

Brer Leopard and He Tiger
By Madeline S.

It was real, real dry like this time of year, and Leopard, who is young and brave and Tiger, who is old and wise were hungrier than ever. Leopard was wandering around and saw a big juicy bird in a tree. So he jumped up in that tree and he got a nasty surprise. Tiger jumped out of the tree and he said...

“Not this time Leopard”, but Leopard wasn’t afraid of no tiger, especially this one. He just pushed that old Tiger aside and started for the bird. But Tiger said, “You want that bird, you have to race me for it, and win.”

Leopard said, “Okay, fine, but you better not cry when I beat you!” So they both jumped down out of the tree and started running.

But Tiger stopped and he said, “Wait, we have to do this civilized like.” So they got turtle to start the race. Tiger made where the start line was gonna’ be, and Leopard made where the finish like was gonna’ be.

Then they lined up real nice. As soon as turtle started to put the flag down Leopard started his engine! But Tiger just stayed there lookin’ kind of dumb. Then he when Leopard was out of sight he turned around and ate the bird.

“Silly Leopard,” he said, “that Leopard should know I can’t run that far.” He rolled over and started laughin’ real hard. Just then Leopard jumped over the finish line. And he was mad. So mad that it sounded as if the all mighty was shoutin’. Tiger covered his ears and took off runnin’. Fast.

Leopard, who was still yellin’ real loud, ran after him. This kicked up so much dust that folks took their kids inside and locked their doors. But now every living soul says that’s what a tornado is.

“It’s old wise Tiger and young brave Leopard fighting over a bird.” So don’t be scared when someone says a tornado’s coming, because you know that it’s just them fightin’ over a bird.

The Story of Peter Palsa
By Casey S.

Peter Palsa was born in Minnesota. He had a big family, but not too big, and he was the strongest out of all his siblings. When he grew to be 11 years old he would help his dad do lots of fixing around the house. He loved to help his mother with cleaning and cooking. Peter Palsa was such a great help around the house that his brothers and sisters were getting jealous, because he got all the credit. So they made him move to the woods. And you know what he did? He built himself a nice cabin! He enjoyed living in the woods and talking to the animals. He cut down so many trees in one day no one could believe it. Peter's neighbor, Johnny Appleseed, got so mad because Peter cut down his beautiful apple trees. But Peter didn't know that he was cutting down Johnny's apple trees.

Peter said, "I am so sorry about your apple trees." Suddenly he remembered that he had four or five apple trees at home. So he ran back home and got the apple trees and came back as quick as can be. He was so fast that the wind from him running took down five trees in 10 seconds!

He got back to Johnny Appleseed's house and said, "I'll help you plant them!"

"Let's go in and have some apple cider, and cornbread," said Johnny. "I see you cut down the whole forest."

Peter said, "Yeah, I sure did, didn't I." Peter asked Johnny, "So why do you like apples so much?"

Johnny said, "I don't know I just do. I really would like to have an apple farm but I just don't have the money." Johnny said, "Why do you like cutting down trees so much?"

"Well, it's been in the family so long. And I grew up with cutting down trees," answered Peter. "I was the strongest out of all my older brothers and sisters. They wanted me to move out here because I got all the credit and helped out a lot."

Something popped into Johnny's head and he said, "Me and you can open our own business and own our own apple farm. You could sell wood things and I can sell crates of apples. It's going to be a great time!" Three weeks later they were getting set up. They couldn't get a farm right away. It took them about 5 months and finally they had enough money.

They became so popular they were one of the richest people in town. They did their career until they died. Everybody remembered them for their hard work.

How Snakes Got Patterns

By Jake R.

A long time ago when the earth was young, a boy named Wipouaminy was born into the Ojibwa tribe. He was the smallest boy ever. At age 12 he was only as tall as a campfire and was often made fun of. But Wipouaminy was a grand hunter, and he could shoot a bow a mile into the woods and hit a deer right in the heart!

There were not many snakes, but Wipouaminy found one. She was the color of the earth and could not be seen easily. Because of that people and animals could not see her, and the snake hunted and ate nearly all of the animals in the forest. Wipouaminy pinned it to a tree and grabbed it so it could not eat the animals. But Wipouaminy lost his grip on the snake and it got away.

When winter was on its way Wipouaminy found the snake's nest and it was filled with hundreds of eggs! "Nooooo!" Wipouaminy screamed, afraid the world would be wiped out. His parents came sprinting out wondering what happened. They found his arms filled with snake eggs. A week passed and they had no food so Wipouaminy and some friends went hunting. They only got a few rabbits and five squirrels, and that was not enough for the whole tribe. When Wipouaminy got home he carried the eggs into their wigwam and every time an egg would hatch his family would quickly stitch beautiful colored porcupine quills lying down on its back and release it. Since then snakes could be seen more easily and are not a threat to the world anymore.

