

Battling the Waterspout



Advance



Engage



Have an Exit Strategy

The 2010 Knight Family Calendar

Laughing at Ourselves

In 1991, I was at Mom's in Laramie when she shared with me a treasury of poems and poetry she had written over the years. It was the first time I had seen most of her collection, and soon thereafter I hit on the perfect way for her to share these with her already far flung family. The 1992 calendar with her writings was the first edition. It was such a hit I told Mom, "We can't stop with one." Now we are at nineteen. We've had many different themes, but they share the constant premise that we don't take ourselves very seriously. This one, "Laughing at Ourselves", has that perspective as its very subject.

Now it's time to think about even another year. Over the early months and through the summer of 2010, I plan to travel around and climb the branches of our family tree, gathering memories and photos of our mother, your grandmother, your aunt, your friend. I know I will find plenty of fruit. Mom will be the subject of our 2011 Twentieth Edition Calendar, but it will be as much about all of us as about her, and in the end, I'm sure we'll be laughing at ourselves for yet another year.

Denny

Cover: Christopher Knight discovers another great feature that has made Loveland, Colorado one of our favorite places on earth to have fun, laugh and just hang out.

Child humor has always been my favorite which is not surprising since I work with children. My first story is from Stormy. I was teaching him to write his name but the process was taking too long and he was growing impatient. Meanwhile Stormy saw a TV commercial selling a calligraphy set. He came to me and said he had just seen something on TV and it promised that anyone could write beautifully in minutes. He knew that this was exactly what he needed, and wanted.

This summer on one hot day I went out with the kids and let them run in the sprinklers. When we came in from playing in the water a 4 year old girl immediately stripped out of her wet clothes. I thought I should gently remind her that she was in front of other people so I said, "cute butt". Her reply cracked me up! She said, "Thank you, I try to keep it clean."

According to Grandma Jerri, when Stormy would sleep over at her house, Stormy and Grandpa Mickey would have long conversations that were hilarious. It seems that both Stormy and Grandpa were talking to each other in their sleep.

This picture of Jim with Jill Mac is from a day when the MacMillan kids teased Jim by covering him with costume jewelry while he laid very patiently and allowed them to decorate him to their hearts' content.

Mary Knight



Several years ago I was on a business trip in the Southwest and had taken an afternoon for sightseeing and shopping around Santa Fe. I encountered an elderly Pueblo woman who was selling jewelry in a plaza, and I purchased a bracelet from her. I made some other purchases, gifts for others and a few more things for myself, and headed back to my hotel in the evening.

It was getting dark, and I noticed the elderly woman walking along the road. I stopped and asked if I could give her a ride somewhere. She nodded and got in the car. I asked where I should take her and she motioned that I should continue forth down the road we were on. We drove together for several minutes, and I tried to make small talk but she would not engage in any conversation.

I noticed she seemed to be looking around the car, taking in the details, but remained absolutely silent. A bag sitting on the floor near her feet caught her attention. She pointed at it and I said, "Oh, that's a bottle of wine. I got it for my husband." She said nothing, but seemed to contemplate my remarks. I was afraid I had somehow offended her, but finally she nodded affirmatively and said, "Good trade".

Becky Knight

Breann has the ability to type and send text messages, emoticons included, without ever taking her phone out of her pocket. It's amazing, is what it is.

Jim Knight

You really don't want to know this, but as of January 1, 2010, Jerry, Maureen, Denny, Jim, Kathi and Mick have accumulated some 4,742 months, or over 395 years of combined experience on this planet.

Danny's Redneck Road Kill Dinner

Danny came home from work one evening and told Kelly, "I have dinner". Asked what he meant, he said, "We're having pheasant". Danny had struck the pheasant in the head with his truck. They cooked the bird, and indeed the family enjoyed a pleasant pheasant that evening for their supper.

Kelly MacMillan

I picked Antonio up at the end of his day at school, as I often do, and he told me, "Grandpa, I'm going to be five years old next July. You know, I can hardly wait until I'm ten, because then I'll be tall enough to reach the cheese."

Jim Knight

I was setting up the croquet court at Grandma and Grandpa's house. I was bent over putting in a wicket when Jimmy, who was three or four, hit me over the head with a mallet and knocked me cold.

