



Memories of Eileen Korb-Beck

1/05/1933 – 12/13/2023

By Her Loved Ones

Compiled and Narrated by Scot Fagerland

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Introduction

Eileen Korb-Beck was a beloved mother, grandmother, great-grandmother, relative, and friend to many people. She was “Grandma Beck” to me and my dozens of cousins. On December 13, 2023, Grandma died as she had lived – naturally, peacefully, and with a rustic sense of humor (I am told that her last words, upon learning of her fatal condition, were, “Just shoot me.”)

Grandma was fortunate enough to be survived by every single one of her descendants. Just as amazingly, all of her children and grandchildren attended her funeral on December 21, traveling from all corners of the country. ¹ For that service, many of us were asked to serve as readers, singers, pallbearers, cooks, and so forth. I was honored with the assignment of gathering and sharing relatives’ memories of Grandma. Here I am reading at her lovely Christmastime funeral.



¹ Except Alicia, who was too sick to attend the service, but who actively participated in its preparations.



When I put out the call for memories, I received far too much material to read in a five-minute tribute. Moreover, your memories were too rich to summarize. I decided to print everyone's submissions and compile them into this document. I am now distributing it on the occasion of Grandma's first post-mortem birthday (her 91st), January 5, 2024. As I prepare this, I can't help but remember that Grandma's 90th birthday was the last time I saw her alive.

What follows are memories of Eileen as told by several of her family members, from oldest to youngest.

My comments and paraphrases are printed in serif type, like this.

Direct quotes are printed in sans serif type, like this.

Enjoy!
Scot Fagerland
(Avonne's oldest child)


Family Group Sheet


As far as I know, this is the largest family picture we ever took. 60th anniversary celebration, Munich, ND, July 2011. Color coded by the middle generation.




Rallan and Eileens' family group sheet follows on the next two pages.


Rallan John Jerome Joseph Beck and Eileen Marie Ann Mary Korb


Husband	Rallan John Jerome Joseph Beck		
Birth	Jul. 12, 1931	Munich, Cavalier, North Dakota, USA	
Marriage	Jul. 25, 1951	Calio, Cavalier, North Dakota, 58352, USA	
Death	Jun. 20, 2017	Grand Forks, Grand Forks County, North Dakota, USA	
Burial		St. Boniface Cemetery, Cavalier County, North Dakota, USA	
Other Wives			
Parents	John Peter Beck and Gertrude Helten		


Wife	Eileen Marie Ann Mary Korb		
Birth	Jan. 5, 1933	Calio, Cavalier, North Dakota, 58352, USA	
Death	Dec. 13, 2023	Langdon, ND	
Burial		St. Boniface Cemetery, Cavalier County, North Dako	
Other Husbands			
Parents	Peter George Korb and Anna Marie Janowski		

Children


1	Avonne Louise Beck		
Gender	Female		
Birth	Dec. 27, 1952	Calio, Cavalier, North Dakota, 58352, USA	
Husband	Steven Warren Fagerland		
Marriage	Mar. 13, 1971	Calio, Cavalier, North Dakota, 58352, USA	
Death			
Burial			


2	Cynthia Rae Beck		
Gender	Female		
Birth	Apr. 21, 1956	Calio, Cavalier, North Dakota, 58352, USA	
Husband	Richard Joseph Zimmer		
Marriage	Jun. 21, 1975	Calio, Cavalier, North Dakota, 58352, USA	
Death			
Burial			

3	Lori McLean		
Gender	Female		
Birth	Oct. 25, 1956		
Husband	Gary Joseph Wirth		
Marriage	Mar. 13, 1976	Munich, Cavalier, North Dakota, USA	
Death			
Burial			

4	Nathan Lee Beck		
Gender	Male		
Birth	Jun. 29, 1959	Calio, Cavalier, North Dakota, 58352, USA	
Wife	Lori Ann Nelson		
Marriage	Jun. 11, 1982	Munich, Cavalier, North Dakota, USA	
Death			
Burial			