Why the Skunk Has a Stripe

By Nils V.

A long time ago when many Native Americans lived in Michigan, the children of the Ojibwa tribe had a tradition. Every year when it was winter they would try to throw snowballs at the annoying skunk. They tried to throw snowballs at skunk because he was black, and when he came out at night they could not see skunk. They would run into him while hunting and skunk would spray them.

One winter when it was time to try to throw snowballs at skunk, every time they hit him it was on his back. Once they hit skunk enough, it formed a white stripe on his back. Skunk tried to get the snow off, but the cold, white powder would not come off. As the years passed skunk started to see other skunks with white stripes and after a while every skunk had a white stripe. After that time the Ojibwas never had to worry about the skunk surprising them at night again.

How Raccoon Got His Mask By Aiden M.

The raccoon always used to steal masks from the Ottawa tribe. He stole the masks they used in ceremonies while they were sleeping at night.

The Ottawa were so mad they set a trap. They made a snare trap and set a beautiful black mask on it. The Ottawa put pine sap inside of the mask.

As raccoon reached for the mask, the snare caught his leg and in a flash he was hanging from the tree.

The beautiful mask hung right near his face. He couldn't resist it. He grabbed it to put it on just as the Indians came along and let him go. He felt shocked.

Raccoon quickly ran home. When he got to his den he tried to take the mask off. It was stuck! "Oh no", he thought, "now what?" From then on all raccoons have a mask to show that they were thieves.

How the Skunk got It's White Stripe
By Miya L.

Do you know how a skunk got its white stripe? Well, I do. This story takes place in Northern Michigan where all of the birch trees grow. The Ottawa say there was once a skunk and a hunter. The hunter would always chase the skunk into a hollow tree and try to capture the skunk for its fur. The skunk would climb up into the top of the tree and hide to get away from the hunter. He would squeeze into a branch that had a hole in the top. Each night the moon would shine onto the skunk's back through the hole in the branch. Each morning when the hunter went away skunk would go look for bugs to eat. But each night the hunter tried to capture skunk, and he would climb into the hollow tree and the moon would shine on his back again. One day the skunk came out with a beautiful white stripe on his back. The hunter was amazed that the moon would give the skunk such a gift and that is how the skunk got his white stripe!

Why the Dull Roadrunner Is Fast
By Rhys M.

Once, the roadrunner was a colorful and slow bird. She had feathers the color of the rainbow. She had so many beautiful feathers that she was also very slow.

One day while taking a stroll through the desert she was ambushed by a coyote! He reached out and grabbed all of Roadrunner's beautiful feathers! The coyote lunged at Roadrunner and he caught her. He took Roadrunner to his den.

While the coyote was boiling the pot and looking at his cookbook Roadrunner made a break for it. As soon as she was outside the coyote realized she was gone and knew she had escaped!

So he frantically ran to catch her. Quite suddenly she started running faster! Then she realized her colors were the problem! So she was happy that she lost them.

She was long gone from the coyote's den! And from that day on she was the fastest bird around.

Romy John the Canal Builder
By Charlie B.

In the early 1800's in Dexter, Michigan on a local farm a very unusual boy was born. This boy had many talents. He could pick up a cow to help his mother with milking at age 3! He could throw a boulder 200 feet, which was useful for cleaning farm fields and digging ponds. The hero's name was Romy John, and he was the strongest person in the land. When Romy John's dad needed water in the farm field, Romy would build a dam across a near by stream by throwing big boulders out of the way. But most of all Romy loved to dig.

Romy heard about this big ditch that was going to be built from Albany, New York to Buffalo, New York. Romy said, "This is a job for me." So he went straight to the boss of this big canal and said, "I am the strongest and most powerful in the land." Then Romy said, "My muscles are as big as barrels."

So the boss said, "Sure, you can work to build this canal." Romy was delighted. He joined with hundreds of other workers. Day and night they dug with shovels and picks. Romy did as much work each day as 100 other men. Then the team in the east heard that the team in the west was working harder than the team in the east. Romy got mad and threw a boulder 300 feet. He was throwing so fast the wind from the east switched and went west. Then it was still, absolutely still. They had finished. Romy John's team had won by a mile. And that's how the Erie Canal was built.

The Sun and the Moon

By Natasha D.

A long time before men and women lived on earth, the sun and the moon shared the sky. The sun didn't get his own space and the moon didn't get her own space. It was always twilight. Night animals couldn't hunt or eat. Day animals couldn't sleep. So the animals tried to help them.