Jerry Knight, *1998 Calendar*

Thomas was not quite three at our Loveland picnic in 2003 when he made a stage out of a picnic table and treated the whole famdamily to his performance of Kenny Rogers' *The Gambler*, every verse. It seems natural, then, that one of his favorite adult pastimes is a night of poker. You gotta know when to hold 'em, know when to fold 'em.

Dennis Knight

I remember Dad would hold me upside down to empty the "grumpus galumpus" out of me.

Thomas Knight, *1999 Calendar*

Some of the kids in my seventh grade at St. Lawrence had hosted parties at their homes for my classmates, and so it was that I, by the talent, planning and work of Mom, was able to throw a fine soiree for the group at our house.

It was the year most of us learned to waltz. You addressed your dance partner with your left hand clasping her right, arms bent gracefully to make a shallow vee. You put your right hand on her back; she put hers on your shoulder. She was taller than you, because this was, after all, the seventh grade. The music progressed, and you led your partner in the classic waltz step, two to the left, a step to the right, two left, and so on and so forth.

Well, our house was perfect for dancing the waltz, because (as Maureen describes elsewhere in the calendar) the floor plan was a racetrack design, leading through the living room, then the dining room, the hallway, the front bedroom and back to the living room.

There were roughly twelve couples who came to my party, and it seems like we waltzed dreamily, if ploddingly, for hours. A chain of couples, we paraded two left, one back, and around and around. All the boys were on the inside of the loop, because that's the side you're on when you lead.

The loop was unbroken as long as the music played. When the music changed, we changed partners, but we never changed direction.

It was a wonderful evening, and I'm sure the kids all enjoyed it, but it damaged me forever socially, because half a century later, I still require a clear pathway for dancing, preferably in the design of a racetrack.

Dennis Knight

Short Skirts

The following is taken from our 2004 family calendar. It is part of Mom's response to Brian Curtis' question about her memories of the "Roaring Twenties", the decade that spanned her life from the age of seven to seventeen. She had lived in small towns in Eastern Colorado, with her father a Methodist minister, and her mother who filled well her role of preacher's wife. While her life was naturally sheltered, they saw to it that her mind was allowed to be open and inquisitive. After the first several paragraphs describing the towns and people she lived around, she went on to comment on the times...

It was the era of 'bobbed hair' cut very short and short skirts. For teen age girls and young ladies the skirts were often above the knee. Because my parents agreed I always would be dressed fashionably, I returned from our fall shopping trip to Pueblo ready for school wearing my new and fashionable dresses, definitely above my knees. This caused indignation to another preacher's wife who expressed her disapproval by thoroughly chastising my mother.

Mother replied in her familiar sweet manner, "Well the Indians painted themselves and went naked, I guess Geraldine can too!" I think this was the end of the conversation, quite likely once and for all.

Geraldine Knight

... Mom continued her description of the decade, talking about cosmetics, prohibition and a number of other social phenomena, even the crash of the stock market in 1929. When you have time, please take time to go back and read this and all of Mom's writing and memories from the 2004 calendar, "Grandma Answers." This and all of the family calendars are on line at www.knightlines.com. Click on the "Family Calendars" tab.

One day at work I got a call from Rosie. She said "Jerry – you didn't" and I said "I know, I know".

I had been in a meeting with someone when I crossed my leg over my knee and noticed I was wearing brown socks with black shoes. I told him "I guess I wasn't paying attention when I got dressed this morning. I put on the wrong color of socks." He said "Well, at least you got it half right". I was wearing one brown shoe and one black shoe.

I laughed at myself the rest of the day but no one, other than the first guy, ever noticed. At least they never said anything.

Jerry Knight

One day, not long after dropping the kids off at school, I received a funny phone call from Cooper. "Uh, Mom, someone just pointed out that I have on two different shoes." After a short laughing fit, I managed to regain my composure enough to ask, "I don't suppose you want to go the whole day like that, do you?" (I had just finished working a night shift and didn't relish the idea of driving back to school). I'm sure you can imagine his response, though, so off to school I went to save Cooper from any further humiliation.