Rallan John Jerome Joseph Beck and Eileen Marie Ann Mary Korb

5	Gary Leo Beck		
Gender	Male		
Birth	Sep. 27, 1960	Munich, Cavalier, North Dakota, USA	
Wife	Lynette Kay Wirth		
Marriage	Jul. 12, 1980	Munich, Cavalier, North Dakota, USA	
Death			
Burial			

6	Lisa Renae Beck		
Gender	Female		
Birth	Mar. 21, 1962	Cando, Cavalier, North Dakota, 58352, USA	
Husband	Trent Thomas Stremick		
Marriage	Jul. 9, 1983	Munich, Cavalier, North Dakota, USA	
Husband	Van Howatt		
Marriage	Dec. 6, 1997	Langdon, Cavalier, North Dakota, USA	
Death			
Burial			

Memories from Eileen's Generation

From Pat

Pat Beck is Eileen's sister-in-law, Rallan's youngest sister.

I remember Eileen as loving, kind in every way and hardworking. She was a beautiful friend to me and I'll always remember many of our laughs together. I was very fortunate to have Eileen as part of my life. Thank You God and now may she rest in peace.



Pat is 2nd from left

Memories from the Children's Generation

From Steve F.

Dad remembers fishing with Grandma. She always caught more fish than anyone else. Her technique was as simple as it was effective. She would cast her line and then call out, "Here, fishy, fishy, fishy!"

On a more serious note, I once asked Dad if there had been a particular moment, early in his relationship with Mom, that had made up his mind to propose to her. Dad didn't hesitate for a second: "Yes! It was when I met her family." I'd have to give some credit to Mom too. We all know how wonderful she is, and she was a beautiful young woman at that time. But I love to imagine what that Thanksgiving dinner of 1970 was like, when Grandma and Grandpa inspired the first visitor from the next generation to join their small family.

From Avonne

Mom remembers that Grandma was a speed napper. She would lie down and fall asleep immediately. Just five or ten minutes was all she needed to recharge, and then she was back to work!



Eileen catching five winks in the 1960s. I remember her napping on this couch in the '70s.

From Lori



I enjoyed a long phone conversation with Lori last month as we discussed this project. She told me about how she came to be part of this family after she was orphaned in high school. It was 1973. Grandma and Grandpa knew Lori as Cindy's best friend. I had always assumed that Lori had asked for their help, or that Cindy had pleaded with her parents. To my surprise, neither was true. My grandparents made Lori an unexpected offer to take her in while she finished high school. They had an empty bed now that Avonne was married. Lori had other options; she could have moved in with an older brother or sister. However, as she explained it, that would have involved sharing a small house in a big city (like Grand Forks) or a faraway land (like Pembina County). It was a hard decision, but she made up her mind pretty quickly to accept Grandma and Grandpa's offer. Lori told me how blessed she feels to have found such incredible parents.

Lori in 12th grade, when she lived with Rallan & Eileen

Just think of how many lives were changed in that moment! What strikes me is the lifelong commitment. Lori was only a year away from college. This could have been a one-year living arrangement. But Grandma and Grandpa chose to continue their role as parents, and then grandparents, for the rest of their lives.

Lori's older daughter, Alicia, expresses it better than I could:

The amount of generosity, love, and compassion she had for my mother Lori, who became orphaned at 16 years of age, is something that amazes me more the older I get. Not everyone would be willing to take on another teenager when they already had five of their own children. But Eileen and Rallan did that for her and I will always have the utmost respect and appreciation for them for giving her a second loving family to call her own. They continued to be there for her and for us and made us feel every bit a part of their family.

From Gary



Grandma introduces newborn Gary to Avonne, Nathan, and Cindy, 1960

When Gary spoke at Grandma's funeral, he related several "Mom-isms".

I'd just like to share how lucky our family is to have our mother be Eileen. Mom and Dad gave us a great childhood. The seven of us sat around the table two times a day for ten years. They were the best parents. Mom taught us by not only her words but clearly by her actions.

Here are a few statements I recall from Mom's wisdom.

