship float, she wore her beautiful blue full-length Bunad, made of wool.

Benunie took many trips with us to visit family. One time when we were driving out east to visit my brother Wayne, we got stuck in Chicago's commuter traffic jam. Benunie brought out her homemade fry cakes and her famous coffee made in the thermos. While everyone else was stressed, we were enjoying a morning snack!



**Children of Olav Berge, Benunie's second husband, are (l-r) Jeanette Broge, Wayne Berge, Lynn Mc Collister, and Audrey Dietrich. The gathering was at a reunion held at Audrey and Larry Dietrich's farm on Malone Road. (1993)**

The word "unique" would describe Benunie. She enjoyed the simple things and appreciated everything. She could take weeds, berry bushes and wheat from the field and make a beautiful bouquet for the table. And, I wonder if she may have created the fashion trend of the layered look? She enjoyed dressing in layers, whether she was at "work or play." Benunie always looked good in her little print nightcap -- I sure thought that would catch on! Our family misses her smile, her thoughtfulness, her advice, her chocolate chip cookies, her rhubarb and apple pie, and her presence.



**Enjoying a summer day at Benunie's farm are (l-r) Benunie in her "everyday" bunad, her step-son Wayne Berge and step-daughter Audrey (Berge) Dietrich. (1993)**

Benunie thought of me as her daughter, and some thought we looked alike. In her later years, after I had become a nurse and was working with mainly the elderly, she depended on me much more. Because of my long days at work, I was not available as much as she would have liked -- or as much as I would have liked. She thought that, as a nurse, I could fix most of her medical problems and that she wouldn't have to go to the doctor. She counted on me to advise and make decisions regarding her health.

We had a few calls during the night from Benunie, frightened because someone had driven in the driveway or she thought she heard someone in the house. However, none was as "memorable" as when she called to say she had fallen down the steps, was

bleeding, and her arm hurt. When I arrived minutes later, I was stunned to see her sitting on the floor between the sofa and coffee table. It was obvious she had a broken arm and was unable to move the other arm. Amazingly Benunie had scooted on her bottom from the first stair landing, down six more steps, and then across the living room floor to the phone. How she was able to get to the phone with several broken bones and a smashed shoulder amazes me.

As you know Benunie persevered, returning to her beloved farm to live after just three months of recuperation and therapy at Ingleside Nursing Home. She enjoyed approximately one more year on her farm before selling it in 1996. Benunie then moved to Inglehaven, an assisted living facility, and later back to Ingleside where she remained for the last 2-3 years of her life. She passed away on May 20, 1999.

I miss all the good times we had, the laughs, the coffee clutches, the impromptu meals and drives. I also miss her first rhubarb pie of the season and the wine-tasting when her son Don would give her his latest creation. I miss the familiar Cardinal call she'd emit each time she entered our home. There are so many things I miss about Benunie. I was blessed to have her as a friend. I am pleased to continue that connection with her children and grandchildren -- in particular, the close friendship with her daughter Dorothy.

**Photo at right: In front (l-r) Audrey Dietrich kneels by Benunie Berge at Dorothy and Brian's wedding. Benunie's wish was granted when she was able to make the trip from Ingleside Nursing Home in Mt. Horeb to attend her daughter Dorothy's wedding in Fond du Lac. Audrey made it happen. Others in the photo (back, l-r) are Russell Schwarz, Dorothy and Brian Bliskey, Larry Dietrich, and Don Schwarz. Middle row (l-r) are Huldah Pick, Carol Schwarz, and Rosann Jorns. (1997)**



**Photo at left: Benunie looks at the view from the top of the tower at Blue Mounds State Park in 1994. In bottom photo, three of her great grandchildren (l-r) Grace, Zachary, and Jensen Rindy climbed the same tower in 2005.**

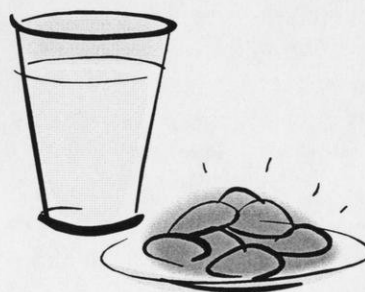


## *Favorite Family Recipes*

### **Grandma Noonie's Chocolate Chip Cookies**

*A favorite treat for Benunie's kids and grandkids!*

2 ¼ cup flour (butter is best!)	1 cup soft shortening
1 teaspoon baking soda	½ cup nuts
1 cup white sugar	1 cup chocolate chips
½ cup brown sugar	2 eggs, beaten
2 teaspoons vanilla, or less	



Mix butter and sugars together to blend well. Add beaten eggs and mix well. Add vanilla. Add 1 cup of flour and baking soda. Blend. Gradually add rest of flour. Bake a test cookie first. If cookie is too flat, add a bit more flour. If too thick or fat, add a bit more butter. Bake at 350 on lower oven rack for 5 minutes and on upper-medium placed oven rack for remaining 3-5 minutes. Cool on brown paper bag cut open and laid out flat on table or countertop.

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### **Brazil Nut Cookies** (Benunie Schwarz Berge)

*Mom made these at Christmas time – our favorite holiday cookie! (Russ and Dorothy)*

2 cups butter	1 Tablespoon molasses
2 ½ Cup sugar	1 teaspoon vanilla
3 eggs, well beaten	8 ounces Brazil nuts, chopped fine
½ cup shredded coconut	5 cups flour
1 teaspoon baking soda in 1 t. hot water	

Mix butter and sugar together till creamy. Add eggs and blend well. Add molasses and vanilla. Stir 'til blended. Add soda water, coconut and then add flour gradually. Shape into foot-long rectangular rolls (to make square or rectangular cookie slices). Wrap in waxed paper and refrigerate at least two hrs or overnight. Slice thin and place on light greased cookie sheet. Bake at 375 for 8-10 minutes or until lightly browned.  
(DON'T OVERBAKE, AS THEY GET VERY HARD.)

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### **Dream Bars** - Submitted by Dorothy (Schwarz) Bliskey

*During the 1950s-60s Dream Bars were the most popular bar recipe on the Schwarz farm. Quick, easy and basic ingredients – they melt-in-your mouth!*

#### CRUST:

½ cup butter	½ cup brown sugar	1 cup flour
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Combine crust ingredients and pat into 9" x 13" pan. Bake at 350 about 15 minutes.

#### TOPPING OR FILLING:

1 cup brown sugar	2 eggs	1 teaspoon vanilla
2 Tablespoons flour	¾ teaspoon baking powder	½ teaspoon salt
1 ½ cup coconut		

Combine all but coconut and pour over baked crust. Sprinkle coconut on top. Bake at 350 for about 20 minutes. Cool slightly and cut into squares.

## **Pineapple-Graham Cracker Dessert** (Benunie Schwarz Berge)

*The combination of graham cracker crust and pineapple filling topped with whipped cream is delicious. Mom made it often. Sometimes it was still warm when we ate it.*

### **CRUST:**

8-10 whole graham crackers                      4 Tablespoons sugar                      ½ stick butter  
Crush graham crackers. Add sugar and softened butter. Mix well with spoon or fork. Pat into "7 x 11 or 9" square pan. Bake for 10 minutes in 350 degree oven.

### **FILLING:**

½ cup butter                      1 cup crushed pineapple   1 cup sugar                      2 eggs beaten  
Combine ingredients and cook over stovetop until thickened. Pour over baked crust. Top with whipped cream when serving. Great when still slightly warm.

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## **Poached Torsk** (Carol and Don Schwarz)

*This is almost as good as lutefisk. Some might even say it is better! Torsk is the Norwegian name for cod fish.*

3 pounds frozen cod, thawed                      2 teaspoons salt  
½ cup white vinegar                                      2 qts. Water

Thaw frozen cod. Place cod in ice water 2 hours before cooking. Drain. Sprinkle with salt. Let stand 15 minutes. Rinse off salt. In large shallow pan, combine vinegar and water. Bring to a boil over medium-high heat. Add fish. Heat until liquid simmers. Cover pan and set aside. Let stand 20 minutes or until fish is firm or it flakes when probed with a fork. Drain. Serve with melted butter or cream sauce.

### **CREAM SAUCE:**

2 Tablespoons butter                                      2 Tablespoon flour                                      2 ½ cup whole milk  
½ to 1 teaspoon salt                                      1/8 teaspoon white pepper                                      1 egg yolk

Heat milk to scalding in separate pan. In a heavy pan, melt butter. Stir in flour until well blended. Over medium heat, add hot milk to butter/flour mixture using wire whisk until blended and smooth. Continue to cook until mixture thickens. Add salt and pepper. In bowl, beat egg yolk and add a little of the hot cream sauce to egg yolk, mixing well. Return yolk mixture to the sauce, blending well. Continue to cook several minutes longer. Serves 6.

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## **Dorothy's Meatballs**

*My family requests meatballs often and they have become a holiday staple and "second meat" with ham, turkey or chicken. Great over mashed potatoes or buttered noodles! Taste is similar to the meatballs served by our Mt. Horeb ELC church in the 1950s-60s.*

1 ½ lbs ground beef                                      2 eggs, beaten well  
1 small onion, chopped fine                                      2/3 cup hand-crushed saltine crackers  
½ tablespoon Worcestershire sauce                                      (converts to 2 handfuls of crackers!)  
1/3-1/2 cup cream or milk (not skim)                                      Salt and pepper to taste  
1 can cream of mushroom soup                                      1-2 cups water

Place meat in large mixing bowl. Add finely chopped onion, salt, pepper, Worcestershire sauce and beaten eggs. Mix with fork. Add crushed cracker crumbs and milk. Mix into "mushy" state. (If too dry, add a bit more milk. If too soupy, add a bit more crackers.)

When meat mixture consistency is just right, form golf ball size balls with your hands, squeezing and shaping firmly. Fry in ungreased skillet until brown, turning once or twice to brown evenly. (Use butter for greasing pan if beef is lean.) Transfer meatballs (drain grease) to a roasting pan or casserole dish. Handle meatballs gently so they don't fall apart.

Mix 1 can Cream of Mushroom soup with water in saucepan. Pour over meatballs. Cover. Bake for 45 minutes in 350 degree oven. (I triple the recipe for a group of 25.)

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### **Coffee-Orange Fudge Cake** (Carol & Don Schwarz)

*This is our family's favorite birthday cake!*

Two-layer size devil's food cake mix	1/2 cup water
1 8-ounce carton sour cream	4 eggs
1/2 cup cooking oil	1 teaspoon cinnamon
1 4-ounce instant chocolate fudge pudding mix	1/2 cup coffee liqueur
2 Tablespoons finely shredded orange peel	12-ounce pkg chocolate chips

Grease and flour 10-inch fluted tube pan. In large mixing bowl, combine cake mix, sour cream, oil, water, eggs, pudding mix, liqueur, orange peel, and cinnamon. Beat with an electric mixer on low speed till blended, scraping sides of bowl constantly. Beat on medium speed for 4 minutes. Stir in chocolate chips. Pour into prepared pan. Bake in 350 degree oven for 50-60 minutes or until toothpick comes out of cake clean. Cool on wire rack 10 minutes. Remove from pan and cool on rack. Sprinkle with powdered sugar, if desired. Makes 12-16 servings.

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### **Cottage Cheese Rolls** (Benunie Schwarz Berge)

*As a dessert or breakfast treat, these melt in your mouth!*

1 cup butter	1/2 teaspoon salt	2 cups flour
2 cups small curd creamed cottage cheese		

Have all above ingredients at room temp. Mix together until smooth and elastic. Chill dough several hours or overnight. Divide dough into 4 parts. Roll each into a circle. Cut into 12 equal pie shape pieces. Roll each piece up from wide end to narrow end to form a roll. Place on ungreased cookie sheet 1 inch apart. Bake about 20 minutes or until slightly brown spots appear. (May seem undone when first taking out of oven.) When still slightly warm, frost lightly with powdered sugar frosting.

#### **FROSTING:**

1 1/2 cup powdered sugar	1/2 teaspoon vanilla
1 tablespoon butter	1 1/2 Tablespoon light cream or milk.

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### **Chocolate Chip Date Cake** (Benunie Schwarz Berge)

*Mom served this at Malone Mothers Club and Church Guild. I loved it still warm with real whipped cream on top!*

1 cup chopped dates                      1 ½ cup boiling water                      1 teaspoon baking soda  
Combine these 3 ingredients and boil. Set aside and cool.

½ cup shortening                      1 cup sugar                      2 eggs, beaten well  
1 ¼ cup flour + 3 T flour                      ¼ teaspoon salt                      ¾ teaspoon baking soda

Cream shortening with 1 cup sugar. Add well beaten eggs. Add cooled date mixture. Combine dry ingredients together (flour, salt and ¾ teaspoon baking soda) and add to sugar/egg/date mixture. Mix well. Pour into greased 9 x 13 pan.

Top the batter with the following BEFORE baking:

12 ounce pkg semi-sweet                      ½ cup sugar                      ½ cup nutmeats, chopped  
Chocolate chips

Bake at 350 degrees for 30-35 minutes. Serve with whipped cream or ice cream.

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### **Dorothy's Half-Time Cheese Ball**

*This "big hit" recipe is one I have been making since I found it in the Madison newspaper in 1969.*

2 bars (8 ounce) cream cheese                      ½ lb sharp cheddar cheese  
1 small onion, finely chopped                      1 tablespoon Worcestershire sauce  
¼ teaspoon celery salt                      1 cup finely chopped walnuts or pecans  
¼ teaspoon salt                      ¼-1/2 cup milk

Soften cream cheese to room temp. Put in large bowl. Add chopped onion, salts, and Worcestershire sauce. Mix well, with back of large fork. Gradually add milk and shredded cheddar cheese. With large spoon do final mixing, shaping into two equal size balls. Keep in covered bowl and refrigerate at least two hours or longer – or overnight.

Remove cheese ball mixture from refrigerator. Place chopped nuts in wide shallow bowl. Roll each cheese ball into nuts until completely covered. Form into nicely shaped ball. Lay on waxed paper. Reshape if necessary. Wrap waxed paper around ball. Then wrap in aluminum foil. Refrigerate.

Cheese balls keep up to 3 weeks in refrigerator. Remove an hour before serving. Serve with crackers. *To give as a Christmas gift, I put a large olive slice on top of cheese ball, wrap in aluminum foil and top with a red bow.*

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## Rosann's Tuna Salad

*Our sister Rosann Jorns' three kids -- Doug, Debbie and John just love this salad! John said, like most things she made, it had to have "crunch!" Debbie says it was a common summer treat on a hot day. "Mom always made it and now I do too!"*



2-3 cups macaroni

2 small cans tuna

½ - 2/3 cup mayonnaise

Salt and pepper to taste

1 ½ cup peas, cooked slightly

Radishes, celery, tomatoes chopped

Water chestnuts, sliced or chopped

Cook macaroni with salt. Drain, rinse and cool. Drain tuna. Add mayo to macaroni. Fold in rest of ingredients. Add more mayo if needed or a little milk for desired consistency. The extra vegetables add color and crunch, as Rosann would say!

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***Too many cooks in the kitchen!*** This was one of Benunie's favorite sayings. Here, women prepare for a huge crowd at Benunie and Walter's 25<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary in 1957. Fitting snugly into Benunie's kitchen are (l-r) Grandma Martinson, Alma Skindrud, Orpha Steinhauer, Doris Frye, Verna Grundahl, Matilda Gust, and Geneva Dettwiler.

## CHAPTER 4

### Geneva Begins New Life with Alvin – *The Dettwiler Family*

Geneva, the second child born to Martin and Clara Martinson, married Alvin Dettwiler on December 11, 1937. With six children born during their first 11 years of marriage, they have the largest family among all of Geneva's eight brothers and sisters.



**Geneva Martinson and Alvin Dettwiler  
on their wedding day (1937)**

Joyce was born first, in 1939. Then along came Jean in 1942, followed closely by Bob in 1943. Ruth (or to most of us, "Dolly") was born in 1945. Phil (affectionately known as "Phip, Phipper or Phippy" by the cousins) entered the picture in 1947. Not much more than a year later in 1948, James ("Jim or Jimmy") took over as the baby of the family. For some reason we always seemed to add the "y" sound on to get cute nicknames.

Geneva and Alvin operated a dairy farm three miles east of Mt. Horeb on Highway 18 until they retired and moved into Mt. Horeb on Brian Street in 1982.



**Geneva and Alvin in later years**

It must have been quite a household with six children -- similar to what our Grandma and Grandpa Martinson experienced with nine kids, I'm sure. The following memories are being recalled by the six Dettwiler children and even some grandchildren. And, of course, I get to reminisce a bit about fun times I spent on the Dettwiler farm when we visited as cousins.

Now, if only Geneva and Alvin were still alive to appreciate it. They would smile and laugh heartily at their family's recollections!



During a phone interview, Jean, who now lives in Fox Lake, told me, *“I miss our moms, Dorothy.”* Our mothers, as the two oldest Martinson sisters, were very close, and our families gathered frequently at each other’s homes. Aunt Geneva and my mom, Benunie, talked by phone often, sharing tidbits of their daily lives. Sadly, both have died.

Jean recalls her mother Geneva describing the hot summer of 1936 as being so hot that they resorted to sprinkling the beds with a clothes sprinkler to cool it down. My mother Benunie must have suffered with the heat that summer because my older sister Rosann was born on July 15, 1936.

Grooves in doorways inside the Dettwiler house told a story for decades. Jean and all five of her siblings recalled the Christmas when the four youngest got tricycles from Santa. “Mom and Dad allowed the kids to ride the tricycles indoors throughout that winter,” Jean said.

“The house doorways had grooves carved in them from the knobs on sides of the trike wheels!” Jean explained, noting that the grooves were still there when the house was burned (intentionally) to make room for a new house. “Mom painted over the grooves all the time.”

“Our mom also used psychology to get us to quit fighting.” Jean continued. In the middle of a fight or argument, she would look out the window and yell, *“Oh, there goes the dog!”* “We’d stop and look out the window, and then she’d tell us, *‘I guess it went down into the woods!’*” Jean recalls Bob throwing a big heavy metal toy tractor at Joyce – I wonder if the dog went down to the woods during that incident?



Geneva and Alvin with  
Joyce and Jean (1942)

## Memories of Grandma and Grandpa Martinson

### Joyce:

Grandpa Martinson died when I was seven so I don’t have many memories of him, but I do recall staying overnight with them in order to get to Sunday School. Grandpa would read my Sunday School papers to me. Grandma Martinson was always making crafts and sewing clothes for all her children. I asked her once how she got all her kids’ clothes sewn when they were little. She said she stayed up way into the night. I wonder how she could stand nine kids the next day? One time I asked her where she found such a big crochet hook for the rugs she made. She said she cut the end off of a mop or broom handle and carved it herself.

### Jean:

Although Jean was only four when Grandpa Martinson died in 1946, she remembers hearing that he was very tall. “In fact, he was so tall that I heard they had to build an extra long casket,” Jean recalls.

A most vivid memory Jean has of Grandma Martinson is the swinging doors in her bathroom as well as the fact she had no shower or bathtub. “Grandma must have taken sponge-baths,” Jean laughed. She also recalls that Grandma’s looms for making rugs were upstairs where Lizzie Henderson lived.

Grandma Martinson had a “no-nonsense calmness about her,” according to Jean. “And she loved lutefisk and lefse,” Jean said, noting that Grandma became famous in Mt. Horeb for the lefse she made. “She even sold it to others around town.”

When Jean thinks about Grandma Martinson, she visualizes her picking berries and gathering walnuts from their woods. So do I. Grandma Martinson split her time visiting the homes of her nine grown children and their families – our farm and Dettwiler’s farm being two of them.

It was common for our Grandma and our mothers, Geneva and Benunie, to go hiking down into the woods on either farm to pick berries. The threesome would gear up by tying pails around their waists with a rope belt. It was a very creative idea, as it would free both hands for gathering wild blackberries and red raspberries. Not a berry missed the pail – except for those that went into the mouths of us kids.

“Another item in great demand by Grandma was the black walnuts that grew on our farms,” Jean recalls. “She would gather the nuts and lay them on the gravel by our garage where she would stomp and crush them with her feet to get the outer green shell off. In winter she would pick out the nuts for her baking needs.”

Winemaking was also in Grandma’s wide range of talents. “We picked dandelions for Grandma,” Jean said. “And she made wine from the blossoms.”

“Grandma Martinson loved to crochet,” Jean continues. “She made a Lord’s Supper wall hanging, tablecloths, a wedding dress bodice and train for my sister-in-law Ann Dettwiler, two baptismal blankets, and many more items over the years. She crafted quilts, stuffed animals, rugs, decorations made of aluminum cans, and more. What couldn’t she make? And one more thing about her – Grandma would stay up nearly all night sometimes to put a huge 500 or 1000-piece jigsaw puzzle together.”

**Bob:**

Grandma Martinson did not drive. We usually brought her out to our farm when someone was having a birthday. She loved to pick berries in our woods. Sometimes she got so scratched up by the berry bushes she looked like she could use a blood transfusion!

**Dolly:**

Grandma was a quiet person. She was always busy doing something. She made a lot of crafts, and she made a lot of lefse. Very good lefse! I always enjoyed going to Grandma’s house, and one reason was because we got to spend some time in town. We never went trick-or-treating, but we would go to Grandma’s house and help her hand out the candy. Of course, we always got to eat some.

**Phil:**

My memories of Grandma include the following:

- Haircuts with a hand clipper (ouch!)
- Seeing her sitting in her rocking chair when we'd drive by and glance toward her house
- Watching her crochet and create craft items like teddy bears and brown work sock monkeys
- Her good lefse and flatbread!
- Grandma picking walnuts on our farm and putting them in a gunny sack.
- Visions of Grandma picking berries on our farm, wearing a big straw hat and having a pail tied at her waist.

Phil continues, "Grandma designed and made a crocheted train for my wife Ann's wedding dress, which she later divided and made into two lacy baptismal blankets for us."

**Jim:**

Jim, the youngest of the Dettwiler children, remembers many of the same things.

"Grandma was a person with many skills, from rug making and crocheting to baking cookies and much more. She would come out to the farm and spend the whole day picking berries in the woods," Jim fondly recalls.



**Grandma Martinson and Ann Dettwiler show the crocheted train Grandma created for Ann's wedding gown. (1969)**

**Below, Geneva and Alvin are surrounded by their six children, starting in front with Bob and going clockwise to Jean, Joyce, Jim, Phil and Dolly. (Late 1980s or early 1990s)**





## Favorite holiday

Joyce wonders, "How did so many of us fit into Grandma's Mt. Horeb house at Christmas time?"

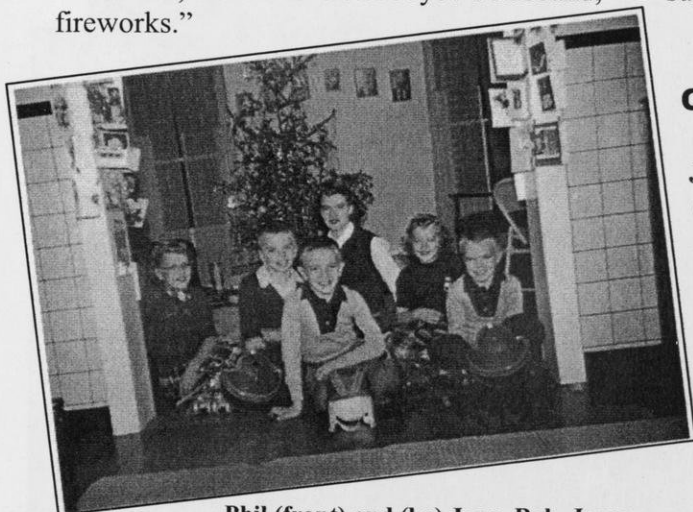


Christmas at Grandma Martinson's house was always bustling with grandchildren anxious to meet Santa. Dorothy Schwarz is facing Santa and is grasping one of Grandma's clown dolls made with socks. (1950)

Jean, Bob, Jim, and Dolly all agree that Christmas was a favorite time. "We got a lot of gifts," Bob recalls, while Jim adds that time spent at Grandma Martinson's house for Christmas was extra special.

"It was fun being with grandparents, cousins, and all the Martinson families," Dolly smiles.

Phil, however, claims he enjoyed the July 4<sup>th</sup> holiday the most. "It meant firecrackers and family gatherings. "We boys got into trouble frequently. When we were younger, Cliff Gust, our oldest sister Joyce's husband, supplied us with many of our fireworks."



Phil (front) and (l-r) Jean, Bob, Joyce, Dolly and Jim Dettwiler - Christmas at Dettwiler's house (1952)

## Christmas memories

### Joyce:

One year four of my brothers and sisters got tricycles from Santa and rode them all over inside the house!

Lefse and romme grot were always made at Christmas time. I make these Norwegian treats, but I am better at lefse than the romme grot.

### Bob:

I recall a Christmas the four youngest in our family got tricycles. We were allowed to ride them indoors the rest of the winter. Needless to say, our house looked lived in! We

always had a natural Christmas tree that we decorated. Another holiday tradition we continue to carry on today is having Norwegian lefse each Christmas season. Grandma Martinson was famous for her lefse.

**Dolly:**

We always opened our presents on Christmas morning, usually very early. Then the milking had to be done. After that we always had a nice Christmas dinner and spent the rest of the day playing with our toys. I remember we used to get puzzles and I always liked putting them together. It was always family day.

**Phil:**

One year I got a tool belt with a hammer, pliers, screwdriver, and a key ring for keys. The Christmas tree was always in the far end of the living room, and we always bought them at the lot in Mt. Horeb. In my immediate family, our traditions included getting dressed up for church, which was always Christmas Day morning. When I was young we always went to Grandma Martinson's for Christmas Eve and Grandma and Grandpa Dettwiler's house on Christmas night. Our own family Christmas was on Christmas morning before church. We got up early and Mom and Dad did chores in the barn. Then we opened gifts (sometimes we may have opened them before chores), and finally we got dressed for church. (Must've been hell for Mom!) I really don't remember anything about the meals. Traditions we continued include church, and making lefse, which Ann and I just started doing during the past three or four years.

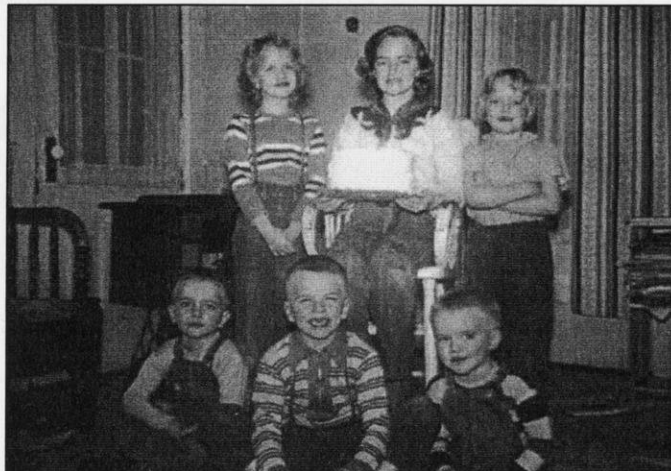
**Jim:**

Reviving memories of past Christmas seasons as a child evokes happy thoughts of going to church on Christmas and of seeing the family Christmas tree, Jim says.

**Grade school days**

**Joyce:**

For first grade I went to Spring Valley School, but for second grade I was at Springdale Center. Both were one-room schools. Playing football and going to other schools for "play days" where we would have foot races, sack races, and all kinds of fun are fond memories.



Dettwilers at home to celebrate Joyce's birthday are in front (l-r) Phil, Bob, Jim. Back (l-r) Jean, Joyce, Dolly. (1950)

**Bob:**

I attended the one-room Springdale Center School for all eight grades. Roughly four of those years I was the only one in my class. We had to be creative and come up with our own games outside. I remember sleigh riding in winter on the neighbor's land next to the school. A dog named Charley always came to school and joined us.

**Jean and Dolly:**

Jean says that in a three-year period, all six of the Dettwiler children were enrolled at the Springdale Center School, just off Highway 18.

“A farmer who lived near our school had a dog that always came to play with us in the school yard,” Dolly said. “He was a good watch dog.” Dolly adds that when her dad Alvin was on the school board, she was responsible for taking the monthly paycheck to the teacher.

**Phil:**

“Throughout grades 1-6, I was the only kid in my class at Springdale Center School,” Phil said, noting that one teacher taught between 25-35 students each year. “Recess time meant sledding, snowball fights, Fox and Goose, Annie-I-Over, Pom-Pom Pull-Away, and music with Fanny Steve,” Phil recalls. “Mabel Espeseth was my favorite teacher. She had a Volkswagen bug.” Phil also remembers school radio programs like *Let’s Sing* and *Book Trails*. “I can still smell that sweeping compound they used to clean the floors,” Phil reminisces. “I also can picture wet mittens and clothes in winter and spring and playing softball games against other one-room schools in the area.”

**Jim:**

Jim, the youngest of the Dettwiler children, attended both Springdale Center and Ridgeview Schools. “Most vivid are the fun times spent playing tackle football, throwing snowballs, sledding, and playing softball,” Jim said.

**Typical summer day**

Joyce says she helped with mowing the lawn and working in the garden. “I also was sent to bring the cows home. I was driving the tractor by the time I was 10 years old.”



**Doll playtime (l-r) Jean Dettwiler, her cousin Lillian Dettwiler, sister Dolly, and cousin Dorothy Schwarz at Dettwiler’s farm. (1953)**

**Dolly:**

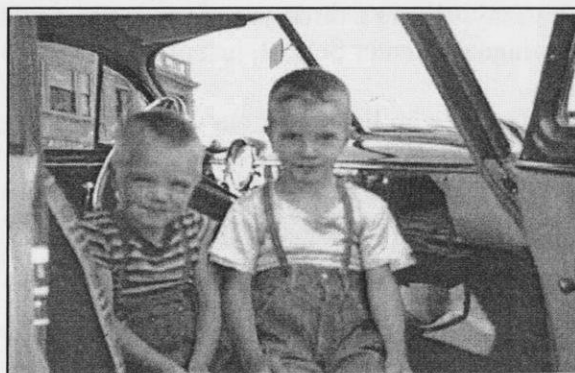
“I helped with the gardening, clothes washing, ironing, did dishes, and helped with some of the cooking.

There was also always time for fun like playing ball in the front yard, riding our bikes, and climbing in the apple trees in the orchard.



**Bob:**

On a typical summer day, the first task was to milk the cows. Then we could go indoors for breakfast. Next, if it was during haying season, we mowed and raked hay. We may have had to cultivate corn during these same days. During late afternoon and evening, the cows had to be milked again. We also had time to play games like softball on most days too. And on hot days Mom always had plenty of her special ice tea for us to drink!



**Jim and Phil have fun in the old Chevy! (1951)**

**Phil:**

Summer mornings for me started by having to feed the calves, help dad load the milk cans in the old pickup truck, and drive to the cheese factory. I also had to let the cows out to pasture and then clean the barn. Then we would head into the house for breakfast, which was usually cold cereal. We probably grabbed the BB guns and headed out to find pigeons, sparrows, starlings and anything else that moved. Some days we would trek into the woods to climb trees, play in the spring, and check on the livestock there. I don't remember a specific time that we ate "dinner."

In the afternoons we'd play cowboys and Indians on the front porch, play in the sandbox, kill sparrows in the barn, "hunt" some more, play softball in the front yard, play catch, and throw the football. Then it was time for "supper" and helping with chores afterwards. In the evenings we frequently had ice cream or shared a big dishpan of buttered popcorn. We usually fell asleep somewhere on the floor and were carried upstairs to bed. Baths were only on Saturday night. Jim says he helped with chores and whenever possible went to the woods to explore and play.



**High School memories and careers**

Joyce graduated from Mt. Horeb High School in 1957. Her favorite classes were math and bookkeeping. Dating Cliff Gust during high school days brings back fond memories for Joyce. A comical and sweet guy, Cliff eventually became her husband. Together, they went on to have six children and run a large farm operation. Joyce has been a homemaker, wife, farm owner, and 4-H leader. She is currently Vice President of the Wisconsin FFA Alumni and the Wisconsin Master Farmers. Sadly, Cliff died of cancer in recent years.

**At left, Joyce and Cliff pose in the Dettwiler home before heading off to the Mt. Horeb High School Prom. Notice the old "crank" phone on the wall! (1950s)**

Jean graduated from Mt. Horeb High School in 1960. She enjoyed making friends with classmates, going to school dances and functions, and watching her brother Bob perform in sports. After high school, Jean worked for eight years at the Wisconsin Motor Vehicle Department until her marriage. She now lives in Fox Lake, Wisconsin with her husband Jack Hollnagel.

Bob's favorite high school class was agriculture. He graduated in 1961, just a year after his sister Jean. Bob appreciates his opportunity to play sports – namely football and baseball. He earned a Bachelors of Science Degree in Education from UW-Platteville and was a high school teacher for more than 30 years. He taught technology education and coached football. Bob is retired and lives in the country near Mt. Vernon, not far from the Martinson family's original farmstead in Springdale Township.



**Bob and Judy Dettwiler married in 1991, surrounded by Judy's four lovely daughters as bridesmaids!**



**Sisters (l-r) Jean, Joyce, and Dolly**

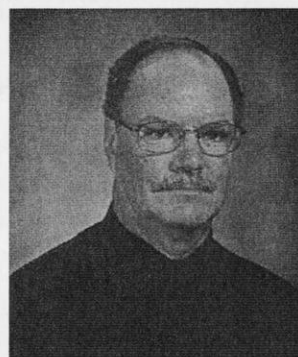
In 1963, Dolly graduated from Mt. Horeb High School. Her favorite subjects were home economics, English and music. Fond memories revolved around football and basketball games, riding on the student bus to the away games, having a part in the school play, and going to proms and homecomings. Dolly attended college at Platteville for almost two years. She has been employed at AAA in Madison for nearly 40 years and is currently a customer service rep and processor there.

Phil, who graduated from Mt. Horeb High School in 1965, claims science as his favorite subject and sports as a favorite extracurricular activity. "I played in all the sports, which included some very long bus rides," Phil said. "My mom and dad attended almost all the games even though they were busy farming." Phil has fond memories of going to Olson's Restaurant before and after games for hamburgers and malts. "And of course, going to school dances with my classmate Ann, who is now my wife!"

After high school, Phil went on to UW-Stevens Point, graduating in 1970 with a teaching degree in biology. He taught for five years in Oregon, Wisconsin and then began work at the Veteran's Hospital in Madison. At age 40, he returned to school and earned an Associate Degree in Electronics. He then changed departments at the VA Hospital, and

has gone on to accumulate 30 years as a biomedical engineering technician. His main task is to maintain and repair medical equipment. He and his wife Ann built a new home in 2005 on land that was once his parents' farm just two miles east of Mt. Horeb.

Jim graduated from Mt. Horeb High School in 1966. His favorite subjects were math, chemistry and physics. Playing sports is a memory that stands out for Jim. He went on to earn a Bachelors Degree in Education at UW-Platteville and a Masters Degree at UW-Superior. He was a high school math teacher until he retired in 2005 at age 57.



**Jim Dettwiler**

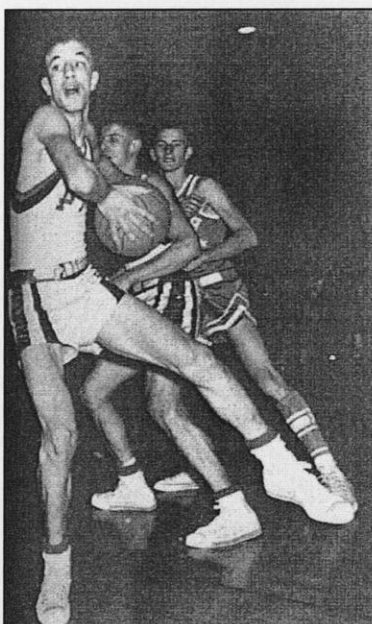
### **Fond memories of our dad, Alvin**

#### **Joyce:**

I enjoyed working outside with dad, but sometimes he would get mad when I wouldn't stay in place to help get the cows in the barn. We'd get into some arguments. I probably was just as stubborn. I do recall that he played softball with us on some Sundays.

#### **Bob:**

My dad Alvin had a great sense of humor. He laughed a lot. Although sometimes when we did something he didn't like, we were able to wipe that smile off his face. He was a great role model for me, and he was quite educated. He liked to tell us funny things that happened in the past, and many of them involved our Uncle Walter Schwarz. I especially enjoyed the interest he took in the sports I played in school. We would talk for hours as I shared with him the experiences I had playing football, coaching, and teaching.



**Phil, far left, excelled in basketball and other sports at Mt. Horeb High. (1964)**

#### **Dolly:**

Dad was a hard worker with a sense of humor. He always played April Fools jokes on us. When we discussed his childhood, he would always say, "*I remember 40 years ago when...*" It was always 40 years ago. Dad taught us many life lessons. When we were learning to drive, he would advise, "*If you are going to hit something, hit something cheap.*" Dad enjoyed his family and his friends. He enjoyed life, worked hard, and got involved in school when we were school age. He was also involved in church as an usher for many years.

#### **Phil:**

I would say my dad was a fairly patient man. I enjoyed his sense of humor. He always took good care of his farm equipment. In high school, I was very appreciative of his support and willingness to let us participate in sports, even though we were farming.



Dad was busy and didn't have a lot of time to spend with us, but I remember one occasion when we were playing softball in the yard. He was batting, and when he hit the ball it broke a window in the house. It wasn't funny when we did it, as I remember it, but somehow it wasn't as big a deal when it happened to him. Dad liked to do things for himself. One year my brothers, Dad and I built a shed on the farm as we always fixed our own equipment whenever we could. I think he was somewhat of a perfectionist.

**Jim:**

Dad always had a smile. It was always fun when he would do things with Walter Schwarz, my uncle. Dad was very supportive of whatever I tried. He was also smart. He seemed to be able to work smarter, not harder. Playing golf or just talking with him were things I liked to do with my dad.

**Jean:**

I remember Dad balancing on a bongo board at our Uncle Walter Schwarz's house. He fell and, sadly, hurt his shoulder. I also recall Dad's dislike of Blue Jay noise and his love for golf after retirement. He also was good at doing math in his head. Poetry was another interest of Dad's. He could recite poetry from memory – poems he had learned in school. Dad enjoyed younger people, and he was a very caring father. He was always concerned about his family. In later years, after I was married, he got along so well with my husband Jack.

### **Social life at the Dettwiler's household**

**Joyce:**

Our social life was going shopping on Saturday nights. Sometimes we would go to the Ma and Pa Kettle movies. Mostly it was visiting aunts, uncles, and cousins.

**Dolly:**

My social life was mostly visiting cousins on weekends. Often we'd go into Mt. Horeb on a Friday night, snack on some popcorn from Ollie's popcorn stand, and then just have fun watching people go by on Main Street. Attending the Springdale 4-H Club meetings and Sunday School and church at Mt. Horeb Evangelical were also a big part of my social life.



**Dolly and Jean get together with cousins during a Martinson family gathering. Front (l-r) Joan Martinson and Becky Skindrud. Back (l-r) Dolly Dettwiler, Judy Martinson, Alice Grundahl, Dorothy Schwarz, and Jean Dettwiler. (1954)**

**Jean:**

We filled the pew in church every Sunday, entering church either just before or after the choir marched in. Other social events included going to school events, 4-H, and visiting relatives. In summer we would drive the short distance into Mt. Horeb to shop, attend ice cream socials, and visit Ollie Statz's popcorn stand. Other times we just had fun playing at our farm.

**Bob:**

Visiting relatives or going to large family gatherings was a big part of our social life. On Friday nights during summer we would often go to the ice cream social in Mt. Horeb.

**Phil:**

I think about how times have changed... We used to go to town on Friday nights and once in a great while we got to stop at one of Mt. Horeb's drive-in restaurants -- either the A & W or Murphy's. Dad's social life was bowling every Monday night. While he was gone, Mom would make popcorn and we'd listen to the radio and, later on, television. Social life revolved around church and Sunday school and family gatherings nearly every holiday. Occasionally we would go to aunts and uncles for a Sunday afternoon visit. We thought some of those drives were the longest in the world. They were really only 15 miles away!

**Jim:**

Church on Sunday and going to town on Friday night in the summer made up much of our social life.

**How things were different years ago**

**Joyce:**

We ate a lot of egg dishes, some pork and very little beef or chicken. Dad did not like chicken that well. We had homemade and hand-me-down clothes. Usually we got something new only for Christmas and Easter.



**Bob:**

There was no fast food when we were young. I never heard of pizza until I was in high school, and I don't believe Mountain Dew was invented yet. White socks were acceptable in church. Most people dressed up more when going to church then.

*Bob, Jim, Phil, Dolly, Jean, and Joyce pose with their mom in the 1950s.*

**Dolly:**

Food choices were different because it was mainly meat, potatoes, and vegetables. Food was raised in the garden, and meat was raised on the farm. We always had pie for dessert on Sundays. I still make some of the same recipes. Most of my clothes were hand-me-downs, but we always had plenty to eat and never went without things we wanted.

**Jean:**

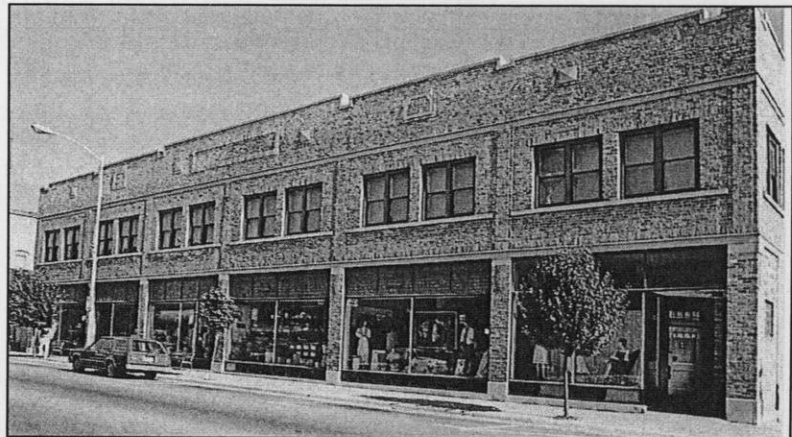
We always prepared food from scratch back then. Pre-made products weren't around like now. I loved all of my mother's recipes.

**Jim:**

I don't recall ever having pizza from a restaurant until I was in high school. We seldom went out to eat. Food was basic back then, but good.

**Phil:**

How things were different for us as kids? A weekly bath on Saturday night was the norm – now we all shower/bathe daily. Socially, it was a Friday night in town – now it's whenever and wherever you want. Shopping amounted to a trip to Hoff's Store, Beat's Hardware, and Vasen's "Dime Store." Now, frequent trips to Madison are the norm. Some of the best recipes are from 30 years ago, but they're not as healthy for us to eat because we don't work as hard physically as people did back then.



**Hoff's huge store in Mt. Horeb was a hub of activity and the place to shop Monday through Saturday or on Friday nights.**

## **Life-changing inventions**

**Joyce:**

The invention I remember is indoor plumbing. It sure beat taking a bath behind the oil burner with your brothers and sisters watching – that was the problem I had, being three years older than everyone!

**Jean:**

A toilet was a luxury. No running outside in the winter anymore! I also recall getting a black and white TV when I was in seventh grade. Another neat invention was a phone you didn't have to crank!



**Bob:**

When I was about 10 years old, we got our first television set and that was quite amazing. And cars were always coming out with something new like signal lights, seatbelts, and larger engines.

**Jim:**

Television gave me exposure to the outside world!



**Dettwiler brothers (l-r) Bob, Phil, Jim.**

**(1990s)**

**Phil:**

Our first television was made by DuPont. I was not quite 10 when we bought it. We watched the Friday night boxing fights. Another invention was the bulk milk cooler, a replacement for milk cans. A new John Deere tractor with a manure loader and snow bucket really helped make farm work easier. It replaced the pitchfork and snow shovel! I was especially glad when our dad bought a barn cleaner and an automatic silo unloader.

**Dolly:**

The biggest inventions when I was growing up were indoor plumbing and our first television set.

## **Chores and responsibilities**

**Joyce:**

Mowing lawn, working in the garden, driving tractor, and washing the milking machines – as the oldest of six children I did all of these and more.

**Bob:**

I had to help milk, feed, and clean up after the cows. Along with that, I carried milk to the milk house, fed calves, and drove tractors quite often.

**Dolly:**

My daily chores involved helping with dishes, washing clothes, ironing, mowing lawn, picking eggs, house cleaning, and gardening.

**Phil:**

I remember my chores as feeding the calves, carrying the milk to the milk house, pitching hay out of the hay mow, barn chores in the morning, putting out fresh bedding and corn silage, and later on we helped with field work.

**Jim:**

Feeding calves and cattle and doing all kinds of chores around the barn kept me pretty busy.

**Jean:**

My main role at home was to clean the house and wash clothes. I ironed, using a water bottle sprinkler. Other jobs I was responsible for included washing dishes, helping make meals, and assisting Mom with baking.

Often I watched for the “*dog down in the woods!*” I was also in charge of being a lookout to watch and give the signal to the other kids as to when Mom and Dad were done with chores in the barn!



**Jack and Jean (Dettwiler)  
Hollnagel**

**Fond memories of our mother, Geneva**

**Joyce:**

I don't remember Mom ever getting mad. She told us once that she never had a headache. With six kids that was amazing. She always went about her work, never complaining – just getting it done. She was a very private person. I wish I was like her, taking things as they come. Mom and I always got along better than dad and I.



**Geneva (Martinson) Dettwiler (1993)**

**Dolly:**

Mom was a quiet, hard working person. When dad went bowling on Monday nights, she always made us popcorn. We enjoyed coloring Easter eggs with her. She was a 4-H leader and taught me sewing and cooking. She always made a grocery list for dad when he went to town, and she always had him buy candy that was in pieces. When he came home it was divided into seven piles – one for each of us kids and one for dad!

“I was with Mom the day she was told she had cancer,” Dolly continues. “That night we went to the A&W for supper. She and I sat there for a long time and just talked. I will never forget that time. She was just a super person. Very loving and understanding. A very good mother.”

**Jean:**

She made great hamburgers and homemade buns on Friday nights after games! She enjoyed doing chores with dad, raising six kids, making meals, and showing the kids the “dog in the woods.” She loved cardinals very much. Daily rituals included reading her devotions and doing exercises and stretches to keep her body strong. She followed in her

mother's footsteps. Like Grandma Martinson, Mom could do just about anything. She was a very loving person. I admired Mom's calmness and her religious nature. She had very few complaints.