Jill MacMillan

Maureen and some of her grandkids decided to crash at my apartment in Denver one year following the annual family picnic in Loveland. We had quite a full house with my two boys, Thomas and Robert, Maureen, and several of her grandkids. We were moving in small groups to go down to the swimming pool, when on the way out the door, Robert picked up a small assortment of books and explained to his cousin Evan that he was going down to sit by the pool and act like his dad.

Dennis Knight



BANNED FROM THE KITCHEN or WHY I DON'T COOK

One afternoon my husband made a lovely meat loaf just before it was time for his nap. He put it in the oven but asked me if I would take it out in about 45 minutes. I watched the clock and at the precise time I took the pan out of the oven. I noticed it was bubbling juice around the edges and needed to be drained, which I proceeded to do. Whenever I had made meatloaf (that is, before I was banned from the kitchen) it was always firm, like a loaf of bread. But this meatloaf was very loose, and when I tipped it to drain – just a little, I thought -- the meatloaf slid out of the pan. About a third fell to the floor, a third landed in the potholder drawer, and a third of it stayed in the pan. Robert really didn't say much to me, but he kindly cleaned up the mess and we enjoyed the remainder of the meatloaf.

Another day I was craving some Gazpacho soup. I had recently purchased a food processor and wondered if it might do a better job than the blender I normally used. About half way through, I realized the food processor was not doing the job, so I poured what I had so far into the blender. Before I put the lid on, I reached over and plugged the machine in, NOT REALIZING ONE OF THE BUTTONS WAS ALREADY PUSHED IN. Gazpacho splattered across my glasses and chest, on to the refrigerator, in the silverware drawer, and covered the cabinet, the floor and everything else in the vicinity. Again Robert came to the rescue but I am now banned from the kitchen for good.

Mary Ann Jones

I don't think it would be wise for anyone to listen to any advice I might give. Jerry and the kids know full well that some of the things I may say don't make sense. I was talking to Jerry and said, "Whenever I open my mouth, I put my foot in the door." Can anyone figure out what I meant?

Rosie Knight, 1999 Calendar

My Robert was about three when I took him along to Fort Collins for lunch with Mom, Mick and Mary. We had been enjoying our sandwiches when Robert started to pester me about playing the game. "What game?" I asked but didn't really respond to him. Finally, he took me by the hand and led me out to the lobby of the restaurant to show me the big, shiny, colorful and very exciting cigarette machine. It sure looked like fun to him.

Dennis Knight

A good piece of advice I learned the hard way: "Open sauerkraut before cooking."

Stormy Knight, 1999 Calendar

Testing Western Ethics

We all know that if you are in a bind in the rural West, people are generally there to help. For example, if you're in the middle of nowhere, always leave the keys in your ignition because someone just might need your truck. Sounds crazy, I know, but it's true.

I tested this early one May morning in the Pryor Mountains deep in the Crow Indian Reservation when I ran my two-wheel drive pickup off the edge of a cattle guard trying to avoid a mud hole. I was on my way to deliver a presentation to some National Park Service law enforcement officers; so of course, I was dressed in a nice shirt, jeans, and cowboy boots.

I was lost, late, and a little loopy. Once I realized there was no amount of digging I could do to get my truck out, I walked to the nearest ranch house. No one was home, and it looked like no one had been there for days. But a ranch truck was there with keys in the ignition. I took the truck and dragged my own out of the mud.

Just as I was headed back to the ranch house, another pickup truck came driving slowly up the road. It approached, slowed, and stopped, and I said to the old cowboy driving, "This is your truck, isn't it." He nodded. I explained what I had done as he looked at what was left of the fence I had creamed and then tore apart to use as dunnage to get my truck off the cattle guard.

He said to me, "Well, let's get that truck on back to the house. I'll give you a ride so you can get on your way." Not a word passed between us after that. I didn't make it to my meeting.

Jud Finley



Our grandson Austin created a sensation at the Skate Park near Coors Field in Denver with his acrobatic razor skills. If the picture is a little disorienting, it's because Austin's head is at the bottom. The photographer was there watching her own grandchildren, and she was kind enough to speak to us, got our e-mail address and forwarded this picture. Skaters around the park paused in their own fun to watch Austin's show.