- 1) You don't have to do it all ... but be sure to do your share.
- 2) Don't overstay your welcome (short visits are better than longer ones)
- 3) If it fits in your schedule, go to the event or do the thing (experience life).. Dad and Mom went to a bullfight many years ago. Mom said she thought it was hot, dirty, and sort of cruel. But she said I should go if I had the opportunity. So decades later we went. One and done for that.
- 4) If you have children, one of the best years in your life will be when the oldest one is a senior in high school. Enjoy it.

- 5) If you go out looking for trouble, you will find it.
- 6) Don't be late ... and if you're not five minutes early, you're late. Especially for any grandkids' events. You never know when they start.
- 7) If you think you can or you think you can't, you're probably right.

But mostly we learned from watching, how she always put other people's needs before her own. You almost needed a permission slip to do something for her!

I doubt if the Catholic Church will canonize the soul of Eileen Korb-Beck. But within this family, we are fairly certain that if we don't already have a saint in Heaven, we will soon have one that we can pray to for help. So we may obtain the graces to one day be with each other again.

When Father Gregory was here, he had a tradition at funeral masses to pray for the next person in the room here today that passes away. This could be me, or you could be praying for yourself. So be prepared when that day comes.

From Lisa

She never had a bad word to say about anyone else and treated everyone kindly.

She used to tell me “Wait til the cows come home,” and it took me a long time to figure out that meant, “Never”.

She called all of us “George” so she didn’t have to go through all our names to find the right one.

When I asked her how much of something to add in a recipe or some such thing, she would answer “Whatever you think”, not typically the answer I wanted, but I guess I learned to think for myself through it.

When we were teenagers, she didn’t seem to worry about what we were doing, but we better be home at curfew. That bothered her if we were late. She said nothing good ever happens after curfew.



Grandma and Lisa doing a little painting, 1960s

Memories from the Grandchildren

From Scot

These were some of the notes I contributed to Grandma's funeral:

I have been asked to help gather and share memories of Grandma from her family members. Fortunately, I already have a lot of material to work with. Unfortunately, we are short on time today. Grandma had such a morbid sense of humor. Not only did she give us a funeral for Christmas, but we are holding it on literally the shortest afternoon of the year. The cemetery workers are getting nervous about running out of daylight. I will do them and myself a favor and try to limit today's sharing to the light-hearted material.

For those of us in my generation, Grandma's house was like an amusement park. There was great music, great food, and two rides! There was the wee-wee ride and bee-oh-bye oh.

(More on these rides below)

There's a song that I have always thought of as Grandma's anthem. It's a popular song from the 1950s called *Que sera, sera*.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IKumQCTNJOY>



When I was just a little girl, I asked my mother,
"What will I be? Will I be pretty? Will I be rich?"
Here's what she said to me:
"Que sera sera. Whatever will be will be.
The future's not ours to see. Que sera sera."

I looked up information about this song. The more I read, the more perfect the fit became. The song dates to 1956, right in the middle of Grandma's child-raising years. A linguistics professor gives this take on its meaning:

"The phrase 'Que sera sera' translated as 'What(ever) will be will be,' has been adopted by many English speakers as an expression of cheerful fatalism. Rather than connoting despair, it typically offers relief from worry about future events beyond human control."²

"Cheerful fatalism." To me, that is Grandma's personality in a nutshell. She didn't waste much energy worrying about the future, complaining about the present, or regretting the past. She accepted her circumstances. She embraced her roles

² Lee Hartman, "*Que sera sera*: The English Roots of a Pseudo-Spanish Proverb", *Proverbium* 30(2013):51-104, <https://langnhist.weebly.com/queSera.html>

as wife, mother, grandmother, and homemaker. To her, those roles were about giving. Just think of all the meals she cooked, all the rooms she cleaned, all the letters she wrote, and all the basketball games she attended. Some of us, her post-feminist descendants, might find her lifestyle to be a little old-fashioned now, but aren't we glad for all that she gave us?

And now we will always remember this bittersweet occasion. Grandma gave us a funeral for Christmas, but she also gave us a reunion. I doubt that this many of her children and grandchildren will be gathered together ever again. Let's enjoy this final opportunity, and then let's all go to our respective homes and have a Merry Christmas. I'm **sure** that Grandma would have wanted it that way.