**Bob:**

My mother was always a very positive person who was a great role model. She was the classiest person I have ever known. If she is not in heaven right now, then I don't believe there is a heaven. Mom was always there for us. She was always pleasant and didn't cry over spilled milk. Whenever we lost something, she could always find it. (How did she do that?)

**Phil:**

My mother was always working and never complaining. Patience was her virtue. When I think about her day, it is amazing. I remember Rev. Mostrom reading this poem on Mother's Day which listed about 1000 things and then ended with "*When I come to the end of a perfect day*" – that's how all my mom's days were. My mother viewed hard work on the farm as a way to survive raising six kids – she used to say she went to milk the cows just to get some rest!

She sewed but never had a lot of time for it, so Grandma Dettwiler did a lot of sewing for her. Mom made doughnuts, cookies and pies of all kinds -- apple, cherry or rhubarb to name a few. She liked to make angel food cakes for birthdays. Mom was good at making meals from leftovers. I don't know how she did it! Just washing clothes in the wringer washer was a huge job – and she hung them all out on the huge clothesline which was strung between posts and trees in the front of the house. On top of that she carried them all up from the basement stairs.

Mom, like Dad, was very supportive of our high school activities. She NEVER got flustered; she rolled with the punches. She did everything while remaining calm in the process. My wife Ann calls her the "*perfect mother-in-law*" and a "*damn hard act to follow.*"

**Jim:**

Mom had a quiet inner strength. She was a very strong person emotionally. She never seemed to get sick. She was always helping. I enjoyed everything about her. Mom's sense of humor was great, and she was always there when you needed her.

## **Typical day in the life of our mother**

**Joyce:**

Mom washed all those clothes and did all that ironing. It was especially amazing at the time my brothers were all in college at the same time in the 1960s. If they all came home on the same weekend, she would have 40-50 shirts to iron!

**Bob:**

When we were growing up in the 1940s-1960s, Mom's daily schedule included getting up about 6:30 a.m. to milk the cows. Then she would return to the house and make



breakfast. She'd go back outside for a couple of hours to clean the barn and feed the cows. After that she'd go back to the house to make lunch for everybody and then spend the afternoon sewing, getting groceries, or planning the next meal. Late afternoon she would go back out to milk cows again. After milking and chores were done at night, she worked on whatever she thought had to be done. While doing all of this, she always knew what her six kids were doing -- and she cared what we were doing. She never complained. Seldom did she seem stressed or tired, and I don't recall her ever being sick.



**Dolly and brothers Phil, Bob and Jim harvest pumpkins.**

**Dolly:**

Mom's days were filled with working hard for the family and relaxing when the work was done. She said she relaxed when she helped with the milking.

**Jim:**

In the early 1950s mother had six children, yet she still helped in the barn. It was not an easy life, but she never complained.

**Phil:**

Mom would get up with Dad in the morning and go to the barn to milk the cows. Then she would wash the milking machines while the rest of us did barn chores. Mom always carried in a pail of milk for the day's drinking supply and began to put breakfast supplies on the table. She'd do up the dishes and, depending on the day, perform a variety of duties. Monday was always laundry day, another day she'd mow the lawn, another was set aside for grocery shopping in Mt. Horeb, and so on. She'd feed the chickens and collect the eggs. Finally, it was time to make dinner and clean up those dishes. Imagine the amount of dishes for a family of eight!

In summer, Mom made tasty batches of her famous iced tea. It contained hand-squeezed lemons and oranges. We all loved this refreshing drink. (*See recipe at end of chapter.*) She would iron in the afternoon, but only after the wrinkle-free system of sprinkling the clothes with water, rolling them up in a plastic bag, and placing them in the refrigerator! Soon it was time to prepare the supper meal, after which she returned to the barn for chores. When she came back in the house around 8 p.m., she would page through seed catalogs and magazines.

In 1955 Mom had six kids, all under age 16. She had little or no time for herself, yet she was *a rock!*

## **Fondest memories growing up in our family**

### **Bob:**

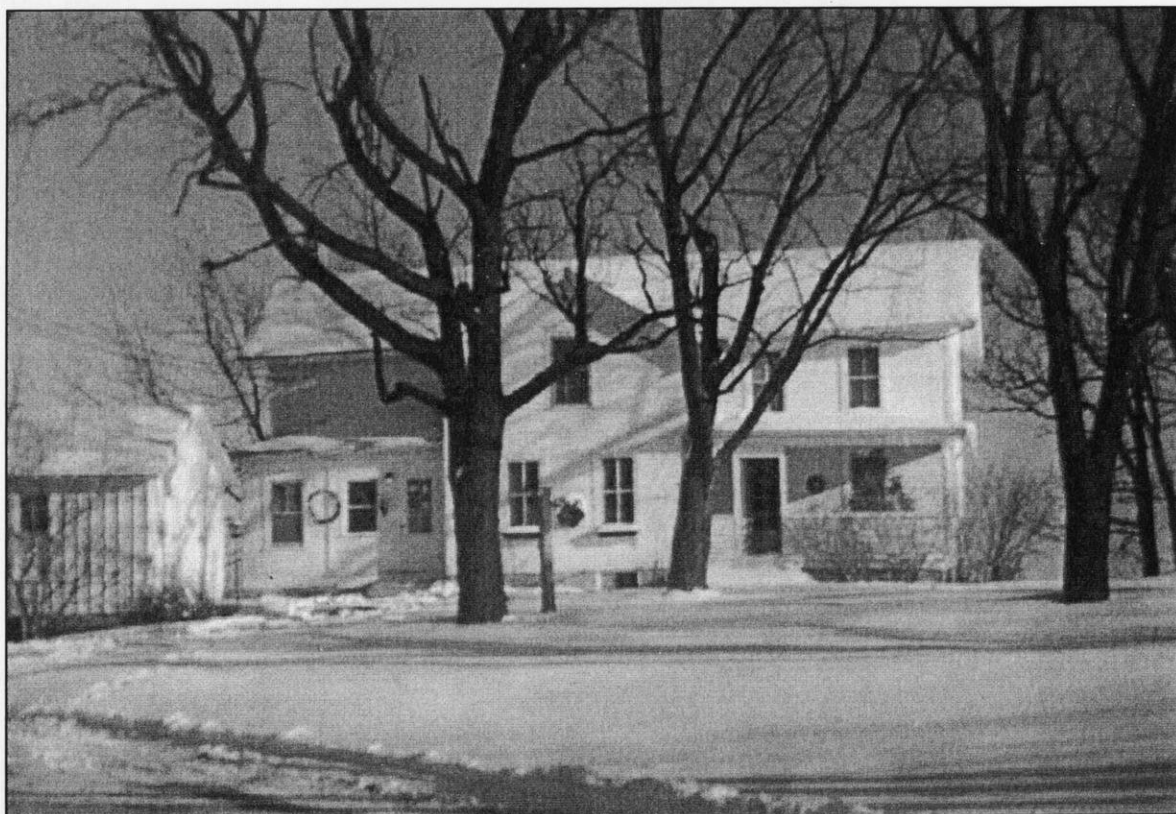
It was a special era in the 1950s and 1960s, when I had three sisters, two brothers and parents who were around most of the time on our Mt. Horeb dairy farm. Sometimes it was a lot of work, but it was a great time in my life.

### **Joyce:**

I used to think how glad I was that I wasn't an only child. It was so much fun to have brothers and sisters to do things with. I appreciate them still today. I remember the tremendous help they and my own kids were when Cliff passed away. It is a scary thought when, at age 60, you become the oldest person in the family.



**Dolly with daughters Tonya and Tammi Olson**



**The Alvin and Geneva Dettwiler home, three miles east of Mt. Horeb on old Highway 18. This is where they raised their six children: Joyce, Jean, Bob, Dolly, Phil and Jim during the 1940s-1960s. After Geneva and Alvin retired and moved to Mt. Horeb, the house was replaced with a new one. Their son Phil recently built a new home on part of the farmland.**

**Phil:**

Fond memories of growing up on our farm are many. Putting my finger on one memory is almost impossible, but I guess it is just being part of an environment within a large family (both immediate and extended) -- it allowed us to do so many different things.

**Dolly:**

Growing up in a large family was great. We worked hard, but we also played hard. I learned many lessons that made me the person I am today -- thanks to my parents, brothers, and sisters. Many times when we get together now, we reminisce about the wonderful memories growing up in the era that we did. Sometimes I wish I could go back in time.

**Changes and grandchildren's memories**

Geneva and Alvin's children gave them a total of 11 grandchildren. Some of them have chosen to write a few memories in this book.

**Mary Dettwiler's memories**

Phil's youngest daughter Mary Dettwiler, was born in September, 1980. She is the youngest grandchild of Geneva and Alvin Dettwiler. Mary lives in Wauwatosa and works for Kohl's Corporation as a merchandise specialist. She earned a degree in marketing from UW- Eau Claire after graduating from high school in Oregon, Wisconsin. Although she is too young to have any memories of her Great Grandma Martinson, she does have fond recollections of her Grandma Geneva and Grandpa Alvin Dettwiler.

"As the youngest in our family, I will always be looked at as the baby! My dad is one of six children, so whenever the whole family got together it was quite an event! But Grandpa and Grandma never seemed worried and loved it when we were all there."



**Phil and Ann Dettwiler family (l-r): Sarah, Joe, Joe's wife Kirsten, and Mary.**

"I miss having grandparents to visit and the central meeting place for our entire extended family," Mary says. "There are cousins I haven't seen for years because we all can't always be at the holiday get-togethers. Oddly enough, I miss the sound of the cowbell that would ring every time someone walked in the door at Grandma Geneva's house."



“My Grandma Geneva was the most unselfish person I knew,” Mary continues. “I was too young to realize that when she was alive, but now I understand it. I wish she was still here to see the person I’ve grown up to be. Although I was a young teen when she passed away, I have the most memories of her because I had the most time with her of any of my grandparents.”

“Once, I went with Grandma to her monthly quilting get-together with other women at her church in Mt. Horeb. Although I was young, I loved going with her to something I knew she loved to do. And who can forget Grandma’s homemade donuts and blackcap jelly! She showed me how she made them and let me drop them into the boiling lard!”

“Sadly, I do not have many specific memories of my Grandpa Alvin,” Mary continues. “He had a great sense of humor. One thing I still remember is him teaching me the rhyme ‘*When I was a wee-wee tot!*’ He used to always take out his dentures and smile at me. I would laugh and laugh because I’d never seen anyone without any teeth before! And Grandpa Alvin also loved root beer barrel candy. I’ve never been a big fan, but whenever I see one, I think of him!”

May Day was Mary’s favorite family holiday. “Every year, when I was growing up, on the first day of May, my mom and sister and I would make May-Day Baskets using old wallpaper sample books -- so they would be decorative! There was a specific way to fold the paper and make a handle strong enough not to break. We would fill these cone-shaped baskets with candy, popcorn, and other snacks. Then we would drive all over town, visiting friends, where we would drop the baskets by their door, ring the doorbell, and run away. It was such fun to deliver these baskets -- and to receive them in the same fashion!”

As for Christmas, Mary reminisces about the many traditions in her family. “Some have continued and some have diminished as we’ve all grown older. We continue to go to church every year on Christmas Eve. When I was little, we used to have “picnic” dinners at church with other families between the numerous services we attended due to the fact we were all singing in different choirs at different services. We grew up opening our presents on Christmas morning, but we were allowed to pick ONE present to open on Christmas Eve. Even after I was old enough to not believe in Santa Claus, my parents continued to give us gifts from Santa. Each person in my family still has a stocking that is filled with little treats and food. My parents continue to be the ones to fill them, but as we’ve grown older, my siblings and I also contribute to these little gifts.”

School years were filled with Mary’s parents attending each and every one of her band concerts and athletic events. “They did the same for both my siblings – throughout our college years.” Mary claims math as her favorite subject.

“My dad, Phil, is a great person, and I’m lucky to have him as my dad,” Mary says. “He has always supported me in everything I’ve done, whether its sports, college, or my life in general. On family vacations, the thing I loved the most was playing in the pool with

Dad. My sister and I would bug him to come in the pool. Eventually he gave in and joined us. I loved it when he'd throw me across the pool!"

To list everything she enjoys about her dad would be impossible, Mary says.

"I love that I can call and ask him a question about almost anything -- and he just knows, because he's a dad! I love that he can fix just about anything. I love the way he laughs at me and the look he gives me when I come down the stairs wearing high-heeled shoes, because I don't think he'll ever get used to the idea that *'the baby is growing up!'*"

"My parents recently built a new house on Grandpa and Grandma's original farmland," Mary explains. "I can see my dad is so happy and content. He just loves being back there. I told him all we need is to get him a tractor now!"



**Ann and Phil Dettwiler join their children at their son Joel and his bride Kristin's wedding. Daughters are (l-r) Mary and Sarah.**

(2003)

"Because I am one of three kids in my family, our family's social life was always very busy with church gatherings, family get-togethers, singing in different choirs in church and in school, band concerts, dance recitals, and athletic events," Mary explained.

"Growing up, we didn't have assigned chores. We were expected to keep our rooms clean and help out with housework when asked to do. But we never had chores and unfortunately, never received a weekly allowance because of it! I remember whenever we would go on vacation, I was too young to earn money, so I would 'charge' my parents when I did chores, like 25 cents to make my bed and \$1 to vacuum," Mary says.

Mary describes her mother Ann as the most generous, caring people she knows. "She's one of my best friends. I laugh with her like she's one of my girlfriends from college. Anyone who knows my mother is a better person because of it."

"Like my dad, after moving into their new house, my mom is so happy to be out there in the country near Mt. Horeb again," Mary said. "She loved being able to specify the things she wanted during the building process since she lived in such a small house when I was growing up. She loves just sitting and relaxing out in the country."

“Mom always makes me smile, and she has quirks that make me laugh. She is always so prepared for anything. For example, at my college track meets she peeled oranges for me, brought peanut butter, and had just about everything you could possibly want or need,” Mary says.

“Looking back, I realize how much my mom did on a daily basis for my family. She stayed at home from the time my brother was born until I was six, I believe. Even after she went back to work part-time, and eventually full-time, there was almost always a home cooked meal on the table and a clean house. And yet, she still had time to spend with us as a family. I think she gave up a lot for our family during those years. I don’t have one fond memory I can pull out of my head... Luckily, I have a lifetime full of them,” Mary concludes.

### **Sarah Dettwiler’s family memories**

Phil and Ann’s oldest daughter Sarah was born in 1978. Like her sister and brother, she also graduated from high school in Oregon, Wisconsin. Her favorite subject was biology and anatomy. School memories that stand out are those involving friends. Attending school football games, homecoming dances, and playing outdoor games with neighborhood kids at McGary’s house are some of the most vivid.

“I remember the last football game of my senior year,” Sarah recalls. “I was the student athletic trainer and pretty close to the guys that were also seniors on the team. We won the game in the pouring rain and afterwards, the guys ambushed me and dragged me through the mud on the field. While disgusting, it was a great time!”

Sarah went to college at UW-Stevens Point and received a Bachelor of Science in Athletic Training. She currently is completing her Associate Degree as a Physical Therapist’s Assistant. She is employed as an athletic trainer at a physical therapy clinic in Two Rivers, Wisconsin where she now resides. Sarah also is contracted through the clinic to cover all of Two Rivers High School athletic events.

Memories of being at her Grandma and Grandpa Dettwiler’s house are clear, although she was too young to remember her Great Grandma Martinson. “My Grandma Geneva was the most amazing woman. She always seemed to smile. I can still hear her laugh and can still feel her hugs. I know she took no guff from us, yet I can’t remember her ever getting angry. Grandpa Alvin was always a bit of a jokester. He’d love to take out his dentures and give a wide toothless grin to send his granddaughters shrieking. Then he’d sit back in his recliner and just laugh.”

“There was always the most delicious food at Grandma and Grandpa Dettwiler’s house. I grew up hating milk, so getting me to drink it was a chore,” Sarah recalls. “However, the milk at Grandma and Grandpa’s (out of her special pitcher) always tasted really good.”

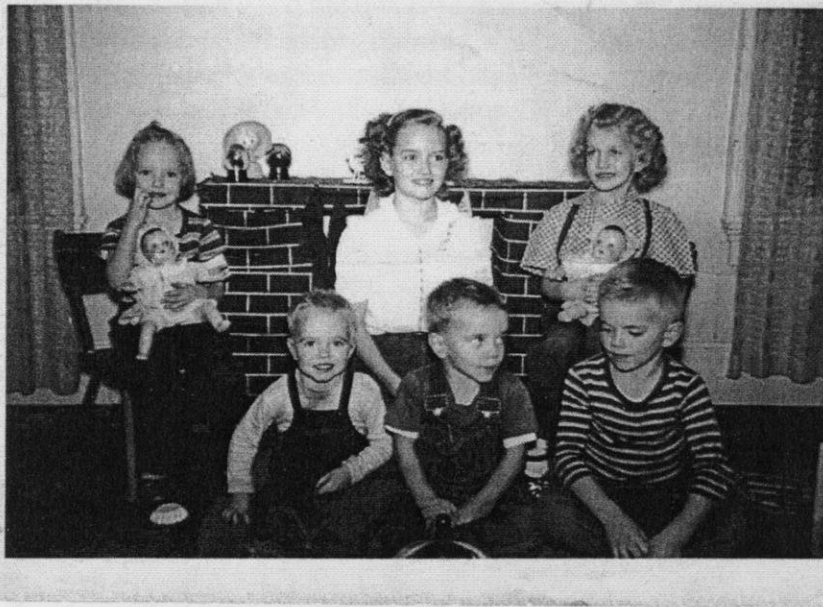
“Christmas was always a favorite time,” Sarah said. “Even as we have grown up and move away, we still return home for the holidays.”



Sarah remembers many Christmas gatherings at Grandma Geneva and Grandpa Alvin's house. "I was always so amazed at how many of us there were. The advent candles and the pre-dinner advent prayer are some of the things I remember most about my immediate family's traditions. Even now as I'm on my own, I still light the advent candles and say the prayer to myself. Another tradition started only in the past 10 years or so, is that my older brother Joel and I watch the movie, *It's a Wonderful Life*, every Christmas Eve after church."

A typical summer day for Sarah when she was growing up was to get up early. "I liked to avoid taking a shower if I could," Sarah admits. "Now I love showers, and I still don't understand why I hated them so much as a kid. In summer, I'd stay outside as much as possible. I loved running through the sprinkler or riding around on my bike. If it was too hot or raining, my sister and I would play dress-up and have our own restaurant, house, or other imaginary things in the basement."

Sarah describes her dad, Phil, as a stoic man. "Mom was the one who stayed home with us while we were growing up. So, it was always an interesting adventure with Dad every Thursday night when Mom had choir rehearsal. Dinner was always macaroni and cheese,



hot dogs, and canned green beans.

Dad was pretty quiet, and he still is. However, I remember him being affectionate as well. I always thought a back rub at bedtime from him was the best thing there was. Dad was also the one to fix our *boo-boos*," Sarah said.

Sarah and Mary's dad Phil (center) at the Dettwiler house on Christmas. He is surrounded by brothers and sisters: Jim on left, Bob on right. Back: Dolly, Joyce and Jean. (1950)

"My dad's laugh is what I enjoy most about him," Sarah continues. "And how I love to make him laugh! I also love how every time I call home and talk to him, he starts the conversation with '*What's happenin?*' Of course, this drives my mother nuts!"

"As for my younger days, we didn't really have a whole lot of money when I was growing up," Sarah said. "I remember nights of eating buttered Cheerios or popcorn for dinner and watching a movie. Pizza from Maria's was also a big deal and still is!"

An invention that impressed Sarah was the microwave. “I remember getting a microwave and standing there the entire 3 ½ minutes while I made my very first bag of microwave popcorn. Another was finally getting a television with push buttons instead of the two dials, and then a remote control – that was huge!”

Chores Sarah had to help with were typical. “We weren’t ever given an actual list where we could earn an allowance,” Sarah explained. “We were just expected to help. None of us were very good at that until veiled threats came about. There was LOTS of nagging for us to do the chores we didn’t want to do. Mom was always cleaning up after us, making us snacks and meals. I’m surprised she made it through each day without falling over, totally exhausted!”

“Mom is caring, loving, emotional yet strong, and very sensitive. She’s somewhat stubborn, but in a way that allows her to stand up for what she believes in,” Sarah adds. “What I like most about her is that she chose to stay home with us as long as she did. Few of my friends had that. While I know it made money very tight, I think I had an amazing childhood because of it. In addition, I’m old enough now that I recognize this. I’m so glad that the older I get, the more I seem to be like my mother. To me, that’s the best thing that could happen.”

Taking her Grandma Geneva around in a limo for her birthday is the fondest family memory Sarah recalls. “I realize now that it was just shortly after she’d been diagnosed with cancer. I remember the look on her face when the limo drove up and how speechless she was throughout the entire ride,” Sarah concludes.

### **Howard Gust recalls his grandparents and parents...**

Howard Gust, the oldest of the Dettwiler grandchildren, was born to Joyce and Cliff Gust in April of 1957. He began his school years in first and second grade at the White School, a one-room school.

He was the only student in his grade. In high school at Verona, his favorite subject was biology. While there he participated in FFA activities and trips. After completing a two-year Agriculture Short Course program at UW-Madison, Howard began farming.



**Joyce and Cliff Gust’s six children are (l-r) Dianne, Steve, Russell, Janet, Mike, and Howard in line from youngest (Dianne) to oldest (Howard).**

Howard remembers Grandma Martinson’s good cooking and quilt making ability. “She always seemed happy, with a smile on her face,” he said. “Grandma Geneva was very good at turning a house into a home,” Howard comments. “She did this with her artistic

touch with plants, photos, antiques, and family mementos. Grandma really enjoyed family events.”

What Howard recalls about his Grandpa Alvin is his laugh and the fact he enjoyed golf, bowling and his kids’ sporting events.

“Grandma and Grandpa had a large house and a big farm with many areas to explore,” Howard says. “In the summer when we worked up a sweat running around, Grandma would mix up a batch of her ice tea for us to drink.”

Howard has pleasurable memories of his dad, Cliff Gust, who died in his mid-60s. “He was kind of a practical joker. Once while he held my arm, he touched the electric fence wire with his other hand.”

“My dad Cliff knew the farming industry and was deeply involved in it,” Howard says. “I admired his business sense and his ability to do math in his head. In his spare time, Dad enjoyed going to auctions, fishing, and bowling.”

“Mom is helpful and hard working. She helps out with babysitting, 4-H projects, and farm work. She also is quite involved in community volunteer work. What I admire most about mom is her ability to organize and get things done.” Howard recalls his mother spent many a summer day during his youth, taking care of kids, carrying milk to the milk room, and lots of other field work.”

A new invention that caught Howard’s eye was colored television, which he says probably caused their family to begin watching too much TV. One of the fondest memories of his childhood is building playhouses with other kids. “We’d play for hours in the pastures behind the farm buildings.”

Holiday time meant family gatherings, but Howard enjoyed Easter most because it was less hectic and represented the arrival of spring. “Christmas was nice too,” Howard said, “On Christmas Eve, we all had to get the chores done. Meanwhile, Santa would be dropping off the gifts!”

Social life at the Gust homestead back in the 1960s-70s was simple but fun, according to Howard. “On Sundays we all would get in the car and drive around the countryside. When we saw a family at home, we would stop in for a sit.”



**Joyce and Cliff Gust (1990s)**



### **Janet (Gust) remembers**

In 1960, Janet was born into the Joyce and Cliff Gust family. Janet recalls visiting with her Great Grandma Martinson and going berry picking with her on the farm. She also fondly remembers her Grandma Geneva.

“Grandma Geneva was all I could want in a grandmother,” Janet says. “She would take on almost any job and do it so well. She was a wonderful cook, and I loved her fry cakes! She loved football and other sports. Grandma was always supportive, and we loved to sit and talk. It was so much fun picking berries with her, too.”

“My Grandpa Alvin was to the point. He would attend my high school basketball games and tell me how to play. Grandpa liked to golf, play horseshoes and ball.”

What did Janet enjoy about her dad, Cliff Gust? “He was a hard worker, had a strong work ethic, and a great sense of humor. He was a real jokester. I remember him throwing water through the kitchen window one time and hitting my brother with it.”

Janet claims her mother Joyce is her best friend. “We can talk about anything. She would take on just about any job thrown at her. Mom loves to be outside driving the tractor, mowing lawn, or working in her flower beds. She is a very supportive and caring person. Her attitude is that she *‘doesn’t sweat the small stuff.’* I enjoy spending time with her even when we just talk. She makes a wonderful grandmother for my two kids.”

Fond memories for Janet center on berry picking. It was often a family affair and included experienced berry pickers like Janet’s Great Grandma Martinson, Grandma Geneva, and her parents Joyce and Cliff. Occasionally her brothers and sister joined the in and make it a family project.

“I also enjoyed family visits to my grandparents’ farm near Mt. Horeb. It was fun to talk and to eat Grandma’s good food. She always had a cup of coffee on hand.”

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## *Favorite Family Recipes*

### **Mock Chop Suey** (Geneva Dettwiler)

*(From the Mt. Horeb Evangelical Lutheran Church cookbook, 1961 edition.)*

1 pound hamburger  
1 ½ up water  
½ cup uncooked rice

1 can cream chicken soup  
2 small onions, chopped  
2 Tablespoons soy sauce

Brown meat. Add rest of ingredients and mix well. Pour into greased casserole and bake for 1 ½ hours in a 350 degree oven. About ½ hour before removing from oven, pour 1 can chow mein noodles over top of casserole.

## Ice Tea – Geneva’s Special!



*Geneva's ice tea recipe was written by Phil's wife Ann from Geneva's own words. Everything is "to taste" of course! It is a favorite of the Dettwiler families and a refreshing summer drink. Ann and Phil almost always double the recipe and use both oranges and orange juice concentrate. They have a special 3-quart pail they use just for Grandma's iced tea!*

6 rounded teaspoons of black tea      2 - 3 cups boiling water  
2 lemons (juiced)                              1 can frozen lemonade  
2 - 3 oranges (juiced)                        ½ cup to ¾ cup sugar  
Water to fill container

Cover tea with boiling water and let steep 5-10 minutes. (Can use tea bags, but need at least 7 or 8 for the correct tea strength.)

Pour the juice of the lemons and oranges into a 6-quart kettle or pail. In a pinch, frozen orange juice concentrate can be substituted for the oranges.

Add lemonade to the juice in kettle. Strain tea as you add it to the juices. Add water to almost full. Add sugar to taste.

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## Escalloped Potatoes (Geneva Dettwiler)

*(From the Mt Horeb Evangelical Lutheran Church cookbook, 1961 edition.)*

¼ cup chopped onion                        ½ cup butter                        ½ cup flour  
Pepper to taste                                2 teaspoons salt                    6 cups milk  
1 can cream of celery soup                8 cups sliced potatoes

Make white sauce of butter, flour, salt, pepper and milk. Add soup. Slice potatoes and onions into buttered pan. Pour white sauce over the potatoes. Bake 375 degrees for about 1 ¼ hours. Just 10 minutes prior to removing from the oven, sprinkle with buttered cornflake crumbs. Bake for the remaining 10 minutes.

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## Mom's Chocolate Frosting

2 squares chocolate or 5 Tablespoons cocoa      4 Tablespoons butter (1/4 cup)  
1 Tablespoon light or dark corn syrup              1 ½ cup sugar  
7 Tablespoons milk    1 teaspoon vanilla

Boil one minute. Add vanilla. Beat until stiff.

### **Fry Cakes** (Geneva Dettwiler)

*The Dettwiler "kids" say their mother's fry cakes (doughnuts) were better than any!*

1 cup milk, with 2 Tablespoons vinegar to sour	2 eggs, beaten
1 cup sugar	2 Tablespoons melted shortening
1 teaspoon baking soda	2 teaspoons baking powder
½ teaspoon nutmeg	1 rounded teaspoon salt
3 ½ cups flour	

Stir 40 times. Roll out about 1/3 inch thick. Cut shapes with doughnut cutter. Place doughnut shaped dough in hot oil about 4 inches deep at least. Turn when done on one side. Remove and cool on paper bag or toweling.

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### **Geneva's Slice Cookies**

1 cup shortening (part butter)	2 ½ cups flour
1 cup brown sugar	1 teaspoon salt
1 cup white sugar	1 teaspoon soda
2 eggs, well beaten	2 cups oatmeal
1 teaspoon vanilla	1 cup flake coconut
½ cup nuts, optional	

Mix shortening and sugars together. Add eggs and vanilla. Stir in flour, salt, and soda. Fold in oatmeal, coconut and nuts. Shape into 2 long rolls. Wrap in waxed paper and chill overnight. Slice and bake at 350 degrees.

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### **Blackberry Jelly** (Geneva Dettwiler)

4 ½ cups blackberry juice  
5 ¾ cups sugar  
1 box Surejell

Bring juice and Surejell to a boil. Add sugar. Boil 1 minute. Put into jars. Seal.

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### **Delicious Dill Dip**

16 ounces sour cream	1 pint mayonnaise
1 Tablespoon dill weed	2 Tablespoons onion flakes
1 Tablespoon parsley flakes	1 teaspoon seasoned salt
1 Tablespoon Beau Monde spice	

Moisten dried onion with a bit of water. Mix well. Best if made 2-4 hours ahead of time.



### **Rommegrot** (Geneva Dettwiler)

1 quart cream	½ cup or more of flour
Salt and sugar to taste	2 cups milk, heated
½ cup melted butter*	

Bring cream to boil in heavy pan. Boil slowly for about 18 minutes, stirring often. Gradually add flour to make thick mush. Stir until butter appears. Remove butter fat and place in container to keep warm. Add hot milk gradually to mush. Stir until thick.

NOTE FROM GENEVA: *\*Sometimes I can't get the fat to come out of the cream, so I just add the hot milk and melt a little butter to put on it afterwards. You may have to add a little more than ½ cup of flour. Good luck!*

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### **Potato Chip Cookies** (Geneva Dettwiler)

1 cup butter	½ cup sugar	1 teaspoon vanilla
½ cup crushed potato chips	½ cup chopped pecans	2 cups flour

Cream butter, sugar, and vanilla. Add potato chips and pecans. Stir in flour. Form into small balls (about 1 Tablespoon). Put on ungreased cookie sheet and press flat with glass dipped in sugar. Bake at 350 for 16-18 minutes. Makes 4 dozen.

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### **Geneva's Pie Crust**

*I recall the pie crust story of Aunt Geneva and my mother Benunie, the oldest two in the Martinson family of nine. It was in the 1920s when they were teens. My Mom became frustrated at her first attempt to make pie crust. With Geneva looking on, Benunie flung that pie crust against the woodshed outside. It must have been a lesson learned, because both of these sisters were well known for their DELICIOUS pie crusts and pies throughout their lives. – Dorothy*

4 cups flour	1 ¾ cups lard	1 Tablespoon vinegar
1 ½ teaspoon salt	½ cup water	1 teaspoon baking powder
1 Tablespoon sugar	1 egg	

Blend and beat the egg. Add vinegar and water. Blend with rest of ingredients. Refrigerate at least two hours. (Will keep two weeks in refrigerator.) *Makes several crusts.*

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### **Hot Bean Salad** (Geneva Dettwiler)

½ pound bacon, cut but not fried	2/3 cup brown sugar
1/3 cup white vinegar	1 onion, diced
2 teaspoons dry mustard	1 Tablespoon molasses
1 can lima beans	1 can red kidney beans
1 can butter beans	1 can garbanzo beans (chick peas)

*Optional: 1 can undrained pork n' beans (All cans 15 ounces)*

Boil all ingredients EXCEPT THE BEANS together for about 30 minutes. Add the beans. Bake at 350 degrees for one hour.

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### **Strawberry Angel Food Dessert** (Geneva Dettwiler)

1 pkg strawberry jello          ½ cup sugar          2 cups hot water  
Refrigerate this until it begins to set. Then whip it.

Combine the following and fold it into the whipped jello mixture

1 pint whipping cream (whipped)  
1 can crushed pineapple, drained  
Maraschino cherries or sliced strawberries  
15 marshmallows, cut up

Cut up an angel food cake into a large pan or bowl, layering with the jello/cream mixture. Refrigerate until set.

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### **Phil's Favorite Angel Food Frosting**

*Geneva made this one especially for son Phil. He loves it!*

1 stick butter (no margarine!)          2 cups powdered sugar          2 egg yolks  
Pinch of salt          1 teaspoon vanilla          1 cup whipped cream  
6 Heath candy bars  
(or Hershey bars)

Cream butter, add powdered sugar, salt and vanilla. Add egg yolks and whip real good. Fold in whipped cream. Just before serving, fold in crushed candy bars. Place a scoop of frosting mixture on a slice of angel food cake. *Yummy!*

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### **Lover's Delight Apricot Balls** (Geneva Dettwiler)

1 large pkg of dried apricots, finely ground          2 cups flaked coconut  
2/3 cup sweetened condensed milk          Confectioner's sugar

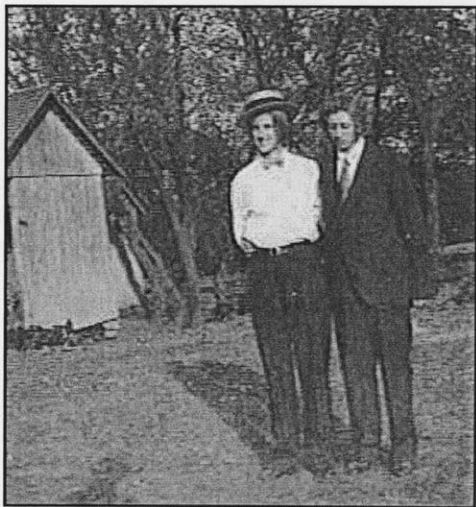
Blend apricots, coconut and condensed milk together. Mix well. Shape into small balls. Roll in sifted confectioner's (powdered) sugar. Let stand until firm. Store in air tight container in cool room. May roll in confectioner's sugar again whenever they are served.

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At left:  
 Geneva (on the right) enjoys a visit from at her sister Benunie (middle) and their friend Florence Field (left). The gathering was at Geneva's house on Brian Street in Mt. Horeb. (1994).

Photo at right: Geneva visits at her sister Benunie's house. The six Martinson sisters (l-r) front include Alma Skindrud, Geneva Dettwiler, Helen Abplanalp, and back (l-r) Benunie Schwarz Berge, Verna Grundahl, and Myrtle Showers. (Late 1980s)



Above, (l-r), Geneva and Benunie joke around and act like guys on their folks' farm! (1929)



Geneva & Alvin Dettwiler (1975)



**Martin and Clara Martinson and family  
(1920)**



Benunie said her mother Clara made all of the dresses in this photo and stayed up all night to sew beads on the dresses by hand! Five of the nine Martinson children had arrived by this time. Helen, Myrtle, Harland and Marty were yet to be born into the family. In front is the Martinson's first son, Gaylord. In back (l-r) are Geneva, father Martin, Benunie, mother Clara holding Alma, and Verna.

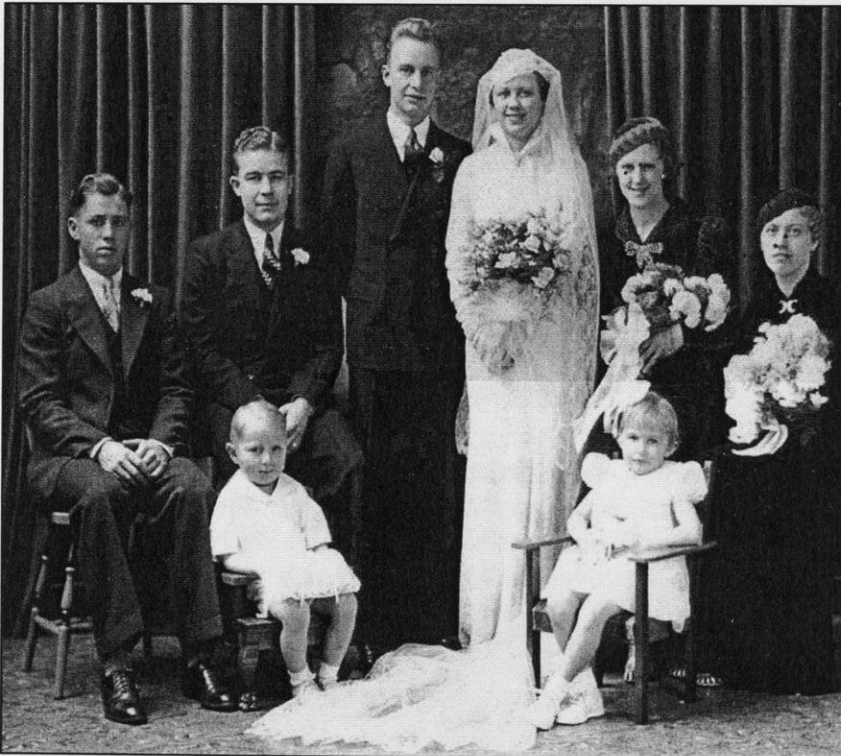
## CHAPTER 5

### **Verna Meets Bennie – And Leaves the Martinson Nest**

November 26, 1936 was a very special day for Verna Martinson. She married her true love, Bennie Grundahl. During their first eight years of marriage, they had four children – two boys and two girls. Tom arrived in 1938, Karolyn in 1941, Brad in 1942, and Alice in 1944.

Verna and Bennie's wedding on November 26, 1936, was a 2 p.m. ceremony at the Mt. Horeb Evangelical Lutheran Church. A chicken dinner was served at the Martinson home for immediate families. Verna recalls that it was prepared and served by neighbors, Hilda Lunde, Regina Brustuen, Elsie Shutvet and Dorothy Kahl.

"There wasn't time for a honeymoon as we had just rented and moved onto the Hovrud farm in Perry Township," Verna recalls. "It was a



**Verna and Bennie's wedding. Front row (l-r) Donald Schwarz and Vivian (Field) Means; back row (l-r) Gaylord Martinson, Dr. Alvin Grundahl, Bennie and Verna, Geneva (Martinson) Dettwiler, and Evelyn Grundahl Olson. (1936)**

large farm at 200-plus acres. The five-bedroom house was enormous and quite modern for that era. It even had running water, a bathroom, and a furnace! A living room, fireplace room, dining room, kitchen and washroom completed the layout. There was lots of room for us as a newly married couple!"

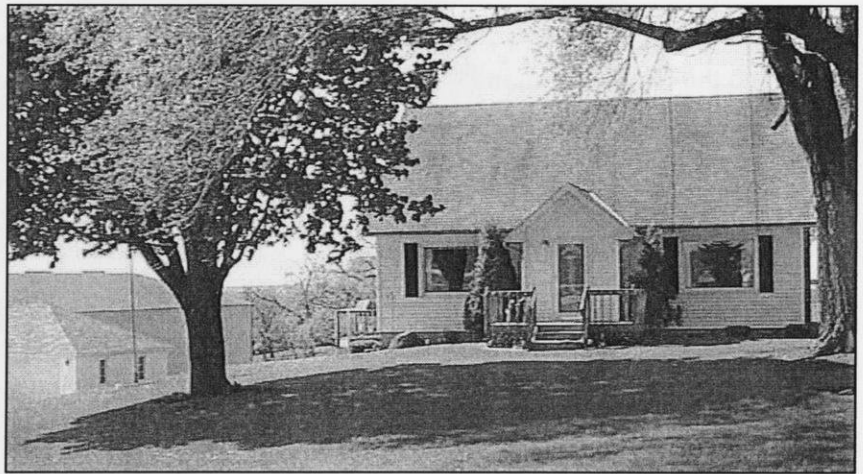
"Work was abundant," Verna recalls. "Thirty cows had to be milked and a flock of several hundred chickens to care for. We had to gather and clean the eggs in preparation for selling them. In these early years, we received 40 percent of the farm income for our work. These were hard times, but all went well. In 1938 we bought out half of the

cattle and machinery and then received 50 percent of the income. Our four children were born while living here in this big house.”

“In 1946 we purchased our own farm south of Daleyville and moved there – but we no longer had an indoor bathroom anymore! There was lots of hard work ahead,” Verna continues.

“In 1954 we moved into our garage while our old house was being torn down. A new house was being built for us by my sister Benunie’s husband Walter Schwarz, with the help of Ole Stensby,” Verna explains. “We used lumber from the old house for the construction. By the fall of 1955, we moved into our new house. We lived there until 1969, when we retired and rented the farm to our son Brad.”

**At right is the Bennie and Verna Grundahl farm home, located near Daleyville. It was built by Bennie Grundahl and Walter Schwarz in 1955. After Verna and Bennie retired, their son Brad and his wife Karen raised three sons in this house. Brad and Karen still live there today. (2005)**



“After moving off the farm, Bennie and I lived in an older home in Daleyville which we remodeled,” Verna explained. “We enjoyed our retirement and did a lot of traveling, taking many bus trips around the United States and British Columbia. In 1983 we flew to Norway for a Grundahl reunion. (Yes, Bennie was Norwegian too!) In Norway, Bennie suffered a heart attack. Thankfully, he recovered. We still were able to see much of Norway, and he arrived home in good condition. However, Bennie suffered a fatal heart attack nine years later when we were on a bus trip in the eastern United States. He passed away in Norfolk, Virginia on October 17, 1992. I have continued to live in our home since then,” Verna concludes. “It’s lonely, but my relatives and friends have been wonderful.”

**Verna celebrates her 70<sup>th</sup> birthday with husband Bennie at High Point Restaurant near Mt. Horeb. They sure knew how to have a good time together! (1985)**





## Memories of Grandma Clara and Grandpa Martin Martinson

Brad remembers Grandma Martinson making lefse and weaving rag rugs. He also recalls staying overnight at her house in Mt. Horeb.

Karolyn recalls the day Grandpa Martinson died and the funeral. She was five years old at the time. “Unfortunately I don’t remember much about him. Grandmother, on the other hand, was a big part of our family life.”



At left, are the five oldest grandchildren of Clara and Martin Martinson. Seated (l-r) are Karolyn and Tom Grundahl, Don and Rosann Schwarz and Joyce Dettwiler. (1942)

While in high school at Mt. Horeb, Karolyn spent many evenings with Grandma Martinson. What impressed her was Grandma’s weaving skills.

“I was awe-struck with the many rugs that she made,” Karolyn said. “And our three children will always remember her for the teddy bears that she made. They were almost a patented design.”

## Christmas memories and traditions

Although Brad’s favorite holiday was always July 4<sup>th</sup> because of the family picnics, he admits to continuing the tradition of eating lutefisk and lefse on Christmas Eve.

Karolyn says Christmas at Grandma’s house with all the Martinson clan was her favorite holiday celebration. “Our arrival was later than most, because we spent the early evening with the Grundahl family. Often when we arrived at Grandmother’s there was a snow storm in progress!”

## Grade school memories

Brad recalls his days at the Daleyville two-room school. “There was one boy with six girls in my class.”

“We all attended Daleyville grade school,” Karolyn said. “I remember walking to and from school, about a mile and a half. We thought nothing of it. In the winter, sledding behind the school was a real blast! We could go a really long distance down into the valley.”

## Typical summer day

While not a typical activity on a summer day, a piano story is one Karolyn recalls well. It may have added extra “heat” to an already hot day!

“We were a farm family,” Karolyn says. “There were obviously lots of chores that could be done, but if we could find an excuse to get out of them we would. One summer day when Mom and Dad were gone, we decided to get rid of our old piano that was useless. We broke it up and tossed it out the family room window!”

## High school memories and careers

Brad graduated from Mt. Horeb High School in 1960. Memories that stand out, he says, are being Junior Prom King and having lead roles in the Junior and Senior Class plays. After high school Brad went on to the UW-Madison Agriculture Short Course program. He took over the family dairy and crop farm. It currently is used only for crop farming.

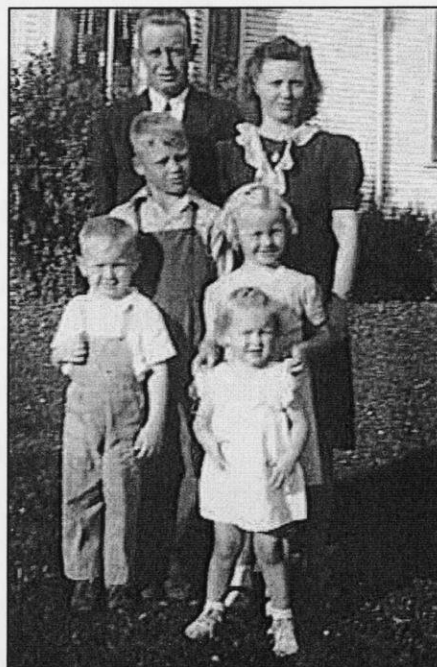
Karolyn graduated from Mt. Horeb High School in 1959. She especially enjoyed classes like home economics and mathematics. To this day, she continues to stay in touch with several classmates.

“I was very fortunate,” Karolyn said. “My parents stretched to help me attend St. Olaf College in Northfield, Minnesota.”

Karolyn has a teaching degree and majored in home economics. She also obtained a Master’s Degree from Aurora University in Illinois. She taught school immediately after graduation until her first child was born in 1968. She didn’t resume teaching full time until 1987.

## Fond memories of Dad

Karolyn recalls her dad Bennie as being a hardworking, no-nonsense kind of guy. “He enjoyed life and loved to pull pranks when the work-day was over,” she adds. “Dad was well respected by his peers and often sought out for his opinions. He was elected to the Mt. Horeb School Board for a number of years and was president for quite a few.”



Grundahl family - 1947

## Social life

“Our social life was visiting neighbors and going to Mt. Horeb on Saturday nights,” Brad said. Karolyn recalls their family being greatly involved in the local community, church activities, and playing games at home or with friends. Canasta, Rook, and Euchre stand

out in her memory. “We also interacted a lot with our cousins – especially the Dettwilers.”

#### 40 Years Ago-June 4, 1964

Duane H. Sutter, son of Mr. and Mrs. Walter Sutter, Blue Mounds graduated with the degree of doctor of Optometry in a ceremony held at the Illinois College of Optometry, Chicago. Sutter plans to practice as an associate of Dr. R.L. Guenveur of Mount Horeb.