Jerry and Rosie Knight



My grandmother, Josie Coughlin was in a convalescent hospital and was known to ask the handsome doctors and other men in the facility for a kiss. She would don a feathered headdress and call herself “Big Chief Gimmeakiss”.

One day, her parish priest came to visit. He was of East Indian origin, with a dark complexion. She demanded as he walked in, “Give me a kiss! I don’t care if you are black!”

Jo Beth Raabe

Jo Beth and I took Grandma to a nice restaurant one day. With a dark, quiet ambience, it was called the “Brass Platter”, but Josie was convinced it was the “Brass Spider”.

John Raabe

All of the Knight kids have fond memories of Aunt Josie, from various visits over the years. Josie was the first of eleven children, and our Dad was the last. At the top of the chain, and with their parents aging, Josie by necessity assumed a lot of authority over her ten siblings, especially the younger. Her own children, Bill and Catherine Coughlin, were more like brother and sister to Dad than nephew and niece. It was from Bill I learned she had the well-earned nickname of “Bossy Jo”.

One summer, Josie came for a visit to Laramie, and she brought one of her granddaughters. We had a fun week with Jo Beth, who was a little younger than me and a little older than Jim. She was a bit of a tomboy, and she could keep right up with Jimmy climbing a cottonwood, leaving me in the branches well below.

We took them to the mountains to give our California girl the grand experience of playing in the snow. Somehow, Jo Beth fell into an icy mountain stream. Jim got the blame, and he got his own grand experience that day, the wrath of Bossy Jo.

Dennis Knight

Mac and I took the boat and the kids camping at Lake Maloney near our home in North Platte. The kids slept in the tent, and Mac and I slept on the boat. In the middle of the night, a squall came up. The boat had drifted with its stern to the wind, and the lake was washing on deck in waves. Mac knew he had to maneuver the craft with the bow into the gale to save her. It was dark, and Mac was hanging over the side of the boat, trying to pull up the anchor while I held on to him by his ankles. We finally righted the ship, the storm passed, and we went below. We fell back to sleep, very wet.

The next morning, Mac greeted the sunny day by jumping into the water, intending to swim to shore. He landed in waste deep water, which for Mac is pretty shallow. We had battled and defeated our personal storm of the century, in little more than a mud puddle.

Maureen MacMillan

Christopher asked me, “Mom, why do they call them childproof caps and then put the instructions, ‘Push to Open’ right on the top?”

Kenna Knight

The Day the House Blew Up

Part of the remodeling of our house on the West side of Laramie was the installation of a new electric water heater in the hall closet. It was a big one, large enough to support a family of nine. Dad hated it, and he distrusted it. He knew it was far less efficient than the old, smaller gas appliance, and it consumed rivers of electricity, all in the quest of a warm shower. To confirm it, he closely monitored our electric meter, extrapolating daily forecasts of huge bills yet to arrive.

But aside from his notions of financial ruin, Dad's greatest fear was the damn thing was bound to explode. Maureen was home that summer afternoon, and we, her five younger brothers and sisters, surprisingly all happened to be in the house when Dad heard the first, foreboding hiss. Good God Almighty! Kids, she's blowing up! Get the hell out of here! Get out of here now!

The hissing expanded by the second, Dad got louder, and we all joined the cacophony, jumping around, yelling to and at each other. We forgot where the doors were. The house was laid out in a racetrack design, and so we ran the course, mostly in opposing directions, through the hallway, through the front bedroom, through the living room (right past the front door), through the dining room, through the kitchen (right past the back door), back into the hall and around again, each of us seeking escape from the doom, the hissing, and dad's frantic exhortations to save ourselves.

Well, the roar diminished to a hiss and then to a whisper, trailing down the alley and up the next block along the Laramie River. The roar that nearly leveled 718 Spruce was the county, spraying for mosquitoes.