Now then, about those two rides.

Each ride was a combination of song and motion. As far as I know, she made them both up (anyone know the history? And I'm still looking for video).

The "Wee Wee Ride" was how Grandma would often greet us little ones at the door. You had to be pretty small to get a wee wee ride. She formed her arms into a swing between her legs. "Wee" was literally the only word, so the song was all about the repetitions and the phrasing (sung in $\frac{3}{4}$ time). This is the best I can do to transcribe it without music software:

Wee		wee,		Wee		wee,
Wee	wee	wee	wee	wee,	wee	Wee!
Wee		wee,		Wee		wee,
Wee	wee	wee	wee	wee,	WEE	wee!

At the climax, she'd swing the baby (simultaneously thrilled and terrified) up to her shoulders.

"Bee-oh-bye-oh" (or "Rock-a-bye") was her bedtime ride. There was a genuine lullaby in the middle, but it was surrounded by up-tempo silliness. She sang while pushing the mattress up and down. This is how I remember the scat lyrics (sung in $\frac{2}{2}$ time):

Bee oh	bye oh,
Biddly beep bye	oh,
Bee oh	bye oh,
Biddly beep bye	oh.

(Quietly, half tempo):

Rock a bye,	rock a bye,
Scottie goes rock a	bye.
Rock a bye,	rock a bye,
Scottie goes rock a	bye.

We Love Eileen

(Up a whole step! Faster!)

Bee oh bye oh,
Biddly beep bye oh,
Bee oh bye oh,
Biddly beep bye oh, Hi ho!

(Child laughs hysterically)

From Steven

Steven Zimmer posted this video to Facebook. It shows Grandma reading and eating toast with Lily in 2017.

<https://www.facebook.com/szimmer2/posts/10154826277731548>



From Alicia

We loved getting together for holidays and various other celebrations through the years. As an adult, I cannot believe how effortlessly she would pull off hosting Thanksgiving, Christmas, or Easter for 40+ people. The pinochle tournaments were one of the best parts of the day, and there was always a prize for the winner and loser!! The children would run wild in the basement, and it was probably one of the loudest, busiest atmospheres you could imagine!

Grandma and Grandpa attended nearly every sporting event, every concert, every program, and every grandparents day the school could come up with.

Halloween night we would always finish our night at Grandmas. We would go downstairs and dump and sort all of our candy, then trade and barter for our favorites and give Grandma and Grandpa the things we didn't like!

I remember there always being baked goods or candy on her tabletop and the glass dish of butter mints in the little alcove between the fireplace and curio cabinet. The first thing Grandma and Grandpa would ask when you came to visit was to ask if you would like a drink and eventually a tray of snacks would appear!

When they lived on the farm I remember playing the organ in the basement and hanging out in the bar! Also bee-oh, bye-oh! Grandma singing that to me on Gary's waterbed in the basement is one of my first (and probably a core) memory of mine. My mom couldn't believe that I would remember when Jonathan and I stayed with them as I think she said I had to be about 3 years old.

When Grandma and Grandpa would return from trips, they would bring back souvenirs for their grandkids. I always remember thinking that was really special because there were so many of us!

The girl cousins used to play a board game from their cupboard called "Passout" and we substituted pretzel sticks and pop for cigarettes and beer! I don't really know if we knew the true point of the game but it is a funny memory!

I remember Grandma asking if we would like some coffee (she put a lot of cream and some sugar in it), and Grandpa saying "it'll put some hair on your chest". I always thought "why would I want hair on my chest?" and always said "no", but Molly would always take some!

Every memory I have of Eileen is of someone who is so sweet and completely full of love for her family. I remember shortly after Grandpa passed we were talking about something coming up and she said, "I better ask Rallan", then she caught herself, smiled a little and said "I guess I don't have to do that do I." They were quite the pair and could be spotted in any crowd with their beautiful white heads of hair! I always thought they were the cutest grandparents and felt very lucky that they were mine!