At Bert's Drug Store: Vitalis, 77¢; Aero Shave, 53¢; Ban Roll On, 69¢.

Playing at the Strand: Mutiny on the Bounty, 50¢ to all.

### How things were different

“Milk was fresh from the barn and eggs were fresh from the hen house or wherever the hens could hide them,” Karolyn says. “Foods were pretty much the basic Norwegian fare -- meat, potatoes, gravy, butter, and vegetables -- either from the garden or Mom’s home-canned jars.”

**At left a Mt. Horeb Mail clipping reveals the era of the 1960s when many of us were teenagers at Mt. Horeb High School.**

### Life-changing inventions

Television and the fact that combines replaced threshing machines are two inventions Brad found to be amazing during his youth.

“Dad got a corn picker that pulled the ears off the stalks, two rows at a time,” Karolyn recalls. “He would harvest his own fields, but was also hired to do a lot of fields for other farmers also. The improvement in time savings let Dad plant more corn which in turn supported more stock, resulting in more income and better things in life.”

### Chores

Milking, feeding pigs and chickens, and bringing home the cows were a few of the chores Brad remembers helping with as a kid on the family farm.

Karolyn says that in her younger years chores consisted of little things like picking eggs. “Later on I got to drive the farm equipment,” Karolyn explains. “There is a famous incident where I drove the Ford tractor into the pig shed. Not so funny then, but now maybe!”



**Verna, 90, tours her one-room Malone School at the first-ever reunion in 2005.**

### Fond memories of our mother

“Mother was the classic farm mom,” says Karolyn. “She prepared all the meals, including the afternoon snack which had to be taken to the field most of the time. Mom



was also the driving force behind the hen house. If it weren't for her, there wouldn't have been one! She was, and still is, active in the Dorcas at Church. Sewing and quilting were always her forte. In addition and most importantly, she was always there for us."

"Mother was always full of energy and cheer. Even today at age 90 she is amazingly active. She still bowls with her friends, quilts, and gardens."

"A typical summer day for her when I was growing up," Karolyn continues, "was to get up early, get coffee ready, and then help Dad with whatever had to be done in the barn or field – tasks the kids couldn't or weren't available to do. She would prepare breakfast and wash dishes (with supporting roles from the kids, of course). After gathering the eggs from the hen house, she often went to the Daleyville store, prepared lunch for the kids at school, and washed the lunch dishes. Next was to clean house as needed. After preparing and taking a mid-afternoon snack to the field, she would prepare supper and check on our homework assignments -- all with a smile. Mother was usually the last person to go to bed!"

### **Memories of growing up in our family**

The fondest memory, says Karolyn, "is the self-sufficiency we had. We had lots of good friends from the Daleyville and Mt. Horeb areas, but within our family and our cousins, we were proud to be who we were -- then and now. We take pride in our very close link to Norway, but also in the fact we are Wisconsinites!"

Alice, who was born in 1944, was the youngest of Verna and Bennie's four children. Although she doesn't remember Grandma Martinson, she does recall Grandma.

"Grandma Martinson, what a lady!" Alice reminisces. "She was always busy doing something, spending time with her friends, having family at her house, taking care of one, two, three of us many grandchildren, working on her loom, crocheting, making teddy



bears or working at church activities. She always seemed to be in the kitchen -- baking bread, cookies, and especially making lefse at Christmas time. I don't remember seeing Grandma sit very much until she was in a wheelchair

**Working on Grandma Martinson's rug loom upstairs in her house are (l-r) Grandma Martinson and her daughters Alma Skindrud, Geneva Dettwiler, and front Verna Grundahl. At right is Olav Berge (Benunie's husband). Benunie was the photographer. (1976)**

"The Christmas holiday was always such a special time," Alice continues. "Early on Christmas Eve we would gather at Grandma and Grandpa Grundahl's for supper, and

after the gift opening, we would head to Grandma Martinson's house in Mt. Horeb. Everyone was there. By the time we arrived, kids were tired and parents were too. The memory I have of Christmas is being scared by Santa Claus and sitting on Dad's lap so that 'old man' wouldn't get me! Christmas Day was a time for visiting with family or having family at our house. Later on, when Grandma could no longer host the big family parties, she would come to our house for Christmas Eve. We were very fortunate to be able to have both Grandma Martinson and Grandma Grundahl at our house for Christmas Eve celebrations. Little did we know until we were older what a blessing it was to be able to bring several generations of family together at one time," Alice concludes.



**Cousins gather at the Schwarz farm near Mt. Horeb. Front (l-r) Brad Grundahl, Jean Dettwiler, Dorothy Schwarz, Alice Grundahl, Dolly Dettwiler, Bob Dettwiler; back (l-r) are Karolyn Grundahl, Rosann Schwarz, and Joyce Dettwiler. (1949)**

"Summers were spent doing farm chores -- taking care of stinky chickens, helping with dinners for the threshing crew, taking afternoon lunch to Dad in the fields, helping with dinners for neighboring threshing crews, spending time with cousins, and driving the tractor," Alice said. "Dad would yell because I couldn't shift the stupid tractor or make the turn in the field!"

"I remember staying with cousins Dolly and Jean Dettwiler and other cousins visiting us for a few days at a time," Alice continues. "We spent days at Grandma's house also. We were able to explore her big old house, the porches and the big attic. She always let us look at her rug loom and all the crafty projects she was working on."

"Younger cousins, Rod and Bill Skindrud, stayed with us some summers," Alice explains. "Karolyn and I would pull Rod in a wagon up and down the road. One summer, 1952, Dad and others were building our new house on the hill. The old house was torn down and we lived in the garage from about April until November. That was quite an experience! I just remember how hard everyone worked on getting it built. My Uncle Walter Schwarz and others would come on Sundays or whenever they could to work on the house. I remember the parties my parents had in that garage when we were trying to sleep in bedrooms portioned off by curtains. Sorry to tell tales on you, Mom!"

"My brothers, sister, and I all attended a two-room school in Daleyville," Alice continues. "Many days we walked to school (we really did walk up and down those hills),

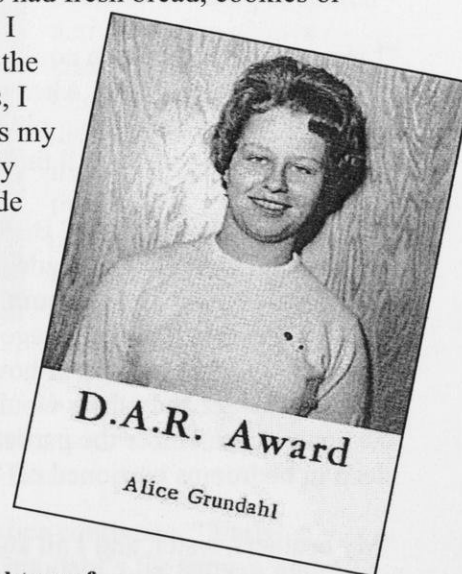
or rode our bikes. Dad would take us when he went to the factory if it was too cold or snowy to walk. During the winter we took our sleds to school and during recess we would sled on the big hill behind the school. One very cold day, my brother or some other older boy told me to stick my tongue on the merry-go-round — boy, was that a thrill! There were six girls in my class by the time we were in about fifth grade. It was always three against three, and I'm sure the teacher could have rung our necks. Girls are really snotty! I know because now I teach school," Alice explains.



Cousins in the Mt. Horeb High School vocal music group, Glee Club, are Joan Martinson (front row, 4<sup>th</sup> from left), Judy Martinson (right end, front row), Alice Grundahl (back, 5<sup>th</sup> from left), and Dorothy Schwarz (back, 3<sup>rd</sup> from right).

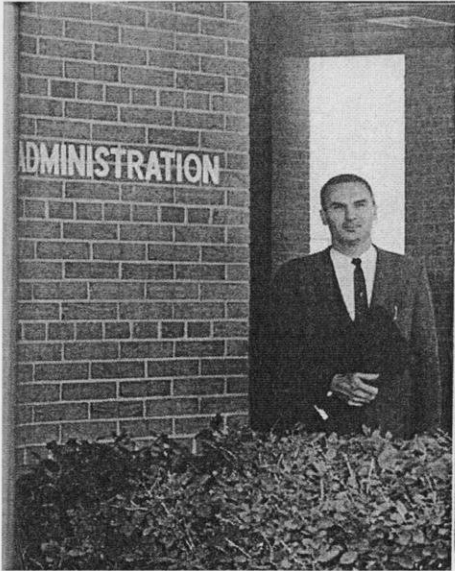
"My high school years at Mt. Horeb were fun," Alice continues. "I graduated in 1962 and spent a lot of time with Grandma, staying at her house so I could work on school projects like plays and junior prom."

"I was especially involved in the school newspaper my senior year, since I was the editor. I stayed with Grandma Martinson because we didn't have an extra car to drive to school. Grandma always made supper for me and of course always had fresh bread, cookies or cake. No wonder all of our mothers are such good cooks! I enjoyed most of my classes, but my history teacher scared the heck out of me. Later, when he came to our class reunions, I realized he wasn't so scary after all. Home Economics was my favorite subject. It's what I teach, although now it's Family and Consumer Science. Fond high school memories include editing the school paper, decorating for prom, being on Homecoming court, Green Lake FHA conventions, and receiving the DAR Award my senior year. Many school activities were shared with first cousins such as Judy and Joan Martinson, Dolly and Jean Dettwiler, Martinson, Dolly and Jean Dettwiler, Dorothy Schwarz, and Becky Skindrud. We were all involved with many of the same activities, and as cousins, we enjoyed working together most of the time!



Alice earned the Daughters of American Revolution award (1963)





Alice went on to graduate from Stout State University (now UW- Stout) with a degree in Home Economics Education. She is currently teaching at Whitnall High School in Greenfield, Wisconsin.

### **Memories of bygone days**

“There are so many things that I remember about Grandma and my own Mom,” Alice says. “The canning during the summer and fall, the gardens, the wonderful flowers. Mom still has the greenest thumb in the whole world. She can get anything to grow. Grandma Martinson seemed to have a green thumb too. I wonder why I didn’t get it?”

**At right is D.A. Kobs, Superintendent of Mt. Horeb District Schools in the 1960s.**

“During the summer, we’d go berry picking in our woods -- at least we were supposed to, but usually we ran around and Mom worked,” Alice admits. “Mom worked very hard, but she always had time and patience to teach us. She was a 4-H cooking and sewing project leader who opened our kitchen to 4-H members so they could learn the skills. Mom taught us how to measure, sift, fold, cream and all those things we needed to know so we could cook and bake throughout our lifetime. She also taught us to sew. What patience she had! We broke sewing machine needles, screwed up the machine, threw the material on the floor because we were frustrated, and cried because it was ugly when the project was finished. Even with all the help she gave us, she managed to also help Dad outside with chores,” Alice reminisces.



**Verna and Bennie Grundahl celebrated 50 years of marriage in 1986 with their sons (l-r) Brad, Tom, and daughters Karolyn and Alice.**

“We all helped with chores,” Alice continues, “but usually in the evening because we had to get ready for school in the mornings. Both Mom and Dad helped with homework if we

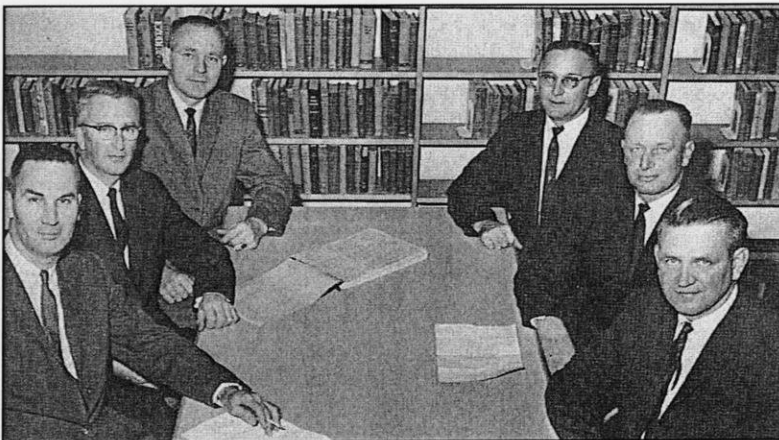
needed something. I remember them being patient when it came to homework. I hated my puzzle pages book as a first grader, but they got me through it.”

“In the summer we went to Mt. Horeb on Friday or Saturday nights for popcorn or ice cream,” Alice recalls. “During the school year we went to football and basketball games as a family, (even though we would have preferred not to have our parents there). Church was a big part of our life, and we went to church together as a family. Relatives were also a big part of our social life. We visited relatives or neighbors on Sundays and spent time with our grandparents.”



**The Strand movie theater in Mt. Horeb was a gathering place for Martinson cousins and friends!**

“As I look back over the years, I can’t tell you the fondest memory, but the fact was -- *family was so important*,” Alice concludes. “Life was slower paced and families were all in close proximity. It was easier to spend time together and to get to know your aunts, uncles and cousins. Growing up on a farm and being close to relatives was a wonderful experience, but, of course, we don’t realize this until we are older!”



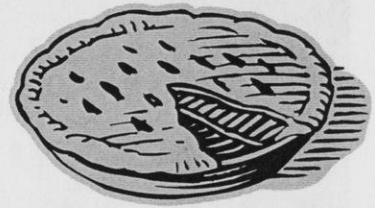
**Verna’s husband Bennie Grundahl is shown as a member of the Mt. Horeb School Board in this photo from the 1964 Berohbok. At right, front to back, are Frederick Heuser, Bennie Grundahl, and Jack Anding. At left, front to back, are D.A. Kobs, superintendent of schools, Albert Zwald, and Erwin Zuehle.**

## Family Recipes

### Verna's Rhubarb Custard Pie

Rhubarb, cut up in small pieces  
3 eggs, lightly beaten  
½ - ¾ cup sugar

Pie Crust  
3 Tablespoons milk  
Nutmeg



Place rhubarb in unbaked pie crust. Mix other ingredients and pour over rhubarb. Bake at 375 for 30 minutes.

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### Verna's Hot Dish

1 cup macaroni, uncooked  
¼ lb dried beef cut in pieces  
1 cup Velveeta cheese

1 ½ cup milk  
onion, chopped

1 can cream mushroom soup  
2 hard boiled eggs, cut up

Place ingredients in medium casserole dish and put in refrigerator overnight. Bake at 350 degrees for 1 hour. Stir once during baking.

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At right:

The Martinson "children" revisit their childhood Martinson farm in 1999. Pictured on the house porch are (front, l-r) sisters Verna, Myrtle, Alma, and Helen, and in back brothers Gaylord and Marty. Missing from photo: Harland (not in attendance), Benunie (deceased) and Geneva (deceased).



At left, Verna (center) enjoys a 1994 summer day in Sturgeon Bay with her sister Helen Abplanalp (left) and Benunie Schwarz-Berge (right). The happy occasion was the wedding of Benunie's grandson, John Jorns.



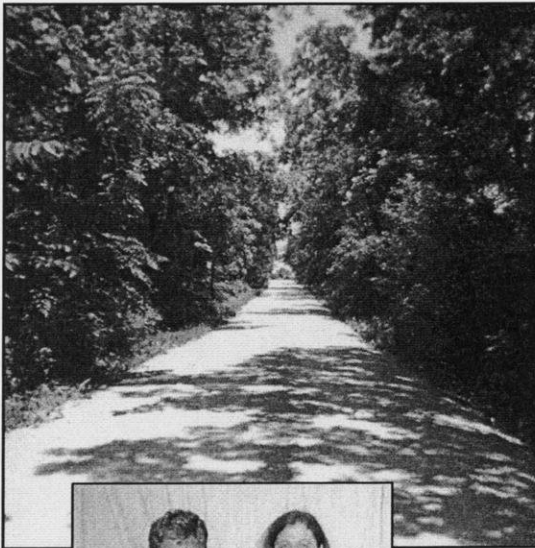
**The Gaylord and Shirley  
Martinson Family**



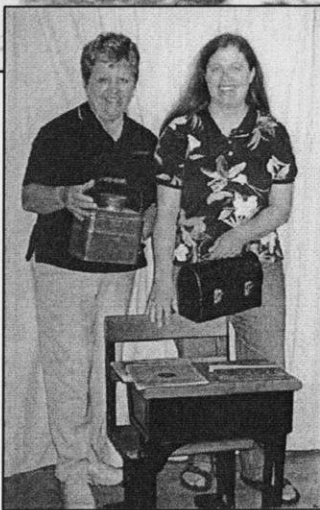
Shirley, Gaylord, Judy, Jerry, Joy, Jan, and Joan at the Martinson farm where they lived from 1944-1982. Gaylord was born there in 1917. (1999)



Above: A family portrait in the Martinson woods.



At left: A look down the long farm driveway.



Sisters (l-r) Judy and Joy set up a scene reminiscent of one-room school days for the Malone School reunion. (2005)

At right: Joan Martinson sang with a Springdale 4-H folk singing group that performed at competitions and events. Front (l-r) are Dorothy Schwarz (cousin) and Dorinda Philmore; back (l-r) Sue Greve, Carla Frye, Joan, and Tom Allen, guitarist. All went to Mt. Horeb High School. (1963)



## CHAPTER 6

### Gaylord Martinson Moves into the 1940s with His Bride Shirley

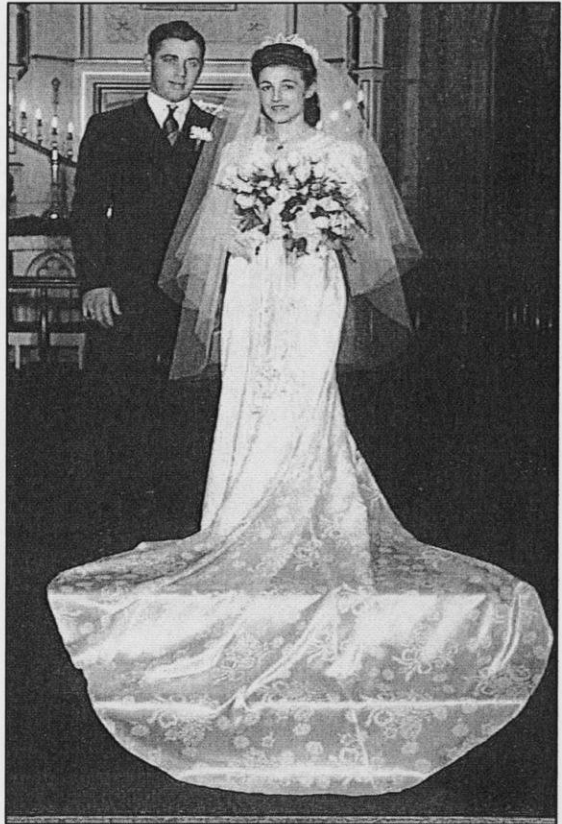
Gaylord Martinson met the love of his life, Shirley, a cute little gal from Klevenville in 1943. It all began, Shirley recalls, when they both socialized with the same friends and did fun things together as a group – they went roller skating and dancing, bowled, and played ball.

After the courtship, a wedding date was set. On February 18, 1944, the day after Gaylord turned 27, he and Shirley, age 20, were married. The following newspaper account described it well...

#### **Miss Marty Takes Vows**

*Springdale Lutheran church was the scene February 18 at 8 p.m. of the wedding of Miss Shirley Marie Marty, daughter of Mrs. Perdella Marty, Klevenville and Gaylord Eugene Martinson, son of Mr. and Mrs. Martin Martinson, Route 1 Mt.Horeb.*

*The Church was elaborately decorated with tall white candles in the windows and on the altar. White satin bows marked each pew on the center aisle. The Reverend Hector Gunderson performed the double ring ceremony. The bride's white brocaded satin gown was designed with a sweetheart neckline, long pointed sleeves, a full skirt, and a court train. Tiny buttons closed the bodice at the back. A tiara of seed pearls held her fingertip veil of silk illusion. Her bouquet of white roses and sweet peas was tied with white satin streamers caught with tiny bows and sweet peas. Miss Marty was given in marriage by her uncle, Joseph Gessler of Madison*



**Gaylord and Shirley marry in 1944**

*As her sister's maid of honor, Miss Wanda Marty wore a long pale blue marquisette gown over matching taffeta. A headdress of feathers and net held her shoulder-length blue veil. A similar ensemble in pink was worn by the bridesmaid, Miss Anita Gessler of Madison. Both attendants carried arm bouquets of pink carnations tied with large bows to match their frocks.*

*Harland Martinson was his brother's best man. Ushers were Jerome Skindrud, brother-in-law of the bridegroom, and Marvin Bakken.*

*Mrs. Marty, mother of the bride, wore a black dress and a corsage of pink roses. Mrs. Martinson wore a similar corsage with her navy blue gown.*

*A reception was held in the church parlors for more than 100 guests. Assisting were Mrs. Arthur Swiggum, Mrs. Kate Connors, Miss Rosella Connors, Miss Eunice Field, Miss*

*Evelyn Bakken, and Mrs. Lloyd Julson. Mr. and Mrs. Martinson will be at home on a farm near Mt. Horeb after March 1. The bride, who attended Central High School in Madison, formerly was employed by the Farmers' Mutual Automobile Insurance Company.*

Shirley recalls that their wedding took place on an extremely cold Friday night. They didn't go on a honeymoon, but stayed overnight with close friends in Rio, Wisconsin.

In 1944 Gaylord and Shirley took over the hilltop farm along Highway 92, formerly owned by his parents, Clara and Martin Martinson. It was here that Gaylord had grown up with eight brothers and sisters in the 1920s-30s. Gaylord's parents, Martin and Clara, moved to a house on Second Street in Mt. Horeb in 1944. Martin continued to return to the farm to help until he died from colon cancer two years later in 1946.

Between 1944 and 1954, five children were born to Shirley and Gaylord. All were given names beginning with "J" and middle names beginning with "D" -- resulting in all of them having "JDM" for initials. As their cousin, I thought that was so "cool."

Judith Diane arrived first, in 1944, Joan Darnell was born in 1947, and son Jerrold Dennis in 1950. Then the big finale and surprise – twins! Joy Darla and Jan Darcy were born in the summer heat of 1954. My sister Rosann, who had just graduated from Mt. Horeb High School and turned 18, lived with Shirley and Gaylord that summer and fall to assist with the busy Martinson household. Shirley said Jerry, who was four at the time, claimed baby Jan as his. "He'd always say: "She's mine!"



**Gaylord and Shirley Martinson**

In 1982, Shirley and Gaylord retired and sold all but 22 acres of the Martinson farm to O.J. and Jane Ginther. They used the remaining 22 acres as a scenic valley setting for their retirement home, where they continue to live today in their 80s.

**Pictured below is the retirement home Shirley and Gaylord built and moved into in 1982. It is nestled in the valley below the Martinson farm.**





### **Dorothy Schwarz Bliskey recalls Martinson farm visits**

As a first cousin to Judy, Joan, Jerry, Jan and Joy, many of my fondest childhood memories stem from being with them. For starters, I spent grade school days with Judy, Joey and Jerry who were all closer to my age – first at our one-room Malone School and later at Mt. Horeb High School. Living on separate farms just a little over two miles apart made it a snap to get together, both for work and play. Farm tasks became family projects, at times, between the Martinson and Schwarz farms. Family picnics and parties seemed to pop up “spur of the moment,” making it a fun time for all.

My dad, Walter Schwarz, and Uncle Gaylord shared some of their machinery and farm work. Often my dad, Gaylord, and our good friend and neighbor Bill Steinbauer, whose farm was in between ours, worked together to get certain farm tasks done faster. The



sense of humor exhibited by these three men made work, break time, and meals together fun. There was definitely a sense of camaraderie. My dad was known for his sense of humor and usually had everyone laughing over something he said or did. As hard as they all worked, these men knew how to mix business with pleasure!

**Building a corn crib on the Schwarz farm are (l-r) Walter Schwarz, Gaylord Martinson, and Don Schwarz. (1950)**

Meanwhile, not one of the wives needed to apologize for lack of cooking skills. On the contrary, Bill Steinbauer’s wife Orpha, my mom Benunie, and my aunt Shirley Martinson were seasoned cooks and excellent bakers.

My mouth waters at just the thought of some of their goodies. Looking back, I often wonder how they planned their shopping lists and menus for such a group, especially with all of us kids underfoot.

**At right, Orpha and Bill Steinbauer (now deceased) were neighbors and good friends with the Gaylord Martinson and Walter Schwarz families. They socialized and worked together. They became Judy Martinson’s in-laws when she married their son, Irv Steinbauer.**



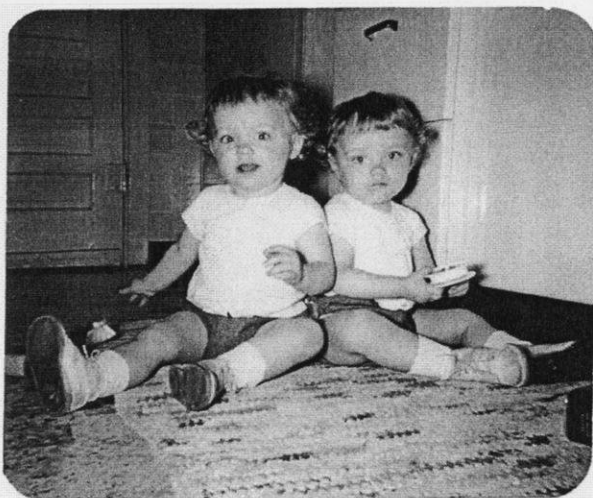
During summer planting and harvesting seasons, we often had a dozen or more mouths to feed when working on a group effort field task. Yet our mothers pulled off a meal that could put today's cooking shows to shame.

Play time was always much more fun when my younger brother Russ and I got together with the Martinson cousins. One time, however, Russ got in a little trouble with Uncle Gaylord when Jerry was found locked in our corn crib. Needless to say, Russ fessed up to the prank. After a few tense minutes, Russ realized that Uncle Gaylord probably wasn't going to grant him the "favorite nephew of the year" award.



**Jerry plays at the Schwarz farm with cousins (l-r) Russell and Dorothy Schwarz. Jerry is at far right.**

I also had a frightening experience with my cousin Jerry. He was visiting our house and had gone bike riding down a steep hill on Malone Road, just off our farm driveway. A terrible bike accident sent him flying, knocked him unconscious, and tore him up pretty badly. As his older cousin, I took over. An instant "adrenalin rush" helped me carry him all the way up the hill and over the quarter-mile long driveway to our farm. He was bleeding all the way. (I wonder if this is why, later in life, I always went into panic mode when one of my own kids got hurt?)



**Twins Joy and Jan in 1955**

The Martinson twins, Joy and Jan, were born in 1954 – a nice surprise and addition to the family. There was no such thing as an ultrasound back then. Twins were not on the "radar screen," and they went undetected until they appeared that hot summer of '54. What excitement their births caused as word spread throughout the Martinson family network! My older sister, Rosann, who graduated from high school that year, was there to help Shirley that summer.

Grade school memories with my cousins Judy and Joan (Joey) included Christmas programs with skits, poetry and music recitals on our portable stage. Judy and I sang a duet when we were in the younger grades. We cradled our baby dolls in our arms as we sang. In high school, Judy, Joey and I continued to sing together in Glee Club, 4-H groups, solo and ensemble competition, and even "hootenanny" quartettes.

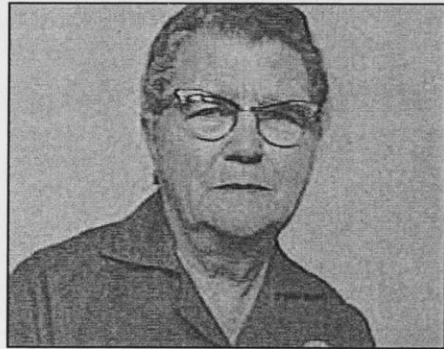
As the years have flown by, our farm lives in Springdale Township have ceased to exist. School years passed quickly. We have all moved on to careers, raising families, and taking up separate causes and interests. Yet, family always draws us back. Those who remain there, like Aunt Shirley and Uncle Gaylord, are a nucleus that holds us together.

*In the remainder of this chapter, enjoy the memories of Shirley and Gaylord's children...*

## **Memories of Grandma Martinson**

### **Judy:**

Grandma Martinson was always ready to help. She was a quiet and somewhat serious person who led a modest lifestyle. She had an aura of strength and wisdom about her. I remember sitting with in her living room on 2nd Street and seeing the wall behind the couch decorated with her crocheted version of the Lord's Supper.



**Grandma Clara Martinson (1967)**

Grandma knew everyone walking by. She knew everything going on in Mt Horeb. She loved picking raspberries. I recall her making headcheese. I made it with her on more than one occasion, but I will never be able to duplicate it. Recipe directions were "quite a bit of one ingredient, light on another," etc. There were no measurements.

I recall discussing the recent death of an elderly person with Grandma. I commented on how sad it was. She told me that when someone lives a long life, there is no reason to be sad about their death. You should celebrate that person's life. I had thought that being sad was the only appropriate response to someone's passing.

Sunday afternoon we took her on rides. It was an amazing four-hour local history lesson. We took back roads, visited cemeteries, etc. She knew so much about people and places.

Grandpa Martin Martinson passed away and was buried on my second birthday on October 16, 1946.

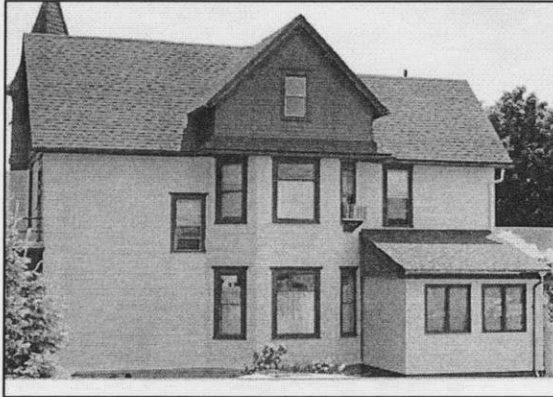
### **Joan:**

Grandma Martinson was very consistent. She was always there. Calm. Quiet. Very stoic. Strong. She was extremely talented and could make anything. Her handiwork – knitting, crocheting, painting, weaving rugs, tatting, crafts galore – the list goes on. She was amazing. Recently I learned from another cousin that Grandma also did woodworking, but if I knew it I had forgotten.

Was there anything more consistent than Grandma's birthday card with a dollar bill coming exactly on the day of one's birthday? She never missed!



One memory that flashes back to me whenever I drive down 2nd Street in Mt. Horeb is Grandma sitting on the front porch swing, waiting for us. Often Lizzie Henderson, who lived upstairs, was with her. To this day, I can visualize Grandma sitting in her chair by the radio, doing her needlework. I can also see her walking down that long hallway to the door with a sweet smile on her face whenever we came to visit.



**Grandma Martinson's house in Mt. Horeb (side view)**

Grandma's skill in the kitchen was unbelievable. Everything she made was delicious. What I miss most is her headcheese. We have her recipe and are tempted to try making it, but haven't yet. I fear we wouldn't be able to come close to hers. Whenever a pig was butchered, she would make this delectable treat. Grandma's headcheese on buttered toast with mustard was my all-time favorite meal, even to this day!

When the twins were born, Mom was very sick. Because I was just seven years old, I didn't grasp that this was a pretty serious time. I just knew that we had two real baby dolls to hold and play with -- and that we had a lot of company. Cousin Rosann, who had just graduated from high school, moved in to help us. Grandma Martinson and Grandma Marty both came to stay for long periods of time. And the aunts also rotated through the house. All this was very exciting for a seven-year old!

### **Favorite holiday**

#### **Judy:**

Christmas was my favorite holiday because it was a time of family togetherness and the one time everyone made it a point to be home. The decorations always gave the house a warm, cozy feeling. On Christmas morning we had to wait for dad to finish chores before we could open gifts. It seemed like a very long wait. Christmas programs at church were always special.

#### **Joan:**

Christmas was so nice because we were such a large family and we would all get together. We dressed up in our Sunday best. We drew names and exchanged gifts and ate the most wonderful food -- many Norwegian specialties such as lefse, meatballs, and glorified rice being my favorites. It was truly an exciting time for a kid.

### **Grade school memories**

#### **Judy:**

Our one-room Malone School, located on Highway 92 south of Mt Horeb, brings up fond memories. It was the greatest group of kids. I recall having to use the outdoor toilets,

having to take goiter pills, making hot lunch in the basement, playing ball games with other one-room schools, participating in the Christmas programs; enjoying picnics on the last day of school, and the long walk home. There are just lots of good memories.

**Joan:**

Malone School memories that stand out include --softball games, sledding on Grinde's field, the wonderful Christmas programs that included songs, plays and reciting poems. Taking goiter pills routinely. Saying the Pledge of Allegiance. Raising and lowering the flag each day. Traveling to other country schools for competitive softball games. End of the year picnics and "plays days" are all great memories!



**Joan and Judy clown around with Doug Thomson and others after a Malone Christmas program in the 1950s.**

Field trips were memorable. I recall we once took a train trip to Chicago, and the buttered noodles we had for lunch on the train were the best I ever had eaten. We also went to Delma Woodburn's beautiful home in Madison, and that has come back to me in my dreams. I believe it was there that we saw a wonderful organ. (NOTE: Delma had attended Malone School, which was built on land owned by her ancestors.)

I can still smell the hot lunches that were put together in the basement kitchen at Malone School. No matter what was prepared, it was good. Hot soup on cold winter days, especially after being outside playing, was the best. To this day, I become nostalgic over a can of chicken noodle soup.

**Typical summer day**

**Judy:**

Living on a farm, I just remember always working. There were chores like getting cows to the barn for the morning milking, feeding calves, going to the cheese factory, mowing, baling, sacking itchy oats, going to the mill, driving the John Deere-60 tractor to pick up bales. The day always ended with a big meal. We still have that habit, but we don't work up the appetites we used to. Watching the sunrises and sunsets was the best memory of all. They were awesome from the Martinson farm on the hill!



Cousins have fun at a Martinson summer reunion (1953)

**Joan:**

Summer days were full of work and play. We were up early in the morning to help in the barn. Haying certainly took up the better part of the summer. After evening chores were done, we often would play outside until after dark. If cousins or neighbors came, we would play hide and seek all over the place -- from the upstairs of the barn through all the sheds, but always outside.

**High school memories**

**Judy:**

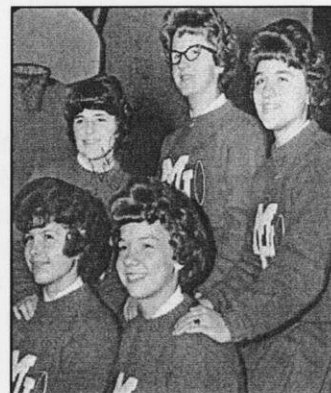
As a member of the Mt Horeb High School Class of 1962, I was in the first class to graduate from the new high school. We moved from the old school on Academy Street during Christmas break. It was quite an undertaking. My favorite class was Home Economics with Mrs. Kilian. She was a new teacher who was enthused and gave us a wealth of information on many subjects.



Judy as Prom Queen & Ron Enloe Prom King 1961

Mt. Horeb High School memories include Mr. Schwierske's history class, taking the student bus to away sporting events (as far as Prairie du Chien), Junior and Senior Class Plays, Homecoming parades, Junior prom, and many special times with classmates who remain friends to this day.

Joan graduated from Mt. Horeb High School in 1965. Although she didn't really have a favorite subject, she will admit she disliked math and biology. While in high school, Joan was very active socially. She became a cheerleader, was on Homecoming court, and says she thoroughly enjoyed being in school with so many of her cousins.



Joan Martinson, a cheerleader at Mt. Horeb High, is at far right.



## Careers and life beyond high school

After one year at UW-Oshkosh, Joan went to University Hospitals School of X-Ray Technology in Madison. For several years she worked as a registered X-Ray Technologist. Joan then worked for an orthopedic surgeon in Neenah as his medical assistant and secretary for years. Joan married Chuck Sholdt, and after their son Cabel was born, she stayed home for several years to be a mom. When he went off to school,



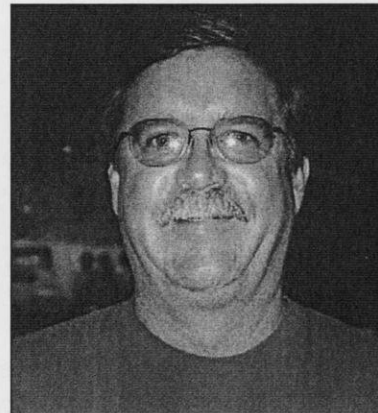
**Judy at UW-Madison 1962-66**

Joan went to work at a Middleton elementary school library and has been there ever since. She and her husband Chuck live in Middleton.

Judy attended UW-Madison and graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree in early childhood education. She worked at University Children's Hospital as a child life specialist for five years. In 1969 she married Irv Steinhauer, who had been a family friend and neighbor throughout her childhood. Judy and Irv live in Mt. Horeb where they have owned and operated Irv's Feed and Supply since 1972. They have two grown children, Debbie and Todd.

Jerry Martinson, the only son born to Shirley and Gaylord, also graduated from Mt. Horeb High School. He married Karen Cunneen in 1972. They reside in Oregon, Wisconsin where they raised two daughters, Kalee and Stacy. Jerry works for Madison Gas & Electric as an electronic technician.

The Martinson twins, Jan and Joy, graduated from Mt. Horeb High School in 1972. Jan married Kirk Feller in 1974, and together they farm near Verona. They have two daughters – Carly and Marty. Joy married Larry Green on Valentine's Day in 1985. She and Larry live near Pine Bluff in a lovely log home they built. Joy is currently self-employed as a photographer for sled dog races.



**Jerry Martinson (2005)**

## Fond memories of Dad

### Judy:

I started helping in the barn at age nine and spent mornings and evenings doing chores with dad. He was a long time member of the Mt Horeb School Board, and he usually shared his thoughts about issues the board faced. Dad is in tune with the community, school, and politics and shares his thoughts and feelings to this day. I learned a lot during the many hours spent with him in my younger years and respect his knowledge. Dad

would also tell me what Santa would be bringing each of us for Christmas, and Mom would get so mad!



**Gaylord chats over coffee with his sister Benunie Schwarz Berge. They often snacked on limburger cheese together at each other's homes. (1994)**

I think my dad's happiest times were when Walter Schwarz, Bennie Grundahl, Jerome Skindrud, and Alvin Dettwiler were alive. They worked together and played together. I can remember the combine harvest -- even threshing. While harvest meant hard work, it was also a social time for families. I can hear them in my memory -- laughing, talking, and telling jokes. Dad is still sly like a fox in a game of Euchre. We try to play often, he always (almost always) wins!

**Joan:**

The funniest memory of my dad was at our wedding reception on December 5, 1970 when I looked over and saw him dancing cheek-to-cheek with my brand new father-in-law. Maybe they had been celebrating a wee bit too much! Dad was always there. He was always very consistent and didn't tolerate any "*darn foolishness!*"

## **Social life**

**Judy:**

Most social events revolved around Martinson family gatherings -- the reunion every August, confirmations, graduations, 25th wedding anniversaries, and most holidays. Church, school, and 4-H activities rounded out our social life. We didn't have the myriad of school activities in those days that we have today.

**Joan:**

Social life didn't happen until chores were done. When farm life allowed, our social life centered around family, neighbors, school, church, and our 4-H club

## **How things were different back then**

**Judy:**

When it came to food, most everything was made from scratch. The whole day seemed to revolve around meal preparation and cleanup. We ate mostly fresh foods and had all of our own meats. I remember Herman Frye butchering beef and pork animals and cutting them up right on the farm. We had chickens which meant gathering eggs each day. I also remember the process of butchering them, which wasn't the fondest memory of childhood.

Recipes were not as detailed as today. We had limited staples and seasonings. Most baking was done without using recipes. In the 1950s and 60s, we did not have a large assortment of ready made foods or fast food eateries.

Clothing styles consisted of gathered skirts with lots of crinolines and shoulder pads. We always wore dresses or skirts to high school. I don't remember owning a pair of blue jeans while growing up. We also made most of our own clothes.

**Joan:**

What was different in the 1950s-60s? Food was nearly all home-grown and homemade. We always ate three meals a day as a family, and they were *good* meals with meat, potatoes, vegetables and dessert! Still, the best was fried headcheese on toast with mustard. I can't begin to duplicate what we did back then.



**Judy, Jerry and Joan have fun with their farm chickens! (1953)**

As for clothes, I wasn't a fashion plate. We didn't even think in those terms. I sewed rick-rack on homemade outfits and thought that was way cool. I remember stretch pants and tight-necked Dr. Kildare blouses with the top neck button left open for breathing space! I don't recall jeans. We must have worn them to do chores, yet I can't envision myself in any kind of blue jeans.

## **Life-changing inventions**

**Judy:**

I remember getting an indoor toilet. There was water running out of our faucets! (We had a cistern prior to that). Another fantastic invention was the clothes washer and dryer. We bought a set to replace our old wringer washing machine. The clothes dryer also allowed us to warm up our clothes before we got dressed in the morning. That was like heaven! I also remember the old cast iron cook stove in the kitchen was replaced with a gas stove which was connected to a tank of LP gas outside the house. Along with running water, we got a bathtub. Prior to installation of the tub, we would have a bath on



Saturday nights in a metal wash tub in front of the oil burner in the dining room. Mom heated kettles of water to fill the tub, and we would each take our turn getting a bath.

Prior to the installation of a furnace, the only heat in the upstairs bedrooms came up through ceiling registers from the oil burner below. I can remember waking up in the morning with frost on the blanket by my nose.

**Joan:**

I was very young when a toilet was being put into the house for the first time. Mind you, it wasn't an entire bathroom – just the toilet. I think I was probably still in diapers as I can see myself watching the whole process from a crib, so it didn't impact me hugely then. Still, I knew it was a momentous occasion. I recall getting our first TV set as well. That was huge! It was in the parlor and we didn't get to watch anything until all chores were done. I recall desperately wanting to see the Beatles on the Ed Sullivan show, but it was on while we were still in the barn. So we kept running back and forth between the barn and house, trying to see it – all while carrying pails of milk to the cooler.

The best invention was probably the “kick” hay baler that kicked out small bales. We didn't have to move those huge bales anymore. That was beyond exciting! However, it didn't happen until after I was out of high school.

**Gaylord and Shirley and (l-r) Jerry, Joan and Judy pose with a new product of the 1950s - a milk pasteurizer, the tall machine on the kitchen counter. (1951)**



**Chores**

**Joan:**

Chores were numerous on the farm. I fed all the animals, except the pigs. I also put milking machines together, washed the cows prior to milking, carried milk to the cooler, washed up after milking, washed the cooler, scraped the barn walk, put fresh bedding down for the cows, and threw down silage and feed. I helped with the haying, lawn mowing, house cleaning, dishes, laundry, ironing and more.

**Judy:** As the oldest of five children, I was drafted for outdoor chores at age nine or so. I fed calves, scraped and applied lime to the barn driveway, cleaned the mangers, fed silage and ground feed, carried milk to the cooler, washed the cooler, did milk house cleanup after every milking, and fed the cows hay.

I also mowed hay, drove the tractor to pick up bales, fed chickens, gathered eggs, and helped feed pigs with whey from the Malone Cheese Factory. After we purchased a bulk milk cooler and got on Grade-A quality milk production, we didn't have to go to the factory anymore. I never really had a chance to help inside the house. After I went away to college, everyone was excited to see me come home for the weekend. I think it may have had something do with the fact that I would be there to do chores!

At right: Judy in the 1960s



### Fond memories of our mother



Gaylord and Shirley (1980)

#### Judy:

Mom always worked hard. She takes pride in doing things right! Meals are always perfectly prepared and clothes look crisp and clean. She worked tirelessly to take care of our family of five kids. She took us to swimming lessons, 4-H meetings, and school events. I can't imagine how many trips she made to see that we each participated in any activity of interest to us. Her greatest source of pride has been taking care of the lawn and flowers, and she still finds pleasure and pride in this today.

I remember one winter mom decided it would be neat to have an ice skating rink on the front lawn. She worked so hard flooding quite a large area for us. We did have a great time that winter, being able to skate right at home. However, once the snow and ice melted, we realized that all the grass was dead where the rink had been. We never had another ice skating rink at home.



Malone Mothers Club on a trip are (l-r) Unknown, Sophie Johnson, Clara Martinson, Lucille Zweifel, Orpha Steinhauer, Margie Webber, Unknown (mostly hidden), Benunie Schwarz, Pauline Bollig. (Photographer: Shirley Martinson.) (1950s)

Family means everything to mom. There isn't anything that she wouldn't do or sacrifice for any of us. She especially enjoys keeping up with the grandkids now. It's a standing joke about whether or not to tell grandma about what you are doing or where you are going, because she'll just worry about you until she hears you're safely home.

My mother has been a life long member of the Malone Mothers' Club. Mothers of students attending our one-room school started meeting monthly more than 50 years ago, and they still do today. Mom enjoys doing so much! We enjoy seeing her so active and interested in many things. She loves ceramics and has made each of us priceless pieces that we will cherish forever. She bowls a mean game and uses a ball I can hardly lift. Mom also enjoys baking and is constantly trying new recipes.

For years Mom attended school concerts, sporting events, etc, Judy continues. In recent years, I decided to go to a high school musical and decided not to call her as I felt she had done her duty going to those events. I sat down in my seat, looked across the aisle and there was Mom, sitting by herself. I guess she really did like those activities!

**Joan:**

When we were kids growing up on the farm, Mom was always there and doing everything! She worked inside, outside and all around the farm. I honestly don't know how she did it. Five kids going in so many different directions, taking us everywhere, doing so much laundry with a wringer washer, and for many years there was no dryer! She had constant food preparation, and everything tasted so good.

Mom was very patient when I went through a phase of not being able to eat meat. I came to realize that the meat was from my animal friends in the barn. I just couldn't eat it for a time. She always had peanut butter and bread on the table.



**Joan styles her mom's hair back in the 1960s.**

She didn't make a big deal out of it, but Mom was very good at making things. It was just what she did. She made the veil for my wedding dress. I don't even remember asking. It was just there – and it was her creation. For each of us, she created very memorable days for our weddings. All the clothes were homemade as were the decorations, and of course, so was the food. One didn't hire wedding planners or caterers in those days. It was mom who did it all, while doing all her regular chores as well.