Maureen MacMillan

Riding the Rolling Hills

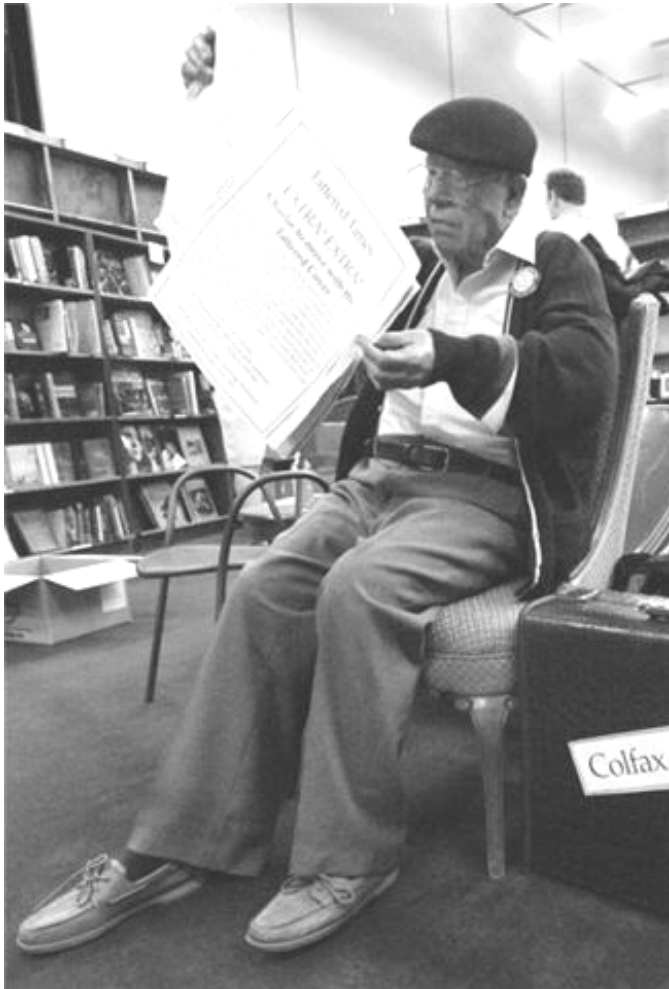
In July of 1991, Dad took Robert, who was about four, and me on a great vacation. We called it our Baseball, Hotdogs and Mark Twain trip, and we drove from Denver to the Mark Twain country around Hannibal, Missouri. Next we followed the Mississippi River down to St. Louis to visit the Gateway Arch and took in a Cardinals game, which was, for all three of us, our first big league baseball. We then drove south through the Ozarks into Arkansas, and back up through Branford, Missouri to Kansas City, where we enjoyed the local barbeque, an amusement park, and a Royals game.

It was while driving through the Ozarks that we experienced one of our most memorable moments of the trip. We were on a long stretch of straight road going over one small hill, then another, and another and another and another, enough to make you dizzy just saying it. At the crest of each of these lumps in the road, our tummies would still be northbound when our butts were going south. It was a strange, momentary thrill for sure, but it was the frequent repetition without time to recover that we found hilarious, gasping with anticipation for the next wave. That is, until my little brother realized he was going to be sick.

As soon as Dad got the sign that Robert was about to lose it, he pulled to the side of the road so I could hop out and get the door open for Robert. What Dad didn't realize was what appeared to be the apron of the highway was actually a ditch of dense vegetation mowed evenly to the plane of the road. It looked perfectly solid, but the car ended up at a 45 degree angle with the driver's side tires on terra firma, and the passenger side on something less than firma. I stumbled out of the car, and got the rear door open in time for Robert to literally roll out and find his spot to be sick.

About that time, a game warden pulled up behind the car. It was his look of concern that made Dad really aware of the car's dire situation. As Robert and I waited in a safe place away from the car, and under the friendly guidance of the warden, Dad pulled it back onto the highway. We loaded up, fastened our seat belts just a little more snugly, and proceeded down the road, a little daunted, and with more appreciation of the very different nature of the Ozarks.

Thomas Knight



Charlie at the Tattered Cover

Several years ago Mary Ann and I took our kids to the Tattered Cover Book Store in Denver. While the kids were shopping throughout the large store, Mary Ann and I found a bench to sit and wait for them. Across from us on another bench an elderly man was sitting reading a newspaper. We sat there for quite a long while when I noticed some grade school boys looking at the man and getting in his face. I said to Mary Ann “those boys are bothering that old man. Where are their parents?” A few minutes later as I looked at the man I noticed he had not been moving and that he was not real, but only a statue, very life like, who I later learned was named Charlie. .