From Molly

There is so much to say about Grandma Beck that it's hard to know where to start. I have early memories of staying at her house and taking a bath in the "big tub" (the one in their bedroom). Grandma would wash my hair with Apple Pectin shampoo, and I loved that smell. When she'd read us books--often the one about the kiwi bird--she'd sometimes nod off. The sign of a busy lady.

When I was around 4, Grandma took me to Devil's Lake with her to visit Great-Grandma Beck. We went out to a restaurant for lunch, which itself was quite a treat, but then she let me order whatever I wanted. I had a chocolate malt and a piece of chocolate silk pie. That's what grandmas are for, she said.

Many things remind me of her: spring, sunsets, tulips, snapdragons. Who knows how many tiny cups of coffee (with milk and a side of cookies) I drank sitting around their kitchen table or how many sodas and pretzels we had "playing bar" downstairs. In the fall, she'd take us to the field in the camper to serve lunch and would let us ride "up top" even on the highway. My siblings remember shooting

gophers and fishing, though my memories of those things are fuzzy. There was the fancy 12th birthday dinner with Renae (my first taste of lobster--a favorite of hers) and the back-to-school sleepover with cousins. Grandma and grandpa not only frequented sports games, they came to my music concerts all over the state. We played many, many card games, mostly pinochle, but by the time my kids could play, it was Play Nine.

When I think of the qualities that exemplify Grandma for me--fun, helpful, practical, efficient, busy, reliable--it makes her sound cold, but she wasn't at all. While she wasn't overly sentimental, she gave great hugs and was always glad to see you. She was the one and only, Grandma Beck.

From Monica

If we won our basketball game Grandma would always say, "Another feather in your cap" while motioning with her hand a feather above her head. Sometimes she'd even say it from far away just mouthing the words and gesturing with her hand.

Grandma got me hooked on coffee (and I think Jessica and Molly too) by pouring us a little bit to try in her tiny kid coffee cups. She told us it's even better if you add cream. This is still how I drink my coffee today.

I remember when she made pretty little boxes out of beautiful paper and sometimes she'd let us pick one to keep.

I remember grandma and grandpa taking us to Iowa basketball camp in the summertime and all the fun memories we had.

After they returned from a trip (I think it may have been China) they brought back so many gifts. They displayed them around their kitchen and us kids walked around to look and could each choose two items. I thought this was so cool!

From Jessica and her kids

Some of the things that will always remind me of Grandma (and Grandpa's house)

1. We used to make paper boxes. She would let us pick out paper from her catalog and help us to make sure that it would look nice. Then she showed us how to use the ruler and measure it correctly.

2. She had a big basket of buttons in her laundry room that I remember liking to look through as a kid and sometimes i would put them on a piece of string.

3. Our Wednesday night dinners between basketball and CCD were the best. We always had such delicious food, with cold plates for salad and warmed up plates for dinner. And just having the time with Grandma and Grandpa and us 4 girls. (Monica, Rachel, Karla, and I)

4. She had cans of pineapple juice in her pantry, and it was such a treat when I would get one.

5. There was always candy on the table. It used to be in a bigger container with a lid, but after a while it was just candy kisses on an open dish.

6. We always had a sleepover before school. I got to stay with Monica because we were the same age. We would play so many cards, and it was great to sit next to grandma, because in rummy she would usually throw at least one wild card a game.

7. Our fancy birthday dinner they took us out for when we turned 12. Monica and I went to Felix's in Devils Lake and grandpa bought so many pull tabs. I think we won a little bit.

8. When I was in 10th grade, they drove us down to Iowa for basketball camp. It was Monica, Rachel, Karla, Lindsay and Sheila (teammates), and I. They took us out for fun dinners. I remember getting malts and grandpa had a marshmallow malt which he loved. When we were at camp they visited Erin and Luther, who had just had Dawson.



9. Grandma came to every basketball game and would keep stats. I have so many papers she wrote and at the top it would say who wasn't there like "Gary and Nathan were in the field harvesting wheat so they could not attend."

10. I asked my kids what they remember and they said the playhouse, the big stuffed dogs by the tv downstairs to play with, the kaleidoscope, how kind she was, the spoons from all the states, the bar and the intercom, all the Coke products.