Still, at 81, Mom is always there. She is the original "Energizer Bunny" – she just keeps going and going. What an example she sets for all of us. She takes care of everything and everybody. She is always so kind, and you can't help but want to be around her!

We continue the tradition of playing Euchre with Mom and Dad, a fun activity that started when we were kids. Our kids are now experiencing the same thing we did with our Grandma on my Mom's side when she'd come and play cards for hours and hours.



## **A typical day in the life of our mother**

### **Judy:**

In the 1950s our mother was swamped with being a mom to five little kids. I was born in 1944, "Jo" (Joan) in 1947, Jerry in 1950, and the twins in 1954. Mom must have been exhausted most of the time. Life revolved around laundry, meal preparation, and more. We also had a hired man living with us during those years. She would take good care of his needs also. We cannot begin to appreciate the support she gave us during those years.

### **Joan:**

Mom was up before all of us and still going strong after we all went to bed. In between, she was making meals, washing clothes, working inside and outside the house getting us where we had to be at the right time, then showing up somehow to watch whatever we were doing. Sometimes she would take over for us so we could do school, 4-H, or Sunday School activities. "Multitasking" is a buzz word of people who I am around today, yet they haven't a clue what true multitasking is all about. You know how everyone today complains of being tired all the time? Well, I never remember one word of complaint from Mom, yet she had to be exhausted. She just had to be!



**Gaylord and Shirley Martinson (seated) are surrounded by their family. (2004)**

## **Fond memories growing up in our family**

### **Judy:**

Years ago when my folks delivered milk to the Pure Milk Association, they would attend meetings in Chicago. During one of these meetings, they attended the musical "The Music Man." Mom enjoyed it so much that she was determined we should have that experience as well. My earliest memory of a theater event was going to *The Music Man* when it came to Madison. It was an absolutely awesome experience for a couple of farm kids from Mt. Horeb and instilled a love of music in me that continues to this day. Thanks Mom and Dad!

**Joan:**

Memories I am most fond of include all of the activity, but especially at holiday time. I feel very fortunate to have grown up on a farm in a farming community with family all around. I feel lucky to have attended a one-room school. All of these things seem to be disappearing from our culture today.

**Joy's memories**

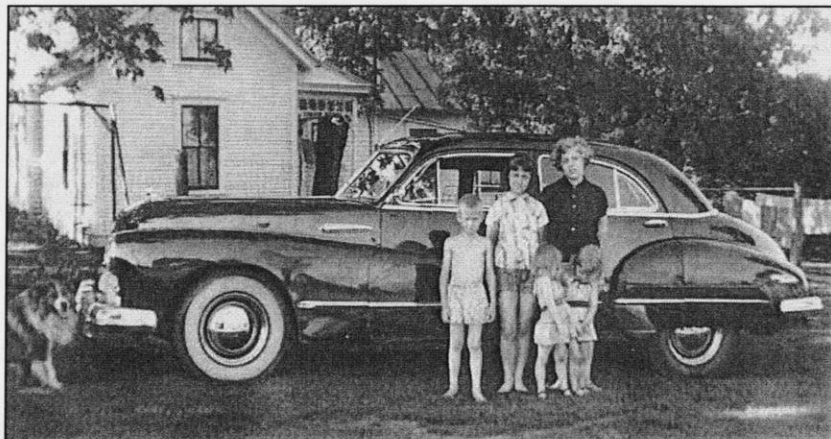
*Twins, Jan and Joy, born in 1954, rounded out Shirley and Gaylord Martinson's family. On this page and throughout much of the remainder of this chapter, Joy reaches back to bring up happy, comical and exciting times on the farm...*

One thing Joy recalls is waking up to hot cocoa every morning "It was pretty special," Joy says, noting that meals on the farm consisted of meat, potatoes, vegetables, bread, butter, jam and milk.

A huge treat was when Grandma Martinson made headcheese, Joy continues. Mom sliced it thin and then fried it crispy in a frying pan. It was my favorite sandwich ever! I sure wish somebody would take up Grandma's tradition. Another awesome treat from Grandma was her fried cakes. They were melt-in-your-mouth yummy. There was nothing better!

Every year when it was sweet corn time, it seemed the corn came in by the pickup truck load. We would spend a day at the fence shucking the corn. We'd throw the husks over the fence. The calves would come and eat the husks out of our hands. This was pretty fun for a little kid. Mom would boil the corn. We'd cut the kernels off and freeze them. It was a yearly tradition.

Mom was an awesome cook. She made wonderful pies, bars, and sweet treats – she really is an expert at it! Back then she was famous for her chocolate cakes, but even more famous for her bars and pies.



**Jerry, Joan, Judy, Jan and Joy gather on a hot summer day in the late 1950s.**

Evening snacks sometimes included pizza, but most often it was pizza in a box. Popcorn was another night-time treat. Occasionally we had soda too. We always feasted on the

holidays like Thanksgiving, Christmas, and Easter. All were yummy, and we ate more than we should have!

### **Joy's favorite holiday**

Christmas was my favorite holiday. We got lots and lots of toys. I always got stuffed up since I was allergic to the tree. One year when we were about 10, my twin sister Jan and I each got a giant stuffed poodle – they were as big as we were! Shortly after Christmas we were looking at pictures our oldest sister Judy had taken in her dorm at UW-Madison prior to Christmas. There in the picture with Judy and her roommate were our pink poodles! We had never taken our poodles to the dorm, so we knew then that Santa Claus was not for real! It wasn't traumatic in any way. Like most kids, you suspect it for a long time until you finally get proof. That was the proof for me.

I always felt very blessed to have grown up in the family I did. I needed family for certain, but also all the aunts, uncles and cousins were wonderful. In my immediate family we have always come together for special holidays. One year my sister Jo and her husband Chuck lived in Colorado and were preparing to move to Kaukauna, Wisconsin after Christmas. We postponed Christmas and went to their new place for a belated Christmas so we could all be together.

### **Twins help with chores, find time to play**

There was a lot of card playing when Jan and I were growing up – Euchre was the main one. Grandma Marty, our other grandma, had pennies in her purse wherever she went and liked to play cards all night long. We also played Rummy Royal and Yahtzee. Jan and I both had Barbie dolls – our most prized toys. There was also a Barbie board game.

Our chores consisted of feeding calves, cleaning up in the milk house, and carrying milk before the pipeline system came in. I don't know how we managed to carry those huge pails of milk when we were so little, but we did it. Unloading bales of hay from the wagon to the elevator was another job we handled.

We mowed lawn all summer. I swear we never stopped -- mow, mow, mow! We had 40 trees in the yard, so there was a lot of raking and picking up of sticks. There was also work in our garden and a few apple trees, but they never produced much.

Sewing was a chore. Each of us girls sewed dresses, skirts, and blouses. Ironing was a process where the clothes had to be sprinkled with water first. We spent hours ironing. Kids don't know how easy they have it now!



**Jan mowing lawn!**

Jan and I had fun times in our little playhouse, which was the retired outhouse. It was no longer used as an outhouse, and it had just the normal floor in it by then. Various grains



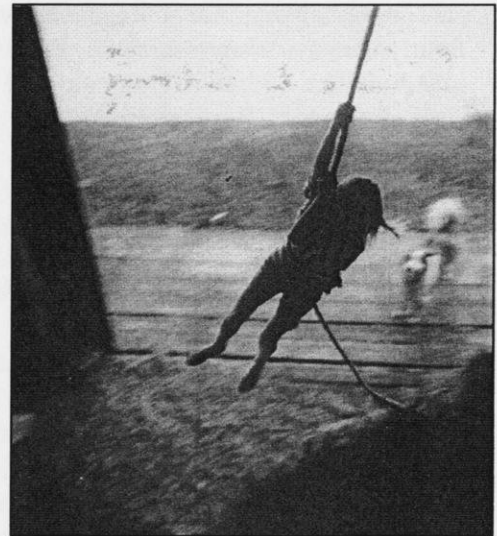
and corn and other special ingredients we'd gather up were used to make our mud pies. We had a sandbox and played in it for a long time as well. We used sticks to make fences, farm scenes and buildings in our sandbox. The field next to the house also became a playground. When the grass was long we'd make little houses by pushing down the grass.

Jan and I were very adventurous and liked to play in the various farm buildings and climb on the roofs. The chicken house roof cantilevered over another roof. That was special because as we played on the backside, we were hidden from view. We were covered up because the other roof was higher.

Jan and I would sometimes pretend we were in a swimming pool when we swam in our cow tank. It was filled with ice cold water, but we wanted to swim like everyone else could. It wasn't too pleasurable, but we did it anyway.

We also played barefoot all summer. We'd walk through the cow pasture. Occasionally we would step on and walk through fresh cow pies. I remember how warm it was when I'd put my feet in the middle of a cow pie. I don't know why we did it... I guess we just enjoyed the feeling!

Another fun thing we did was swing on a rope when hay was stacked way high up in the loft. We jumped off the hay loft and out the door of the barn on the rope. Jan squealed on me once, when I got cut by a piece of metal after falling off the manger. Inadequate stitches were put in at the time. A nasty scar remains. Sometimes I wonder how we survived our childhood!



**Jan swings from the haymow  
out the upstairs barn door**

### **Joy remembers family fun**

For special occasions in summer, dad would dig out the surrey. It was one that had been purchased by our great grandfather Torkel Martinson in 1901. Dad would pull the surrey with the tractor in the field. The highlight of a party would be to go into the field in the surrey. Badminton and croquet was often set up in the yard.

On the July 4<sup>th</sup> celebration we'd drive out to the field at night to watch the fireworks in Madison, which was nearly 20 miles east of our farm. We'd pile into the car and drive into the field where no buildings or trees blocked our view. It was a great show and a fun time in our young lives.

One winter we flooded the front yard to make an ice skating rink. It was not very much of a success. It was a very bumpy surface, and we killed the grass beneath it. The skating rink was a one-time deal. We never did it again.

The farm driveway at a half-mile long was an adventure in itself, with a good size corner halfway up. We were lucky the school bus would come up to get us. One winter morning the bus didn't arrive. Dad finally said he'd have to drive us to school. So we piled into the car. Dad turned the corner and stopped. The bottom half of driveway was glare ice. You could see at the very bottom of our hill the ice was all chewed up from chains, evidence that the bus had tried to make it up, but failed.

Snow days were fun as they caused school to close. Huge piles of snow were everywhere for sledding and for building forts and tunnels. There were various places for sledding – one good spot was across Highway 92 where mom and dad's house is now. Jan and I came in from winter play many times with frostbite. White marks disappeared after we'd curl up in front of heat ducts in the living room.

Piano and swimming lessons were part of Jan and my lives. Jan's lips turned purple when she'd go swimming in Mt. Horeb. I never did learn how to swim.

### **Critters Joy recalls**

A summer memory I envision is June bugs on the porch. They would swarm by the light. We hardly could get in and out of the door. We had one cat that would eat them. It was so gross. We would hear a very loud crunch, crunch, crunch for the longest time every evening.

There were also big green worms -- tobacco worms mom called them. One year they were everywhere. It seemed like a plague of big green worms. We had a plum tree. I was barefoot. I thought I had stepped on a plum because it squeezed through my toes. It was a green worm. It is my worst childhood memory!

Crickets invaded. The house was full of them. We'd vacuum and vacuum and mom would put a rag in the end of the hose. I also recall that our windows were full of flies, and an occasional mouse hid between our walls. Although the mice crawled up the walls and ran above the ceiling, we rarely saw them in the living area.



**Gaylord cuts down a tree!**

There was a freezer in the cellar. Steps led to it from outside. Mom made lots of trips up and down with food. A little frog or toad "friend" sat outside the house by the steps, and I think Mom called this critter "George." He would always sit in the same spot, on the bottom step. They would greet each other whenever she went up and down. George never moved. Finally, I realized he was dead. He didn't look any differently than when he was alive. It'd be fun to ask mom, *'What ever happened to George?'*

### **Hilltop storms and cellar stories Joy recalls**

Storm memories are vivid due to living high on a hill. We always had spectacular views – it was like having a front row seat. We could see the thunderclouds coming from miles and miles away. The lightening was bad. Mom was always so fearful that the barn would be struck. Terrific lightning storms would blow the transformer, and a tree was struck one year. The inside of the trunk of the tree looked like charcoal and it continued to burn and glow for many days. Dad sawed it down eventually.

One of the worst storms I remember is a hailstorm when I was quite young in the late 1950s or early 1960s. It happened during a family gathering on the Marty side -- my mom's relatives.

When the storm hit, everyone ran for cover. We were in the house and the windows started breaking. Hail was coming through the windows! I recall running through the house to get to the cellar stairs for safety, as glass flew from the shattered windows. There I sat in the basement, terrified because I thought I could hear people walking upstairs. I remember saying "*We've got to get them down here!*" But it wasn't people upstairs I was hearing. It was actually the sound of hail pounding on the metal roof.

The hail destroyed my uncle's car. The roof of his Lincoln was sunk down on the seat and filled with hail. In the house, 15 windows were broken. Two were shattered in the barn. Trees were shredded. It was a terrible storm and a horrible mess. We had a second party the next day to clean up. Relatives came back to help, Joy concludes.

### **Joy's sister Joan recalls same hailstorm**

What Joan remembers about this same hailstorm is that my dad, Walter Schwarz, seemed to magically appear out of nowhere right after the storm passed. Here is her recollection of that moment in time... "After coming up out of our basement, there was Walter in the middle of our driveway by the garage workshop, spinning around quickly in circular fashion and pointing methodically to address everyone as he turned. He was shouting, '*I need boards, I need nails, I need hammers, I need...*' It was a moment I will never forget about Uncle Walter. It amazed me that he knew to come and assist -- and how quickly he got to our place after that storm had passed."

It seemed we were always running to the cellar because of storms, Joy continues. It was a cellar not a basement -- very primitive with all kinds of spiders, etc. It was not a place you wanted to be for any length of time. To enter, there was a trap door under the floor of our parents' closet. We had to move all their shoes and stuff to get to the cellar by way of a unique spiral staircase – it was quite an ordeal. We grabbed couch cushions to take into the basement with us. During some storms dad would have the outside cellar door open, watching the storm. Meanwhile, Jan and I were in the cellar crying, thinking a tree would fall on him.

### **Twins' school and social life**

Jan and I were involved in quite a lot of activities -- not like kids today, but a lot of hobbies and things. What comes to mind is 4-H. Projects like photography, knitting,



sewing, wild flowers, and home furnishings were fun. From my recollection, Jerry was the only one of us five kids who exhibited animals at the fair.

Olive Thomson, a neighbor about two miles away, was our 4-H teacher for wildflowers. She came to the house and we went walking through the woods looking for wildflowers. We saw jack-in-the-pulpits and all kinds of flowers – a very fond memory. Olive's daughter Elizabeth came with her.

Mrs. Allen was my photography 4-H leader. I owe a lot to her. Obviously what she taught stuck with me, and I am now reaping the benefits of my photography skills. This weekend, I am photographing a sled dog race. It is wonderful to have the ground work done in early years for anything you do later in life.

During high school in Mt. Horeb, I was a cheerleader. I also worked on the yearbook, and I was involved with the Ecology Club. Of course with cheerleading there were a lot of sports games and away-game adventures. I took part in a lot of activities.



**Merry-go-round at Malone School – Janice Leuzinger seated in center/front. (1961-62)**

Jan and I attended Malone School in first and second grade. Then the school closed and we went to Mt. Horeb. What a fun one-room school it was! I remember the yard clean up and picnic with a bonfire and wiener roasting fun. I recall a boy breaking through the landing of the stairway when he jumped on it. Baseball games with nearby schools were great. I had a huge crush on a boy while he was batting in a ballgame. I chased him around the bases.

I attribute my two years at Malone School as the reason school came easy for me. I never had to study much. Thinking back, at Malone School you had a lot of time. You observed what other classes were being taught. You learned future lessons by watching the older kids. There was a tiny little library and not too many books. I read books from the older students because that's what was available. There is no country one-room school prettier than Malone!

One vivid grade school memory is how my fourth grade teacher, Mrs. Thronson, cried when President Kennedy was killed in 1963.

When our big sister Judy went off to college, it was like she was moving to another planet. The first years she was at UW-Stout but later she transferred to UW-Madison. It seemed so far away. Jan and I would write letters to her. "*Dear Honey Bunny*" we'd always start out! We missed her terribly.

### Lessons learned

Our folks put the fear of God into us about making a long distance phone call. *"Don't ever dial a long distance number,"* they would say. The first time I needed to make a long distance call I was so worried. It cost me a whopping 25 cents. I never was anxious about making a long distance phone call like that again in my life.

I'll never forget the look on my dad's face when I walked into the barn once when the inseminator was there. He had his arm up to his elbow in the back end of a cow. I didn't think anything of it. It was the look on my dad's face that frightened me! Dad probably thought I'd have questions and was worried how he'd answer them but my questions never came.

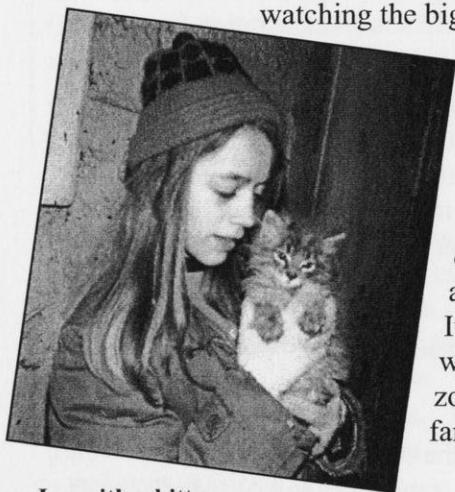


**Joan makes a call, or is she rubbernecking?**

A big part of our young lives was our kitties. In winter, if a kitty wandered under a cow, it could be disastrous. In fall, when we raked the yard, we'd often find a kitten's skeleton in the bushes. *"Well, Jan I think this was fluffy,"* I'd say, as I stared at the remains. *"Or maybe it was Snooky!"* There was no sadness. Just curiosity.

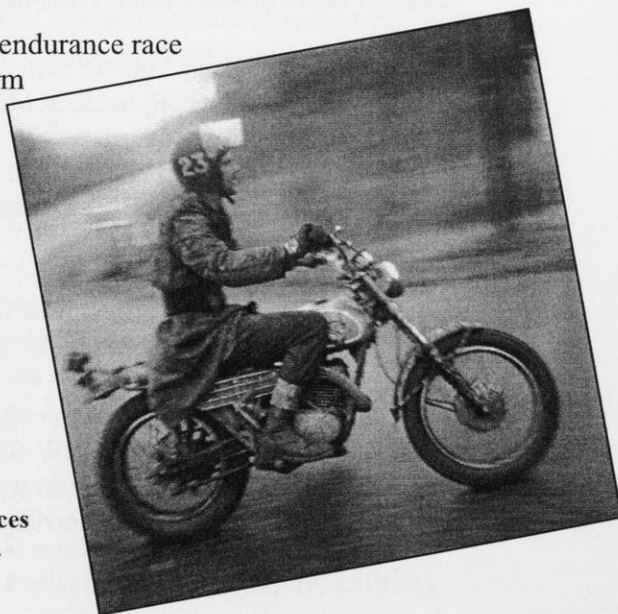
We fished in Malone Creek occasionally. One time we caught a fish at least 6 inches long. We put it in a pail of water and carried it home. After putting the fish in the millhouse tank, we got a scolding. Dad said we'd be kicked off the Grade A market if we got caught with fish in our milk tank!

One year there was a terrible drought. It forced us to buy our hay. The sight of watching the big semi hayload come up the hill was very exciting.



**Jan with a kitty.**

A motorcycle endurance race utilized our farm for two years. The racers came up our driveway and across our field. It was a thrill to watch the cycles zoom across our farm!



**At right, motorcycle races across Martinson farm.**

## Comments from Shirley Martinson

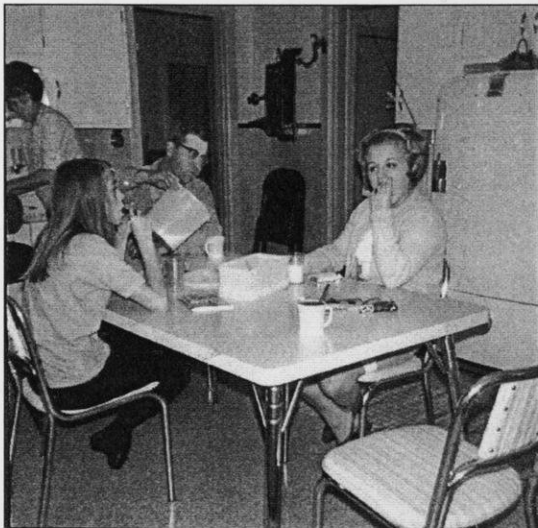
Although Gaylord's dad Martin died shortly after Gaylord and I were married, I got to know his mother Clara Martinson (my mother-in-law) quite well. She was very pleasant and witty.

I appreciated that she was always there to help me with the thrashing and silo-filling crews and the extra helpers who needed to be fed during busy harvest times. I could not have done it without her guidance. I wasn't raised on a farm, so I needed all her expertise and her babysitting!



**The Martinson barn today is no longer used for milking cows.**

What I admired most about Gaylord's mother were her many talents. She made rugs on a loom. She made wonderful fried cakes. Her delicious headcheese was craved by our family – even the kids loved it. Recently Judy made it using Grandma's recipe. It was a real special treat for all of us.



**Martinson kitchen (l-r) Jan, Gaylord and Judy (1960s)**

What really amazed me was Grandma's patience. How did she do it all back then? We didn't even have indoor running water or indoor bathroom until the twins were born in 1954. Between all the meals, laundry, and work inside and out, I don't think our kids got a lot attention, fun-wise. Everything seemed to be fun and humorous most of the time though.

As for the most memorable family occasions, two that come to mind for Shirley are Jan's outdoor wedding and Joy's wedding reception on the farm.



As for the not-so-nice occasions, Shirley recalls the blizzards of 1959. According to Gaylord, there were three of them in a row – all in February and March.



**This player piano was always fun for cousins when visiting Shirley and Gaylord. It remains in their home today.**

**At right, Grandma Martinson and neighbor Lizzie Henderson (on right) prepare for the Mt. Horeb Centennial parade in 1962. Twins Joy and Jan rode with them in the Martinson surrey that has been in the family since 1901.**

Gaylord and Shirley Martinson, now in their 80s, lead active lives and remain in their home in the beautiful Malone valley along Highway 92. With a full head of dark hair, Gaylord looks nowhere near his age. Although somewhat limited physically due to health problems, he still plays a mean game of Euchre. He also enjoys games of solitaire on his computer.

“We were in Chicago during that first week in March at a farm show and had gone down by bus,” Shirley recalls. “When the blizzard hit, we took the first bus home we could. Others who stayed later didn’t get back to our area for nearly a week! Judy, who was a sophomore in high school, was snowbound in Mt. Horeb at Grandma’s for five days.”

Shirley recently verified through Grandma Martinson’s diary, which they have, that the storm began on March 5, 1959. “Grandma wrote that Judy and Ruth (Shelstad or Dettwiler?) were there overnight until the following Tuesday. The storm began the Thursday before,” Shirley explained.



Meanwhile, Shirley’s daily activity level is mind-boggling. “There is no such thing as retirement for me,” Shirley says.

Work inside and outside, as well as helping care for Gaylord, keeps Shirley hopping all day long. She also volunteers at the nursing home, delivers Meals on Wheels, volunteers for church communion duty three months out of the year, assists at the church bazaar and ice cream social, bowls, and creates ceramic keepsakes for herself and others. On top of

that, she is a longtime member of the Malone Mothers' Club and enjoys outings with the group. "Many of the members are gone now, but there are still a few of us who do things together," Shirley comments.

Her kids are right – the kitchen is like a magnet, drawing Shirley in. There she creates new as well as no-fail recipes that are requested again and again. Shirley continues to cook and bake up a storm whenever she has company coming – and maybe even when she doesn't. (Gaylord loves it.) Some of her favorite recipes follow. *Enjoy!*



**The five children of Shirley and Gaylord Martinson are (back l-r) Jerry, Judy and Joan, with their twin sisters Joy and Jan in front. (Late 1950s)**





## **Oxford Salad** (Kalee Martinson, granddaughter of Shirley & Gaylord)

1 head romaine lettuce (cut tops off as they are bitter)	1 cup cashews
4 ounces shredded Swiss cheese	1 apple
1 ¼ cup crasins (dried cranberries)	1 pear

### DRESSING:

1/3 cup lemon juice	1 teaspoon prepared mustard
2 teaspoons chopped onion	½ cup sugar
½ teaspoon salt	2/3 cup oil (canola or olive)
1 tablespoon poppyseeds	

Mix all ingredients for dressing. Chill for an hour or more before adding to salad.  
Toss salad ingredients with dressing.

---

## **Barbeque Hamburger** (Shirley Martinson)

*Shirley's family loves this warm, tasty sandwich!*

1 lbs ground chuck	½ large onion, chopped
2 cups celery, sliced	1 9-ounce can tomato sauce
3 Tablespoons vinegar	1 10 ½- ounce can cream of celery soup
3 Tablespoons brown sugar	3 Tablespoons prepared mustard
1 cup ketchup	

Brown meat. Add onion and celery. Sautee lightly. Add remainder of ingredients. Cook until celery is cooked through and flavors are blended. Add salt and pepper to taste.  
12-16 servings. *(I like to make it ahead of time and warm it up again.)*

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## **Mixed Nut Bars** (Joan Sholdt)

1 ½ cups flour	½ cup butter, melted	¾ cup brown sugar
1 teaspoon salt	2 cups mixed nuts	1 pkg butterscotch chips
2 Tablespoons butter	½ cup white syrup	1 Tablespoon water

Mix flour, butter, brown sugar and salt together for crust. Pat into 9 x 13 pan. Bake for 10 minutes at 350 degrees. Cool. Pour mixed nuts over crust ...chop one cup, leave one cup whole. Melt butter, butterscotch chips, syrup, and water over low heat or in microwave. Pour mixture over the nuts. Bake 10 more minutes. Cool. Store in refrigerator.

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## Chocolate Chip Cheese Ball (Judy Steinhauer)

8 ounces cream cheese  
¾ cup powdered sugar  
¾ cup mini chocolate chips

½ cup butter  
2 Tablespoons brown sugar  
Chopped pecans  
Graham Crackers

In mixing bowl beat cream cheese, softened butter and vanilla until fluffy. Gradually add powdered sugar and brown sugar. Stir in chocolate chips. Cover and refrigerate for at least 1 hour. Just before serving, roll cheese ball in pecans. Serve with regular or chocolate graham crackers.

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## Italian Beef for Sandwiches (Judy Steinhauer)

*Makes a delicious beef mixture to serve with your favorite buns.*

6 pound Round of Beef, rolled and tied  
3 large onions  
½ teaspoon salt

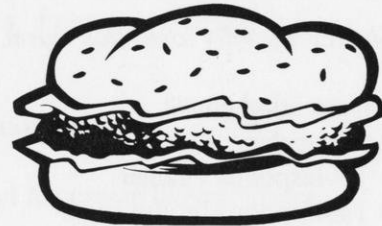
### Marinade:

½ teaspoon salt  
½ teaspoon garlic salt  
¼ teaspoon basil

½ teaspoon oregano  
½ teaspoon onion salt  
½ teaspoon Italian Seasoning

### Optional:

1 Tablespoon Accent



Place meat, onions and salt in roaster half full of water. Roast until tender, approximately 30 minutes per pound at 250 to 275 degrees. Let stand overnight in broth in refrigerator. Slice roast very fine and arrange in layers in pan. Strain liquid, removing onions and any fat into separate kettle. Add seasonings to liquid, bring to boil, and then pour over layers of meat. Liquid may be thickened with cornstarch to desired consistency. Marinate at least one day. Bake at 275 degrees for about two hours.

## CHAPTER 7

### **Alma Finds Jerome... New Home, New Life -- *The Skindrud family***

On June 8, 1943, Alma Martinson married Jerome Skindrud at the Mt. Horeb Lutheran parsonage. Jerome's brother, Orlando, performed the ceremony. Attendants included Alma's sister, Myrtle, and Jerome's brother, Eric.



**Jerome and Alma's wedding (1943)**

"Our reception was held at my parents' home," Alma said. "A couple of neighbor ladies came in and cooked the meal, and four of my friends served it. It was during World War II, and some things like gas were rationed. We didn't have much of a honeymoon. We went to Wisconsin Dells for a couple days and stayed in a room at a private home. Then we went to Waupun and visited Jerome's sister and family."

Alma and Jerome's home was the Skindrud farm, where Jerome's dad and brother were living.

"We lived with them for a few years," Alma explained. "The Skindrud family was large, just like my own. We got along real well, and they were very good to me. Martin, Eric and Jerome shared the farm work and the income. I did the housework. Jerome's dad remarried in 1944 and moved to be with his new wife at Barneveld."

Between 1944 and 1949, three of Alma and Jerome's four children were born. Rick arrived on Sept 15, 1944. Their only daughter, Becky, was born June 3, 1947. Bill, their second son, was born March 11, 1949. Six years later, on May 20, 1955, their third son, Rod, arrived.

"Jerome's brother Eric decided to quit farming and bought a partnership with Ben Mavis in the Mt. Horeb Lumber Company. He went to live with a sister and brother-in-law in Barneveld," Alma explained.



**The Skindrud farm house just outside Mt. Horeb**



“After Eric left the farm, we needed extra help to get the work done. We used hired men. Some of them were fine workers, and some were not. Our last one, Bob Murray, was a real good hired man. Then he got drafted and went into the Korean War.”

“Jerome had a case of undulant fever and wasn’t feeling very well. So we decided to rent out the farmland and move to town,” Alma continues. “We rented a house which was on the market to be sold. A year later the house sold, so we rented a home in Verona.



**Ronnie and Rick Skindrud (1970)**

Jerome was delivering gas and oil for the Verona Farm Bureau. We were not too happy there, so six weeks later we bought a small farm on the northeast corner of Mt. Horeb. We have lived on our farm land ever since.”

“We started plotting our farm for residential lots,” Alma continues. “We sold a few and decided to build a new home for ourselves. In 1976, we built a second home, since we had the land. The children had all left home, so we built it more for our own needs as a couple. This is where I still live today. Jerome passed away on October 15, 1995 after he had been ill for quite some time.”

“As our family grew we had baptisms, confirmations, graduations, and weddings. Becky married Mark Mostrom on June 15, 1968. Bill married Pat McGinley on March 4, 1969. They later divorced, and Bill married Bonnie Gullickson on February 6, 1988. Ronnaug Hereid married Rick on August 8, 1970. Rod married Pat Huebner on June 12, 1987.”

“Then grandchildren arrived – Melissa, Bill, Jan, Kristin, Robby, Marny, Dagny, Leif, and Bobby. When Bill and Bonnie married she had three children (Mike, Heidi and Kelsi), and when Rod and Pat married she had two daughters (Theresa and Kathleen). So I have five step-grandchildren and 19 great grandchildren. A few years ago I learned Rod had a daughter Betsy,” Alma explains.



**Alma Skindrud (front center) is surrounded by her children and grandchildren.**

“Betsy had been adopted at birth and was raised by adopted parents. She married Steve VanEtten, and together they have a daughter Emma and a son Nicholas.”



**The Skindruds in the 1960s – (l-r) Becky, Bill, Rick and Rod gather with their parents, Jerome and Alma.**

### **Memories of Grandma Clara and Grandpa Martin Martinson**

Becky, the only daughter of Alma and Jerome, remembers visiting Grandma Martinson in her Mt. Horeb home where she often could be found sitting in her chair crocheting and looking out onto Lincoln Street.

“Grandma had a large crocheted wall hanging of the Lord’s Supper on the wall behind her chair,” Becky said. “She was always present at every family function and her Norwegian heritage was evident in her lefse baking, etc. She was a quiet unassuming lady with a gentle disposition. She seemed to love all the family parties and events over the years.”

Rick remembers Christmas at Grandma Martinson’s house and the smell of lutefisk. Becky remembers that the food was always wonderful -- whether it was the classic Norwegian lefse, lutefisk, romme grot, or krumkake.

### **School memories and careers**

Becky, like all of her brothers, attended school in the Mt. Horeb School District. She went to UW-Whitewater and received a teaching degree in 1969. She married Mark Mostrom at the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Mt. Horeb in 1968 where his father was a pastor. After two years of teaching, Becky stayed home during the years her three children were small. Becky and Mark lived in several places during their early married years but have been in Mt. Horeb since 1979. Becky went to work in banking in 1985.

She is now a supervisor at AnchorBank in Mt. Horeb. Mark continues to work as an auto sales manager at Saturn of Madison. Becky's oldest brother Rick Skindrud attended the Berg one-room school and graduated from Mt. Horeb High School in 1962. He farmed for many years and then entered the political field, serving as a State Representative. Rick is presently a Sergeant of Arms at the Wisconsin State Assembly.

Becky's younger brothers Bill and Rod both have careers in the rock crushing/gravel business. Rod sells crushing equipment for Twin City Wire, and Bill manages crushing crews for Wingra Stone. All three brothers and their wives live in the Mt. Horeb area. A few of Becky and her brothers' children have scattered in different directions, but many still remain around Mt. Horeb.



**Becky and Mark Mostrom in a recent photo**

### **Social life and fond family memories**

I have fun-filled childhood memories of being at the Skindrud house, my cousins in Mt. Horeb. Becky and I shared similar high school activities, as well as summer work at the local A & W Restaurant in the 1960s. Becky has many fond memories as she reminisces about her childhood in Mt.Horeb...

"We lived on my father's family farm until I was five, and then moved to Mt. Horeb," Becky explains. "Our family retained ownership of the farm for years. Dad's job was with AMPI, first as a fieldman and later as AMPI Plant Manager on Park Street in



**Alma and Jerome Skindrud in the late 1980s or early 1990s**

Madison. Many of the Martinson family members were farmers, so farm life seemed to be what we were all about. Summers were fun because of all the cousins we had on farms," Becky said. "I loved to visit them, play in the hay mows, and go to the pastures to bring the cows in for milking."



During a stay with the Grundahls one summer, Becky recalls that her cousin Brad and her Uncle Bennie took her fencing. "They even let me drive the tractor," Becky said.

"The big event every summer was the Martinson reunion at Stewart's Park," Becky says. "We girls liked to hike around the lake after lunch."

"I had great parents," Becky continues. "Dad died in 1995, but Mom is still living in the last home they built for themselves. They were both strong Christians who loved us and taught us strong family values. Dad had a great sense of humor and was always interested in what we were doing. In later years Dad was a willing taxi for his grandchildren," Becky explains. "He would often bring home varieties of ice cream from the AMPI plant. That was a real treat!"



**At left, a gathering at the Skindrud home brought cousins together (l-r) back are Debbie Kahl, Becky Skindrud, and across the table are (l-r) Joan Martinson, Debbie Jorns, Dorothy Schwarz, Rosann Schwarz Jorns, and Joyce Dettwiler. (1962)**

"Like Grandma Martinson, Mom also has an easy-going and quiet disposition," Becky says. "Both Mom and Dad thoroughly enjoyed socializing with family and friends over the years, and Mom continues to enjoy these activities."

"When my brothers and I were growing up, Mom made sure we always had the best home-cooked meals. She still enjoys making lefse and our family favorite -- her great sugar cookies," Becky adds. "She also made the best homemade soup! Her meatballs are always requested by the grandchildren whenever there is a family event. We had vegetable gardens, and Mom would can and freeze foods for winter enjoyment. She enjoys crocheting like Grandma did. I have lots of Mom's doilies to treasure."



**Alma Skindrud (2005)**

"I recall a family vacation when all six of us went to Woodruff for a week at a campground," says Becky. "We stayed in a small trailer, and I thought it was great!"

"Sunday afternoon drives with my folks and brothers were fun," Becky said. "We stopped to visit aunts, uncles and cousins. Adults played cards. We kids played hide and seek or other childhood games. There was lots of fun and joking...the uncles always seemed to love to tease the kids."

"Our family life included weekly church services and Sunday School at Springdale Lutheran Church east of Mt. Horeb. Summers we went to Vacation Bible School which included fun recesses playing in the church cemetery," Becky said. "Confirmation was the big event prior to high school graduations. All the aunts, uncles and cousins were always invited for both of those events. My brothers and I also took part in 4-H, which

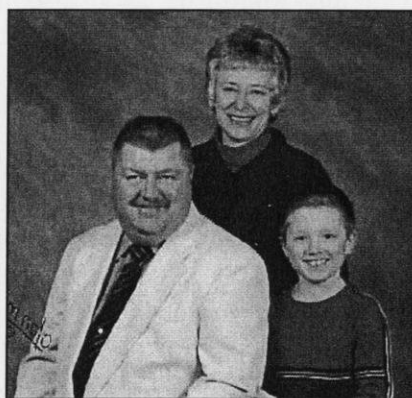


**Easter basket treats await the Skindrud children (l-r) Bill, Becky, Rick and Rod. (1950s)**

reminds me of the projects we had to complete for the Dane County Fair every summer. I entered clothing, foods, leather work, and photography projects." Becky said. "Mom patiently helped me with many sewing projects. Then there were the 4-H record books to complete and turn in, something I never enjoyed."

"We have continued traditions of family gatherings and enjoy watching the new generations enjoying these same events. Our numbers keep growing. We have about 40 now with spouses, children, and grandchildren. Mom also has 19 great-grandchildren, at last count," Becky concludes.

Rod, the youngest of Alma and Jerome's children remembers Christmas at Grandma Martinson's house. Social life in his younger years included going to the Mt. Horeb public swimming pool and playing ball with neighborhood kids. He also recalls many neighborhood street parties and visiting farms where aunts, uncles and cousins lived. "Vacations at Shower's cottage were always fun," Rod said.



**Rod with wife Pat and son Bobby**

Chores and fun for Rod back in the 1960s-70s included pulling weeds, mowing lawn, cleaning his room, and when he was all done – watching Television was his reward. "TV was a new invention back then," Rod said.

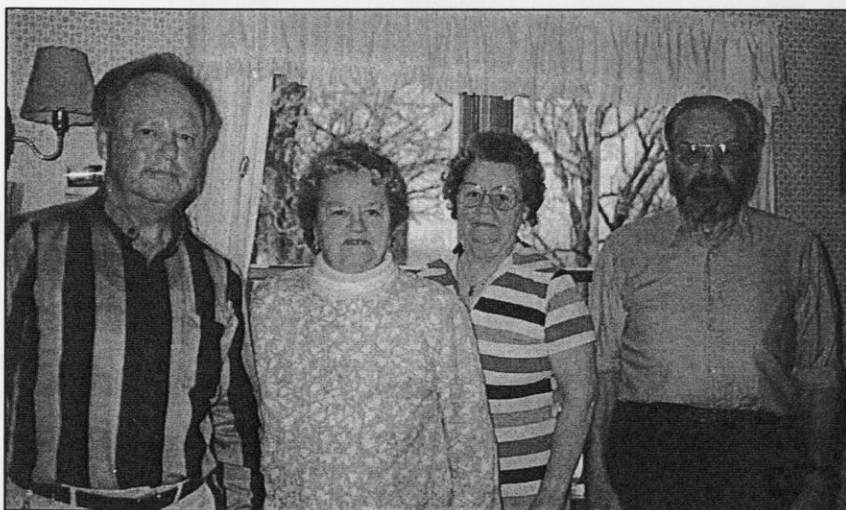
Rod graduated from Mt. Horeb High School in 1973 and says Industrial Arts was his favorite subject. With a career at Wingra Stone for 26 years and sales rep work for Twin City Wire, Rod is very busy these days.

Humorous memories for Rod include driving the Ford tractor and his dad giving him heck for going too fast!

“What I liked about my dad, though, was that he was honest and fair,” Rod said. A vivid memory Rod holds dear is how happy his mother was when his brother Rick returned home from Vietnam.



Alma and Jerome Skindrud's grandchildren above are front (l-r) Leif and Dagney; middle (l-r) Jan, Heidi, Marney, Robby, Kris; and back (l-r) Melissa, Bill, Kelsi, and Kathy. (*Not pictured: Mike and Theresa*)



Alma Skindrud (second from left) is joined by her brother-in-law Milton Showers (at left), her sister Verna Grundahl, and her sister Benunie's friend Quinten Stenseth (at right). A family gathering was taking place at Benunie Schwarz Berge's house. (1990)



**Martinson cousins take time out for a “Kodak Moment” while playing at a family gathering at the Skindrud house in Mt. Horeb. In the front row, (l-r) are Joan Martinson and Becky Skindrud; back (l-r) are Dolly (Ruth) Dettwiler, Judy Martinson, Alice Grundahl, Dorothy Schwarz, and Jean Dettwiler. (1954 or 1955)**



**Jerome and Alma Skindrud are encircled by (l-r) Becky, Bill, Rick and Rod. (1980s)**

## *Favorite Family Recipes!*

### **Alma's Meatballs**

2 pounds hamburger  
1 ½ teaspoon grey poupon mustard  
Most of 8 oz. carton French Onion dip  
Salt and Pepper to taste

2 Tablespoons catsup  
2 slices dry bread, crushed into crumbs  
1 egg

Mix above ingredients and shape into balls. Brown in frying pan on top of stove. Put meatballs in baking dish. Using the same frying pan, add water – enough to cover the meatballs when done. Add a couple beef boullion cubes or canned beef bouillon. Heat and make a mixture of cornstarch or flour and water. Use this to thicken the liquid. Pour over meatballs. Bake at 325 degrees for a couple of hours or so. (Best to keep them covered.)

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### **Favorite Sugar Cookies** (Alma Skindrud)

1 cup butter  
1 teaspoon Cream Tartar  
1 teaspoon baking soda

1 ½ cup sugar  
¾ teaspoon nutmeg  
4 cups flour

3 eggs  
¼ teaspoon salt

Cream butter and sugar together. Add eggs. Beat well. Add cream of tartar, soda, nutmeg, salt, and flour. Mix. Chill well. Roll thin, using extra flour for rolling. Use a cookie cutter to shape the cookies. Sprinkle with sugar. Bake at 350 degrees for 8-12 minutes or until light brown. Cool on rack.



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### **Rommegrot**

*Alma uses the recipe out of the Mt. Horeb Evangelical Lutheran Church cookbook from the 1950s.*

1 pound butter  
Flour

2 cups water  
1 quart boiled milk

Boil butter and water together for about five minutes. Add flour, a little at a time, about 6 tablespoons. Boil until fat comes out. Remove fat and add scant cup of flour and 1 quart boiled milk.



### **Martinson Reunion 2005**

Getting old fashioned surrey rides on their grandfather Torkel Martinson's 1901 surrey are the Martinson "kids" (l-r) front Alma Skindrud, Myrtle Showers, and seated (l-r) Gaylord Martinson, Verna Grundahl, and Harland Martinson (behind Myrtle). Missing: Helen Abplanalp.



## CHAPTER 8

### **Helen and Alfred Marry and Make Cheese – *The Abplanalp Family***

On November 3, 1947, two couples were married in a double wedding ceremony. Helen Martinson married Alfred Abplanalp, while at the same time, Alfred's brother Harold was wed to his bride Rachel.

Helen met Alfred when he was working as a cheesemaker at the Malone Cheese Factory, not far from where she lived on the Martinson farm. Milk from her dad's cows was delivered to this factory.

After meeting Alfred through her brother Gaylord Martinson, Helen had to say her goodbyes. Alfred was drafted by the Army in World War II and in 1945 he was at Normandy's Omaha Beach on the French coast when the bloodiest of all battles took place. It was a huge relief for this courting couple when the war ended and he returned home.



**Helen Martinson and Alfred Abplanalp marry (1947)**

During their married life, Helen and Alfred had two children – Chuck was born in 1948 and Nancy in 1951. They were raised and schooled in Middleton where Alfred operated the West Middleton Cheese Factory.

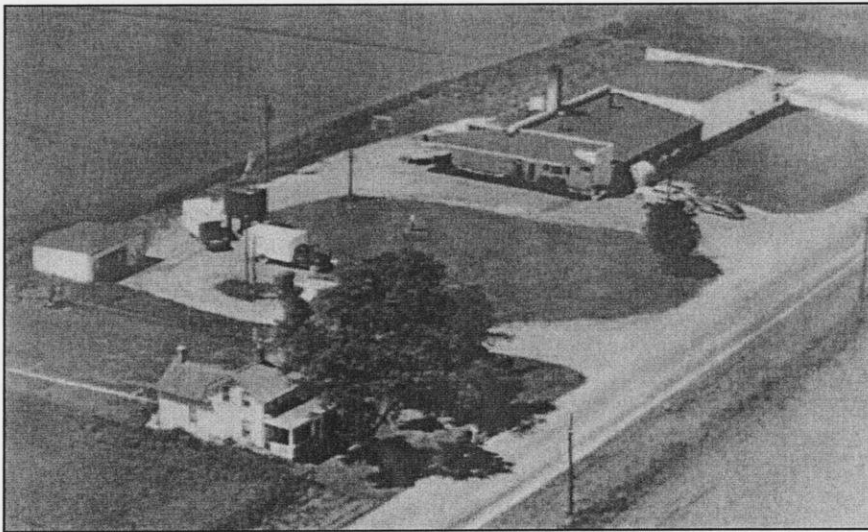
Alfred was an expert Swiss cheesemaker. His parents both emigrated from Switzerland and had raised him on a farm near Arena, Wisconsin. Alfred made cheese at the Malone Cheese Factory and also had learned the trade from his uncles who were cheesemakers in Monroe. He also had taken a UW-Madison Cheesemaking Short Course.

The Abplanalp's West Middleton Cheese Factory was adjacent to their house on Mineral Point Road near Middleton. It was here that Alfred made Swiss cheese most of his working years. Alfred suffered with arthritis and was ill a number of months before he died, at age 53, from a blood infection. The factory and their house have since been torn down to make way for a Kwik Trip gas station.

Helen worked in an office setting in Madison most of her working years. In later years, she was employed at the Wisconsin Department of Motor Vehicles. In fact, she got a job there for her sister Benunie (my mother) on a temporary basis shortly after my dad Walter died in 1969.

As a young girl, I remember entering the Abplanalp house through the kitchen and seeing the pretty yard that surrounded their home. I thought Nancy was the cutest little two-year old cousin I had ever seen!