As we were leaving the store I spotted another man sitting on a chair, reading. I said, “Look, there is another statue” and went up to take a closer look. I was bent over looking right at his face when much to my dismay he moved. It turned out he was a real person just sitting and waiting for someone. I couldn’t get out of there fast enough.

Rosie Knight

Not long after we adopted our adorable dog, Pierre, I noticed that his little button nose was dotted with speckles of pink instead of being all black. I remarked to Gene, kidding, that I wondered what could be wrong with the dog.

Then I went off to work not giving another thought to what I had said. When I returned home at the end of the day, Gene told me he had rushed Pierre to the vet to have his nose checked out.

I chuckled, thinking that now it was Gene's turn, and he was pulling my leg. But then I realized he wasn't joking! My jaw dropped - it never occurred to be that he would take me seriously.

To Gene's embarrassment, the vet told him there was nothing wrong, but if it bothered us that much, we could use black shoe polish to cover up the pink spots. The vet charged \$35 for that useless piece of advice, but I would have paid double just to see the expression on the Gene's face and on the vet's face after Gene left his office.

Kathi & Gene Goodnough

Beetle Buzz

Many years ago, in July of 1966, our family of six returned from Germany and landed in New Jersey. Because Dennis was working for the Army and living nearby, we conned him into picking us up at the airport. He had a Volkswagen bug.

It took a lot of creative packaging and energy to fit six MacMillans plus Denny and all of our baggage into the little car. Mac sat in the front seat with Denny. The back seat was strategically crammed with all of our luggage, two of our children, and me. The two smallest children stood in the little well behind the back seat. Fortunately, it was a short trip over to Denny's town of Lakehurst.

After just a little while down on the highway, a disturbing, unrelenting buzz started in the back seat. After a few minutes of this alarm, the three adults began to worry that something was going haywire with the engine (in the rear of the car) or the battery, which is under the backseat of a Beetle.

Dennis pulled to the shoulder in emergency mode; we saved the children, and made a brief inspection of the engine. We tossed the luggage out as quickly as possible so we could get to the last thing, the back seat itself! Surprisingly, when we removed the seat, the buzzing was gone.

Before we had time to talk more about what it could have been or what we should do next, Nicky told us he could still hear the buzzing outside. Listening carefully, we found it was coming from a suitcase. Opening it up, there was the culprit. A battery operated shoe shiner which had been a gift to Mac from his dear Mother-in-Law.

What a sight we must have been.

Maureen MacMillan

After my brother Brody was born we had to go to the clinic for a checkup and Grandma Mac went with us. Mom had to wait for some blood test for my little brother, Grandma Mac and I were tired of waiting with mom for the blood test and we decided to go outside. On the way out of the clinic, I got into a really big hurry and ran right into this very large lady's rear end. Boy I have to tell you it surprised me and scared her. Needless to say I found out what it means when someone says, "hit a brick wall."

Gavin MacMillan

The other day I was looking for my cell phone. I checked in every room, I looked under beds, the sofa, under cushions. I looked every place. Evan was around at the time, and when he finally figured out what I was looking for, he informed me, "Mom, it's in your hand. You're talking on it."

Barbara Collins

Barbara's lost cell phone brings to mind an incident which I briefly mentioned in one of my stories in the 2006 calendar. When I was in Army basic training in Colorado, my company had been on a day long hike up "Agony Hill." We carried full combat backpacks with our heavy M-1 rifles slung over our shoulders. At the summit we were given a short "smokem if you gotem" break.

The fatigued troops all found comfortable places under trees to lay against their backpacks and have a smoke. I put my backpack down in a good, comfortable looking place, and suddenly discovered my M-1 was missing. I looked everywhere I could and must have looked panic stricken when one of my buddies kindly informed me that the rifle was still slung on my back.

Dennis Knight

I Don't Know Whose Nose Was Bigger, Pinocchio's or Grandma's

This last October 2009 we decided to drive to Las Vegas for fall break, get Grandma Kathi and take her to Disneyland with us.