11. Emmerich will always remember being her partner in pinochle as they got a double rope once and won.

I feel like I could write all night about her. We were sure lucky to have such wonderful grandparents.

From Rachel

A few things I will always remember:

1. Whenever we left her house, she was always standing in the front window to wave goodbye.

2. She'd always call us sugar plum

3. She made yummy suppers for us on Wednesday nights after basketball practice so we could get to CCD on time. We'd get to take turns picking out our meal.

4. At age 12 her and grandpa took us to a restaurant for our birthday instead of an actual present.

5. She taught us girls how to drink coffee—start with a lot of cream and eventually do less and less until it was just black. I still only drink black coffee to this day.

6. She always had a candy dish on her kitchen table and mints in the side bookshelf on the way to her room.

7. We got to spend the night each summer before school started and bring a cousin or friend. I often went with Karla or Jessica. We'd play lots of rummy, ride the banana bike around town, and play in the playhouse.

8. She'd take stats each basketball game with a true stat book. At the end of each season, she had a folder for each of us with newspaper clippings of our season. She also had a handwritten note of our strengths and things grandma thought we should work on! lol. I still have all of them.

9. We would help grandma take out lunch to the men in the field with the camper. It was the best because she'd make enough food for us to eat in there too with the men. Grandmas cooking was so yummy!

10. Her door was always open to us. If we dropped by unannounced, she was probably found sitting by the fireplace reading her newspaper.

I've got many stories and memories of her but these are just a few!

From Anthony

When I was about 5-6 I was at grandmas playing in the playhouse. She was about to go to Lisa's farm and mentioned they had a cat that just had kittens. I asked grandma if she could bring me one back. I failed to inform her that I had not asked or told my mom. A few hours later, grandma came over to our house and to my mom's surprise, brought a kitten. We didn't have cat food or a litter box, but we kept the cat. Thanks grandma!

I always loved grandma's spinach salad. She grew the spinach in her garden and made a salad with a tangy dressing, boiled eggs, and bacon. Each spring she would make sure I got some spinach salad and would bring it over with the dressing in a Dixie cup cover with plastic wrap and secured with a rubber band. It made me feel so special because the salad was just for me. Even though she was a grandma to many, she always made you feel special.

From Briana

The day Grandma Beck died I attended a Christmas party. Punch was served and it immediately transported me back to Beck family get togethers, with punch and Shirley Temples (and Hamm's for the adults) and mints and mixed nuts as well as various savory foods and sweet desserts that have been passed down through generations and that I try to now replicate at my own house.

Driving into Munich before the wedding brought back memories of playing Billy Goat's Gruff at the park and walking around town and stopping to see the koi pond. I know others have more frequent memories of Munich, but these stand out in my mind.

After the funeral, we went to Lynette and Gary's and the house somehow felt smaller. I am not certain if this was because of the remodel or just that I am not small anymore. But again, I started to reminisce about the sounds of the cuckoo clock and the fun car, playing in the playhouse or with boxes, and watching Speed (which was rated R but deemed safe for kids to enjoy). The map of the world with the flags showing where they traveled, whether to see family or explore the world, served as an inspiration to expand our horizons but also stay grounded in our roots.

Seeing her at rest in her coffin, I thought back to Grandpa Beck's funeral and Grandma Beck worrying about her hair and how nice she now looked, finally at peace. It was sad to say goodbye, but I think the whole family had comfort knowing that the two were once again reunited.

As she was laid to rest in that peaceful cemetery next to Grandpa, I became acutely aware of the changes in the world, how peaceful places like this are harder and harder to find and how the world seems so much smaller with advances in technology. I just hope that our generation and future generations can enjoy the simple things in life, be grateful for what we have, and value family and hard work. Grandma's values will live on in each of us.

From Travis

This is an excerpt from an essay that Travis wrote in 2009, at the age of 17. It's called "A Remembered Event".

Today's agenda will pretty much go as follows: go to school, go to practice, go to CCD, go to bed. Today is Wednesday, the middle of yet another grueling week. But there is one event that I actually look forward to on Wednesdays, and that is going to eat supper at my Grandma and Grandpa Beck's house.