It was always fun to visit and learn how daily life was different for our cousins who weren't on farms. I thoroughly enjoyed sneaking into the factory with Chuck and Nancy to see what their dad Alfred was doing. With my Grandpa Rudy Schwarz being a Swiss cheesemaker in the early 1900s near Daleyville, a fascination with cheese factories grew within me at a young age. To this day, I still am in awe when I enter a cheese factory. I love to watch cheese being made. And, yes, Swiss is one of my favorites!



**Bird's eye view of the West Middleton Cheese Factory and home owned by Helen and Alfred Abplanalp in the 1950s-60s. It is no longer there. A gas station now operates on the same spot on Mineral Point Road.**

### **Nancy Abplanalp's Memories**

Helen and Alfred's daughter Nancy has suffered from brain aneurysms in recent years. Therefore, some of her recollections aren't real clear. She did the best she could to remember fond times with her parents, Helen and Alfred, and her older brother Chuck. Nancy, who is married to Rod Arneson, lives in Middleton. They have two daughters Heidi, 27 and Edie, 25 years old.

What Nancy remembers about Grandma Martinson is going to her house after a dentist appointment. She also recalls eating Grandma's lefse. On Christmas, Nancy said, she would go to Grandma's house and play with all her cousins. "When I was older, I was able to go to Mt. Horeb and go swimming with some of my cousins."

Nancy recalls that her dad Alfred put in long hard days at the factory. "I remember playing with my dog, riding my tricycle, and playing in the cheese factory," Nancy said.

“My Dad and I would always watch the Green Bay Packers together. He was a wonderful, thoughtful, caring, and loving person who excelled in people skills. I enjoyed the kind of ‘heart’ he had,” Nancy reflected.

In 1969 Nancy graduated from Middleton High School. Math, she says, was her favorite subject. School activities and social life Nancy enjoyed involved “running around with my girlfriends to the Capitol Square, Piasans, and McDonalds.”

Nancy’s chores during her childhood included keeping the house clean. Helen’s daily chores while raising two children included cooking, taking care of the garden, and doing lots of freezing of foods, Nancy recalls.

One of the funniest of Nancy’s memories is the day not too many years ago when she and her mother ate an entire pie. “Mom had just baked a lemon meringue, and it was really good,” Nancy recalls.

A fond memory for Nancy is thinking of her mother singing. “Mom sang to me when I was sick. I understand she sang to me recently when I had my brain aneurysms. My Mother is very concerned about me and my family,” Nancy concludes.

### **Chuck’s Memories**

Chuck Abplanalp graduated from Middleton High School in 1966. He went on to school at UW-Madison and received a degree in economics in 1973.

“Chuck was drafted during Vietnam,” Helen said. “Because he had taken typing, he became a clerk for the commanding officer of an Army Division Support Brigade in Frankfurt, Germany. He was home in less than two years.”

Chuck had two children with his first wife, Sherryl. Jenny is 22 and Greg is 18. Chuck is engaged to Robin Hoyt and lives in Verona. He has worked at Madison Newspapers as a computer systems administrator for 25 years.

What Chuck recalls most about his dad is that he made good Swiss cheese. “He made Swiss and Cheddar, and he won awards at the State Fair,” Chuck said.



**Chuck and Nancy Abplanalp with their parents (1959)**



“Making Swiss cheese was quite a process,” Chuck explains. “Cheese likes bacteria. We’d place the Swiss cheese in the warm cellar at a certain temperature to generate bacteria. Part of the process was putting it in the cold cellar too, which had a brine tank in it. The Swiss cheese blocks went into a brine solution for 2-4 days so the salt could soak in.”

Wholesalers would buy his dad’s cheese and repackage it, according to Chuck, who said its final destination was mainly Mt. Horeb (Hentze’s), Dodgeville, and Monroe.

“We delivered cheese in blocks of roughly 90 pounds. Cheese was graded at one of four levels. I helped my dad make the cheese and drove one of his six trucks on weekends and in the summer. We’d pick up the milk and bring it to our factory.”

Does Chuck like Swiss cheese? “It’s my favorite,” he says.



**Helen and Alfred Abplanalp**

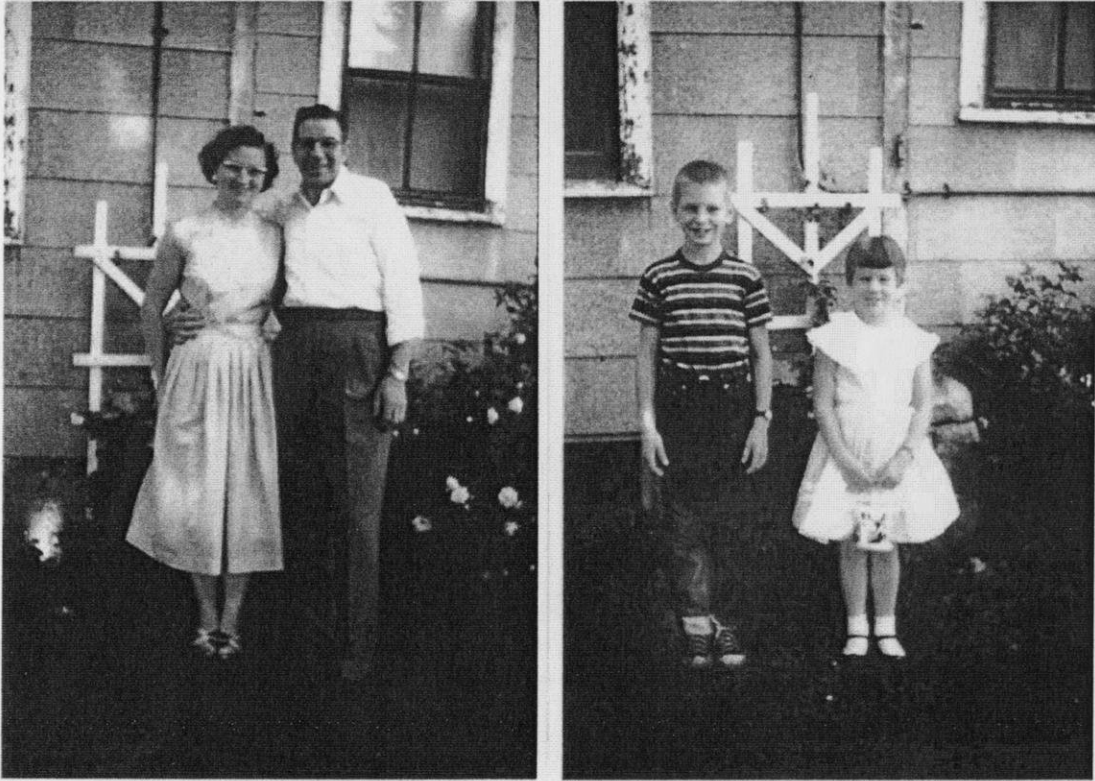
Chuck also remembers his dad liked to play cards, mainly poker. “At Schwarz’s house, I can still picture us kids running outside and peering into the basement where the men were playing cards. My dad had quite a stash of winnings -- money or chips -- in front of him.”

At one time Alfred also liked to bowl, Chuck said. “Dad had a pretty good average on bowling leagues in Mt. Horeb, but later problems with his feet got the best of him.”

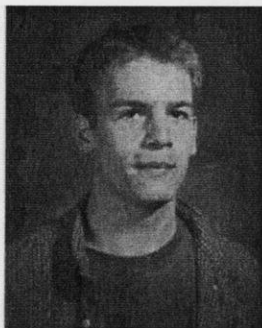
Social life for Chuck revolved around playing Little League ball, attending Sunday School, and going to his one-room school which later became two rooms – the West Middleton School. His favorite subject was math. For fun Chuck enjoyed riding his bike and playing football.

Chuck is quick to point out what he likes about his mother. “She is so tolerant, kind, and caring,” he says. “My cousin Joan Sholdt has been a godsend to my mother since Nancy became ill a few years ago,” Chuck added. “Prior to that, Nancy had been taking mom shopping and on errands each week. Now, Jo does it.” Chuck related how one day when Nancy was in the hospital, Joan and Chuck Sholdt were visiting Nancy. “They said to

let them know if there was anything they could do to help,” Chuck recalls. “And that was the start of my cousin Jo taking Mom shopping. She’s just been super to my mother.”

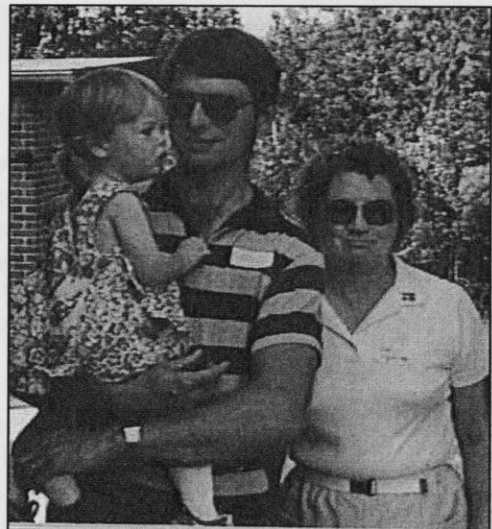


Helen and Alfred and their children Chuck and Nancy pose in front of their Middleton area home during the 1950s.



Above are Chuck’s two children -- Jenny and Greg Abplanalp.

Helen Abplanalp walks with her son Chuck as he carries his little girl Jenny during an annual Martinson reunion at Stewart’s Park. (1985)





Helen and Alfred (seated at far end of table) enjoy their engagement party with relatives and friends at the Chanticleer Inn in Middleton. (1947)



Clara Martinson makes lefse for her nine kids, their families -- *and many others!*



The nine Martinson brothers and sisters gather. Front (l-r) are the brothers Marty (mother Clara), Harland, Gaylord and in back, sisters (l-r) are Verna, Benunie, Geneva, Alma, Myrtle, and Helen. (1960s)

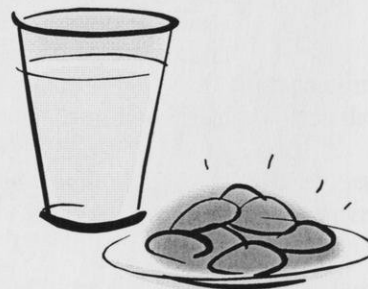


## *Favorite Family Recipes!*

### **Chocolate Chip Oatmeal Cookies**

*A favorite cookie for the Abplanalp family!*

1 c plus 2 T flour  
1 c quick cooking oatmeal  
2 T Dutch process unsweetened cocoa  
 $\frac{3}{4}$  tsp baking soda  
 $\frac{3}{4}$  c (1  $\frac{1}{2}$  sticks) butter  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  c granulated sugar  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  c brown sugar (lightly packed)  
1 egg  
1 tsp vanilla  
1 (6oz) pkg semi-sweet chocolate chips  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  c walnuts



Stir together flour, oatmeal, cocoa and baking soda. Beat butter (margarine) and sugar until light and fluffy. Beat in egg and vanilla. Stir in flour mixture until blended. Add chocolate chips and nutmeats. Drop by teaspoonfuls onto greased cookie sheet, 2 inches apart. Bake at 350° for 10-12 min. Do not over bake. Leave on sheets 2-3 minutes before removing. Makes 5 dozen cookies.

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### **Matrimony Bars (Oatmeal Date Bars)**

*These are Helen's favorite, made often by her mother. Nearly everyone in the family made these bars. Over the years, Date Bars have been a family potluck staple!*

#### **CRUST:**

2  $\frac{1}{2}$  cups oatmeal  
2 cups flour  
1 teaspoon salt  
1 cup butter, melted  
1 cup brown sugar

#### **DATE FILLING:**

1 large pkg dates, cut up  
1 cup sugar  
1 cup hot water

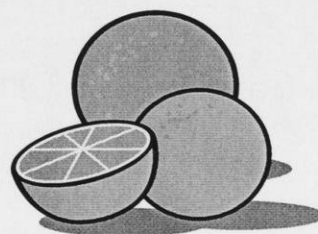
**AHEAD OF TIME:** Boil date filling ingredients slowly until quite thick.

*(Now dates are available pre-chopped and coated in sugar. No need to chop or add much sugar if using this type of date.)*

While date mixture cools, make crust (half of which is also the topping). Put half the mixture into bottom of 9 x 13" pan. Reserve other half for on top of date mixture. Spread cooled date mixture over crust. Sprinkle or spoon remaining crust mixture over top of date layer. Pat down. Bake approximately 20-25 min. at 350 or until browned.

## Mandarin Orange Salad

1 – 6 oz box orange Jello  
1 pt orange sherbert  
2 c boiling water  
1 c miniature marshmallows  
1 large or 2  
small cans Mandarin oranges



Dissolve jello in 2 cups boiling water or juice from oranges. Stir in sherbert. Add oranges and marshmallows. Makes 6 servings.

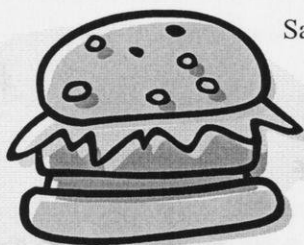
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## Arneson Burgers

*A nice grilling burger from Nancy and Rod!*

1 pound lean ground beef  
3 small onions  
1/2 cup Worcestershire sauce  
1 teaspoon salt  
Colby cheese slices

1 pound lean ground turkey  
5 teaspoons minced garlic  
1 teaspoon accent seasoning  
1/2 teaspoon black pepper



Sauté the onions. In large mixing bowl, combine all the ingredients and mix together.

Refrigerate for a few hours. Form into about 8 patties. Grill as normal. When the burgers are almost done, top with a slice of Colby cheese.

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## Burritos (Nancy and Rod Arneson)

*A friend gave us this recipe. It's the best Mexican food ever!*

3 pounds chopped beef chuck roast  
3 tablespoons flour  
3 large onions diced  
16 ounces taco sauce green  
2 cups water  
16 ounces green enchilada sauce

3 pounds chopped pork roast  
6 cloves garlic  
12 ounces green chili peppers  
16 ounces salsa Verde  
2 tablespoons lemon juice  
2 dozens flour tortillas burrito size

Cube meat and discard fat and gristle. Flour meat and then brown slowly with onions, garlic and seasonings (cumin, salt, pepper, and oregano). Use a heavy pot to prevent scorching. Add cans of minced green chilies, taco sauce and salsa Verde, water, and lemon juice. Depending how hot you like your chili, you can add another can each of salsa Verde, taco sauce, and minced green chilies. Simmer at least two hours. Heat the enchilada sauce in a separate pot. Spoon green chili into a tortilla and roll it up. I usually add shredded cheese on top and then the enchilada sauce. You can freeze whatever chile is left. Serves 24.

## CHAPTER 9

### Myrtle is Prom Queen with King Milton – *The Showers Unite*

Myrtle, the youngest of the six Martinson girls, was born August 16, 1923. When she was a junior at Mt. Horeb High School in 1940, her classmate Milton Showers asked her to be his prom queen. It was the start of something big. They were married in 1943. A Navy man, Milton left his bride to serve in World War II from 1942-1945. In 2005, the two have been married for 62 years.

Myrtle and Milton lived and worked in Madison and raised four children: Danne was born in 1944, David in 1946, Sue Ann in 1950, and Sheri in 1956.



*Myrtle & Milton as Mt. Horeb High School Prom King & Queen*



Myrtle and Milton marry in 1943.

Myrtle recalls October of 1946 as a bittersweet time. While it was wonderful to be expecting their second son, it was sad because her dad died October 13, just 11 days after David was born.

Vivid memories of October 2, 1946 fill Myrtle's mind. She even remembers what she wore that day -- a navy dress with a white print. Not yet in labor, she decided to take the bus and go visit her dad at St. Mary's Hospital. He was scheduled for surgery that day. While there, Myrtle began to have labor pains. Before she could leave, David was born. Sadly, her dad (my grandpa) died October 13 from complications of surgery for colon cancer.

#### **Dorothy recalls visits to Showers' Madison home**

Myrtle's experience reminds me of one I had 26 years later when my second son, Chad Rindy, was born on January 1, 1969. He arrived just days before my dad, Walter Schwarz, died from cancer. I visited my dad in the hospital just prior to Chad's birth and again after showing him Chad's birth picture. Dad and I were patients at Methodist



Hospital in Madison at the same time. His death was devastating to me – especially at a time when I was so happy to have just given birth to my second son. I’m sure Myrtle had those same feelings.



**Myrtle and Milton with children (back, l-r) Danne, Sue Ann, David; and (front center) Sheri (1966)**

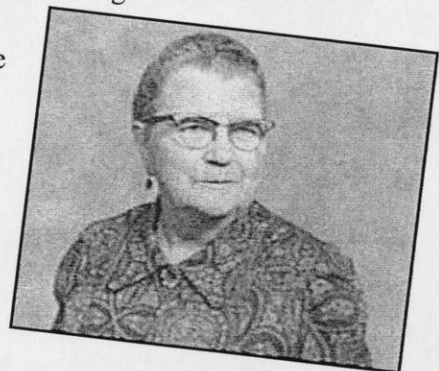
Myrtle and Milton’s children had red hair and freckles and were the envy of many of their cousins, a few who also had red hair – namely, Becky Skindrud and my sister Rosann Schwarz.

Family get-togethers at Showers’ house were always a special kind of fun because it took us 25 minutes beyond our Mt. Horeb farm to the much larger and bustling city of Madison. I recall the drive there. I can still envision their back yard and house overflowing with aunts, uncles, and cousins running around in the hot summer – on several occasions. Being there was so much fun. It helped unravel the mystery of city life.

### **Memories of Grandma**

“Grandma Martinson’s house on Sunday was a common and fun destination,” says Myrtle and Milton Showers’ daughter Sue. “We’d race to the swing on Grandma’s front porch, with a handful of Grandma’s fresh “fried cakes” (doughnuts). “We ate them with jelly. We also had some great conversations with Grandma. I enjoyed seeing her crocheted doilies and items she was working on,” Sue reminisces.

Sheri has many fond memories of Grandma Martinson as well. “It seems she didn’t smile much,” Sheri begins. “She didn’t like pictures of herself. I remember one time she had pictures taken at her church and she didn’t like any of them.”



**Grandma’s church picture (1975)**

Sheri recalls Grandma’s tremendous talent for crocheting. “She created a wall hanging of the Last Supper, and I thought it was the most beautiful thing! I couldn’t believe it had not won first place. She even crocheted Ann Dettwiler’s bridal veil. My mom always told me how Grandma could just look at something and then make it. She didn’t need a pattern. How I cherish all the doilies (that I still have) that Grandma made!”

**Memory “snapshots” Sheri has of Grandma Clara Martinson include the following:**

- The wooden Dutch shoes I would play with in the front room.
- Grandma sitting in her chair, listening to a baseball game and crocheting.
- Her baking skills – the wonderful lefse we all thought was the best... people would order it and send it all over the country!
- Grandma’s fried cakes (doughnuts) were “to die for.” Nobody made them like Grandma.
- The front porch swing.
- Her incredible sharp mind! She amazed me on how she could remember all the grandchildren’s names and birthdays, and even the great grandchildren! I wish I would have received her “remember” gene!
- How we were told that “her hip broke and then she fell.” But in my job, I perform bone density tests. As a result, I now understand the significance of Grandma’s fall and of her “dowager’s hump.”
- How Grandma babysat for me at our home in Madison, and I accidentally spilled a pitcher of milk. I think that was the only time I saw her really kind of mad!
- How she would always say she’d never go on an airplane.
- I recall the first time I tried lutefisk... Grandma told me it tasted like lobster, because she knew I liked lobster. Guess what? It didn’t taste like lobster.
- How she always said “*quite a little*” – I wasn’t sure if it meant *a little* or *a lot*!

**Christmas memories and other favorite holidays**

**Sue:**

I enjoyed all the holidays. Mom and dad made each one very special and always related the true meaning of it. One Christmas I remember getting a rocking horse. We always dressed up in our Sunday’s best, but being together and having a real Christmas tree made it so nice. One tradition we still continue today is making homemade “snow” for on the Christmas tree by whipping Ivory Flakes with hot water!

**Sheri:**

I really liked Christmas. We would have oyster stew and BBQ ribs for Christmas Eve dinner. Then, we’d go to the 11 p.m. church service. It was always so pretty. Afterwards we drove around town looking at Christmas lights. Christmas morning we (especially me, since I was the baby) would get up early to open presents. I found out years later that mom and dad would just barely be getting to bed after wrapping our presents – when we would be getting up to open them!

I also liked Easter. Mom always made clothes for Sue and me. She’d dress us up in pretty outfits or dresses with white gloves and shiny patent leather shoes. We would get up early and go to the sunrise service. Of course, we’d find our baskets first.

Halloween was also a special holiday. One year that stands out is when my dad made me a cat costume. I wore yellow pajamas. He blew up a big balloon, wrapped it in aluminum

foil to make the head, used pipe cleaners for whiskers and tightly wrapped foil for the tail. I continued the joy of Halloween with my kids. We always carved pumpkins and created costumes.

### **School memories and careers**

Madison's Frank Allis School on the East Side is where all four of the Showers' children attended grade school.

Sue has lots of good memories from school days. A favorite was being on the teen board and modeling for the Gimbels store. "I enjoyed meeting girls from other high schools," Sue said. Her favorite subject was psychology. After high school, Sue continued her education at UW-Stevens Point where she majored in Business Education. She worked as an administrative assistant for various companies and now works part-time at a specialty woman's clothing store. She is married to Kevin Laird and they live in Menomonee Falls. They have one son Tim who has a career in pharmaceutical sales.

Sheri graduated from Madison East High School in 1974, continuing on for training at X-ray Technology School. For the past 30 years she has worked as a Registered X-ray Technologist of Radiology and is happy with her career choice. She and her husband Dennis Rodefeld live in Madison with Sheri's two children, Adam and Kayla.



**Sheri and Dennis Rodefeld with Adam and Kayla. (Late 1990s)**

Danne Showers lives in Ajo, Arizona. After high school, he graduated from Madison Business College. He currently works as an accountant for a telephone company. He is married to Lorraine and has two children, Apryl, 35, and Erik, 37.

David was the second son born to Myrtle and Milton in 1946. He earned a Bachelors Degree in Business from Luther College, Decorah, Iowa. David made the U.S. Air Force his career, serving as a pilot. While working at the Pentagon during 10 years of his military career, he returned to school and received his Masters Degree from William and Mary College in Washington D.C. He retired as a Colonel after 26 years of service. Currently David travels coast to coast in his motorhome with his wife Janice. David has two children, Anne Marie born in 1973 and David Francis born in 1975.

### **Fond memories of Dad**

**Sue:**

My dad isn't a real funny man, but he was always there for me. As a child growing up in our busy household, what I liked most about him were his listening skills and his smile!



Mom worked nights, so dad helped me with homework. He also was there when I came home from dates and other things. Dad taught me how to wrap presents, especially at Christmas. Together, he and I wrapped all the presents. He used to clean on Friday's and would fall asleep with the vacuum still running!

**Sheri:**

You know how it is – you appreciate your parents once you are older and have started your own family. Looking back, my dad didn't smile much. He sure would like to give my friends and boyfriends a hard time. They were kind of afraid of him. He was always good to me though. My mom worked nights all the time I was growing up. So, my dad and I spent a lot of time together. Some nights he would go back to work, and I would go with him. I always enjoyed that.

My dad started in the mail room for Rural Mutual Insurance Company when he came home from World War II. In the war, he had been a radio man on the U.S.S. Melvin – a Naval destroyer. Through the years, he worked his way up the career ladder. When he retired 40 years later, he was Vice President of Human Resources for Rural Mutual Insurance Company. It was quite an accomplishment.

In the 1960s, long before the popularity of faux painting, I remember dad used sponges to paint the rec room floor in our basement on East Dean Avenue in Madison. He wasn't a true handyman, yet he was not afraid to try a project!

Dad always gave me good advice, even though at the time I may not have thought it was good. One time I came home from work, complaining about something they had me doing at work. Dad said, *"If they are going to pay you to paint daisies on the wall, then you paint daisies on the wall."* And one time we were driving home from visiting in Mt. Horeb when we witnessed a car accident. I said, *"If those people wouldn't have been there at that time, they wouldn't have gotten into the accident."* My dad replied, *"IF is the biggest word in the world."* I guess some things just stick with you.

**Life-changing inventions**

Remarking on fashions through the decades, Sue, who used to model clothing for the Madison Gimbel's store, says "Fashions come and go, and then they come around again."



It cannot be repeated enough. Pants were worn for only the most casual activity. And never ever worn to school.

**Left**  
Wards 1960  
2 piece set. Pop top. Mid-calf pants in all cotton sharkskin. \$4.97

**Below**  
Sears 1963  
Cotton Knits.  
Left - Jesler shirt with whimsical notched hem. \$2.83 Capri pants with a lean, lanky fit. Completely lined with cotton. \$3.77

Right - Mandarin lock pullover with solid color accents. \$2.83 Cabin boy pants flattering knee-high length. Cotton lines. \$3.77

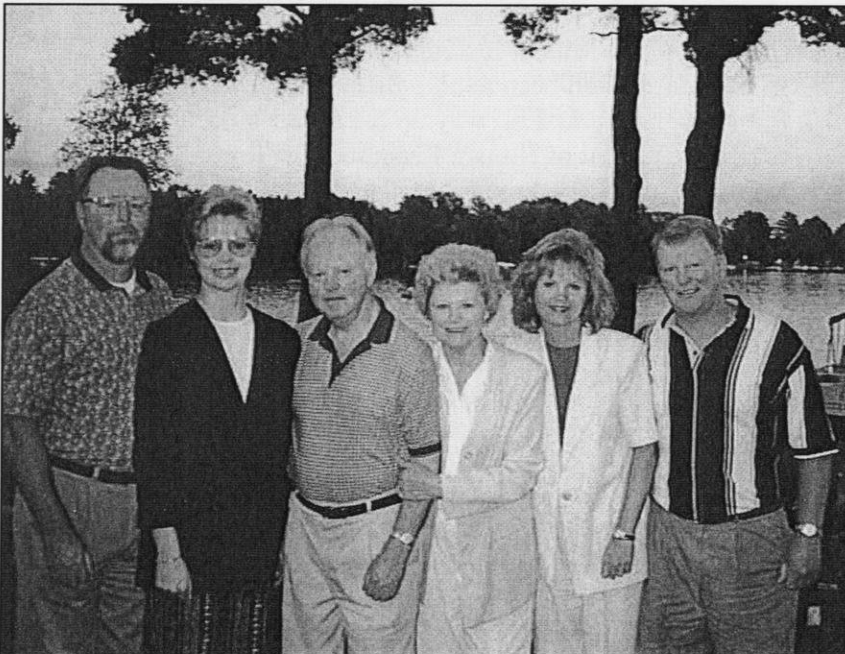


Sue recalls that her mother made many outfits she and her sister Sheri wore, as well as clothes for herself.

The family's DeSoto car Sue says was awesome. "It had a record player in it and was really cool!"

For Sheri, getting their first colored television set was a benchmark.

"Seeing something in color for the first time was really exciting," Sheri said. "Mom and dad wanted to get a color TV before New Year's Day so mom could watch the Rose Bowl Parade," Sheri recalls. "Mom still enjoys watching that parade today."



Sheri also recalls that when her parents bought their cabin up north it had an outhouse and only cold running water. In the early 1970s they added a full indoor bathroom and hot running water. "That sure made a big difference," Sheri said. "Thank goodness for modern conveniences!"

**Danne, Sheri, Milton, Myrtle, Sue, and David celebrate Myrtle and Milton's 55<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary in 1998. The event took place at an Eagle River resort, not too far from their family cottage.**

### **Social life and changes**

Sheri has fond memories of her mom and dad, brothers Danne and David, and sister Sue spending time up north at their cottage. "I could write a book about our summers," Sheri says, reflecting about by-gone-days. "Mom and dad bought me heaven on earth when they purchased our cottage near Tomahawk in 1960. They are the best of all my memories, and there are too many to write about. I still get choked up when I think about all those experiences vacationing with our family."

Sue feels the same way. "We enjoyed traveling *Up North* and swimming at the lake. We were always together sharing life's ups and downs," Sue added.

## Fond memories of Mother ... and more

“Mom is my best friend,” Sue says. “She is always there for me. She’s an excellent mom in every respect, and an excellent seamstress. Until I was about 11, Mom worked nights and slept until about 11 a.m. She cooked dinner entrees, cleaned, washed, sewed, and then would go to work from 6 p.m. to 2:30 a.m.! She was always home for us after school. Best of times were going up north and driving with dad to clean the cottage. One time we forgot the key and had to go in through the window. I had poison ivy at the time,” Sue reminisces.

“Mom is a remarkable woman!” Sheri says. “She is the most talented seamstress I know. She always made her own clothes,” Sheri explains. “She even made Sue and my wedding dresses, bridesmaid dresses, prom and homecoming dresses, and more. Along with sewing curtains, drapes, hats, fur and fake-fur items, she also knitted wonderful items.”



Milton and Myrtle in recent years

“I’ve always admired mom’s cooking and baking talents,” Sheri continues. “Each summer she’d make and freeze all this wonderful food for winter – apple pies, vegetables, and so much more. Accomplishing all that, plus working a full-time job was amazing to me -- especially since many women didn’t work outside the home in the 1950s and 60s. At one time she had three jobs.”

“In some ways, it’s *like mother, like daughter* when it comes to interests,” Sheri says. “Mom loves to read cookbooks and clip out recipes, as I do. When it came to her sewing and knitting hobbies, she would buy all kinds of material and yarn, saying that sometime she would use them – with good intentions. I do the same now, with my rubber stamping hobby. I am my mother’s daughter!”

**Photo at right:** Martinson family members met in May 2005 for a preliminary review of this book. Seated (l-r) are Myrtle Showers, author and her niece Dorothy Bliskey, and Myrtle’s daughter Sheri as they look over the Showers’ chapter. The gathering was at cousin Judy (Martinson) Steinhauer’s house in Mt. Horeb. Tasty potluck dishes covered Judy’s island and a good time was had by all!





## Showers' Favorite Recipes

### Jewel Cake (Myrtle Showers)

*Allow 1-2 days for making this cake. Pretty and delicious!*

1 small pkg cherry gelatin	1 small box lime gelatin
1 small box strawberry gelatin	3 $\frac{3}{4}$ cups boiling water
1 $\frac{1}{2}$ small pkg lemon gelatin	1 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups cold water
1 cup eggnog	2 Tablespoons light rum
2 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups cool whip, thawed	

Prepare cherry, lime, and strawberry gelatins separately, dissolving each in 1 cup boiling water and adding  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup cold water to each. Pour each flavor into separate 8-inch square pans. Chill until firm, at least 3 hours or overnight. Cut gelatin into  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch cubes. Dissolve lemon gelatin in  $\frac{3}{4}$  cup boiling water; add eggnog and rum. Chill until slightly thickened. Blend in whipped topping. Fold in gelatin cubes. Spoon mixture into 5-cup mold or clear bowl. Chill overnight or until firm. Unmold, or you can leave it in the clear glass bowl.

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### Just Delicious Cookies (Myrtle Showers)

*Myrtle used to take these tasty cookies to the cottage and on trips.*

1 cup brown sugar	1 cup white sugar	1 cup butter
1 cup oil	1 egg	2 teaspoons vanilla
1 teaspoon salt	1 teaspoon baking soda	1 cup coconut
1 teaspoon cr of tarter	1 cup rolled oats (oatmeal)	3 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups flour
1 cup Rice Krispies	1 6-ounce pkg choc chips	1 cut chopped nuts

Cream the sugars, butter, and oil together. Stir in the beaten egg and vanilla. Add the rest of the ingredients gradually. Drop by spoonful onto cookie sheet. May press down with fork if desired. Bake at 350 for 12-15 minutes. These cookies freeze very well. Makes about 6 dozen.

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### Pumpkin Cheese Pie

*Tasty cheesecake and pumpkin pie combination under a crunchy, baked-on nut topping!  
Myrtle's grandson Adam always wants this pie as his birthday dessert in July!*

8-ounce pkg cream cheese	$\frac{3}{4}$ cup packed brown sugar
2 Tablespoons flour	1 teaspoon cinnamon
1 teaspoon ginger	$\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon salt
$\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon nutmeg	16 ounce can pumpkin
5.33 ounce can evaporated milk	3 eggs + 1 teaspoon vanilla
9-inch unbaked pie crust*	Nut crunch topping (see below)

#### NUT CRUNCH TOPPING:

2 Tablespoons butter                      3/4 cup walnuts                      1/3 cup brown sugar

Preheat oven to 375 degrees. In large bowl with mixer at medium speed, beat cream cheese, brown sugar, flour, cinnamon, ginger, salt and nutmeg. Add pumpkin, milk, eggs and vanilla. Beat until blended. Pour into unbaked piecrust. Bake 30 minutes.

(\*If desired, pre-bake the pie crust at 400 degrees for 5-6 minutes.) Prepare Nut Crunch topping by melting butter in saucepan over low heat. Stir in sugar and walnuts. Spoon over pie and bake another 15 minutes. Cool. Makes 10 servings at 400 calories per slice.

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#### Baked Rice and Peach Custard

*A favorite of Myrtle and family!*

1 cup uncooked rice	6 cups milk
1 teaspoon salt	1/2 cup sugar
1 1/2 teaspoons vanilla	3 eggs, beaten
1 can (15 oz.) sliced peaches	1 cup sour cream
1/2 cup packed brown sugar	1 teaspoon cinnamon

Combine rice, 5 cups milk, and salt. Heat to boiling in top of double boiler. Place over lower boiler and cook 45 minutes or until rice is tender, stirring occasionally. Stir sugar and vanilla into eggs. Add remaining milk. Gradually stir into hot rice mixture. Pour into a greased 2-quart casserole. Set in a pan of hot water. Bake at 350 degrees for 45 minutes or until set. Remove from hot water and cool. Chill. Arrange peach slices on top of chilled pudding. Spread with sour cream. Sprinkle with brown sugar and cinnamon. Broil until sugar melts, about 5 minutes. Watch carefully to prevent top from burning. Makes 6-8 servings.

## Harland Martinson Family



Harland and Martha Martinson with their four sons (l-r) Jeff, Jim, Brian and Mark



## CHAPTER 10

### Harland Meets Martha at the State Fair -- *Their Family Story*

In 1947 Harland Martinson, age 21, took a day off from farm work and went to the Wisconsin State Fair with his friends, Victor Jenson and John Garfoot.



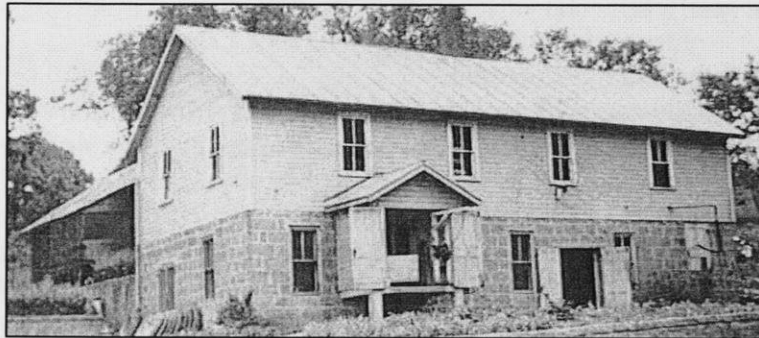
**Harland and Martha on their first date at the Milwaukee State Fair (1947)**

“The three of us had been buddies all through high school. The fair was in Milwaukee, so during the long drive we had lots of things to talk about. We all know, sooner or later, that 21-year old boys are going to start talking about girls. At that time, I did not have a girlfriend. In fact, I never had a girlfriend and was too bashful to even talk to a girl. I had six wonderful sisters, but when it came to talking to a girl I didn’t know, I would lose my voice.

Without considering the consequences, I opened my big mouth and told John and Vic I knew a girl in Milwaukee who worked at Schlitz Brewery.

From then on, no matter how hard I tried to get out of it, they insisted we look this girl up. By the time we had worked our way into downtown Milwaukee in search of the Schlitz Brewery; it was getting close to the noon hour. John drove into the Schlitz Brewery and parked in the visitor section near the front door.

I felt trapped. John and Vic entered the front door with me. At the information desk, I asked if it was possible to see Martha Lisser. The lady at information said “*Oh, sure. She is sitting right over there*” and she pointed to a desk labeled “receptionist.” I wanted to run, couldn’t. I didn’t think she would even remember me from when I worked for her uncle, Otto Bendicks, at the Malone Cheese Factory.



**Malone Cheese Factory near Mt. Horeb (built in 1888)**

I explained why we were there – that we were on our way to the fair, and stopped by to see if she would like to go with me. And then, can you believe this particular day was known as *Milwaukee Fair Day*? That meant most all of the business places were letting their employees off at noon to attend the fair. She said, “*Yes, I like fairs. I will call my mom to tell her where I am going. Then, as soon as the noon whistle blows, I’ll meet you in the visitor’s parking lot.*”

We had a wonderful time going on all the rides and sharing cream puffs, elephant ears, and all sorts of good stuff. In the crush of the crowds, she held tightly onto my hand so we wouldn't get separated. When we passed the dance hall in the Youth Pavilion, we stopped and looked in. She told me she didn't know how to dance. I was relieved because I didn't dance either, even though my sisters had tried to teach me. Dancing wasn't fun for me or my partner, as it was like I had two left feet.

Daylight faded into darkness and the midway lights came on. Neither of us wanted the day to end. So, it was rather late by the time I rented a yellow cab to take her home.

I had made arrangements with John and Vic to meet at the end of the cattle barn nearest to the park entrance when I returned. It was after midnight by the time I got back to the fair. John and Vic were still there, patiently waiting for me. We had a long ways to go to get home. I didn't get much sleep that night as it was close to milking time when I walked in the farmhouse door.

Not many days later, I received a letter from Martha. Then we wrote each other often. Some weekends she would take a bus to Mt. Horeb and stay at the factory so we could do things together. Then about this time, Gaylord and I made arrangements to take turns doing the evening chores every other Sunday.

I had been driving Gaylord and Shirley's car, but now I needed one of my own. This was shortly after the war years and new cars were hard to get. I ended up buying a 1937 Chevrolet. Even though it was already 10 years old, the previous owner had taken good care of it. It served me very well.

So then, every other Sunday forenoon, after the morning chores were done, I took off for Milwaukee. I remember Owen Owens, my agriculture teacher in high school, would tell the class how he used to drive 100 miles to court his girl. At that time, I thought he must have been a little crazy. Now here I was doing the same thing.

The weeks and months went by quickly. Then sometime in 1948, while we were parked around Milwaukee's lakeshore drive, watching the reflection of the harbor lights across the water, I asked Martha to marry me! We selected my birthday, February 7, 1949, as our wedding date.

Ever since I was a little boy, I had always dreamed of being a farmer. It was the only vocation I knew anything about. I heard of a farmer on highway 18 just a few miles west of Mt. Horeb who wanted to rent his farm. This seemed like a good opportunity for me to get started farming, and we agreed on a deal.

After the wedding, we took a two-week trip to Florida. Just a few weeks later, on March 1, 1949, we took over the operation of the farm we rented, and moved into an upstairs apartment in the farmhouse. The farm owner continued to live downstairs, which turned out to be a bad arrangement. The milking herd was made up of all heifers about to deliver their first calves. Getting all of these young new mothers used to milking machines was challenging. Eventually they accepted the milking process and were just fine.

At right, (l-r) Martha and Harland tie the knot on February 7, 1949, with Harland's brother Marty and Martha's sister-in-law Mary Lou Lisser as witnesses.



Below, Mary Lou, Marty, and Clara Martinson help the happy couple celebrate their wedding.



The owner of our farm helped us get the spring planting done, which he had promised. Up to that time, we had a good working relationship, but as time went on, we began to have different opinions as to how some things should be done. The way I was taught was not always his way. Little differences became major problems for him. Our relationship deteriorated. His ever-present unfriendly attitude

created a very stressful time for both Martha and me. Everything had to be done his way. Even though I had money invested in the cattle and machinery, I was really no more than a hired man working for him.

Martha and I began exploring other options. Martha's father worked for the Borden Dairy in Milwaukee and they were hiring extra help. He told them about me, and they held a position open for me.

So, when the first years of our farming endeavor came to an end, we had an auction sale, settled our debts, and moved to Milwaukee in March of 1950. We stayed with Martha's parents the first several years. I worked for the Borden Dairy and Martha obtained an office job at the Miller Brewery.



For the first several months at Borden's, I worked inside the plant, doing all sorts of jobs. I was sent from one department to another, wherever they needed help.

Later, several milk-delivery route jobs became available. Working inside the plant was alright, but I was used to being outside. So, a delivery route seemed more appealing. I was selected for one of the routes – a wholesale route delivering dairy products to stores, schools and factories in the suburbs of South Milwaukee and Carrolville.

In 1957, the Borden Company revamped their wholesale delivery system, resulting in fewer wholesale routes. We were classified as route salesmen. Wages consisted of a daily base salary, plus commission on monthly sales.

I was assigned to a route in Milwaukee's inner core area. It was inhabited by mostly black families and was a fairly depressed section of the city. After spending a little over a year on this route, a suburban route on Milwaukee's southwest side became available. I accepted it. Milwaukee's southwest side was one of the fastest growing areas at that time.

Entire subdivisions of new homes were being built by young, growing families. There were also five or six different dairies trying to get these families for customers. So, competition was very keen.



**Harland stands near his Borden semi truck**

When each of us built up our territory large enough that it could be split into two routes, we received an extra bonus. In the 17 years I served that area, I achieved numerous splits. Each route salesman was on his own, similar to owning a business. It was a job I really enjoyed.

In 1974, the Borden Dairy decided to discontinue home delivery. Large shopping centers and huge supermarkets began to make home delivery unprofitable.

As retail route salesmen who were not old enough to retire, we had the option to take a job inside the plant or sign up for an available wholesale route. Again, I favored the outside because, as a driver, I would be on my own.

I signed on for one of the school routes. During the school year, all we did was deliver milk to schools for their lunch programs. We no longer received a commission but our hourly wages were fair, with time-and-a-half for each hour over 40 hours a week.

We drove large tandem duelled (10-wheeler) straight trucks and worked at night when the schools were closed. Our starting time was 11 p.m., with our last delivery occurring shortly after daylight before schools opened and before playgrounds were filled with children. The schools supplied us with the keys for their doors and refrigerator locks.

I held this position for several years. Then I had an opportunity to sign on as a semi tractor-trailer driver. During the first several weeks, experienced drivers taught me the art of driving this huge rig. They showed me how to maneuver a 40-foot long trailer in tight areas and back into narrow loading zones. Some semi routes were within the greater Milwaukee area only, where heavy traffic was always a challenge. I applied for a position requiring over-the-road, long-distance driving. Since I enjoyed driving, this position seemed more appealing to me.

My very first solo run was from Milwaukee to the Borden distribution branch in Madison. Very soon after that run, I signed on as one of the regular drivers, delivering dairy products to the Great Lakes Naval Station, North Chicago, Illinois.

Once we started crossing state lines, we were required to keep a logbook, recording our daily driving activities. We needed to record everything we did and the time of each event. This included the driving time, number of miles, lunchtime, rest time, delivery time, refueling time, and more.

I started driving semis in 1976 and retired 12 years later, in February 1988. During those 12 years, I logged over a million miles. Besides the run to the Great Lakes Naval Station, I made runs to Michigan City, Indiana; Peoria, Illinois; Atalisa, Iowa; Marshfield, Wisconsin; LaCrosse, Wisconsin; Madison, Wisconsin; Pekin, Illinois; Peru-La Salle, Illinois; and Metamora, Illinois.

Most all of the runs were at night. Many of them covered 400-500 miles round trip. As professional drivers hauling perishable foods, we were required to go in all kinds of weather. If the highway department closed a road because it was drifted over, we were to find an alternate route. We drove through wind and rain, over ice covered roads, and through raging blizzards. Occasionally the nighttime wind-chill temperatures dropped to nearly 60 or 70 degrees below zero! During those times, we were instructed to never stop the diesel motors on either our tractors or trailers for fear they would not start again.

Over those 12 years, I saw an awfully lot of beautiful sunsets and sunrises, had some close calls, and memories to last forever.

#### **Borden milk delivery dangers in wintertime**

During all of my 38 years delivering milk for the Borden Dairy, I was never charged with an accident. However, I did have some memorable experiences.

On ice-covered roads, before daylight one winter morning in 1956, I tipped a truck loaded with cases of dairy products on its side. I was creeping along a narrow country road covered with glare ice. The road was straight and flat except for a steep incline to cross a raised railroad track. I wasn't able to make the crossing, as the wheels began to spin and I started sliding backwards. The left rear dual wheels slid off the road, into the ditch, and the truck rolled over on its side. Even though most of the milk was in glass bottles at that time, very few of the bottles broke. The truck tipped over very gently.

On a winter night in about 1980, I was returning to Milwaukee from Pekin, Illinois with a load of empty milk cases. Snow was falling steadily and a brisk wind was blowing it across the road. The comparatively mild temperature caused the roads to glaze over in some areas.

Shortly after I turned eastbound on I-80 from northbound 180, I crossed a washboard type area covered with solid ice. The washboard caused the lightly loaded trailer to bounce sideways. The rig started to jackknife. I had no control. My semi took off across the medium strip, crossed the westbound lanes on I-80 and came to rest upright, heading up the bank on the north side of I-80.

Here again I was lucky no one else was involved. The only damage to the rig was a broken air hose between the tractor and trailer. A heavy-duty wrecker towed me to a nearby truck stop, near Princeton, Illinois. They mounted a new air hose and I continued my trip back to Milwaukee.

One experience of driving a semi on icy roads turned out to be very dramatic for me. I wrote about it for *Guideposts* magazine, a Christian publication that solicits stories of real-life experiences. Although it wasn't published, I've reprinted it here, as follows:

### **A SPRING DAY TO REMEMBER IN 1983**

*By Harland Martinson*

Wet snow mixed with rain continued to fall this gray cheerless Sunday on the 20<sup>th</sup> of March, 1983. I was concerned. I drove eighteen-wheelers out of Milwaukee for the Borden Dairy. My next run was scheduled to leave for Madison shortly after midnight.

As the daylight faded into darkness, the wind shifted to the north and began building in velocity. The wind chill temperature plummeted to near zero. The snow and rain mixture turned to all snow and began falling faster and thicker. Road conditions grew worse every hour. The storm reached near-blizzard conditions by midnight.

My wife, Martha, was concerned. She didn't want me to leave the house to go to work in those conditions.