"I don't know about this, guys!" said grandma who was quite frankly scared out of her wits. My mom, Ian, Grandma, and I were at Disneyland and about to ride Space Mountain. Everyone was excited but Grandma, who had her doubts, but being the giant kid that she is, she didn't want to be left out. We waited in line for about 45 minutes when it was finally our turn.

Space Mountain is an indoor rollercoaster that goes tremendously fast in the dark. As soon as we loaded the rollercoaster, I could feel the excitement that Grandma was lacking. Whoosh! I was screaming and laughing and having the best of time. The rollercoaster slowed down a bit and I tried to talk to Grandma to see if she was okay but it sped up and instead of making any noise, I drooled, praying it wouldn't land on Grandma. Soon the ride was over and the lights were back on.

When we departed the lightning fast rollercoaster Grandma was dizzy and her hair was windswept. She didn't say a word for the next five minutes and she looked quite stunned until finally she started cracking up. "My earlobes were dragging on the track!" she said through laughs. "Grandma, you know you didn't make a single noise the entire time?" I questioned, "I thought you may have fallen out or something!" To this grandma replied, "I did! I mean we were on our sides the entire ride!"

The rest of that day in Disneyland and many times since, we couldn't help but almost pee our pants from laughter whenever we thought of Grandma riding Space Mountain.

Cameron Clay

Worst. Halloween. Ever.

When I was growing up, picking a Halloween costume was a cut-and-dried affair. You'd go to Skaggs, you'd get your plastic mask with two eye holes and a rubber band (matching jumpsuit included), and you'd be off to collect your candy.

One year, I decided to raise the bar for the kids in my neighborhood. I would make my own Knight in Shining Armor costume. I learned everything about knights that I could - authenticity was crucial here - and one month and six rolls of tinfoil later, I had the most intimidating suit of armor ever seen. Breastplate, helmet, sword, shield -- the works.

The big night finally came. I walked to the first house, puffed out my ironclad chest, stood close to the porch light (for the glitter effect) and rang the bell. She opened the door. "Trick or treat," I said. "What a darling little tin man you are!" she said.

This happened at house after house. Not one person seemed to find me imposing, intimidating, or that I was a steel-plated man of war. They just said I was the cutest little tin man they had ever seen and tossed me a Tootsie Roll.

The adventure that night didn't last long. I was only six houses down when a freak October electrical storm came up. It was quite possibly attracted or even inspired by my lightening rod of a costume, but it was the fiercest I had ever seen, and struck without warning. A bolt of lightning that hit a pole fifty yards away I realized was meant for me, clad in metal, head-to-toe. I clanked home as fast as my little tin legs would go, carrying my total loot of six pieces of candy and a crushed little tin ego.

I don't remember any other Halloweens, but I'm pretty sure all of my costumes from then on came from Skaggs.

Kevin Knight

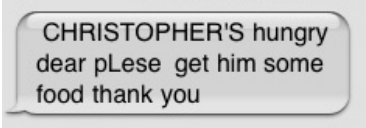
Editor's note: Do you suppose this explains Kevin getting his degree in meteorology?

The first Thanksgiving that Jerry and I were married we were going to have dinner with his folks. I volunteered to bring the turkey. I had heard about the University Stock Farm near Laramie, so I called them and ordered my turkey. When I went to get my order I expected a nice plump turkey, ready for the oven. WRONG! Much to my dismay, I was handed a gunny sack that was heavy and bouncing all over the place. What I didn't know until that moment was that when you ordered from the University Stock Farm you got exactly what you ordered, a live, feathered, bouncing turkey. I was nearly in tears as I drove home in our little Ford Mustang with that stupid turkey gobbling and jumping around in the back seat.

Thank heaven for Jerry's mom. She took over and bailed me out.

Rosie Knight

Kevin, Kenna and Christopher were out for a drive not long ago, when Christopher asked to borrow Kenna's iPhone. Moments later this message landed in Kevin's inbox:



CHRISTOPHER'S hungry
dear pLese get him some
food thank you

My son Nicholas Peters and his buddy were on the way to see some girls in Omaha and just hang out at the mall. On the way, Nicholas told his friend he wasn't sure how to kiss the girl he was rather fond of. He asked his buddy, "Would you kiss my girl and I will watch?" His buddy responded, "You want me to kiss your girl?" Nick stated, "Yes and then I will kiss her."