As I park in the middle of my Grandma's curved driveway, I get out and grab my practice bag. I stumble up the steps to the front door of the large brick house. Before I can knock or press the doorbell, the door swings open. Standing there smiling, wearing an apron, is my grandma.

"Well, if it isn't Travis Andrew!" she says enthusiastically.³ "How's my grandson doing today?" she asks with a smile still on her face.

I smile back and usually respond by saying, "I'm doing pretty good today!" We talk for a few more moments. Then she tells me that supper will be ready shortly and that the upstairs shower is open.

³ Note from Scot: Grandma knew all of her grandchildren's birthdays and middle names. Until the last few years, she knew all of her great grandchildren's names too.

I get out of the shower to find that it is time to eat. I find this part to be kind of funny. My grandma has the table set with all of the essentials (silverware, glasses, napkins, etc.) except the plates. When we are about to eat, she will retrieve them from the oven and give them to us. Usually Grandpa, during some course of the meal, will unknowingly forget that the plates are a thousand degrees and burn himself.

My grandma usually cooks things that she knows I like or am used to eating. She'll make chicken, cheeseburgers, steak, shrimp, fruits, vegetables, etc. You name it, she's made it. My grandpa will usually make enough chocolate malts to feed a small army. There are seldom times where Grandma's made something she doesn't think I'll like. However, if this does occur, she'll usually ask, for example, "Do you like side pork?" Then, without hesitating, she'll jokingly say, "Well, it doesn't matter because that's what you're getting."

During the course of the meal, we'll usually talk about what's going on with me and school, etc. We'll talk about up and coming games, whether it's football, basketball, or baseball season. There really is never a dull moment when it comes to discussion.

Then after every meal, there is always dessert. This is my favorite part of the meal. I can't even count how many different kinds of desserts she's made, from caramel dumplings and peach cobbler to cakes and pies. If you are not full from eating the main course of the meal, you will be by the time you're done with the dessert.

When we're done with the dessert, it's usually around seven o'clock (when CCD starts), so I have to get going. I thank them and tell them how good the meal was. Then they say they'll see me again next week. As I drive out of the curved driveway, I always wave goodbye to my grandma in the window. For as long as I can remember, every time I've been to their house, she's always standing through that window waving a goodbye.

A lot has changed since I first started going to my grandma's to eat supper. The first time I went to my grandma's house to eat was in the eighth grade. I think I was there only about three or four times, but I remember it well because there were a lot of people there. Riley, Chris, Jon, Kassie, Danielle, and I were there. We had to sit at the big dining room table because there were eight people at the table. I didn't go there every Wednesday. When I first started going there on a regular basis (my freshman year) I went with my brother Riley and cousin Chris. It was usually us three for my freshman and sophomore years. On occasion, Tucker would be there as well. We also sat at the dining room table. Since they graduated, I'm usually the only one there, but from time to time Tucker will come too. We usually sit at the small round table in the kitchen.

We Love Eileen

My grandma and grandpa have had their grandkids over for supper on Wednesdays for as long as I can remember. I think it dates all the way back to the early '90s; I guess you could call it a tradition.

So as for my typical Wednesday, going to my grandma and grandpa's to eat is definitely the highlight of my day.

From Tucker

Tucker also wrote an essay about Grandma and Grandpa in high school. It's attached below.

Tucker Zimmer

Mrs. McArthur

Adv. English

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My Grandparents, the World Travelers

As I walked into my grandma and grandpa Beck's house, I was flooded with happy memories of Halloweens, Christmases, and nights spent there. I stepped up from the low, tiled entryway and into the brightly lit kitchen. As I sat around the white, oval table I noticed that they had a new, updated family picture on the wall from their sixtieth wedding anniversary. My grandparents were waiting for me, seated around the table talking. My grandpa's stark white, full head of hair had its back to me as I walked in. I really hope I get my hairline from my mother's father. My grandma was grabbing things she wanted to use like a pen and a piece of paper, walking around the kitchen with a purpose like her usual helpful, busy self.