I reminded her that we are expected to go unless the highway department declares the roads to be impassable. This milk run was the main link in the distribution chain between Milwaukee and Madison. If I didn't get this load of dairy products to the Madison drivers on schedule, their deliveries would be late and lots of people would be upset.



So I bundled up and set out for the dairy through the blustery storm. By now the winds were gusting to nearly 50 miles per hour.

The big semi diesel tractor was waiting, cold and silent when I arrived. The powerful motor coughed, and then exploded to life as I turned the key. I set the throttle at slow idle, allowing the tractor to warm gradually while I checked out the paperwork in the drivers' room.

The tractor had warmed by the time my paperwork was finished. The diesel was purring like a kitten when I climbed into the driver's seat. I released the air brakes and slowly eased ahead through the trackless snow. Moving slowly along the rows of loaded trailers parked at the loading doc, I found the one I was scheduled to pull. I was happy it was fully loaded. The forty tons of dairy products aboard would help hold the rig on the snow-covered road as we sliced through the blizzard type winds.

I backed under the trailer, locked up, and eased the rig out of the lot onto highway 100. It was deserted, not a soul in sight. Snowplows had gone through earlier. But, the drifting snow had already filled in their tracks. Even so, the rig rolled slowly through the drifts without any difficulty. I cautiously headed north, and within several miles turned west onto I-94. I was on my way towards Madison.



**A snowy Spring day Harland remembers vividly!**

Here too, the drifting snow had covered all previous tracks. I was breaking fresh trail. It was difficult at times to determine where the pavement ended and the ditches began.

The highway seemed deserted until I noticed tire tracks, not fully obscured. I knew now someone was only a short distance ahead. I was almost on top of the rig ahead before I could see his taillights through the blowing snow.

I picked up my CB radio and introduced myself as a Borden driver. He responded immediately. He welcomed me to the fine Wisconsin spring weather. He thought he was the only one who had to be out driving in that mess. He said he was only partly loaded and pulling double bottoms. That was why he was going extra slow.

I told him I was pulling a single 40-footer, fully loaded, and it was holding onto the road good against the wind.

“I don’t want to hold you back,” he replied. “Why don’t you pussy foot around me and break trail for awhile.”

I moved ahead. It wasn’t long before the blowing snow blotted out his headlights. We kept in touch until our CB’s were out of range. Then I was alone again.

I marveled at the awesome fury of nature and the wild beauty of this full blowing snowstorm. Nearly seven inches of new windblown snow was transforming the landscape into a gleaming white fantasyland. However, I was greatly relieved when I reached Madison. I drove along East Washington Avenue, almost up to the State Capitol. Then, circling the Capitol building, I arrived at the Borden branch and safely parked the loaded trailer.

My job was now half over, as I needed to drive back to Milwaukee with a trailer load of empty milk cases. But when I opened the door of the return trailer to check on the load of empty cases, I discovered the whole trailer was completely empty. I realized a load of empty milk cases is not much weight, but it would have been better than nothing. I needed all the weight I could get to hold the rig on the road in this storm.

I thought of ignoring the schedule and return with another trailer which was partially loaded with empty milk cases. But my conscience seemed to be telling me there was a special reason to take the empty trailer.

As I hooked up to the empty trailer, I noticed it was one of our older trailers on which the refrigeration unit was mounted underneath, midway between the rear wheels and the nose of the trailer. These were known as belly units. They were bulky and traveled close to the ground.

I rested in the tractor while I enjoyed a cup of coffee from my thermos. The wind did not seem to be as strong now. I thought the storm may be letting up and driving back would not be so bad.

What I did not realize was the State Capitol building, not far away, was acting as a giant windbreaker. So I felt at ease as I rolled out of the Madison lot and pointed the nose of the big rig towards Milwaukee. Large buildings along East Washington Avenue continued to break the force of the wind. I did not realize until I was in the open country that the wind had not abated at all. I knew then that keeping the rig on the road was not going to be easy.

I snaked along until I reached the rest area just East of Lake Mills. I waited there for nearly an hour, hoping the storm would slacken.

As the eastern sky began to lighten, I became anxious. I knew another driver would be waiting for my tractor when I returned. Our tractors seldom stood idle. When one driver’s run was finished, another driver’s run was just beginning. I felt as though I was wasting time, so I decided to continue on my way.

The snow plows and salters had not been through this area. So, I was still crawling along, eastbound. And the near blizzard force north winds were blowing curtains of snow across the road in front of me. The mile markers came and went very slowly.

Suddenly, I felt a gust of wind pushing me sideways. The rig began to buckle. I used the hand brake lever on the steering column, which applies the rear trailer brakes only, creating a dragging effect. The rig straightened for a moment.

Then another gust of wind caught the rig broadside again and pushed it across the icy pavement like it was a toy. I was completely out of control. Snow was flying. I sensed the tractor was going off the road at a steep angle. "Oh God, please help," I said. Then, in a second, the rig came to a complete stop.

As the flying snow settled, I looked through the windshield at a scene, which didn't make any sense to me at all. I was gazing upwards at a huge white snow pile, which seemed to be moving toward me.

Then my mind and my eyes began to focus. I saw water nearly to the top of the tractor's radiator. Water was beginning to seep onto the floorboards inside the cab, around my feet. I could not imagine where this much water was coming from, in this snow covered, frozen land.

Then I remembered the Rock River, and realized I had crashed through the ice into the edge of the river. The large snow bank, which I saw moving towards me, was actually a large ice flow piled high with snow. The ice flow broke loose and was pushed away when the tractor crashed into the river. By the time the snow cleared enough for me to see, it was floating back towards me.

I did not know if the rig had come to a complete stop, or if it was still slowly sliding into the river. I just knew I wanted to get out of the tractor, fast.

The door on the driver's side was tilted towards the deep water. The door on the passenger's side was still above water near the riverbank. I tried but it would not open. It was jammed. I cranked the window down, climbed through, and scrambled up the riverbank, onto the roadway.

Headlights of a lone auto were creeping toward me. They stopped when they saw me. A young lady was driving, accompanied by her father. She was returning to the University of Wisconsin from a weekend at home. They gave me a lift to the truck stop and restaurant near Johnson Creek, just a few miles farther east.

I immediately called the Borden garage in Milwaukee and reported my predicament. They inquired about my well being, and I assured them I was fine, not a scratch. They said they would call Rays towing service to pull the rig out of the river. They would also call my wife to let her know I would be home late. Then before hanging up, they asked me to stay close to the phone so we could keep in touch.



The restaurant was buzzing with activity at this early hour, because of the many travelers seeking shelter from the storm. I found an empty stool at the counter and ordered breakfast.

I was preparing for a long wait for Ray's tow truck to arrive. Their business was located in Tess Corners, a small community on Milwaukee's southwest side, nearly fifty miles away.

I was taking my time with my breakfast when suddenly a husky young man entered from out of the storm and hurried towards the men's room. He paused for a moment. "Hey, Borden, you're just the man I'm looking for. I'll be right back". Then he hurried on.

In a few moments he returned, sat down, and ordered breakfast. "My name is Mark," he said. "I drive for Ray's towing and I am going to pull you out."

"How did you get here so fast?" I inquired.

"I just finished a towing job near Camp Douglas," he explained. "I was on my way back when my office relayed your situation to me."



**Harland was active in Mt. Carmel Lutheran Church in Milwaukee. Through his strong Christian beliefs, he was moved to write his *Spring Day to Remember* semi story for *Guideposts*, a national magazine.**

We finished breakfast together, checked in with the Highway Patrol, and drove out to check on the rig. The tractor had not gone any deeper into the river. The belly unit under the trailer had dug into the frozen shoulder of the road, serving as an anchor. This is what caused the sudden stop.

Mark, the tow truck driver, was silent for a long time as he surveyed the rig from various angles, trying to determine the best way to get the rig back up the steep bank and onto the road without tipping it over. His occasional glances toward me made me feel uncomfortable. Then his words took me by surprise. "Do you believe in God?" he asked. "Yes, I do." I managed. "I sure hope you do." He continued. "He saved your life this morning. If that belly unit hadn't stopped you, the whole rig could have rolled over into the river, and you could have been trapped."

Our eyes met for a long moment. Tears began to blur my vision, so I turned away.

Two tow trucks were needed to pull the rig out of the river and keep it from tipping over. Mark called his office asking them to send another tow truck.

Lenney was the driver of the second tow truck. When he saw the rig nosed into the river, he said, "Wow, that's the biggest fish I've ever hooked on to."

Their first attempt to move the rig failed. The tow trucks needed more room and a better angle for their winches to work. Mark and Lenney finally convinced the Highway Patrol to detour the traffic and close down the Interstate. With the tow trucks anchored in the position they needed, the power winches slowly inched the long semi back onto the roadway, nice and easy.

The tractor wasn't damaged. River water had seeped into the crankcase through the breather pipe while the motor was in the water. With a fresh oil change and dried out motor components, the tractor was back on the road the next day.

The belly unit on the trailer was on the list to be replaced with a new front unit anyway. So, the equipment damage was minimal.

I rode in the tow truck with Mark as he towed the rig to the Borden garage in Milwaukee. A large sign on the front of his tow truck read, "God is my co-pilot."

"Mark," I said, "you really do believe in that sign, don't you?" "I certainly do," he said. "I see too many unusual situations in my business, such as you had today, not to believe. Lots of people dismiss those events as just coincidences. But, I know someone controls them. People escape real tragedy too often in the accidents I see to be termed as just a matter of coincidence. Someone is watching over those lucky individuals."

I often think back to all of the events which happened to me that day, the first day of spring – March 21, 1983.

The empty trailer. The old belly unit. The frantic prayer for help. The sudden stop at the river bank. Were those series of events just coincidental? I think not.

The Headline in the Milwaukee Journal on March 21, 1983 read, "*Spring gets off to a wintry start – Snow, Wind Snarled Traffic.*"

I had always enjoyed driving and never even considered early retirement. Not until the Borden Company started to offer extra incentives for their older employees to select early retirement, did I retire. It was after I turned 62 in February, 1988 that I retired from Borden after 38 years.

### **Retirement for Harland**

Early retirement was a restless period for me, after being so active all my life. Selling Real Estate seemed attractive. I enrolled in Real Estate Agency School and obtained my Real Estate Agent's License. After a very short time, I decided it was not what I wanted.

For many years, I was a member of an organization in Milwaukee known as *Lutherans of Wisconsin*. I was elected to serve on their executive board and was president for years.

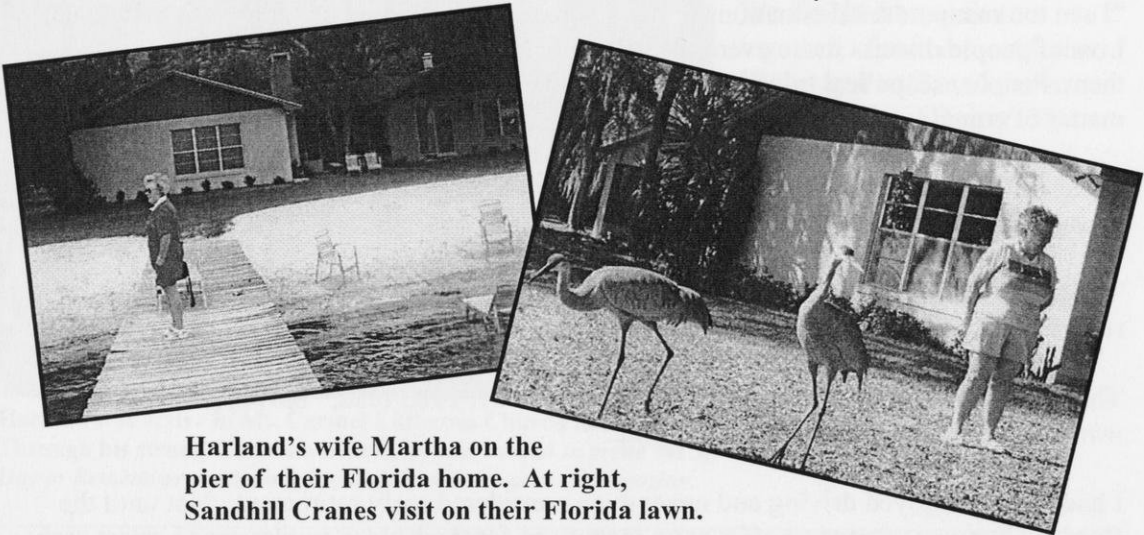
During this restless period, the Lutherans of Wisconsin organization was searching for an Executive Director and Editor for their monthly publication, the *Milwaukee Lutheran*. They offered me the position, but I declined because of my inexperience in that field. However, they continued to pursue me, perhaps because they couldn't get anyone else. The pay was minimal. I accepted and held the position for several years before retiring from it in 1990.

As editor of the *Milwaukee Lutheran*, I wrote an article about the old Hauge Log Church near Mt. Horeb. In fact, Marion John Nelson refers to my article on page 72 of his book, *Material Culture and People's Art Among the Norwegians in America*. The book was published by the Norwegian American Historical Association in 1994.

### **Florida becomes new home for Harland and Martha**

Martha and I spent January, February, and March of 1991 in Florida. We rented an efficiency apartment in a private lakeside home -- sight unseen. We had a wonderful time. We returned over the next three years, extending our stay through April each year.

In the spring of 1994, a lakeside home three doors away from our apartment was up for sale. We made an offer, and it was accepted. We sold our Milwaukee home and moved into our new Florida residence the middle of December that same year.



**Harland's wife Martha on the pier of their Florida home. At right, Sandhill Cranes visit on their Florida lawn.**

Martha and I enjoy our lakeside hideaway. We don't do much fishing. We just enjoy the wildlife and tranquility of the area. I also enjoy yard work and growing things. Our growing season lasts for 12 months. We have four orange trees, a grapefruit tree, a Japanese Plum tree, a Lechee nut tree, and about 10 papaya trees. Besides the fruit trees, we have a wide variety of flowers.

During our years in Florida, I've had two hernia operations and three full hip operations. I limp a little now, but I can do most anything I want. Martha and I are both pretty healthy for being nearly 80-years-old. I am active in our Florida Lutheran church, serving as chairman of the Stewardship Committee, an usher, and on the Board of Directors. Martha also serves on the Stewardship Committee.



As a former semi driver, I enjoy driving everywhere. In 2005, Martha and I traveled back to Wisconsin twice, in August for the Martinson reunion and in September for the Malone School reunion near Mt. Horeb. In October, we went on a fall driving trip to Pennsylvania and states along the east coast. In doing so, we were able to avoid the hurricanes that hit Florida. Luckily, our home escaped the devastating damage.



**Harland visits with a neighbor in his lush Florida yard.**

Our area was battered by three hurricanes during the summer of 2004 – Charlie, Jean, and Frances. Our concrete block home came through the 100-mile-per-hour winds very well. The house and garage roofs needed to be re-shingled. We lost some trees. The screens of our screen porch were blown away. Our lake pier and about 12 feet of yard along the lake washed away.

We are so very thankful the damage wasn't more severe and that insurance covered a good share of the repair expenses. Nature is already covering the scars left by broken limbs and fallen trees. This was the first time three hurricanes hit any one county in the state of Florida in a period of about six weeks.

We pray that it will never happen again in our lifetime.

### **Dorothy recalls her uncle Harland and family**

Although Harland and Martha and their four sons lived in Milwaukee, they did get to Mt. Horeb occasionally to visit Grandma Martinson at her house on 2<sup>nd</sup> Street. Of all the Martinson aunts and uncles, they were the only ones who didn't live in the Mt. Horeb area. I've often wondered what it would have been like if they too, had lived in closer proximity to the Martinson family... Four more Martinsons going to Mt. Horeb High School – four more Martinsons in line at Ollie's popcorn stand, four more cousins strolling over to Grandma's house after school, and the list goes on. I think it would have made life even more exciting.

One thing I do know, mother loved it when Harland, Martha and boys came to visit our farm. She'd be very excited in anticipation of their arrival. I recall a fall day where we loaded relatives onto a wagon pulled by our tractor, venturing into our fields to pick walnuts. Harland, Martha and boys, I believe, were a part of that excitement.

I also recall the day, not too many years ago, when Harland told my mother that he and Martha had decided to move to Florida permanently. I happened to be in Mt. Horeb, visiting Mom at the time. After receiving that message, Mom cried. Her little brother Harland was moving away again – only this time much farther than Milwaukee. Maybe she was afraid she would never see him again. After all, she was over 80 years old and her health was beginning to fail. Milwaukee had been close enough for a Sunday visit. Florida seemed a world away to my mother.

Harland and Martha's boys -- Mark, Jeff, Jim and Brian – have many fond memories of their days visiting Grandma and other Martinson family members. They also reveal what it was like growing up in Milwaukee in the 1950s-1980s with Harland and Martha as their loving, Christian parents.

## **Remembering Grandma Martinson**

### **Mark:**

Harland and Martha Martinson's second son, Mark, who was born in 1953, recalls Grandma Martinson's 2<sup>nd</sup> Street house, with its big porch and large wooden porch swing.

"Grandma would bring out her wonderful cookies and lefse for treats when we'd come," Mark said. He describes her handmade crafts as being everywhere. "I especially remember Grandma's handmade rugs and those ornamental twisted coffee cans which became beautiful starbursts."



"Grandma had a big recliner chair with the radio next to it. She had a framed photograph of Jesus which looked like a jumble of black shapes and branches until you focused your attention on it and found the image of Jesus hidden in there. I remember her friend Lizzie who lived on the second floor of her house. Most of all, I remember Grandma as a very quiet, thoughtful, and caring person who always had time to sit and listen. She shared her uncomplicated wisdom, her handiworks, and her treats."

*Grandma Martinson's Mt. Horeb house as it appears now.*

"I visited with Grandma on many occasions, mostly with my father during our many hunting weekends at the farm," Mark continues. "The hunting weekends were a combination of visiting, eating, and hunting. I think it was mostly visiting and eating."

During these weekends, we were always part of Uncle Gaylord and Aunt Shirley Martinson's family."

"I vividly remember bicycling 100 miles to Grandma's house in Mt. Horeb from our house in Milwaukee. Grandma would always be so happy to see me and to feed me."

Mark also recalls the day Grandma traveled all the way to Chicago for his wedding. "Our wedding was December 19, 1976 -- in Chicago during a snowstorm. I am sure Grandma thought Chicago was some dangerous God-forsaken place. But she was there."

**Jeff:**

"In summer, when Dad had vacation, we'd visit Grandma in Mt. Horeb," says Jeff, who was born in 1951 and is the oldest of Harland and Martha's four sons. "Since our home was in Milwaukee, we weren't as close to Grandma as the other cousins who lived in the Mt. Horeb area."



Visiting Grandma Martinson are (l-r) are Brian, Jim, Mark and Jeff. Notice her famous rocking chair and the bottom corner of the Lord's Supper wall hanging she created. (1973)

"In anticipation of visiting Grandma, there was always a review of cousins' names -- as well as the aunts and uncles they belonged to," Jeff said. "As a shy kid, I never did sort it all out. Grandma Clara had a horde of grandchildren. The summer visits, unlike the Christmas visits when everyone was there, was our special time with Grandma -- in her house. Then I, and my brother Mark, learned we belonged to her."

"Grandma was happy to have us visit. We would sit either in the parlor or kitchen, eating cookies and catching up on all the activities and family doings. I remember Grandma Clara's rugs she made out of rags, and the looms she used to create them. Her colorful rugs were scattered throughout the big house. The magical rug-making loom, which she gladly demonstrated, was located upstairs. It occupied most of the space in an upstairs room where it was carefully kept, and it was as if Grandma was sharing a wonderful secret with us -- the secret of turning rags into art!"

"I also remember the swing on her front porch. My brothers and I were happy to swing on it, along with the big rocking chair, which were both kid-friendly."

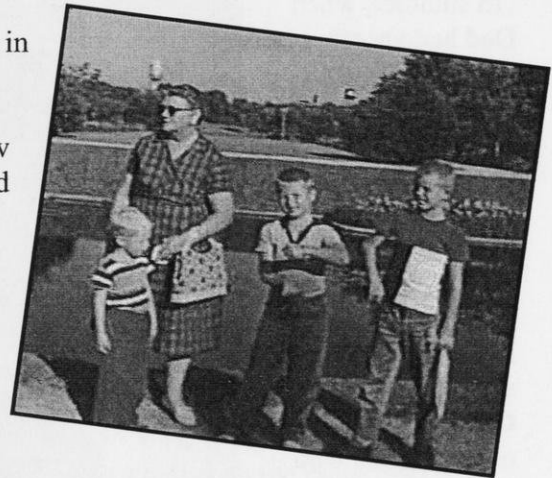


“Grandma Martinson made lutefisk the old fashioned way, soaking it in lye and then boiling it,” Jeff continues. I was much too young to appreciate the process or understand the lure of lutefisk. I have no memory of eating lutefisk, which is sad, but I think she was quite kind and merciful and had an alternative sandwich, pickles, macaroni, and lefse for boys. Lefse won the day and the hearts. We belonged to Grandma Martinson from then on. I would suppose it was very special, indeed, for Grandma to make lutefisk in July! To my parents it was a gift of love, and it was a bit of Christmas already.”

**Jim:**

Jim, who was born in 1957, remembers Grandma Martinson’s house being full of knick-knacks and crafts she made.

“In particular, I remember a weaving or stitching in the form of a poodle dog created over a glass bottle. She also had a picture of black-and-white blotches, and if you looked at it just right you saw Jesus. Grandma Martinson’s house was warm and inviting. I remember her making lots of lefse -- sometimes for community functions. It smelled and tasted so good with butter and sugar. We would always attend church with her at a Lutheran church. One time, Grandma Clara went with us to Mitchell Park in Milwaukee to see the plants and flowers. We also took her to Whitnall Park Botanical Gardens.”



**Grandma Martinson with (l-r)  
Jim, Mark and Jeff in Milwaukee**

**Brian:**

The youngest of Harland and Martha’s sons, Brian was born in 1962. He recalls Grandma Martinson as being very gifted artistically. “She was very good with crafts and had even crocheted the Lord’s Supper. I was impressed with her work, and I believe it had something to do with why I went into the Fine Arts in college. When we’d go there on winter hunting trips, it was nice to come home to a cozy, warm house.”

**Favorite holidays**

Mark’s favorite holiday is Thanksgiving, he says, because “we always got together with friends and family to eat and give thanks to God for all of our blessings. There are few commercial distractions, which other holidays seem to have.”

Jim says Christmas was his favorite. “It was fun having the family together, opening presents, attending church together, and eating lots of food.”

**Christmas memories**

**Mark:** “Christmas never seemed complete unless we went to the candlelight church service and sang the Christmas hymns, which we still do today.”

**Jim:**

“Occasionally we had a ‘white elephant’ Christmas. We wrapped things from around the house to give. It was usually an item we knew the recipient wouldn’t like. For Dad, I found five little plastic deer and put them in a small box. When he opened the box, a note read: *“These are the deer you missed while hunting.”* For Mom, we put her dustpan in a huge gift-wrapped box. Brother Mark never smoked, so he got a few cigarettes, called ‘cancer sticks.’ My sister-in-law, Kay, hates Monopoly, so she got the old Monopoly game. We were in stitches laughing!”

“There were a lot of traditions in our family,” Jim continues. “We always had a real Christmas tree and enjoyed helping pick it out and decorate it. Mom baked lots of cookies. We always attended Christmas Eve service, and usually would open up presents late after the service or on Christmas morning. The presents we got were surprises for us but our parents knew what we wanted. They also had stockings for each of us.”

“Now, we always get a real Christmas tree, trucked in from another state, like North Carolina. We enjoy decorating it. Food and worship services are still the major part of Christmas Eve and Christmas Day activities. We passed on the tradition of giving our kids stockings and opening our gifts on Christmas Day,” Jim concludes.



**Christmas at Harland and Martha’s 81<sup>st</sup> Street home in Milwaukee (1975)**

**Brian:**

“As the youngest, I always looked forward to Christmas. This was a time when my brothers would come home from college and share stories with me about school – a future that I would soon be experiencing too. We used to have a lot of fun passing off the gag gift to each other – the one we had received the year before, such as a can of Jack Mackerel or an old rusty shovel.”

“Our family tradition was to open presents on Christmas Eve following the Candlelight Christmas service,” Brian explains. “My loved ones and I appreciate the meaning of Christmas as a holiday of faith just as my parents instilled within us. The Candlelight Service and the true meaning of the birth of Christ was always more important and more meaningful than the gifts that followed.”

## Grade school memories

### Mark:

"I attended 81<sup>st</sup> Street School in Milwaukee, just two blocks from our house. It was a large brick school with many students and a large fenced asphalt playground with several



baseball diamonds, a large sandbox, a tetherball pole, a tall American flag pole, and a basketball court. I remember how much I enjoyed playing on the playground -- football, baseball, basketball, and generally "rough housing" and coming back into class all sweaty and perhaps bleeding from making a fantastic catch or a game saving tackle."

**Jeff, Mark, Brian and Jim prepare for bike trip (1982)**  
Biking was enjoyed by the boys, and it still is today.

### Jim:

"In the early years during summer time, there were people who would read stories to the children. This took place behind the 81<sup>st</sup> Street School where the grass sloped downhill beneath the huge tree. That was fun. Until I was about eight, the school was only a half-block walk. When we moved, it was a four-block walk, which seemed long at first, but I got used to it. The playground had a big wonderful sandbox to play in. There was a tetherball in one area, and it was fun to hit the ball in order to wind it around the post. Sometimes, in the summer, we played baseball on the playground."

"In sixth grade," Jim continues, "the teacher, who was very strict and most students did not like, asked the class, '*What does A.D. mean?*' For years, I was interested in dinosaurs, so I responded, '*It means after dinosaurs.*' She was disgusted and said, '*Oh, sit down!*' Another time, we were studying cultures, and she asked, '*Why do the Chinese prefer to eat with chopsticks?*' A friend jokingly got up and said, '*Because they could get stabbed with a fork.*'"

"Probably the most vivid, embarrassing, memory I had was in kindergarten," Jim continues. "Every day, we had a period of quiet time where we laid on the floor on blankets and had to sleep -- or at least stay quiet. I enjoyed talking to the neighbors next to me. The teacher finally came over, rolled me up in my blanket, and carried me to a distant spot away from people."

"In gym class, for years, we worked out to the song *Go, You Chicken Fat, Go*. At sixth grade graduation, we practiced and learned to dance rock and roll to the tune *Mony, Mony* by Tommy James and the Shondells. That was the first time I danced with a girl, but at that age, I didn't like it."



**Brian:**

“The 81<sup>st</sup> Street School was quite large with hundreds of students attending K-6 grades. I pursued art, played tennis, and made life-long friends. During this time I was a cub scout and enjoyed playing shortstop on their baseball team. My father was even a den leader for our troop. All in all, it was a good experience for me and built a good foundation for my education.”

**Typical summer day**

**Mark:**

“A typical summer day would be helping my dad scrape and paint the house as needed, then complete any other required jobs such as repairing screens and storm windows, (the heavy removable type), mowing the grass, cleaning the garage, and when I was old enough, I helped re-shingle the house and garage roof.”

“But I always had time to play with my friends. We would go to the community pool, ride bicycles on an adventure, play baseball, and then, after dinner, we would play a game called kick the can. It was played by all the neighborhood kids in the street in front of our house. I think that I had a good balance of responsibility and playtime.”

**Jim:**

“When I was younger, we enjoyed playing on the swing set, or sliding down the slide in our backyard. We also had a sandbox. We’d dig canals, bring the hose, and make rivers. I’d roll Tonka trucks down the slide and crash them into other trucks. A few times, we’d set up a large, bulky ‘army tent’ and camp out in the backyard. We had an apple tree that was easy to climb, so we spent time up in the tree and swung from the branches.”



**Harland and Martha with their boys (l-r) Jeff, Jim, Brian and Mark**

“During my teen years in the 1970s, I did much bicycling. I began riding around Milwaukee and I’d work up to 100+ bike rides, beginning with a three speed. The 10-speed my parents bought me was probably my most prized possession. One year, I documented bicycling over 3000 miles.”

“During high school, my friend Greg and I went on some long summer bicycle rides. Three different ones stand out. On one bike ride, we pedaled from Milwaukee, crossed

Wisconsin, and the Mississippi River at Prairie, Du Chien, followed the great river road to La Crosse, and returned on a different route. We bicycled 750 miles and crossed into Iowa and Minnesota. We stayed at motels, hostels, relatives and friends' homes.

"On another bicycle ride, Greg and I pedaled from Milwaukee to Green Bay, then to the tip of Door County at Gill's Rock. We followed the Lake Michigan coastline home. We also stayed at motels and a relative's house. The longest ride I did in one day was 173 miles. Greg and I started before sunrise, meandered northeast of Fond du Lac, bicycled to Fond du Lac, and got home after dark."

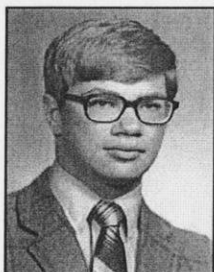
**Brian:**

"Dad built a large sandbox and put up a slide in our backyard. We got a lot of use out of those on summer days. I enjoyed climbing our trees, and even broke my arm once! Playing basketball at our outside hoop was a popular activity for my brothers and me.

## High school memories, college and careers

**Mark:**

In 1972, Mark graduated from Washington High School in Milwaukee. He played sports including football, wrestling, and track. "My favorite subject was a business course I



Mark Martinson

took because it seemed to make so much sense," Mark said. He received his Bachelors Degree in Business Administration from Carthage College in Kenosha. Mark went on to earn his Masters Degree (MBA) from the University of Illinois, Chicago, and then earned his Law Degree (JD) from DePaul University in Chicago. With his own business, *Martinson & Associates, Inc.*, Mark works as a commercial real estate broker and a commercial real estate lawyer in Chicago and the surrounding area.

**Jim:**

Jim graduated from John Marshall High in Milwaukee in June, 1975. The school year motto was "75 is alive," Jim recalls, and his favorite class was psychology. "It was a new class that I found very interesting, and the teacher was one of my favorites. Art came in second."

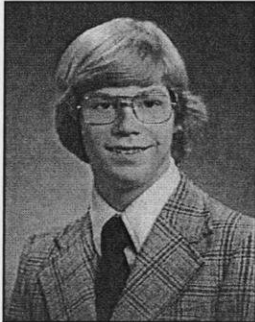


Jim Martinson

Jim won a first place in an art exhibition for a painting he created in high school. The painting was of Mt. Shukson in Washington State. He won an honorable mention for another painting depicting Bond Falls in Michigan. Jim was also active in his church's youth group. "One highlight," Jim says, "was traveling by bus to Houston for the all-Lutheran youth gathering at the Astrodome. On the way, we spent a couple nights in New Orleans. It was awesome to see thousands of Christian youth gathered together in worship and spiritual growth."

Jim earned a Bachelor's Degree in Social Work from Carthage College, Kenosha in 1979. He received a Master's Degree in Social Work from the University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee in 1984.

With several jobs in social work under his belt, Jim currently is employed in Florida in the Hendry County Health Department. He works with the Healthy Families Program as a Human Service Counselor II. His role involves the recruitment of families expecting children and teaching parents how to care for and bond with their children. He recruits English and Spanish-speaking families. The program prevents child abuse and neglect.



**Brian Martinson**

**Brian:**

In 1980, Brian, the youngest in the family, graduated from John Marshall High School in Milwaukee. Art has always been his favorite subject, from Kindergarten to Graduate School. Fond memories for Brian include lettering for the tennis team and driving a Volkswagen Super Beetle. After high school he earned both a Bachelors and Masters Degree in Fine Arts from UW-Milwaukee. He now works as a computer graphic artist in Florida.

**Jeff:**

Jeff attended Carthage College, Kenosha and later went on to the seminary at Northwestern Lutheran Seminary, St. Paul, Minnesota. He has been a minister in several states and is currently in Merrill, Wisconsin.



**Jeff Martinson**

**Fond memories of Dad**

**Mark:**

“My dad, Harland, was and still is very hard working, honest, ethical, very loving and caring. He told us boys that we could be whatever we wanted to be as long as we worked hard and ethically. He said he would be proud of us as long as we gave 100 percent to whatever we had an interest in. He would say, *‘If you decide to be a street sweeper, be the best street sweeper there is.’* That had an impact on me.”

“What had a greater impact on me were his actions. He worked 110 percent at being the best milkman for Borden’s that he could be. When he wasn’t delivering dairy products he was helping people along his route in other ways, and then he would go door-to-door to build up his different routes.”

“One of the funniest things I remember about Dad is how he washed his first new car after it had 10 years and over 150,000 miles on it. We used soap and water along with SOS pads, other steel wool, and sandpaper (for the rust). Then we topped it off with spray paint after it was dry. Eventually he had to insert a piece of sheet metal in the floor so our feet wouldn’t scrape the ground! One time we were driving along and the car felt a little sluggish so he decided it was time to blow out the carburetor (by accelerating fast



several times). He didn't figure out until after quite a number of accelerations that he had it in second gear. I don't think the car was quite the same after that incident."

"What I enjoy about Dad is his commitment to family," Mark says. To illustrate the point, Mark explains how a very special family bicycle trip was made possible by his dad.

### **Bicycle trip across America 1982**

**Mark:**

"When I was planning a cross country bicycle trip (against my parents' better judgment), two of my three brothers decided that they would like to go with me," Mark explains. "Jim and Jeff were between jobs and college and were set to go. My youngest brother, Brian, however, hadn't been out of high school very long and didn't have the money to spend on such a long trip."



**Jeff, Jim, Martha, Harland, Brian and Mark at the end of their exciting cross country bike trip in 1982.**

"After watching and listening to our plans and feeling the excitement of the bicycle adventure we were about to undertake across America, Dad told Brian he wanted him to go too," Mark explains. "He said he would support Brian in our biking venture."

"Brian took the summer off, and we four brothers bicycled 5,500 miles across the United States from the state of Washington to the state of Maine. We went from Washington state, then south along the California coast, east across the southern part of the states, and then angled northeast up to Maine."

"Dad said he wanted all of us to have this experience together because it would keep us close throughout our lives. He was right. We still talk about the different experiences on that trip when we are together today."

**Jim:**

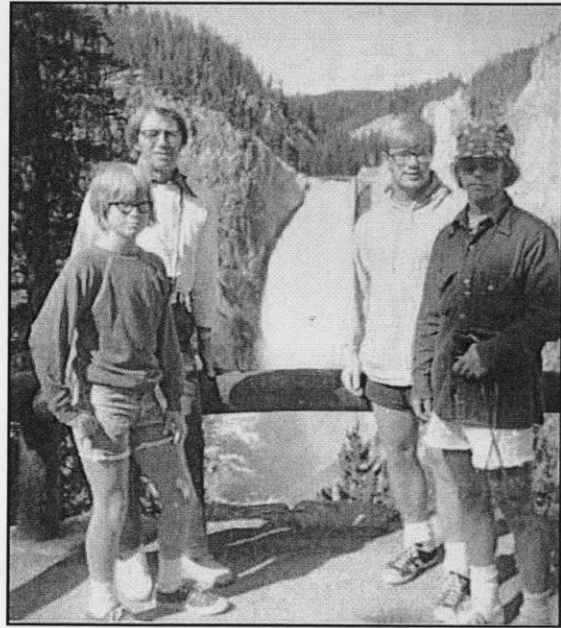
"Dad has a good sense of humor and likes to tell Ole, Sven, and Lena jokes. He would often tell these at the supper table. Also, at meals or other times, he'd discuss important values, such as honesty, sharing, and caring for others."

"When my brothers and I were older, sometimes we'd engage in political debates. Dad wouldn't side with anyone, just mainly listen, and allow us to vent."

“My dad always had a strong Christian faith, and we attended church faithfully every Sunday,” Jim says. “It was a challenge to get us there on time. My dad and mom put their faith in action in various ways, such as taking a blind man to church.”

“Dad has always liked to explore. On summer vacations, he’d go to places off the beaten path. I couldn’t understand how he could find so many waterfalls in the middle of nowhere. When we’d hike he’d joke to mom that he saw bear tracks. There were times I think we did see bear tracks. On Saturdays, sometimes we drove to explore little towns or country stores selling fruits, jams, or other things,” Jim said.

“One funny memory was when my brother Jeff was in cross-country in college,” Jim continues. “We were on our way to his cross-country competition in Davenport, Iowa. Dad’s love for exploring wore off on me, and I enjoy looking at maps. He was driving, and I was in the front passenger seat, looking at the Illinois map. We went by the town of Pontiac. I looked it up. We should’ve been on I-88 headed for Iowa. Instead, we were on I-55 headed for St. Louis! I told dad that this road takes us to St. Louis. He couldn’t believe it, but when he realized where we were going, it was one of those times he got mad at himself. We did arrive in time to see some of the competition.”



**Vacation in Yellowstone National Park front (l-r) Brian and Jeff; back (l-r) Harland and Mark.**

“Dad was strict on everyone finishing the food on their plates,” Jim laughs. “Often, I was the last one at the supper table. One day, since I was the last person at the table and I didn’t want to eat the meat, I put it on my brother Mark’s plate. His plate was empty and hadn’t been cleared from the table yet,” Jim explains. “Then I left. When dad saw the meat on my brother’s plate he got mad and yelled “*Mark, why didn’t you eat your meat?*” He finally found out it was me, not Mark.”

“I also like dad’s political views, being democratic. And he has a wonderful flower garden and fruit trees,” Jim concludes.

### **Brian:**

“One year dad built us a go-kart. It brought lots of fun to our family and friends. I also enjoyed the road trips and vacations we took, especially the ones where we got lost. To this day the family still reminisces and laughs fondly about those vacations.”

“Dad has been an inspiration to me in many ways. His interest in art helped to shape my career path. He supported and encouraged my decision to do a cross-country bike trip

with my three older brothers. And I will always be grateful to him for instilling a strong faith in God and family values in me,” Brian concludes.

## **Social life**



**Mark and his wife Kay ride his folks' bicycle built for two!**

### **Mark:**

Our family's social life centered on friends and neighbors, cookouts, family and church gatherings.

### **Jim:**

We would go to family reunions. We had lots of social activities through the church like ice cream socials and church picnics. Dad and Mom would have friends over sometimes.

### **Brian:**

Both of my parents worked difficult jobs so my brothers and I could be well provided for. However, we did have time for fun family games, cards, dominoes and other things.

### **Jeff:**

My dad, Harland, was a hard worker. He was a milkman in the Milwaukee area, delivering from house-to-house. He drove a truck in the city and then later a semi truck on the highway. He worked long hours and began his job well before sunrise. He made his lunch and took a thermos of coffee. I remember lying in bed and hearing Dad leave for work... first the house door would close, garage door would open, car would start, garage door close, car door close, and the car drive away.

When he got home from work, he had bookwork. Dad might be exhausted from his route, and while looking over his books his head might drop down. This was the hardest part, keeping track of the money, because I think to be honest, he gave away chocolate milk to some children. He was very dedicated to doing the best job he could, so that he could support and care for us. We were four growing boys. These values were most definitely instilled in him in his own growing up on the Martinson farm in Mt. Horeb.

Another thing I remember about Dad is his dedication to the church. On Sunday, going to church was the law. Dad was up almost as early on Sunday as he was on a work day. He took a bath (and this was rare) before or after everyone else did. He wrote out the offering check and filled the traditional Lutheran weekly offering envelopes all set out on the kitchen table. I observed that church was of first importance to Dad. This, too, had to be instilled in him growing up in the Martinson family. There was no arguing about not going to church and no question about giving. It was like paying a bill. When we



dressed for church, we had Sunday clothes and Sunday shoes to wear. It set the day apart. We could not wear tennis shoes, for brother Mark tried, and he couldn't 'sneak' past Dad. Mark was sent back to put his black dress shoes on to go along with his fake tie. We understood that going to church was the law, which was good in lots of ways, but there was also grace. Thank God for grace.

Mom kidded Dad about falling asleep in church, but Dad would say he was *just resting his eyes*. (It was embarrassing though when the pastor had to stop the sermon because of Dad's snoring. "Does it disturb you?" Dad queried the pastor. The pastor replied, "Not only me, but it disturbed the whole congregation." (This little story is somewhat exaggerated, for the fun of it!) Who could blame him for being tired? After all, Dad worked 12-15 hours a day. He felt great peace at church and was soothed by the pastor's voice. God makes allowances. That's grace.

Dad was dedicated to the church in serving on boards, committees and the church council. He had a strong understanding that the church was to be about outreach to others. He was one who would go door-to-door around the neighborhood on certain Sunday afternoons to invite the neighbors to attend the church and hear the good news of Jesus Christ. As in delivering dairy products (his weekday work), delivering an invitation to come to church was natural.

As I became a pastor, dad spoke about selling the gospel and the church. He was ahead of many in that understanding and the practice of it. What got his dander up is when the church turned on itself and was more interested in collecting money to buy new pews, new carpeting, a bigger organ, or other things. He would not speak in favor of these expenditures when he knew that others in the world were hungry -- both physically and spiritually. Maybe some saw him as a 'dumb milkman,' but he spoke from his heart and made everyone stop and think. Probably it all went back to farm chores, Sunday school, and eating lutefisk as a child.

Rev. Jeff Martinson is greeted by relatives, Olav Berge, Benunie (Schwarz) Berge, and Shirley Martinson at his Lutheran ordination.



## How things were different back then

### Mark:

Food choices, dress, and outward things are not so much different now -- except technology. The main difference is the feeling that the world is so much smaller than it was when we were kids. Friends and family think nothing about working, going to college or traveling any place in the U.S. or world now. When we were growing up, a

trip to Wisconsin Dells was a huge adventure and a real treat. Our driving trip to visit national parks out West in 1964 with our first and only new car was HUGE. It was like going to a different country! As for inventions, Mark recalls that colored television and microwaves changed things in the Martinson household.

**Brian:**

During my childhood in the 1960s-70s, food was home-cooked on a stove in contrast to the microwave and prepared meals we have available today. I have to say I pretty much enjoyed the meatloaf and everything my mom cooked, except maybe for brussel sprouts and liver. When we finally got a microwave, it seemed truly amazing.

As a boy, we had to be “polished” for Sunday School and church in polyester suits and clip-on ties. That was a big fashion change for me when I was a young boy during the late 1960s and early 1970s.



**Grandma Clara Martinson traveled from Mt. Horeb to Milwaukee for grandson Jeff Martinson’s ordination as a Lutheran minister. Jeff (in background) smiles while his Grandma, assisted by her son-in-law Bennie Grundahl, enjoys the day. (1980)**

### **Chores in the city**

**Mark:**

Life at the Harland and Martha Martinson house included an endless array of chores, according to son Mark. His list reads “mowing the grass, shoveling snow, washing the car, cleaning the garage, scraping and painting the house (for some reason we had to do this every year to some extent), repairing storms and screens, painting the interior of the house, shingling the roof, taking out the garbage, and generally helping with whatever my mom and dad needed done.”

**Jim:**

I helped with the dishes, taking out trash, mowing the yard, raking, shoveling snow and painting the outside of the house when that needed to be done.

**Brian:**

I always had to keep my room clean. My brothers, father, and I also kept the house looking good with new paint when needed, roof shingles, and other home improvement activities. And, of course, with the Wisconsin snow, we all had to keep the driveway and walkways shoveled and clean.

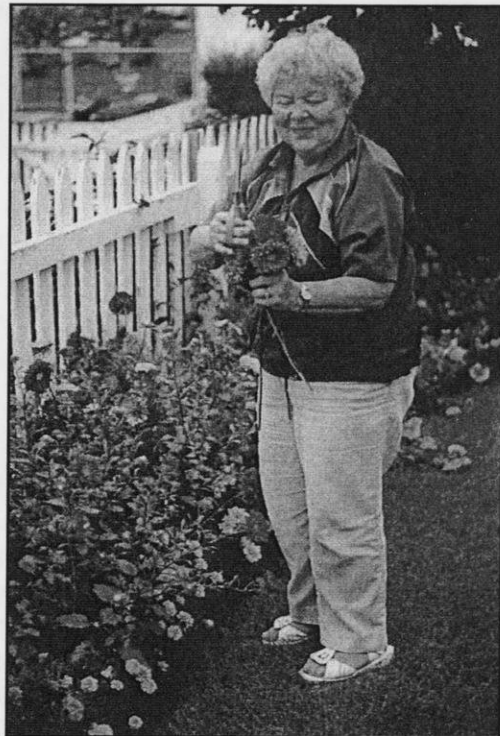
**Fond memories of mother**

**Mark:**

My mother, Martha, was and still is a very loving, caring person. She always kept the house in a clean and orderly fashion and made us good-tasting and nutritious meals. She was always so good natured. Mom worked hard at home and at her part-time job at Penney's catalog order center. Her goal in life was (and is) to make sure we four boys were happy -- and to have it "better" than they had it.

What I enjoy most about my mother is the unconditional love she has for us boys and her complete support and trust in us.

A typical day for mom in the 1950s was centered on her children. She'd play with us, cook, clean, go to the park, do laundry, and then have a nice dinner prepared for the entire family when dad got home from work.



**Martha Martinson in her Milwaukee garden**

**Jim:**

My mother has always been talkative and has a jovial personality. Her laugh is infectious. It's easy for her to laugh at herself. I've always admired my mom's ability to have beautiful flowers. My dad has the same ability. Mom would always stay home with us when we were kids. She played board games with me a lot. Sometimes I'd lie with her on the couch, watching soap operas, when I was young. I remember that when my brother and I had records and a record player, we had a competition. We both played one of our records and mom would vote on which song was the best. She read to me a lot and would give me a 'steam bath' when I got sick. That would consist of me putting a towel over my head and sitting in the bathroom while breathing the vapor from the hot shower that she had turned on.



I appreciated the fact that Mom really enjoyed playing with my brothers and me. She was a child at heart. What I also enjoyed in both of my parents was that they gave me the freedom, as I got older, to do things – like going on bicycle rides.

The memories of my mother are of a woman who was so loving and nurturing to my brothers and me. She was like a TV mom – doing anything for you at any time, and always making everything better. She should be sainted for having to put up with four boisterous boys.

**Brian:**

She is so sweet and loving, and I feel I can talk to her about anything. As the youngest, I was born in 1962. I would guess that she had her hands full with the four of us.

### **Fond memories growing up in our family**

**Mark:**

My fondest memory is a general feeling of being loved, cared for, and being trusted to make good choices. I was always given a great amount of latitude to make choices, and I was expected to make good ones. I would have to say that 99 percent of the time our parents were not disappointed with us.