I'm not sure how it went but, I could only imagine someone asking their friend to kiss a girl so they could learn how to kiss. I guess we could call it kissing class 101. This story was told to me later along with several other stories of things the boys did.

Kelly MacMillan

Good advice from Rosie to Kevin: "Eat all your vegetables so you'll grow up big and tall, just like your father."

Kevin Knight (1999 *Calendar*)

Mom's advice often went unheeded. Once I had to run into Davidson's grocery store to fetch Mom to come back to the car and help get Kathi's tongue unstuck from the frozen chrome trim in the Buick. Of course, Mom reminded her "I told you not to do that!"

Jim Knight (1998 *Calendar*)

Mom served an elegant Thanksgiving dinner on a fine lace tablecloth covering a table made up of two sawhorses and an outhouse door.

Maureen MacMillan (1998 *Calendar*)

"A watched pot never boils." Ironically, the first person I remember saying that was my dad, one of the most impatient people I know.

Jill MacMillan (1999 *Calendar*)

Green and orange neon socks and shoelaces were a fad one year. One Sunday, I put on a pair of neon socks to wear while serving mass, but Mom caught me and made me change to something more pious. Then, at mass, Father Bartek was wearing orange neon socks!

Jerry Knight (1998 *Calendar*)

In the winter of 1963 Maureen and her kids, who by that time were Nick, Barb and Charlie, lived in the basement apartment at Mom and Dad's house in Laramie. Maureen was pregnant, this time with Dan.

One morning after a deep winter storm, Dad, Tim and the kids had built a beautiful snowman in the front yard, and the kids called for Maureen to come out to see it. It wasn't particularly convenient given her condition, but she ventured out and up the icy stairwell. When she reached the top landing, she slipped and rolled backwards, head over heels all the way to the bottom.

Well, Dad was beside himself and immediately engaged his standard mode of managing desperate situations. Geraldine! Geraldine! He hollered it again. Geraldine! Geraldine!

Mom had learned over the years that, when she heard her name invoked for the fourth time, it was a call to action, not to be ignored. She dropped her work, bolted to the front yard, made an assessment of the situation, and, before she could start down the stairs, slipped on the same icy landing. She rolled forwards, head over heels, all the way down to join Maureen in her sprawl at the bottom.

The two could do nothing but laugh at themselves, and looking straight up, laugh at Dad, who found nothing funny about it and never would, and laugh a little more at the shocked little Macs and their Uncle Tim, who didn't find it funny either, but might in a day or two.

Back in 1958, Maureen and I were shopping at the base commissary for good things to fix for our first Christmas dinner. We had each wandered down a different aisle when I was completely amazed at an end aisle display of canned goods. I hurriedly found Maureen to show her what I had found...."Look, look at this! Canned Eagle Brains!" She rolled her eyes and instructed me to look closer and read the label again. Oh... it actually says Eagle Brand sweetened condensed milk.

Stuart MacMillan

THINK TWICE BEFORE YOU ASK ROSIE TO GO SHOPPING FOR YOU

Several years ago Robert was singing in a small madrigal group that sang at the Renaissance Fair. His costume was a short tunic with elasticized legs. With this tunic he wore a shirt with full sleeves and black tights. His black tights got a run in them and, unable to find another pair in Laramie, we asked Rosie to try to find something for him in Denver. So Rosie and Jerry go shopping and head for the first large ladies store they can find. Sure enough the store had size XXL and Rosie said they were just she wanted. The clerk said "but these would be way too big for you", and Rosie replied "Oh these are not for me...they are for my brother-in-law". Jerry turned on his heel and walked out of the store.

Mary Ann Jones

MALAPROPOS

I have never been known
To be in the right place,
It's no matter wherever I'm at.
Like a square little peg
Won't go in a round hold,
Though I've tried it both this way and that.

In a ball game I find
I'm back there on the bench
When I really should be up to bat.
It's distressing to be
The only one standing
When everyone in the crowd has sat.

I've puzzled and pondered
The whys and the wherefores,
My program won't come out quite pat.
Do you think it could be
That my square little head
Doesn't fit in my little round hat?

Geraldine Knight
Originally told in 1992 Calendar