I would have gladly skipped English to go and visit with my grandparents, but I had an agenda. I had to ask them questions about their traveling for English class. From these two loving, seemingly normal grandparents, I heard tales of Africa, Asia, Europe, and more. Both of them were bright-eyed while telling the stories. Looking back on their adventures seemed to bring out a more youthful, energetic version of themselves.

Once, when they were in Africa, they were walking between two rows of trees and Grandma was eating a Hershey bar. All of the sudden there was a rustling in the tree and the Hershey bar was gone. They saw a flash of fur running up the tree. They watched and soon a monkey was sitting high in the tree peeling the wrapper off of her chocolate bar having itself a sweet snack. When Grandpa told me this story, he was laughing the whole time. He was still in a

state of wonderment that a monkey could do that. After he was done telling it, he sat in silence for a little bit, smiling.

When I sat down to talk to them, before I could start asking questions, I was offered a rhubarb muffin. I had already had breakfast. Nonetheless, I ate the muffin with no questions asked. Then I started the interview.

My grandma Eileen Beck, formerly Korb, grew up in Calio, ND. My grandpa Rallan Beck grew up near Munich, ND. After they talked about that, Grandpa joked, "It's amazing we ever met, we lived so far away." He laughed his laugh that starts normal and gets higher and ends with a red face and squinted eyes. Grandma laughed too. They looked at each other, smiled, and asked for the next question.

Grandpa had always wanted to travel. He wanted to see the world, and Grandma thought it would be fun, too. They started traveling when my aunt Avonne and my mom Cindy were little girls. The first big trip they took was with them to the southern part of America. They went to Texas, Louisiana, and Florida. My guess is they also went through Mississippi and Alabama, unless they somehow managed to jump a couple states, but they didn't mention those states, so they must have been forgettable. They had Thanksgiving dinner on a beach in Louisiana. They traveled a lot when their kids were still around, even went on trips that lasted five weeks a couple of times.

All in all, they've been to at least seventeen countries, all fifty states, almost every Canadian province, and every continent but South America and Antarctica. They've also gone on about four cruises. That's quite the list, but Grandpa is a little disappointed that he hasn't made it to South America. Looking back, he didn't know why they never went there.

After that, my grandma walked over to the counter, grabbed a glass plate, and came back to the table. "Do you want a chocolate chip cookie?" she asked.

I chuckled a bit under my breath and said, "No thanks. Eight thirty is a bit early for a cookie."

"Well, I was just fixing Rallan's sack lunch. I just thought I'd ask, you know. Do you want cheese on your sandwich, Rallan?"

"Huh?" Grandpa said.

"Cheese! Do you want cheese on your sandwich?" Grandma loudly proclaimed to Grandpa. She turned to me and said, "I've got to yell sometimes, you know."

"Oh, yeah. Put a couple pieces on there. There you go," he replied.

Some scary and strange things happened on some of their trips. For example, when they were in Bangkok, they got a taxi. They told the taxi driver where they wanted to go. He took them somewhere that they had no interest in going, led them up a thin, messy flight of stairs, and apparently wanted them to buy jewelry or something for him. Grandma thought this was kind of scary because he took them to a strange place, and she thought he could have killed them right there on the stairs if he was a killer. Grandpa, on the other hand wasn't as worried. Another strange thing that happened was, while they were out of their tent in Africa, a baboon raided their tent. Stuff was everywhere when they got back in. When they were in New Orleans, they were out in the hallway by their room, and they heard a gunshot clear as day in the room across the hall. Grandpa tried to listen for a second. Then Grandma pulled him away, worried and scared. "I wanted to hear what was going on," Grandpa explained to me. Grandma smirked and kind of rolled her eyes.

When I was done interviewing them, I sat and talked for a little bit. We talked about the future of farming, this year's basketball team, and its coach. When it was time for me to leave and go to physics, Grandma said, "It was nice to have a morning visitor." It was nice being a morning visitor, too. My grandparents are not only fantastic at being grandparents, they're interesting people with stories to tell and have had a great life with many memories to look back on. I've learned a valuable lesson from them: Family comes first, and responsibility is important, but don't forget to have a little fun along the way.