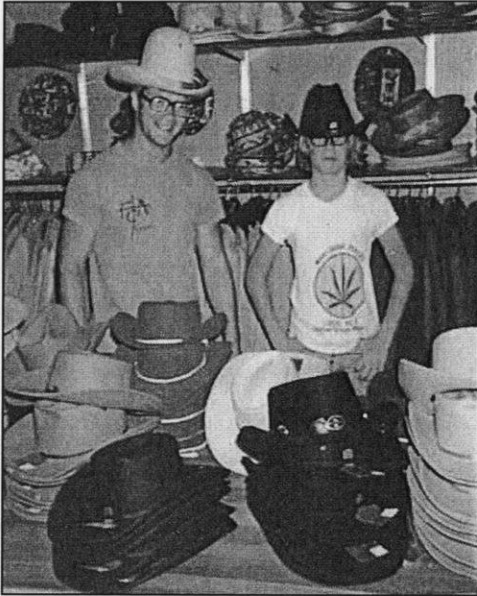
**Jeff:**

Sunday afternoons was family time. One tradition, playing Monopoly, was popular in winter months after the Green Bay Packer season ended. It was an activity that brought us closer as a family. We gathered around the kitchen table to play the game. Dad made popcorn in the frying pan, and we had pop. Yes, we referred to it as ‘Pop’ -- whether it was coke or root beer. (This is Milwaukee, where water fountains are called bubblers.) After the Monopoly properties were bought up, Dad and my brother Mark battled for Monopoly supremacy. They were the wheelers and dealers. The rest of us were happy to have some pretty pink and blue money and purple properties. We were at the mercy of luck because Dad and Mark made tough bargains, built green houses and red hotels, and taught lessons to the rest of us.

Once in a while luck did win. That’s why you “play the game,” as they say. Dad and Mark pushed the game into the supper hour until mother said it was time to eat. I can tell you that Mark learned the lessons of monopoly very well. Others did not, but there is a thing called luck. Yeah, lots of luck -- and love.

Did you hear about our vacation out west? Dad and Mom loaded us four boys in the station wagon and we were off, with our car bingo cards, to see the mountains. Dad had a fascination with the mountains. I think it was because Mother was deathly afraid of them. He would drive to the edge of the winding mountain roads and exaggerate the view. The view was Mother on the floor with her hands over her eyes. Then he’d say something like; “*See the bear!*” Very not nice.

On the long drive to the Rockies, we'd play car bingo, the alphabet game, count the bent down trees (for brother Jimmy), and the miles to Wall Drug. Oh yes; the jackalope game. *"Look, there's one; a jackalope; the rare elusive animal of South Dakota.* Mother was never quick enough to actually lay her eyes upon a jackalope until at Wall Drug. There was one who's head was irreverently mounted on a wall; a jack rabbit with antelope pronghorns. Poor, long-suffering Mother.



**Mark and Brian try on hats at Wall Drug on a family vacation in South Dakota.**

After seeing the spectacular sights of Yellowstone National Park, we had to come back home. Vacation time for a milkman was short, as was the green stuff. Dad would always remind us, after seeing some truly breathtaking country, that Wisconsin is as pretty as any state. He was seeing alfalfa fields and Holstein cows through his heart. Don't look now, but I think those cows were painted!

**Brian:**

My fondest memory is of my oldest brother Jeff's ordination as a Lutheran pastor. This ceremony was held at our family church, and it brought so much of our family together. This included both of my grandmothers, which in itself was very special. My brothers, my parents, and many other relatives attended.

**Jim:**

I am eternally indebted to my parents for their love and support during the most difficult time in my life -- when my first wife died in a car crash. They stayed with me for a month and helped me get my life back in order. I could have never prospered or gotten through it without their help. They spent much time with Kenny and Anna who were 4 and 2 at the time.

I am also thankful that mom and dad allowed all four of us kids to bicycle across the United States. Dad was helping Brian at the time through college, but allowed him to join us. That trip has been one of the biggest blessings in my life.

There are so many fond memories it's hard to decide which ones stand out most. Times when we were all together like Christmas or other holidays such as Thanksgiving. We went on some great vacations. We were all together exploring things we'd never seen like Yellowstone, the Black Hills, Badlands, the Tetons and Glacier National Parks. We saw some beautiful parts of the country and they were always enjoyable times. I will remember fondly the times we went to Wisconsin Dells, northern Wisconsin and northern Michigan on vacations.

My favorite family picnic was when we went to Mauthe Lake not far from Kewaskum in the Northern Kettle Moraine State Forest. The beach was beautiful and filled with people in the summer. There was a trail that encircled the lake.

## Harland reflects on family life in Milwaukee

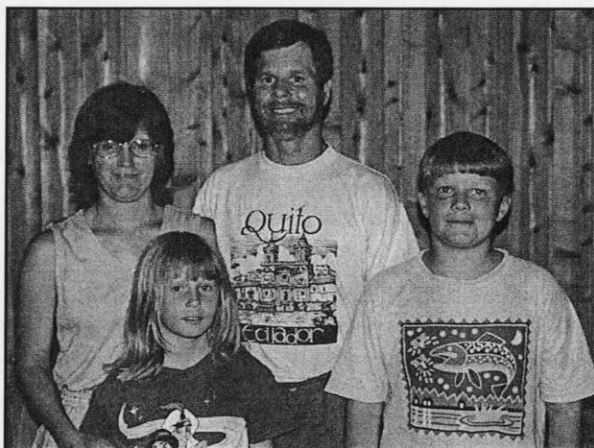
*In the remainder of this chapter, Harland sets the scene of his family life with Martha and boys in Milwaukee, from the 1950s through the early 1990s. He begins by describing Jeff, the oldest of their four sons and continues to cover the other three as his memories flow. As a caring, Christian father and husband, Harland's church and family mattered more than anything. He projects a wealth of inspiration mixed with touches of humor and real life situations. As with many of us, the "writer in him" has provided a source of interesting family stories.*

Our first-born son Jeffrey entered the world on April 14, 1951. He served as a role model for our other three sons and eventually became a minister.

Jeff had asthma growing up and a lot of breathing problems. For some reason his lungs developed to where it seemed that he could run forever. He became one of the top runners on Milwaukee's Washington High School cross-country A-team. He also ran the two-mile race for the track team. I will never forget the day as the entire student bleacher section stood and cheered for him as he ran the two miles in less than 10 minutes. This was the record for Washington High at that time.

As an athlete, Jeff attracted the attention of a number of college coaches. We were invited to visit various colleges, and he selected Carthage College in Kenosha, Wisconsin. He became a regular on their cross-country A-team. For several years their team placed first in their conference and advanced to national competition, where they placed in the top ten for their size school.

During this time, Jeff decided he wanted to take subjects which would prepare him for the ministry. He applied and was accepted to the Northwestern Lutheran Seminary, St. Paul, Minnesota. He has been a minister in Woonsocket, South Dakota; Urbana and Champaign, Illinois; Cobb, Wisconsin; Sun Prairie, Wisconsin; Frederick, South Dakota and is currently at Merrill, Wisconsin.



Faith and Jeff with children Hope and Leif

Jeff married Faith Sveren, a South Dakota Lutheran minister's daughter, in 1982. She was a school teacher in the same small town where Jeff had his first parish. They have



two children, Leif born in 1985 and Hope born in 1988. Jeff and his family live in Merrill, Wisconsin.

Our second son, Mark, was born December 7, 1953. We had just moved into our first home the previous September. The area we selected was on Milwaukee's northwest side at 2860 North 82nd Street. The elementary school for our area was only one block away on 81<sup>st</sup> Street. The neighborhood was loaded with growing young families and was a fairly new area.

Our rear yard was enclosed by a white picket fence, creating an ideal play area for our two young sons. A sandbox and a swing set helped to keep them busy. Very soon, our yard was a play area for the neighborhood. It got to be a little chaotic at times. We didn't mind because we always knew where our boys were and who they were playing with.

Our third son, Jimmy (his baptized name), joined us on June 1, 1957. During those years, Martha was a stay-at-home mom. Sunday School and church every Sunday was always our normal routine. Martha and I were both active in the church.

Martha was the head of the church nursery while the boys were small. She organized the schedule for other young mothers to take turns caring for the nursery during worship services. I served on the church council as a trustee. When that term expired, I served on the council as a deacon and also was an usher. Our home church during those early years was St. Paul's Lutheran, the church where we were married. It was the church Martha's family had attended on the corner of North 28<sup>th</sup> Street and West Wisconsin Avenue in Milwaukee, not far from the downtown area.

### **Surprise visitors at church**

While ushering one Sunday morning, I was pleasantly surprised to recognize two familiar faces entering St. Paul's. They were just as surprised. We just stopped and stared at each other for a few seconds and exchanged greetings. Then, I had the honor of escorting Orpha and Bill Steinhauer to their seats! They were our neighbors during my younger years growing up on my parents' farm south of Mt. Horeb. We exchanged farm work with them. I especially remember silo filling. Bill was such a fun guy to work with. He was having some trouble with his truck at the time. He told me that if he knew the world would end tomorrow, he would take the sledgehammer and smash his truck all to pieces.



**Orpha and Bill Steinhauer**

Our family was growing up. There were Little League ballgames and Cub Scout meetings. Martha and I bowled on leagues. Work, church, school, and youth activities consumed all of our time. I gave up hunting while my boys were small and didn't hunt again until they were old enough to go with me.

Brian, our fourth son, joined our roughhouse bunch November 5, 1963. We transferred from St. Paul's to Mt. Carmel Lutheran shortly after he was born. Jeff was going to be starting confirmation class, and Mt. Carmel was within walking distance from our home.

If we had stayed at St. Paul's, Jeff would have needed to take the city bus, and transfer to get to St. Paul's for Saturday confirmation classes and other youth functions.

Our home continued to be the gathering place and play area for our sons and their friends through high school and even through college. There was a pool table and a ping-pong table in the basement. We had a regulation basketball hoop and backboard mounted on the garage in the alley. The rhythmic thump-thump of the basketball was music to us. We knew where our sons were, whom they were with, and what they were doing. This was during the time when there were reports of drug dealers working the city playgrounds.

### **Interesting vacations recalled by Harland**

On one of my vacations, the boys helped me scrape and paint the house and garage. On another vacation, we joined together to shingled the roofs of the house and garage.



**Jim Martinson and his cousin Debbie Jorns walk and chat at a Martinson family reunion (1980s)**

We went on driving tours, trying to find every waterfall in Wisconsin and upper Michigan. We followed bear tracks until Martha made us stop. We went through boat locks at Sault St. Marie, Michigan. Our whole family rented bikes and bicycled all around Mackinaw Island, Michigan. On one trip we took a long train ride to remote areas of Ontario, Canada. We took several driving tours through the Rocky Mountains.

In the summer of 1964, when our Belaire Chevy was new, we drove west to the Rocky Mountains. Brian was not yet two years old. He stayed at home with Martha's mom and dad. We drove through the South Dakota Badlands and encountered buffalo and wild donkeys at Custer National Park. We drove through the Black Hills, toured Mt. Rushmore, and found the famous Wall Drug, South Dakota.

Not far west of the Black Hills, after we entered Wyoming, there was a loud bang on the car's roof just above the rear car seat. I thought the boys were roughhousing. I pulled off the road and stopped to see what the trouble was. Then all havoc broke loose. Our shining new Belaire was hammered with hailstones the size of tennis balls. We were lucky we stopped when we did, as most of the drivers who didn't stop had their windshields broken inward. The finish on our car resembled pictures taken of the moon's surface, all covered with large dents. We received an insurance adjustment later on, but the car carried those dents for the rest of its life.

We continued west and visited the Custer Battlefield National Monument on the Crow Indian Reservation in Bighorn, Montana. We crossed over Bear Tooth Pass on our way to Yellowstone National Park. We saw Yellowstone Falls, Old Faithful, the Paint Pot, and all of Geysers Basin.

After crossing the Continental Divide, we drove through the Grand Teton National Park. The majestic Tetons were awesome. We followed the Snake River through Jackson Hole and doubled back northeast. Then we visited the Buffalo Bill Historical Center at Cody, Wyoming, and headed south to Colorado where we drove through the Rocky Mountain National Park at Estes, Colorado and continued through Denver. Finally we relaxed several days at Colorado Springs, saw Pike's Peak, and toured the Garden of the Gods Cliff Dwellings.

We watched the beautiful Rockies disappear in the distance from the rear view mirror as we headed east. The scenery through Nebraska, Iowa, and into Wisconsin was not as interesting or exciting as where we had been.

Our second trip to the Rocky Mountains was about 11 years later. Jeff was a student at Northwestern Lutheran Seminary. The boys helped me reshingle the house and garage. They worked like pros. We finished the job in less than a week. We still had eight or nine days of my vacation to do something special.

One of Jeff's seminary classmates had a summer job as a guide at Glacier International Peace Park in northwest Montana. He had told Jeff that if we stopped by he would give us a tour of the park.

With almost no advance planning, we decided to go on a drive and head west. All six of us piled into our large white Chevy station wagon, with a rented all-weather carrier on top. When the rear seat was folded down, there was enough room for someone to lie down and rest when they wanted to. We changed drivers and drove day and night all of the way to Glacier Park. We followed I-94 up through Minneapolis and took a brief stop in St. Cloud. Then it was on to Glacier Park, following a far northern route. At night the northern lights were just awesome.

Jeff's friend managed to reserve rooms for us in the park's main lodge. The lodge was rustic and magnificent. It was built in the era when President Theodore Roosevelt visited that area. Jeff's friend gave us a private tour of all the main points in the park. From there we headed south through the Rocky Mountain Range. We drove through Yellowstone and the Grand Teton National Parks again and then headed east toward home.

Hundreds of antelope roamed all across Wyoming. We stopped at Devil's Tower National Monument in Northeast Wyoming. In the Black Hills we hit another hailstorm. The hail was not as large this time and was mixed with snow pellets. It only lasted about five minutes, but it was so heavy and fast that our whole windshield was covered with ice. We had to dig out the windshield wipers. We saw Deadwood, the graves of Calamity Jane and Wild Bill Hickock, and Wall Drug. Then we walked along hiking trails in the Badlands and visited Mt. Rushmore.

Many of the sites on this trip west we had seen on our previous trip 11 years earlier. Brian had not seen them before. The other three boys were older now. They saw things they had missed or forgotten the first trip. Even though it was a fast, unplanned trip, it was a trip we will all remember for a long time.



### **Harland describes Martha as a mom**

Martha was the best mom four active boys could possibly have. She was a stay-at-home mom through most of their childhood years. Martha was always there for them when they needed her. She saw them off to school and was waiting at home when the boys returned.

When it came to playing games, Martha was right there, joining the fun -- both inside and outside our home. I remember her playing ball in our backyard with Jeff, Mark, and Jim when her pregnancy with Brian was quite advanced.



Welcoming baby Brian are (l-r) Jimmy, Harland, Martha, Jeff and Mark. (1963)

Martha kept the boys busy and helped resolve their differences. She strolled with them as babies and took them to neighborhood parks to play as they grew older. She always dressed the boys prim and proper for Sunday school and church every Sunday. She taught them about right and wrong. They understood the meaning of 'no' and learned to respect each other's property from little on. They also learned to respect the rights and property of others as they grew older.

As the boys matured, Martha had thoughts of going back to work. I left for work at 5:30 in the morning and returned home around 3:00 in the afternoon. A friend of Martha's started working for Penney's catalog department, taking call-in orders over the phone. She encouraged Martha to apply, as they were looking for new associates. Their hours were from 3:00 in the afternoon until 9:00 at night. Martha was accepted and held that job for 20 years. In the beginning, she handwrote the orders. Later she advanced to taking the orders on the computer.

The hours worked out fine for us. Martha saw the boys off to school. I was usually home by the time the boys returned. Martha was awarded with a lifetime associate discount card after 20 years. This allows us a 20 percent discount on nearly everything we purchase at Penney's. If an item is already on sale, we can still get an extra 20 percent off the sale price. Her years at J.C. Penney's are still benefiting our family.

### **Tales of our boys**

#### **About Mark**

Mark was always the outdoor kid. There were some new homes being constructed in our area. I remember Mark coming home wearing only one overshoe one day. The other one had gotten stuck in the mud at a new home site. Mark couldn't get it unstuck, so he just slipped out of it and left it there.

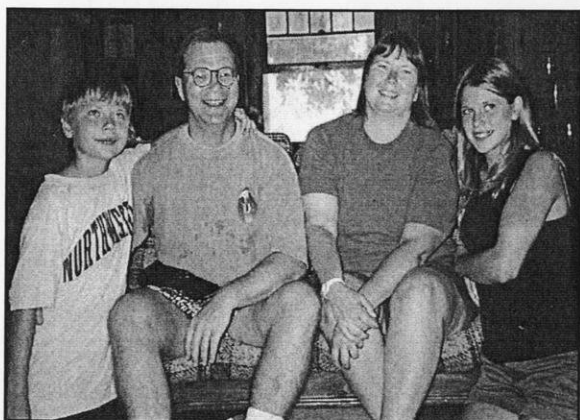
Mark tried out for just about every sport in high school. In his first year of football, he suffered a broken nose. By the time he was a senior, he won the nickname of *The Brick* as a guard on Milwaukee's Washington High School A-team. He also did well in track and in wrestling.

Mark was very industrious and had more jobs than I can remember. He was a golfing caddy and washed dishes at a restaurant. Mark worked for a hardware store and a grocery store. There must have been others, but the one I remember the best was when he was hired by the Jewel Tea Company as a door-to-door salesperson for their home delivery routes. He not only worked in the Milwaukee area but was also sent to various towns and cities around the state of Wisconsin. Jewel Tea sent him to areas wherever their routes needed help in securing new customers. Mark was very good at this job.

When our son, Jim, was old enough, he was also hired by Jewel. Jim and Mark worked together around the state. They still talk and joke about those early experiences when we get together and they start to reminisce.

Mark also went to Carthage College, following in his brother Jeff's footsteps. Carthage had a very popular, successful football program. Mark tried out as a freshman and then dropped out. He feared the time needed to succeed in their ambitious, demanding football program was starting to affect his grades. He joined the wrestling team, as their time element wasn't as demanding.

After graduating from Carthage, Mark joined the Peace Corp. He felt he could benefit from the experience and was following a college advisor's recommendation. Mark was sent to the Dominican Republic where he lived with a native family. For some reason, Mark decided the Peace Corp was not what he really wanted. He resigned from the program, returned home, and married his college sweetheart, Kay Herndobbler in 1976.



**Mark and Kay and children, Nathan and Carlene**

Kay and Mark lived in an apartment in Chicago when they first married. Mark worked for Jewel Drugs and enrolled in the University of Illinois, Chicago, where he earned his master's degree in business. Kay earned her degree in nursing. One of Mark's professors at the University of Illinois accepted the position as manager of a large resort in Michigan, not far from Muskegon. He selected Mark as his co-manager. Kay secured a nursing position at a nearby hospital.

Several years later, in 1982, Mark and Kay returned to our home in Milwaukee. Mark and his three brothers planned a three-month, 5500-mile bicycle journey across the United States that summer. Kay worked at Elmbrook Memorial Hospital in Brookfield, a Milwaukee suburb.

After the bicycle journey, Mark and Kay returned to Chicago. Mark enrolled in the University of DePaul, where he earned his law degree.

Kay and Mark have two children, Carlene born in 1984 and Nathan in 1988. They reside in Naperville, Illinois.

### **About Jim**

Jim was born with blonde, curly hair. It was Shirley Temple type hair. Mother never wanted to cut it. He must have been three years old when I finally convinced her that Jim needed a boy's haircut. I took Jim to the barbershop for his first haircut, since that was before I began cutting the boys' hair. The barber hesitated in disbelief when I asked him to give Jim a boy's haircut. He thought Jim was a girl.

Jim was the friendliest kid. He trusted everyone. He would smile and start talking with total strangers. It was a wonderful attitude or disposition to have -- yet we feared it was rather dangerous as most anyone could have walked off with him.

Whenever Jim met new playmates, he would bring them home to give them the grand tour of our play yard and the entire house.

As Jim grew older, he had trouble learning how to ride and balance a two-wheel bicycle. When his playmates would ride their bikes around the block, Jim would happily follow by running alongside them. This continued until I went with Jim to the deserted school playground one summer day. Jim and I must have spent hours on that playground that afternoon while he wobbled back and forth on his two-wheeler. Finally, he caught on and was just the happiest kid. He rode out of the playground and headed for home.

From that time on, we had trouble getting him off the bike. As he grew older, he started taking day trips out of the city into the countryside. At first, he did 15 or 20-mile trips. Eventually, those trips grew to as much as 100 miles per day.

He had a friend, Greg, to bike with. They biked to Mt. Horeb and stayed with my mother, Clara Martinson. One time he and Greg biked to Door County and stayed a night with his cousin Rosann (Schwarz) Jorns and her family. They biked many places, too numerous to recall. A number of times, we received distress calls. A bike had broken down. "*Could you please come and pick us up?*" And of course we always did.

This biking fever, which Jim caught that day on the school playground, has never been completely cured. Even after biking over 5500 miles across the United States with his three brothers, he still enjoys peddling through the countryside and following bike trails whenever he has the chance.

Jim, like his two older brothers Jeff and Mark, continued his college education at Carthage, where he earned his Bachelor's degree in social work.

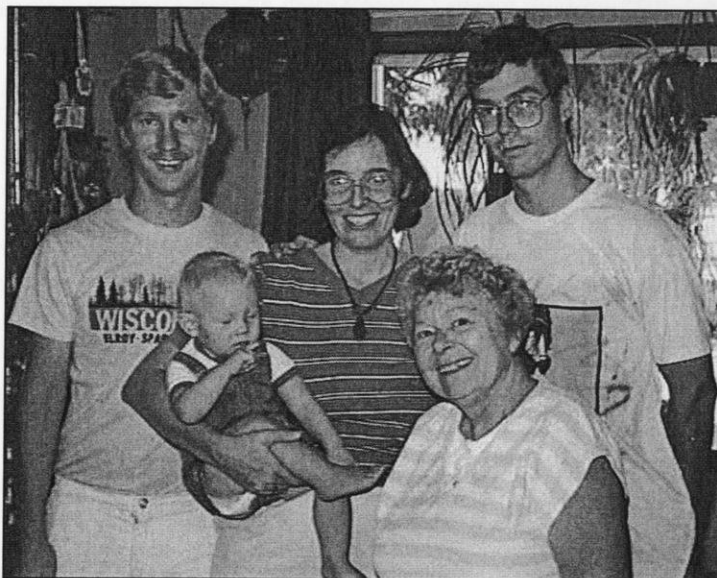


He returned home and worked for a social agency in Milwaukee for about a year before becoming a Vista Corp volunteer, which operates much like the Peace Corp except it is within the United States.

Jim was sent to Longview, Washington, which is only about 35 miles from Mount St. Helen, which had erupted just a few months before. He was with the Vista Corp in Longview for about a year. Then, he spent about a month volunteering at Holden Village, a Lutheran retreat at an abandoned copper mine on Lake Chelan, located in the Cascade Mountain Range of north central Washington. It was here that Jim met his future wife, Diane Peterson. They were married in 1984.

Jim eventually returned home, realizing the need of a Master's Degree in social work to be able to advance in that field. He earned his Master's Degree from the University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee. After Jim and Diane married, he worked in Milwaukee for a brief time as a social worker, and Diane taught classes in special education for severely handicapped students.

Jim and Diane decided to volunteer as a couple in the Peace Corp. They requested an African assignment, but not many locations were open to couples. Later on, there was an opening in Costa Rica. They accepted it and remained there nearly three years. Their son, Kenneth, was born there in 1987. They returned to Milwaukee and then moved to Washington State where Diane's parents lived. Anna was born there in 1990.



At left, Jim gathers with his (late) wife Diane, his brother Brian, son Kenneth and mother Martha Martinson. (1988)

### **Jim and a tragic July 4<sup>th</sup>**

Tragedy struck on the weekend of July 4, 1992. Jim's wife Diane was killed in a car accident while our family gathered at our home in Milwaukee to celebrate the holiday weekend. Brian was still living at home. Mark and his wife Kay and their children, Carlene and Nathan, drove up from Naperville, Illinois for an overnight visit that Saturday, which was actually July 4. On Sunday afternoon, Jeff and Faith also arrived, along with their children, Leif and Hope. We had a fun-filled afternoon, complete with a cookout. As always, the four grandkids had a great time.

As daylight was fading on that Sunday, Martha and I were at curbside giving farewell hugs to our grandchildren, when the phone rang. I asked Jeff and Mark to wait, as I suspected the call was a holiday greeting from their brother Jim in the state of Washington. He and his family hadn't been able to be with us for our July 4<sup>th</sup> celebration.

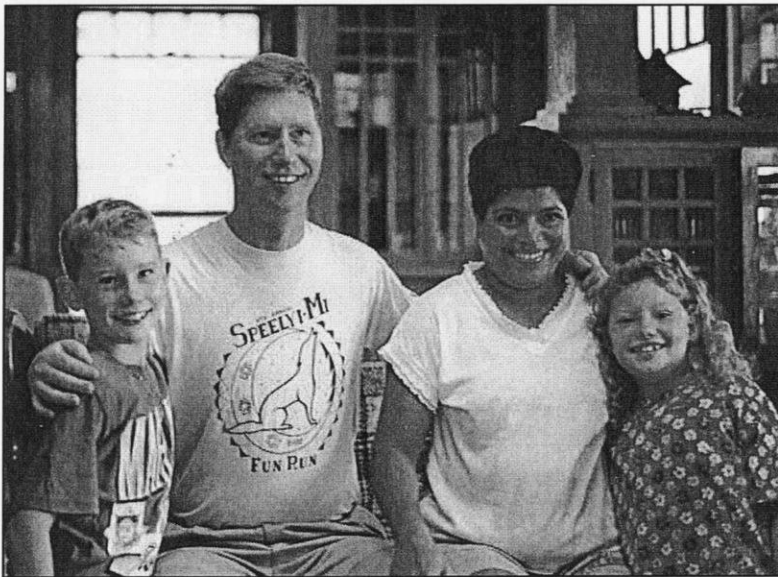
The caller was Jim, but he was not his usual, joyful self. In fact, it sounded like he was grieving. He told me Diane was dead. I thought I misunderstood him. He repeated himself, "*Dad, Diane was killed in an auto accident this afternoon.*"

Martha and I were at a travel agency the following morning as soon as they opened. We were booked on connecting flights, arriving at Jim's house that same evening. Jim's daughter Anna was just two at the time, and his son Kenneth was four. Martha and I stayed with them about five weeks. It was a very sad time for everyone involved.

### **Changes**

A year later, Jim took his children on a trip to Costa Rica, where he and his wife Diane had spent happy times in the Peace Corp. While there, his Costa Rican friends introduced Jim to a school teacher, Maria Cristina, whom he was highly attracted to immediately. Perhaps it was her joyous laughter. Maybe it was her easy way with the

children... or her deep Christian faith. They married 10 day later, on July 10, 1993.



Our family knows Jim's second wife as "Cristina" and she has been like an angel sent from heaven for Jim, his children, and for us as concerned grandparents. Cristina legally adopted Kenney and Anna as her very own.

**Jim and Cristina with their children Kenneth and Anna (Late 1990s)**

Jim and Cristina now reside in LaBell, Florida, which is an easy two-hour drive for us from our Florida home. Jim works in social work. Cristina has received her citizenship papers and teaches in the public school system. Kenney and Anna are straight-A students, accomplished musicians, and speak both English and Spanish fluently.

We don't understand why Diane was taken from us so abruptly. But the Lord opened another door for us, and for that we are so thankful.

### **Recollections of Brian, the youngest**

Brian was born on November 5, 1962. His next oldest brother, Jimmy, was already five years old. Mark, 9, and Jeff, 11, thought Brian was really special. They took pride in giving him stroller rides around the block and showing him off to the neighbors. This continued until he was old enough to start getting into their things. Then, attitudes changed and conflicts developed.



**Brian and his fiancé, Liz**

The four boys really got along very well most of the time. In nice weather, they played in the yard. During bad weather, they played inside, making tents out of bed sheets draped over furniture or playing games with mom.

One day, when Brian was about four years old, he asked me if I was a doctor. *“Why do you think I am a doctor?”* I asked.

*“Well, he said, “you are always so good at taking out my slivers and fixing my ouches.”*

### **Trees remembered**

We had a large apple tree in our play yard. This was the boys’ climbing tree as we were not concerned about the apples.

At our first home on 82<sup>nd</sup> Street, we had a pine tree near the lot line. The limbs extended over the neighbors’ property. The neighbor kept encouraging me to take that tree down. I finally consented.

After the tree was gone, Mark came and asked why I had taken down his climbing tree. I wasn’t even aware he used it for climbing. He explained it was his secret hiding place. He could hide there from people and dream of all the stuff boys dream about.

I really felt bad. So, when we moved to 81<sup>st</sup> Street, the big apple tree became the boys’ climbing tree. The neighbors thought it was a waste to allow our sons to ruin the apple crop. But to us, the tree was more valuable to our family as a climber than it was for the apples it could have produced.

One summer day, when Brian was about six years old, he fell out of the apple tree. I was sitting at the picnic table, doing bookwork for my retail milk route accounts. Suddenly, I heard a loud thump. I looked up and saw Brian lying on the ground, whimpering and holding his arm.

We rushed him to the hospital emergency room. He had what they referred to as a “green twig” fracture. They explained that the bone was bent and kinked, but not actually broken.



### **Brian the artist**

Brian went through high school at John Marshall instead of Washington High, where his brothers had gone. The school boundary lines had been changed. He won his school letter playing tennis at John Marshall High School.

Then, instead of going to Carthage College, as his three older brothers had done before him, Brian enrolled at the University of Wisconsin, Milwaukee. He received his teaching degree in art for the primary grades. After a short time, he decided this position was not what he wanted. He thought discipline was lacking in the Milwaukee public school system. He was spending more time trying to keep order than he was teaching.

He returned to UW-Milwaukee, where he earned his Master's Degree in Fine Arts. During a good share of the time while going for his Master's Degree, he was a student teacher for art classes at the university. He completed his Master's Degree program in Paris, France through an art gallery study session, along with some UW-Milwaukee classmates and one of his art professors.

By then, Brian was certified to teach art classes at any university in the United States. This was during the time when the art field was saturated. Universities were instructed to favor applications from minorities. Even though Brian sent out hundreds of resumes, he never received a call to teach. Discouraged, he moved to Florida with us. Using his artistic knowledge, he taught himself graphic skills on the computer.

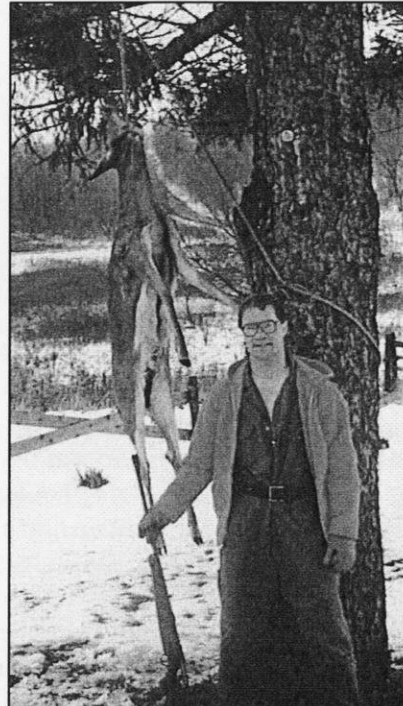
Brian now owns a condo in Osprey, Florida, a suburb of Sarasota. He is employed as the chief graphic design specialist for a growing company there.

### **Hunting tales**

After the boys had grown older, I had an opportunity to go bow hunting for deer in northern Michigan with one of my customers. Mark was fascinated with my hunting stories and wanted to go with me as soon as he was old enough.

Most of our hunting trips were to Uncle Gaylord's and Aunt Shirley's, near Mt. Horeb. However, the Indian Head country of far northwest Wisconsin had always intrigued me. So, one beautiful fall day, Mark and I left early in the morning and headed for Bayfield County. The trees were in peak color. The drive was awesome. Each turn and hill was just as beautiful as the ones we had just gone through, a rainbow of colors everywhere. In Bayfield County, the hills were nearly solid gold because of the yellow leaves on all of the aspen and birch trees in that area.

**Mark and a deer he shot while hunting on Gaylord Martinson's farm near Mt. Horeb. (1986)**



We had a heavy canvas army tent with a wood-burning stove. The nights were cold and the wind picked up. We secured the tent and set up our sleeping cots. We put our cooler in the corner of the tent next to the head of my cot, and stacked the cookies, chips and bread on top. We fired up the heater, which worked really well. Even though the outside temperature dropped below freezing, our tent was as warm as toast. In fact, it got too warm. We decided to open the entrance flap for air. I did not zip down the bug screen, as it was too cold for bugs.

I awoke during the night and heard rustling in the food supplies, just behind my head. I rolled out of the cot and grabbed the flashlight underneath. There, less than a foot from where my head had been was a full-grown porcupine eating our loaf of bread.

Now Mark was awake. We thought of putting an arrow through it. Realizing the mess, the blood, and a possible hole through the tent, we decided not to do so. We had a long-handled, round-nosed shovel along and I used that to guide him out of the tent. We watched him waddle out into the night and named him "Dumbo."

On the second night, we didn't get the tent as warm and kept the flap closed. During the night, both Mark and I were awakened by something scratching on the outside of our tent. We thought it might be a bear or just branches blown by the wind. I carefully opened up the flap and crawled out just enough to see along the outside of the tent. There was Dumbo, trying to get into our food again!

We were at a public campground, but at that time of the year, there was nobody else around. However, we did run into a father and son the next day who were squirrel hunting. They said that during the summer season the wild critters in the area were used to lots of handouts. That might explain it.

I don't remember even seeing a deer while we were there, but we have lots of memories. During the two days we were there, a brisk wind came up and blew just about every leaf off the aspen and birch trees. The forest floor was covered with a deep carpet of golden leaves. The aspen and birch stood so solemn-like, all stark naked. What a change. The drive home was not as beautiful, but we carried memories to last a lifetime. As soon as Jim was old enough to hunt, he went with us. Brian was so very anxious to go along. He told mom he thought dad would be too old to hunt by the time he was old enough.

The years went by quickly. Brian was soon legally old enough to hunt with an adult. We did some hunting and scouting with bows and arrows in the early fall near Mt. Horeb at my brother Gaylord's farm (my home farm).

Then the first day of gun season arrived. Soft, wet, clinging snow had been falling most of the night. We left Milwaukee sometime after midnight, and arrived at the Martinson farm near Mt. Horeb early enough to get into the woods and find our places to hunt before daylight. Mark, Jim, and I were carrying 12-gauge pump shotguns, using slugs. Brian had a three-shot, bolt-action, 20-gauge.

About four inches of wet snow had fallen clinging to every branch and twig, turning the whole area into a white, winter wonderland. It was just so beautiful.

Mark and Jim went west to hunt on the ridge across Highway 92. Brian and I went out of the farmyard to the south wood lot, putting distance between us to eliminate the danger of crossfire.



**Harland bags a buck on his brother Gaylord Martinson's farm.**

Brian and I stayed on our stand until long after daylight. We saw two deer shortly after daylight, but they were much too far away for the shotgun slugs we were allowed to use.

After the sun was up and we had eaten our lunch, we took a slow walk through some small wood lots in the area where deer often found shelter. Brian offered to walk through one larger wood lot, allowing me to circle around and take a stand on the far side -- just in case he should chase out a deer.

I asked him to give me about 20 minutes to circle the area and find a place to stand and wait. Then before I left, Brian asked if he needed to take his gun with him. He said the gun was awfully heavy to carry through the deep, wet snow. He would rather just walk this time and not really hunt. So I agreed.

I reached my position. I waited and waited and waited. It seemed like forever. Finally, Brian emerged from the snow-covered wooded lot.

*"Did you see the deer?"* he asked.

*"Nothing came this way,"* I replied. *"Was it a buck or a doe?"*

*"It was a nice four-point buck,"* Brian revealed.

Then Brian went on to explain how he first saw the deer...

The wet, soft snow had allowed him to make his way through the wooded lot in complete silence. Looking ahead through a tangle of brush, Brian saw the form of a deer lying in the snow. He first thought the deer was dead. Then, as he watched, he could see it was breathing. He shook the tangled brush. A clump of wet snow dropped on the deer. The deer jumped up, took a surprised look at Brian, and ran off through the woods as fast as it could go. He didn't know which way it went, because, by that time, Brian had lost all sense of direction.



I asked him how close he had been to the deer. He said it was like “*right there,*” and he pointed to a spot about four feet in front of him. I then reminded Brian if he would have carried his gun, he could have had his first deer.

Brian replied, “*But dad, could you shoot a sleeping deer?*”

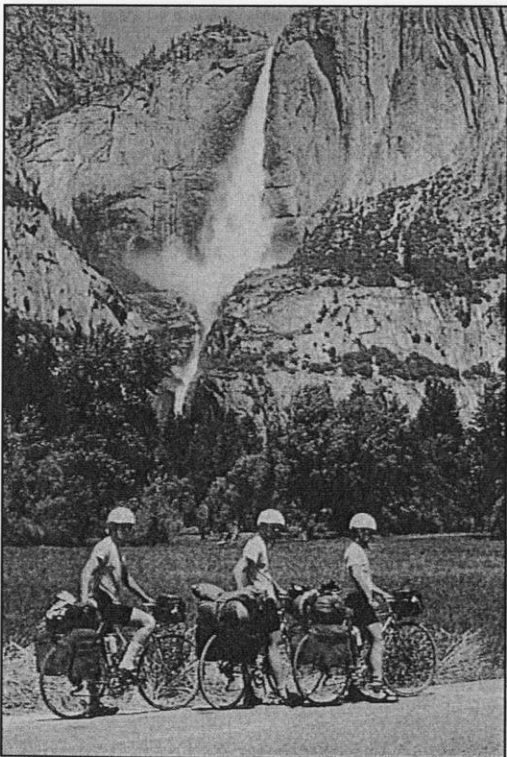
While I have to admit it doesn't seem like the sporting thing to do, I confess that if the Lord allowed me to walk up on a sleeping deer during hunting season, I would probably take it.

We have had some wonderful experiences and lots of warm memories. The idea of hunting and killing wild game never did appeal to Jeff. That is fine. I understand and respect his feelings. The other three sons, Mark, Jim, and Brian, could hardly wait until they were old enough to try hunting. Jim and Brian quickly realized there was no real thrill for them in hunting either. That is alright. My dad, Martin, their grandfather, was not a hunter, yet I think he was the best dad anyone could ever have.

Mark and I still enjoy the sport. I think we may just enjoy being in the woods, surrounded by all of nature. If we have the opportunity to harvest a deer, we are thrilled. If we have the chance to watch some from a distance, that is just fine too.

### **Bike ride across America in 1982**

During our family Thanksgiving gathering in 1981, our son Mark revealed his plans for taking a bicycle trip across the United States. By Christmas our son Jimmy wanted to join him. Then our eldest son, Jeffrey also expressed his interest in riding with them.



Our three oldest sons began their cross country bicycle tour plans in earnest. They arranged to have three to four months free during the spring and summer. Their route was to start near Mount St. Helen in the state of Washington and end in the state of Maine. Their route resembled a large horseshoe when traced onto the national map. They were to swing as far south as New Mexico and Texas, covering approximately 5,500 miles.

Martha and I were not in favor of this adventure. We had so many fears and concerns of all the things we imagined could go wrong. This trip was always on my mind. I had lots of negative thoughts about it. One day, as I was driving my 18-wheeler through the Illinois countryside, I heard someone say that Brian should also go along.

**Picture at left: Three of the boys at Bridal Veil Falls in Yosemite Park during the cross country bike trip.**

I had been driving in a kind of a trance, as if on autopilot. This startled me. I was all alone. No one was with me. I thought maybe I had dozed for just a moment and had been dreaming I heard those words.

Now I was really alert. Then again I heard what sounded like a voice in my head, “*Brian should also go along.*”

I told Martha of my experience. We decided that if our three oldest sons were really going on this adventure, Brian should also go. As a result, all four of our sons crossed the United States together on their bicycles in the spring and summer of 1982.

The four boys worked as a team. Jeff, an ordained minister, was the oldest at age 31. He served as their spiritual leader. Mark, at 28, was the organizer and physical leader; Jim, 25, was the map reader and navigator. Brian, the youngest at 19, served as the mechanic, flat tire repairman, and all around handyman.

They all rode 10-speed bikes and carried everything they needed with them. There was no support group, no chase vehicles. All necessities were packed in their bags – a large tent to sleep all four boys, four sleeping bags, bike tools, wheel spokes, extra tires and tubes, tire pumps, extra clothing, food, and more.



**Martinson brothers on 5,500 bike trip are (l-r) Brian, Mark, Jim and Jeff (1982)**

Each rider carried about 65 pounds of supplies. The bikes were equipped with rear carriers, plus saddle bags which hung down on each side of the rear wheel. They also had luggage packs fastened onto the handle bars.

The boys were extremely frugal, budgeting just \$5 a day per rider for food and supplies. They never paid for lodging, but camped on public property or received permission from private owners to camp on their property. About once a week they splurged at a restaurant – usually a cafeteria where they could stuff themselves for a modest fee. Food they purchased for making their own meals required no cooking or preparation. Items such as milk, bread, peanut butter, cheese, sardines, and other canned meats were the norm. They even tried drinking raw eggs!

They covered 5,500 miles in 90 days, beginning at Washington State on May 5 and ending in the State of Maine on August 5 and averaging just over 60 miles per day. The boys were to call us collect every Sunday morning around 10:00. This gave us enough time to attend early morning church services, hurry home, and wait for the phone to ring.

Before they left, I told them they could return -- never to speak to each other again -- or be bonded together for life. They have admitted there were a few days they rode as much as a mile or two apart because of tensions. But they returned cemented together forever.

It was an adventure we will always remember. Martha and I received phone calls and newspaper articles from strangers all across America who had come in contact with our sons on their journey.

The cross country bike ride of 1982 is a topic that comes up often during our family get-togethers. Sometimes the four boys even express a desire to repeat some of those experiences. Listening to the reminiscing and laughing of the trials and tribulations they all shared is heartwarming.

The following year, Mark went on a sole bike trip through Europe, covering over 6,000 miles. He began in Holland, biked to the Arctic Circle, to the Mediterranean, and back to Holland -- a story that could be a book by itself!

### **Harland and winemaking memories**

I would be negligent in my recollections if I failed to include my hobby of making wine. One Christmas, shortly after moving into our larger home on 81<sup>st</sup> Street, the boys gave me a winemaking kit. The kit consisted of a collapsible one-gallon clear plastic container, a plastic tube for siphoning the wine, a fermentation lock, and an instruction book, with various wine recipes.

This hobby started out very modest, but quickly grew, as winemaking ingredients became available. I experimented with all sorts of wines. I started out with grape juice, then raisins, and then grapes in season.

My sons helped me pick pails full of dandelion blooms, which had not been sprayed with herbicide or insecticide in Milwaukee city parks. One of my favorite dandelion wine recipes was the one my mother, Clara Martinson, used years before on the farm.

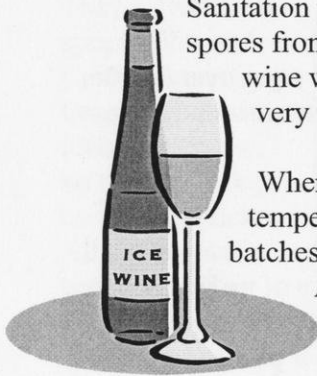
I had some of my own rhubarb in Milwaukee, but most of my sisters -- Benunie, Geneva, Verna, Alma, Helen, and Myrtle -- supplied me with grocery bags full of rhubarb from their gardens.

We had two pear trees on our property on 81<sup>st</sup> Street in Milwaukee. They were very prolific. Martha froze enough pears to supply our needs for the entire year. We gave some to neighbors, and I still had enough to make 20 gallons of pear wine. Martha's favorite was May wine. She thought our pear wine was a close imitation.



By the way, those were the same pear trees I fell from in the fall of 1984 during another bumper crop year. The trees were loaded with pears. We had extra braces under some of the limbs to keep them from breaking. I was on a ladder against the pear tree and had just finished picking the last of the pears. The ladder shifted. I reached for the nearest limb and missed. A broken pelvis and two cracked ribs was my reward. I was back to work in less than three months. I thank the Lord every time I think about it. It could have been so much worse. I really thought my back was broken until the body scan proved otherwise.

Our basement on 81<sup>st</sup> Street had an extra side room off the main basement area. I could close this room off and control the temperature in winter and summer very easily. It was an ideal wine-fermenting room. I progressed to using 8-10 gallon plastic drum-like containers for the primary fermenters. The wine went through various stages, and it was an entertaining process for me. It was time-consuming, though, as each batch of wine needed nearly a year to become stable and clarified for bottling. The extra fringe benefit was the wine sampling and tasting between the stages.



Sanitation procedures were important in an attempt to prevent foreign yeast spores from entering the wine. If everything went well, I had a homemade wine we could enjoy with friends or give away as gifts. We didn't drink very much wine, but I enjoyed making it and giving most of it away.

When I retired in Florida, I tried making wine. The lack of space for a temperature-controlled area was my main problem. I had a number of batches overheat and go dormant before the fermentation was complete.

After three attempts, I did succeed in nursing a 5-gallon carboy to maturity by keeping the wine in our air-conditioned quarters.

The lack of space and additional cost diminished the fun of winemaking I once enjoyed. So, for now, my hobby of making wine is only a fond memory.

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## *Favorite Family Recipes*

### **Pumpkin Torte** (Martha Martinson)

#### CRUST:

24 graham crackers                      ½ cup butter, melted                      ½ cup sugar

#### FILLING:

2 eggs    ¾ cup sugar    8 ounces cream cheese

#### TOP LAYER:

1 small can (2 C.) pumpkin    3 egg yolks    ½ cup sugar  
½ cup milk    ½ teaspoon salt    1 teaspoon cinnamon  
1 envelop Knox gelatin                      ¼ cup cold water    Cool Whip

Combine crust ingredients and pack into 9 x 13 pan. Make filling by mixing eggs, sugar, and cream cheese together. Pour over crust. Bake at 350 degrees for 20 minutes. Cool.

Prepare top layer by mixing pumpkin, egg yolks, sugar, milk, salt, and cinnamon in saucepan. Cook until thick. Separately, combine gelatin with cold water. Add to cooked pumpkin mixture. Pour over cream cheese layer. Refrigerate. Add Cool Whip to top of each piece before serving.

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### **Sunny Fruit Cheesecake** (Martha Martinson)

#### CRUST:

1 cup graham cracker crumbs  
1/3 cup packed brown sugar  
¼ cup margarine, melted

#### FILLING:

3 bars cream cheese (8 ounces each)  
¾ cup sugar    2 Tablespoons flour  
3 eggs    1 Tablespoon grated orange rind

#### GLAZE:

¼ cup sugar    1 Tablespoon cornstarch  
½ cup orange juice    2 Tablespoons water  
Orange sections

**Crust:** Combine crumbs, sugar and margarine. Press onto bottom of 9" pan. Bake at 325 degrees for 10 minutes. Remove crust. Increase oven temperature to 450 degrees.

**Filling:** Combine softened cream cheese, sugar and flour, mixing at medium speed with electric mixer until well blended. Add eggs, one at a time, mixing well after each addition. Stir in orange rind. Pour mixture over crust. Bake at 450 degrees for 10 minutes. Reduce oven to 250 degrees and continue baking for 30-35 minutes. Cool.

**Glaze:** Combine sugar and cornstarch in saucepan. Add juice and water. Cook until clear and thickened, stirring occasionally. Cool slightly. Arrange orange sections on top of cheesecake. Cover with glaze and chill

*Following is a poem written for Harland and Martha Martinson by their son Jeff. It reminds the family of a very special time in 1947, when Harland and Martha had their very first date at the Wisconsin State Fair.*

## **The Fair**

*By Jeff Martinson*

Harland and Martha went to the State Fair.  
She accepted a date which he made on a dare;  
He played the chance game, and won her a bear.  
Harland and Martha went to the fair.

They rode the ferris wheel just for a thrill,  
And the loud roller coaster which screamed down the hill.

Probably then with fists tight as clamps;  
Probably then is when they first held hands.

They ate barbequed chicken and corn on the cob;  
Then the riches of cream puffs from the dairying mob.

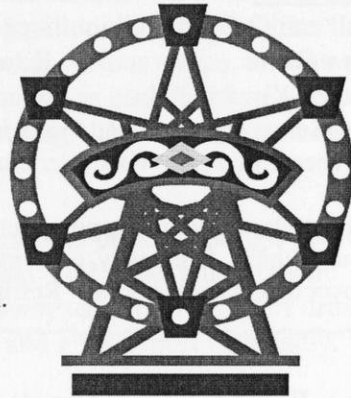
Probably then with sugary lips;  
Probably then they had their first kiss.

They strolled through the midway and heard all the barkers;  
“Hey, I’ll guess your birthday, Doll for a thin measly quarter.”

Probably then with a gleam in her eyes;  
Probably then she went for the prize.  
Probably when Martha fooled the age guesser,  
Harland laughed robustly and gently caressed her.

Harland and Martha went to the State Fair.  
She accepted a date which he made on a dare.  
They played the chance game and found life to share.

Harland and Martha still go to the fair.





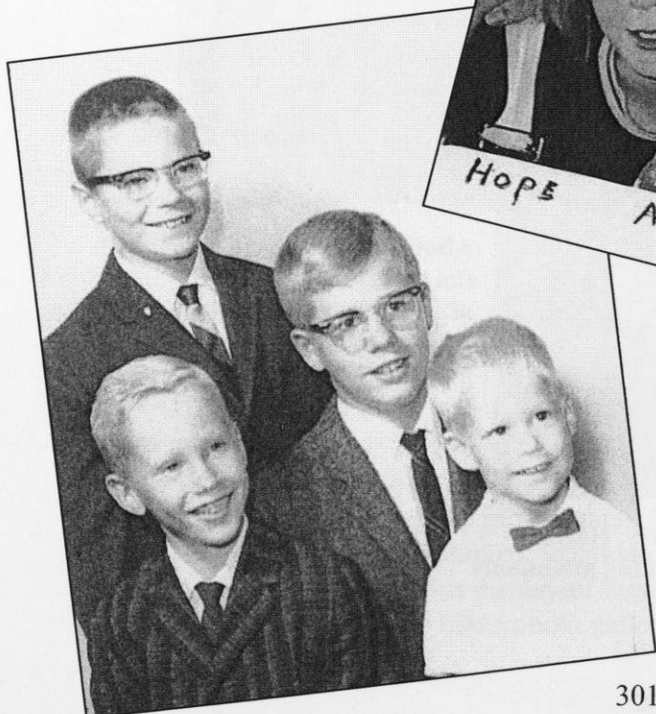
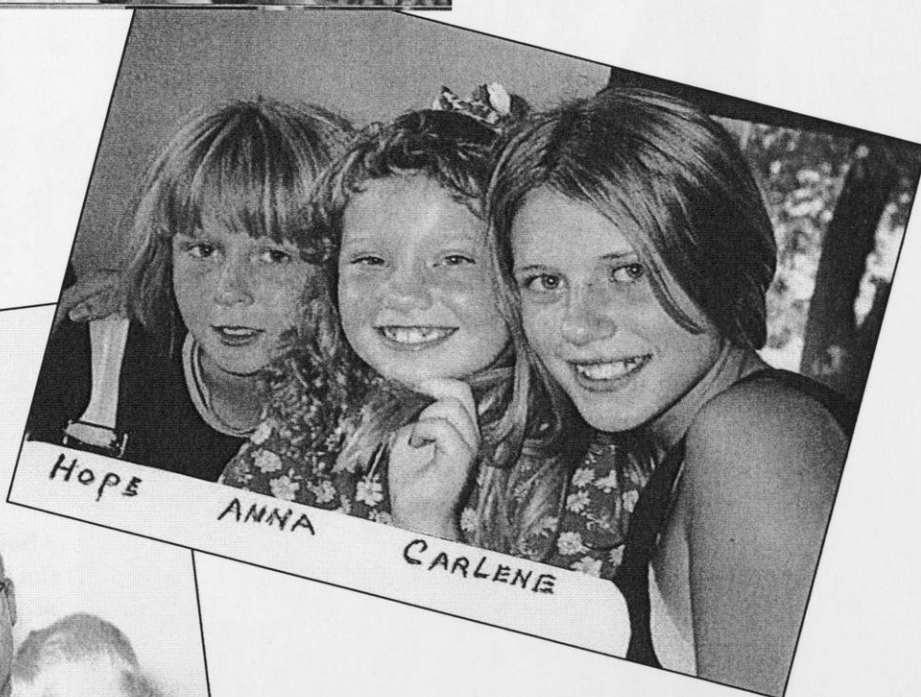
**Grandchildren of Harland and Martha Martinson**



Harland and Martha enjoy grandkids front (l-r) Hope, and Anna, and in back (l-r) Kenny, Carlene, Leif, and Nathan.

Below right: "Harley's Angels" granddaughters!

Bottom left: Four sons of Harland and Martha as in the 1960s -- Jim, Jeff, Mark and Brian.





Shortly before moving to Florida, Harland and Martha Martinson pose with grandkids in their backyard in Milwaukee. With them (l-r) are Kenneth, Anna, Carlene, Leif, Nathan, and Hope. (1994)

### Celebrating 50 Years



Above: Harland and Martha (on right) marry. Their attendants, standing at left, were his brother Marty Martinson and her sister-in-law Mary Lou Lisser. (1949)



At their 50<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary surprise party, Harland and Martha (on right) are joined by their wedding attendants Marty and Mary Lou (on left). (1999)

## CHAPTER 11

### Marty the Football Star – The Family of Marty and Lois

Marty, the youngest of Martin and Clara Martinson's nine children, was born May 5, 1928. He was named Martin after his father. The nickname "Marty" stuck after his first grade teacher at Malone School insisted the family stop calling him "Junior" and use his real name. Like most of his siblings, Marty was a good student, ranking in the top-10 of his Mt. Horeb High School class. His nickname was "Butterball" because he was on the front line of the Mt. Horeb football team – a team that became State Champions in 1946. Marty was also at the top of his class in the NCO Academy (Non-commissioned Officer). He was drafted by the Army in 1950 during the Korean War.

Lois (Brattlie) and Marty were wed on March 21, 1953 in the Little Brown Church in Nashua, Iowa. They lived in Mt. Horeb all their married life. In their first 19 years of marriage, they had five children.

Their first three children, all girls, were born during a seven-year span. Karen was born in 1954 – the same year her twin cousins Jan and Joy arrived in the Shirley and Gaylord Martinson family. Karen's sister Mary was born in 1957 and youngest sister Jayne in 1961. All were three years apart. Seven years later, in 1968, David was born, followed by Charlie in 1973 -- the year Karen graduated from high school. Charlie is the youngest of Grandma and Grandpa Martinson's 38 grandchildren.



**Lois and Marty Martinson married in 1953.**

Marty ran an electrical business in Mt. Horeb with Russ Martin. Later he drove a rural mail delivery route. Regretfully, Marty died in June 2001 after a brief illness, leaving behind five grown children and his wife Lois.

As a little girl in the 1950s, I remember strolling into Grandma Martinson's dining room and being fascinated with Lois and Marty's wedding picture. Through the eyes of an eight-year-old, they looked like movie stars! They had recently married, and Grandma portrayed their photo in a prominent location on her buffet. The picture stood out from the rest. Grandma's enormous display of family photos lined the walls and table tops in this room. To me, it looked like a photo gallery.



I recall visiting Lois and Marty, my youngest uncle, at their Fifth Street home in Mt. Horeb during the 1950s and 1960s. They had such cute little girls at the time, and I was their older cousin. I delighted in their antics whenever I stopped by – usually with my mother Benunie, who was Marty’s oldest sister.

Years later, when the Homestead Restaurant was operating in the valley below Stewart’s Park, Lois and Marty’s daughter, Mary, was a waitress there. As a young mother with three growing boys, I made frequent two-hour drives from Rosendale to Mt. Horeb, staying overnight on the farm with my mother. Sometimes my Rosendale girlfriends, JoAnn and Darlene, would join me. “Going to the Homestead” was usually on our agenda. It was our absolute favorite place to chat and have a relaxing meal. There was even a gift shop adjoining the dining room area. Since “shopping” was my middle name, it was always an extra fun stop before or after lunch.

The Homestead’s owners, Russell and Fran Greve, were the parents of my high school classmate, Susan Greve. How fun it was to go there and visit with them, especially if Susie was home. Once in a while Grandma Martinson would go along to the Homestead. If we were lucky, my cousin Mary Martinson was our waitress. That made the experience even more special! It was a sad day when the restaurant closed. Nestled in the picturesque Stewart Park valley, it held memories galore. A cookbook published by the Greve family is a treasure.



**Homestead Restaurant, Mt. Horeb, operated from 1973 to about 1991. Martinson family members enjoyed gathering there, especially when Mary Martinson was their waitress.**

During the late 1960s and early 1970s when David and Charlie were born into Lois and Marty’s family, I was also becoming a mother. David is just one year younger than my oldest son Troy Rindy. Charlie is just two years younger than my youngest son Ryan Rindy. Ironically, Charlie was a Mt. Horeb High School classmate of Ryan’s wife, Jody (Preimesberger). They were on prom court together. Since my boys weren’t raised in the Mt. Horeb area, often Ryan would run into second cousins he didn’t realize he had. Jody, his girlfriend at the time, would introduce them saying... “*This is my high school friend...*” and it would turn out to be a second cousin Ryan was meeting for the first or second time. Charlie was one. My son Ryan resembles Uncle Marty, as well Charlie a little bit. Recently someone looking through the rough draft pages of this book remarked how much Ryan looks like Marty. I always suspected Ryan was “a Martinson” with his blond hair and blue eyes.



Although, sadly, Marty is no longer with us, I am sure he would be proud to read the following collection of memories brought forth by his five children. This book is a tribute to all of our family members, like Marty, who have died.

**Marty and Lois Martinson family picture from the Mt. Horeb Evangelical Lutheran Church book (l-r front) Mary, Charlie, David; (l-r-back) Marty, Karen and Jayne (1980)**

## **Memories of Grandma Clara and Grandpa Martin Martinson**

### **Karen:**

Grandma Martinson crocheted a lot, and I am proud to have her wall hanging of DaVinci's "The Last Supper" hanging in my living room! I had it preserved and framed. It was made in 1951, so it's now 54 years old.

Even into old age, Grandma kept a large garden. Some of the more notable foods I recall she prepared were black raspberry jam, lefse, fry cakes, headcheese, and flatbread. Her house in Mount Horeb on Second Street is a fond memory. So is sitting on the front porch swing and visiting with her and Lizzie (her upstairs neighbor).

### **Mary:**

My most vivid memory of Grandma is of her sitting in her rocker by the window doing her tatting and other busy work. I fondly recall, at about age 6, Grandma serving me a cup of tea and some of her famous fry cakes when I was at her house one afternoon.

### **Jayne:**

Grandma Martinson was the stoic, self-sufficient matriarch of the Martinson family. I will always remember her house on Second Street in Mt. Horeb, with the porch swing on the front porch and the big garden in the back yard.

Grandma's house is a good analogy for my memories of her. I think about how her house was designed around function, not frills.

As long as I can remember, Lizzie Henderson lived in the upstairs, and Grandma had the downstairs "flat." You walked down this long entryway to her sitting room where she had three chairs -- her rocker by the window, an arm chair, and a wooden rocker. There was also a small black and white TV set. She had a secretary against the wall with little treasures in it...like that miniature china tea set I loved to look at!



The most curious thing about Grandma's house is that she had all her fancy furniture and accoutrements in what was the dining room... it was as if anything frivolous could just be put away. It seems the only luxury she allowed herself was the beautiful brush and mirror set she kept on her dressing table. She did not even have a full bathroom.

My sisters and I spent many an afternoon or evening with Grandma Martinson whenever my dad Marty mowed her lawn or did chores around her house. She wasn't a "goof-off" granny. Instead she was very stoic and reserved, and you acted with dignity and respect at her house. However, she had this little soft spot where she would make us "tea" and it was really a treat when she would have fresh fry cakes or lefse hot off the griddle.

**A young Clara Anderson  
Our "Grandma Martinson" (1907)**

One afternoon when I was with Grandma, she made me a rabbit pillow out of the fabric scraps she kept in that closet under the staircase. I thought she was an amazing craftswoman with her tatting, quilt-making and various projects. I still try to emulate her crafts. She taught me how to make lefse for a school project, and I remember that even though I had her secret recipe, I would never be able to match her renowned lefse.

I also remember Grandma's long hair and how it was usually coifed into an updo, Jayne continues. In church, I remember sitting by her with the eyes of her fox stole staring at me.

It amazes me that Grandma never learned to drive. She was a frontierswoman in the middle of the small village of Mt. Horeb.

**Grandma Martinson (left)  
and her friend Lizzie  
Henderson (right), who  
lived in Grandma's  
upstairs apartment,**

**prepare for Mt. Horeb's Centennial parade in 1962. With them are (l-r) Joy and Jan Martinson, twin daughters of Marty's brother Gaylord. The surrey behind them completed their parade entry. It is the surrey purchased by Torkel Martinson in 1901. It is still being used today for family fun.**





### **Charlie and David recall Grandma Martinson**

“Grandma Martinson was a no-nonsense Grandma who liked to bake and crochet,” David said. “I used to help my dad mow her lawn. I remember getting chocolate or a treat.”

Charlie, who was eight when Grandma died, recalls Grandma making lunch for him and his dad Marty when they mowed her lawn.



**Martinson and Shelstad family reunion. Grandpa Martin Martinson is tallest in back row; Grandma Clara Martinson is seated in front of him and holding a child. (Early 1930s)**

### **Favorite holiday**

#### **Karen:**

I liked Easter. Most Easters were warm and sunny with the spring flowers just beginning to bloom. We always dressed up to go to church on Sunday, but Easter Sunday was an extra special occasion. My sisters and I wore new dresses, white gloves, white patent leather shoes, and Easter bonnets. Wow!

#### **Jayne:**

In my childhood years, my favorite holiday was Christmas. It was always so exciting to go to Temby's with Dad to pick out our Christmas tree. It wasn't fun, though, when he'd get frustrated trying to put it up in the corner of our piano room at our 205 South Fifth Street house. Once it was finally up, straight, and all the lights were on, we kids could start unpacking and hanging the beautiful ornaments on the tree. We also had this little Christmas village that went on the top of the piano each year. My mom, Lois, would take great care in arranging it just right. She'd warn us not to touch the angel hair snow because it was made of spun glass.

#### **David:**

My favorite holiday was Christmas. Grandma Martinson would make lefse and fried cakes. We still carry on the tradition of eating lefse for Christmas.

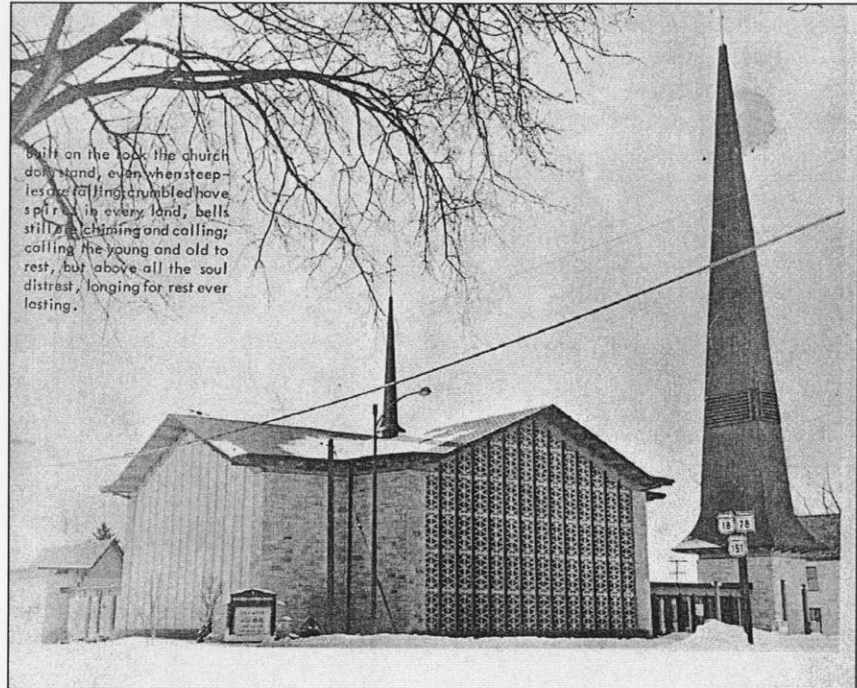
## Christmas memories

### Mary:

I enjoyed Christmas -- the decorations and lights, the anticipation of Santa and gifts – it all seemed so magical as a child.

### Charlie:

We always went to candlelight service at our Lutheran Church in Mt. Horeb and always opened presents on Christmas Eve.



**Mt. Horeb Evangelical Lutheran Church is the home church to many Martinson family members, including Marty and Lois and their children. Today, many in the family still attend this church.**

### Karen:

One Christmas when I was 11 or 12, my immediate family tried to recapture our Norwegian Heritage by having lutefisk for our Christmas Eve dinner. Mom and Dad had told us it had been tradition when they were growing up. No one liked it so we never had it again.

### Jayne:

Christmas was the time when we would get the coveted packages from Grandma Martinson. They came carefully wrapped in white paper and saran wrap, and they contained headcheese and lefse, respectively! The headcheese was a delicacy my dad would slice ever so thinly and fry for breakfast. We would relish it each day that we could have it for breakfast, until the last piece was gone. Having lefse is the main Christmas tradition we continue in our family, only now it is store-bought.

## Grade school memories

### Karen:

I attended Mt Horeb Elementary School for grades K-8. The memory that stands out the most is breaking my right wrist in physical education class when I was in third grade. I spent the last six weeks of school with my right arm in a cast and got a poor grade in penmanship because I had to write with my left hand.

**Jayne:**

The scent of the old school on Academy Street comes back to me when I think of my grade school days. It's what stands out, but don't ask me to describe it because I can't. If I ever smell it again, it will take me right back there. The aroma of that sawdust the janitor would sprinkle on vomit from kids getting sick is vivid.

We had two lunch rooms: one for cold lunch and one for hot lunch. That was weird, talk about segregation. I also recall milk duty and having to go downstairs to the milk cooler to get the right number of chocolates and the right number of whites.

The art room was housed in the really cool "round room" at school, and the playground had a jungle gym, merry-go-round, teeter totters, and a really big slide. Each winter someone would get their tongue stuck to the metal bars at the school's side entrance!

**Summer days****Karen:**

Summer days included outdoor activities such as bike-riding, swimming, making a tent out of blankets that were pinned to the clothes line, climbing trees, and playing with neighborhood friends.



In this 1967 church directory photo, Lois and Marty gather with their three girls (l-r) Jayne, Mary and Karen. The boys were not born yet.

**Mary:**

What was special in summer was playing with my cousins (the Swingen girls) and going to the nearby Grandma Grocery store for a treat. One of my most vivid memories from high school is, unfortunately, rather tragic. It was the night my cousin, Jill Swingen was struck by a car and killed. It happened on Highway 18/151 outside the Club 18 dance hall where we were both attending a teen dance.

**Jayne:**

My sisters and I spent a lot of time with our cousins on my mom's side, the Swingen girls. My older sister Karen was the same age as Julie. My sister Mary was one year older than Jill, and I was one year older than Joni. So, we had instant playmates. We would usually get together every afternoon and ride bikes, play games, or go uptown. We always had to be back home by 3:30 as that was the bewitching hour when Mom would expect us.

**David and Charlie**, although much younger than their three sisters, also attended grade school in Mt. Horeb, just in different decades -- the 1970s and 80s.



## **High school memories and careers**

### **Karen:**

I graduated from Mt. Horeb High School in 1973. My favorite subject was chemistry. What I remember most from high-school days are the Homecoming activities, especially making floats for the parade. Another memory is the 1971 dress code change, which allowed girls to wear jeans or slacks to school. I also recall the days of learning to drive a car and getting my driver's license.

In 1975, I received a certificate in Radiologic Technology from Madison General Hospital School of Radiologic Technology. Later, in 1993, I earned a Bachelors Degree in Health Arts from the College of St. Francis and in 1996 a Masters of Arts Degree in Education from Edgewood College, Madison. I am presently the Program Director for the University of Wisconsin Hospital and Clinics School of Radiologic Technology. In that role, I act as the school's administrator and teach a number of courses.

In 1980 I married Kevin Tvedten. We currently live in Middleton and have three children who range in age from 7 to 23.

### **Mary:**

I went to Mt. Horeb Elementary and Mt. Horeb High School, graduating in 1976. Then I attended Madison Academy of Beauty Culture and am a licensed cosmetologist. I also attended Madison Area Technical College and received an associate degree in Interior Design. Presently, I am employed with Springs Window Fashion Inc. in Middleton and live in Prairie du Sac. I am the third shift Group Leader for the Cellular Fabric Processing Department. (If you have any pleated shades in your home, I may have had a hand in producing them!)

### **Jayne:**

As a Mt. Horeb High School student in the late 1970s, I enjoyed math, science, English, and home economics. History and geography were boring. I remember thinking during my high school years that the world was changing -- mothers were required to work outside the home to make ends meet, suburbs were popping up, and indoor shopping malls like West Towne was where everyone shopped. It made small town businesses in Mt. Horeb like Hoff's, Zwalds, and Ben Franklin obsolete. There was an energy crisis, disco era, sexual revolution, political unrest, and very bad hairdos and fashions! While in high school, I was a car-hop at the A&W drive-in. That was the coolest summer job, except for being a lifeguard.

After high school I went on to UW-Madison and received a Bachelor of Science Degree from the School of Consumer Science and Family Resources. Then, for 15 years I worked in retail management. Presently, I live in Middleton and work for a catalog company. My job entails marketing, merchandising, and product development.

### **David:**

In 1986 David graduated from Mt. Horeb High School. Science was his favorite subject. After high school, he attended Madison Area Technical College for Wood Techniques and currently works as a carpenter. David is married and has a two-year-old son.

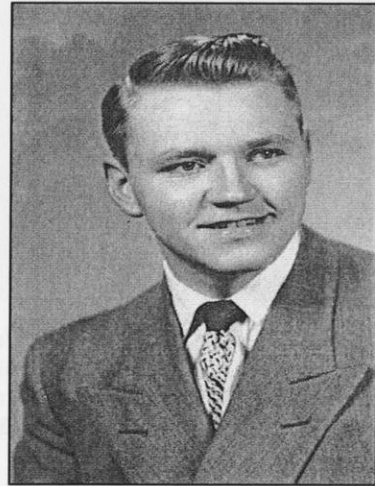
**Charlie:**

Charlie, the youngest of Lois and Marty's five children, graduated from Mt. Horeb High School in 1991. He was especially fond of math and art. "A most memorable time was when I was the Junior class president and prom king," Charlie says. After high school, he earned an Associate Degree in Architecture at Madison Area Technical College. He now works as a kitchen and bathroom designer in addition to designing and remodeling homes on the side. Charlie married Tina Christen in 2000. They live in Mt. Horeb and have two children, ages 2 and 4.

**Fond memories of Dad****Mary:**

I recall Dad giving us rides to school in his old blue *Martin Electric* truck when the weather was bad. It was always interesting when the three of us girls and the three Swingen girls would all pile in and try to find a place to sit... a cardboard box of electrical wire was always good!

The thing I enjoyed about my dad the most was that it seemed he knew everyone, which he probably did. If you wanted to know what was going on around town, he most likely had some details.



Our dad, Marty Martinson (1946)

Much of the time while I was growing up, Mom worked nights and Dad worked days. There really wasn't much of a social life, but I do recall summer evenings after Dad had mowed the lawn... we'd sit on the porch with my parents and our neighbors, the Thronsons. We would listen to them visiting. Sometimes we would go to visit our cousins, the Swingens, after Friday night grocery shopping.

**Jayne:**

I enjoyed my dad's dry sense of humor. The funniest memory I have of my dad is that he was the precursor to the soccer mom. He would drive us everywhere and when I say US I mean my brothers and sisters and the Swingen girls. He had this big old blue van that he used for his electrical business. It had two seats for six-plus kids, so you were left to your own devices if you wanted to get the catbird seat. Otherwise, you might be left sitting on a box of wire. My dad, bless his soul, drove us around with patience and kindness: to school, to the dentist or doctor in Madison, uptown in Mt. Horeb, to Grandma's house.... he always had a bunch of kids with him.

It is curious that my dad was the designated grocery shopper in our family. Every Friday night, like clockwork, my sisters and I would pile in his van to go uptown. While he did the grocery shopping, we were let loose with our allowances to find treasures at some of the local stores like Hoff's and Ben Franklin.



My dad was a lot like his mom, very stoic, not real affectionate. He would come around and say "goodbye" every morning, instead of kissing us goodbye...he would make us practice our handshake. He believed in having a firm handshake and he instilled this in us from a very young age.

**Marty loved to gather for coffee with friends at Schubert's Restaurant in Mt. Horeb (formerly known as Olson's and other names). The photo above shows it in earlier days --1930s or 1940s. Many of the Martinson cousins frequented it when it was Olson's Restaurant in the 1950-60s.**

#### **David and Charlie:**

David says his dad, Marty, worked very hard all his life. Charlie describes him as caring very much for his family. "He would do whatever he could for his children. He always could answer any question I had," Charlie said. "If I had a problem he would help me fix it. A fond memory is of hanging out at Schubert's Restaurant with him and the people he worked with."

#### **Karen:**

There are several fond memories of my dad. He had coffee with the guys every day at Schubert's Restaurant in Mt. Horeb.

We always kidded Dad about the way he made hamburgers. He fried them until they were crisp and then couldn't understand why we didn't want to eat them. We called them *Marty-burgers*.

Ironically, my dad held a keen interest in the local and Norwegian history of the Mt. Horeb area, yet he very rarely mentioned anything pertaining to his own experiences while growing up. My dad was very knowledgeable. You could ask him anything and he would know the answer.

Dad kept a copy of the following poem "Desiderata" taped to our refrigerator and expected us to read it every day because he felt it provided good advice to live by.

As a tribute to him, we included that poem in the program for his memorial service. It reads as follows:



## **Desiderata**

By Max Ehrmann, (Copyright 1952)

*Go placidly amid the noise and haste, and remember what peace there may be in silence.  
And as far as possible without surrender, be on good terms with all persons.  
Speak your truth quietly and clearly; and listen to others, even the dull and ignorant; for they too  
have their story.*

*Avoid loud and aggressive persons; they are vexations to the spirit.  
If you compare yourself with others, you may become vain and bitter; for always there will be  
greater and lesser persons than yourself.  
Enjoy your achievements as well as your plans.*

*Keep interested in your own career, however humble; it is a real possession in the changing  
fortunes of time.  
Exercise caution in your business affairs; for the world is full of trickery.  
But let this not blind you to what virtue there is; many persons strive for high ideals; and  
everywhere life is full of heroism.*

*Be yourself.  
Especially do not feign affection.  
Neither be cynical about love; for in the face of all aridity and disenchantment, it is as perennial  
as the grass.*

*Take kindly the counsel of the years, gracefully surrendering the things of youth.  
Nurture strength of spirit to shield you in sudden misfortune.  
But do not distress yourself with dark imaginings.  
Many fears are born of fatigue and loneliness.  
Beyond a wholesome discipline, be gentle with yourself.*

*You are a child of the universe, no less than the trees and the stars; you have a right to be here.  
And whether or not it is clear to you, no doubt the universe is unfolding as it should.*

*Therefore be at peace with God, whatever you conceive him to be, and whatever your labors and  
aspirations, in the noisy confusion of life, keep peace with your soul.*

*With all its sham, drudgery, and broken dreams, it is still a beautiful world.  
Be cheerful. Strive to be happy.*

## **Social life**

### **Jayne:**

As I was growing up in the 1960s and 70s, times were changing. I'd say our family's social life was centered on relatives' weddings, graduations, baptisms, and funerals. There would always be a family get together for major events.

**Karen:**

Most social activities involved visiting relatives and family activities.

**Photo:**

A roadside picnic is enjoyed by (l-r) Walter Schwarz, Russell, Dorothy and Rosann Schwarz, Lois and Grandma Martinson. This was right before Lois married Marty. (1953)



**How things were different back then**

**Karen:**

With food preparation, most things were made from scratch and took longer to prepare. There were no microwave ovens and little in the way of pre-made dishes and mixes. My mom canned a lot of vegetables and fruits for use in the wintertime. A casserole was often on the menu for dinner. Girls wore dresses or skirts to school as shorts and slacks were not allowed, according to the dress code. We got new shoes once a year, usually prior to the start of the school year. Most of our clothes were homemade.

**Mary:**

One difference was that take-out food was a big deal back then. It was a huge treat when Dad would bring home fish dinner from Hoffmaster's Bar on Friday nights. One plate held the dinner and another plate was the cover.

**Jayne:**

Again, we see the evolution of homemade to fast food, made-from-scratch versus store bought, and home-sewn versus store bought. It is unfortunate, but with the way of the world and our fast-paced lifestyles, we no longer have the time or resources available to do things like gardening, canning, home sewing, etc. American life has changed, and it is all about convenience and disposability.

**Life-changing inventions**

**Karen:**

Getting a dishwasher was memorable when I was in 7th or 8th grade. It saved a lot of time with kitchen clean up.

**Jayne:**

New inventions that impressed me during my growing up years were a color TV and a stereo – each in a big wooden console. I also enjoyed new products like a dishwasher, eight-track tape player, calculator, and a microwave

**Mary:**

I thought our first color TV was pretty amazing.

**Charlie:**

Video games and VCRs were invented during my growing up years.

**Chores**

**Karen:**

I was supposed to help with dishes and keep my bedroom clean.

**Mary:**

We were to keep our rooms straight, and on Saturday mornings we helped with the dusting and vacuum cleaning.

**Jayne:**

Every Saturday was cleaning day and we either had to dust or vacuum. As we got older, we had to do the dishes and babysit for our brothers.

**David:**

I mowed the lawn, shoveled snow, and cleaned.

**Fond memories of our mother**



**Karen:**

My mom worked at night at the Mt. Horeb telephone company and later at Karakahl Inn. So, she was always at home during the day when I was growing up. She was and is a kind person. She would never intentionally hurt anyone or anything.

During the day she performed the typical duties of any housewife in the 1950s. She washed clothes and hung them up to dry (I don't remember having a clothes dryer prior to 1960.) She cooked the meals, ironed clothes, cleaned the house and took care of us kids. She usually tried to take a nap in the afternoon before having to work at night.

**Mary:**

A fond memory of my Mom is that every school year she would sew each of us girls a couple of outfits which usually always mixed and matched...she was very thrifty.

**Lois Martinson (Late 1950s)**



**David:**

Mom worked all of her life to support the family.

**Jayne:**

When I was growing up, I thought my mother was the most beautiful lady. She started working when I was about six years old, and she would always get dressed up in pretty clothes and high heels and put on lipstick. She would also wear Lanvin perfume, which I thought smelled wonderful!

Alternatively, I liked it when my mom would put on her kerchief and her windbreaker and hang the laundry out on those first windy spring days. When we lived on Fifth Street, every spring she would do a major spring cleaning. I remember we would come home from school and the house would smell like floor wax, ammonia, and fresh air. The curtains and linens would all be clean and freshly starched.

Mom made most of our clothes for us when we were little girls. With my brothers it was different because they came along later. There were three years between each of us girls, seven years between me and David, and five years between David and Charlie. So, my mother really had an extended period of child rearing. It was almost like two different families. What I enjoy most about my mother is her independence, strength, perseverance, tolerance, sense of humor, and her artistic and creative side.

My mom had to work hard all her life, whether she was at home or outside of the home. I admire all the women in my family: Grandma Martinson, Grandma Oimoen, my mom....because they all had to be strong and help with the burden of making a living and raising a family.

I often think that having my two Grandmas as strong matriarchal family role models has influenced me and the decisions I have made in my life. They taught me that a woman can do anything and that gender lines can always be crossed. There isn't necessarily man's work or woman's work...it is just work, and it needs to be done.

**Fond memories growing up in our family****Mary:**

One fond memory in particular stands out... on occasional warm summer nights, Dad and Mom would take us to the A&W Drive-in for an ice cream cone or root beer float -- even though we already had our "jammies" on!

**Jayne:**

There are so many fond memories of growing up in our family. I guess I would have to say that my most idyllic memories were life in the big old house on Fifth Street with the huge maple tree, little fish pond, and the pickle cellar. That house and the memories that took place there epitomize my ideal of home, family and growing up.

## *Favorite Family Recipes*

### **Sloppy Joes**

½ cup chopped celery	3 T. brown sugar
¼ cup chopped onion	1 T. prepared mustard
2 T. butter	1 c. tomato juice or ¼ cup catsup
1 T. vinegar	¼ cup water
	1 lb. Hamburger

Brown celery and onion in butter. Brown hamburger and drain. Combine with celery and onion, mix in other ingredients. Salt and pepper to taste. Cook over medium heat until desired thickness.

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### **Scalloped Corn**

1 can (15 oz.) creamed corn	1 cup cracker crumbs
1 cup milk	¼ cup minced onion
Salt and pepper to taste	½ cup corn flake crumbs

Mix creamed corn, milk, onion, cracker crumbs and seasonings together in a baking dish. Sprinkle corn flake crumbs liberally over top and dot with butter. Bake at 350° for 30 minutes or until golden brown.

---

### **Goulash**

1 lb. hamburger, browned and drained	1½ cups cooked elbow macaroni
¼ cup chopped onion	2 cans of tomato soup
dash of chili powder	salt and pepper to taste
	Optional: 1 can kidney beans

Mix all ingredients together in a baking dish. Bake at 350° for 1 hour or until heated all the way through. (Can substitute canned tomatoes for the tomato soup).

---

### **Chinese Hamburger Casserole**

2 lbs. hamburger, browned and drained	2 T. molasses
2 cups chopped celery	1 medium onion, chopped
1 can cream of celery soup	3 cups warm water
1 can cream of mushroom soup	2 T. soy sauce
1 cup uncooked rice	½ tsp. pepper
	1 can Chow Mein noodles

Combine all ingredients except chow mein noodles and bake in covered dish at 350° for 30 minutes. Uncover, top with chow mein noodles and bake for an additional 15 minutes.

---

## 7-Layer Salad

1 head of lettuce (broken up)	1 box frozen peas
1 cup chopped celery	6 oz. Cheddar cheese (shredded or grated)
½ cup finely chopped onion	1 pint mayonnaise (can use Miracle Whip)
½ cup chopped green pepper	1 T. sugar
	10 slices of bacon (cooked and crumbled)

Break up lettuce. Boil and cool the peas. Layer all the ingredients in a large Tupperware container. Spread mayonnaise over the top and sprinkle with sugar. Sprinkle crumbled bacon over top. Refrigerate 8 hours or overnight. Mix just before serving.

---

## Molasses Cookies (submitted by Karen Martinson Tvedten)

*This cookie recipe came from Grundahl's. Karolyn Grundahl used to make them when she babysat for us in the summer. Mom usually made them at Christmas time. They very well may be Grandma's recipe or a variation of it.*

¾ cup shortening	2 cups sifted all-purpose flour
1 cup sugar	½ tsp. ground cloves
¼ cup molasses	½ tsp ground ginger
1 egg	1 tsp. cinnamon
2 tsp. baking soda	½ tsp. salt

Melt shortening over low heat. Remove and let cool. Add sugar, molasses and egg; beat well. Sift together flour, soda, cloves, ginger, cinnamon and salt. Add to first mixture. Mix well; chill. Form into 1-inch balls, roll in granulated sugar and place on cookie sheet two inches apart. Bake in moderately hot oven of 375° for 8 to 10 minutes.

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## Pineapple Date Bars (Lois Martinson)

1 ½ cup brown sugar	1 tsp. soda in ¼ cup hot water
1 cup shortening	1 ½ cup flour
1 tsp. salt	2 cups oatmeal
	2 eggs

Filling:

1 large package dates (chopped)	1 (15 oz.) can crushed pineapple
1 cup sugar	

Mix in order given. Cook filling until thick; cool. Put half of batter on bottom of greased 9 x13 pan. Put filling on top; then cover with remaining batter. Bake at 350° for 25 minutes.





**Clara and Martin Martinson's nine children around 1990 are (front, l-r) Myrtle Showers, Helen Abplanalp, Benunie Schwarz-Berge, Verna Grundahl, Geneva Dettwiler; (back, l-r) Marty, Harland, and Gaylord Martinson and Alma Skindrud.**

## Credits

This book would not have been possible without the feedback I received from nearly 60 Martinson relatives. Once again, I thank them all. However, there are a few additional tasks that relatives and friends have assisted with in the process.

Without the diligent work of many proofreaders, this book would not have received the polish it deserved. For that I thank relatives who had a role in proofreading their chapters. Some took on the additional task of proofing the entire book – my uncle Harland Martinson, my sisters-in-law Barbara and Carol Schwarz, my brother Don Schwarz, my husband Brian and his brother Dean Bliskey, my friend Katie Buechel and my step-sister Audrey Dietrich.

With deep appreciation I also thank Mike Mentzer, managing editor of the *Fond du Lac Reporter*, for taking the time to meet with me and lend his expert advice. As a seasoned editor, fellow writer and friend, Mike's input was invaluable. He examined the manuscript and gave me feedback on the content, writing style, and layout.

Kevin Tvedt, a second cousin on the Anderson side of our family, also helped proofread the first chapter from his home in Los Angeles, California. He has been working on the Anderson family tree for years. Therefore, his assistance has helped ensure accuracy of genealogical information from Grandma Clara (Anderson) Martinson's side of the family. Kevin traveled to the original Anderson farmstead in Norway in recent years, and he may be interested in planning a family group trip there sometime in the future. These words depicting the Anderson farm in Norway arrived within Kevin's email message: "*It is a beautiful farm located on the north side of a peninsula that juts out into the North Atlantic,*" Kevin said, as he described the farm of Grandma Martinson's ancestors. "*The farm itself goes down to the shore and out to the ocean. The air was beautiful and the setting so peaceful.*" What a wonderful place it would be for a family reunion!

My brother Don Schwarz and his wife Carol have also been crucial assistants in checking the accuracy of genealogical information, as they just completed the detailed Martinson Family Tree project in 2005. They plan to visit Kevin Tvedt in the near future, with hope of gaining additional information on the Anderson side of the Martinson family.

Interesting photographs depicting the family in the 1960s and 1970s were taken by my cousin Joy (Martinson) Green as a child growing up in those decades. Joy is now a professional sled dog photographer. Her pictures are primarily in Chapter 6, which follows the lives of her parents Gaylord and Shirley Martinson, her brother and three sisters. I am grateful to Joy for these expressive images, including the cover photo she took as a young girl.

I would also like to thank Vergeane Martin for contributing information she obtained while researching Mt. Horeb newspapers dating back to the 1800s. Vergeane voluntarily submitted the information when she heard the book was in progress. The Martins, who lived on the original Torkel Martinson property, have always been very interested in our family history. Their son, Guy Martin and his wife Martha, currently reside on the property with their two small daughters. In fact, at the 2005 Martinson reunion, the Martins opened up their home to family tours. Many relatives walked the property our

ancestors once farmed. Great Grandfather Torkel Martinson's tobacco shed still stands. The summer kitchen remains, but the old log cabin that was home to Torkel and Barbro is no longer there. It was torn down within the past five years. Guy and Martha graciously welcomed our family members to their home, educating us on the Norwegian Fjord horses they raise. As members of the Sons of Norway, Guy and Martha dress in full costume and show off their horses at Mt. Horeb area festivals and events and are known to host winter sleigh rides with their rare horses. Perhaps some of us who missed their tour can return to the Martins for a future visit of our ancestor's farm.

To Scott and Charla, Renee and others at Scott's Discount Printing in Fond du Lac, Wisconsin, I owe a huge thank you. Their patience, kindness, and assistance throughout the writing, editing, and printing process helped produce a high quality product. It's been a year-long process working with this great team to get the book printed.

There are countless others to thank, who, in many ways, helped make this book a reality. From the bottom of my heart, I thank you all!

*I hope you enjoyed the ride back in time as much as I did!*

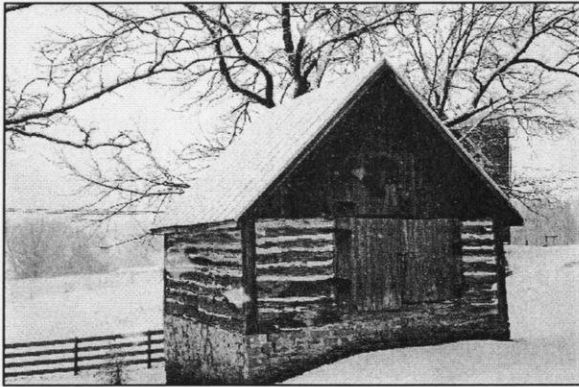
*- Dorothy Bliskey, author*



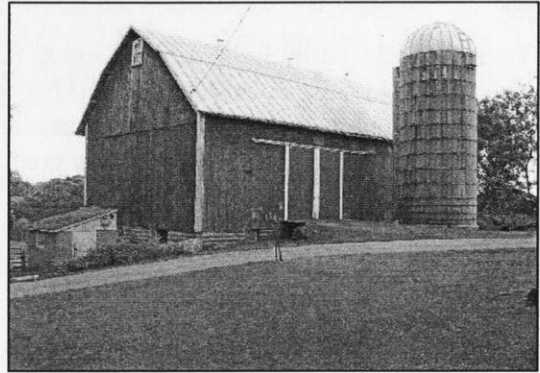


## The Martinson Homestead Today

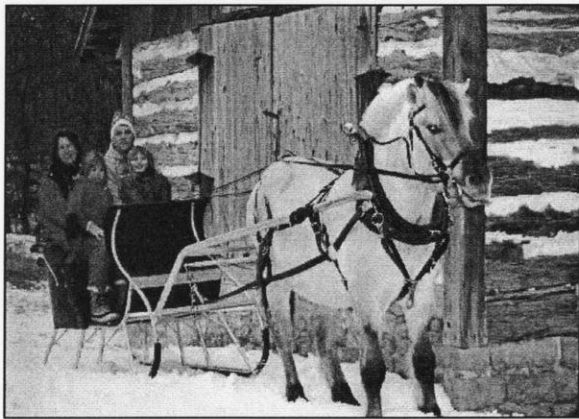
The original Torkel Martinson homestead on Sharpes Corner Road overflows with Norwegian flair even today, thanks to the current owners Martha and Guy Martin. With the help of Guy's parents, Russ and Vergeane Martin who bought the farm in 1970, the Martins continue to preserve and enjoy the barn and outbuildings, some of which are log-built structures. Photos below depict the buildings and property as they appear today. Torkel would be proud!



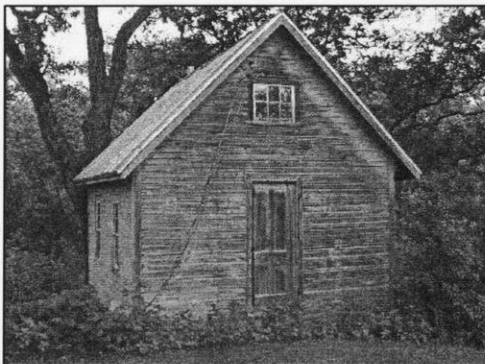
The log stable Torkel used for his horses.



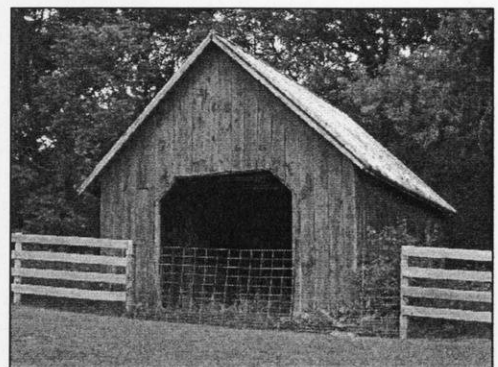
Barn used by Torkel 100+ years ago



Cutter and bobsled rides by Guy and Martha Martin and their Norwegian Fjord horses



At left:  
Summer kitchen  
Barbro used



At right:  
Torkel's old  
carriage house

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