All the animals came into a meeting and they sent messengers to the sun and the moon. Eagle, with the white head and black feathers, went to the sun. Owl with a brown head and big wings went to the moon.

Eagle told the sun, "The day time animals can't sleep because your bright light always fills the sky. We need you for part of the day, but not all day!"

Owl told moon, "Night time animals can't hunt. You show us the way to our food. We need you for part of the day, but not all day!"

The moon went to the sun and said, "I do so much better at night, all the animals said that."

The sun said to the moon, "I do so much better in the day, all the animals said that." The moon agreed with the sun and the sun agreed with the moon. So they divided the day in half, so the sun gets the beginning of the day, and the moon gets the end.

Big Ben and His Amazing Game By Zach M.

In a big forest in Michigan, a baby was born. His mother and father named him Ben. He was unnaturally strong. Once when he was three years old he got in a fight with a bear and he won! As he got older he started helping his dad, who was a lumberjack. Ben climbed up trees as easily as a squirrel and cut off the top as quickly as a beaver. To come down he wrapped his arms around the tree and kicked the branches off as he slide down the trunk to make a perfect log.

When he was old enough to get a job, Ben became a lumberjack with his dad. He could chop a tree down in one swing.

In a few years all the trees were gone. Big Ben wondered what to do with all the empty land. One morning he thought, "Maybe I can make a game to use this land. There can be four corners. The field can be a diamond shape. We'll use a boulder and tree trunk. Somebody can throw the boulder and somebody can hit it with the tree trunk. Some other fellows can try to catch the boulder and tag the hitter."

So Ben set out to find 8 of the strongest lumberjacks he knew. He found men like Two-ton Tom, Joe the Giant, Big Jim and Frightening Frank. The next year the first game was played. Big Ben and his team the Bears against Big Jim and the Logjammers. When Big Ben retired his sport was the most well know of all sports. Of course they had to stop using boulders and tree trunks because the youngsters weren't as strong. To this day Big Ben's game is know as the inventor of baseball.

The First Fisher Girl

By Kaitlyn S.

Olivia Tank grew up in a fishing town north of Boston. Her father was a fisherman, her brothers were fishermen and her uncles were fishermen. When Olivia was born she was 5 feet tall! Even though she was big and strong her father said she would never be a fisherman because girls couldn't be fishermen. But Olivia had other ideas.

When her father and her brothers went out fishing she followed them out swimming by the side of the boat where no one could see her. One day her father threw a fishing net out in the water and it caught on a rock 200 feet underwater. Luckily enough Olivia was right there so she dove into the water, swam down 200 feet and unhooked the fishing net. When she came up out of the water with the fishing net she had saved the day!

The next day her father allowed her to go fishing with them. Her two brothers caught a huge fish and it dragged them out of the boat! Olivia dove in and swam after the huge fish. She caught up and wrapped a net around the fish, then brought her two brothers and the fish back to the boat!

One morning Olivia and her father and brothers sailed out of the harbor. When they were out on the big gray water a huge storm hit! It was horrible! The lightning struck, the waves crashed over the boat and the wind rocked the small boat! When Olivia put up the sail the mast of the sail snapped so Olivia jumped in the water, took a rope in between her strong teeth and pulled the boat back to the shore.

The last anyone heard about Olivia Tank was when she netted a huge school of fish as big as the state of Massachusetts! That school of fish took off with Olivia right behind, and she hasn't been heard from again, although some say you can sometimes see the shadow of her boat in the foggy Atlantic Ocean.

Betty Johnson, Slave
By Caroline H.

Once it was said that Betty Johnson was born in the slave quarters at the Johnson's plantation. The Johnson's lived in Virginia and the birth of a new slave was like the birth of a new sale. This slave, Betty, was especially useful because she weighed 100 pounds at birth. She could clear out a plantation full of cotton in one day, at age five.

As Betty grew older she learned more about her family heritage. Betty realized that she wanted to free slaves in her possibly very short lifetime. She started with herself. Betty decided to bring her family along on her escape. Later, after a night of running she realized she had nowhere to go. Good ole' Betty knew which houses were safe. It was one of those gifts God gives. She and her family escaped and this chain of houses spread fast. They became known as the Underground Railroad. Now don't ask me why they call it that. It ain't no railway! It ain't even underground, but those slave catchers didn't know that!

Betty had a made a promise to herself before the great escape. She promised that she would help free other slaves. Betty Johnson became the first conductor on the underground railway. She also had her ways. When an escaping slave tried to turn back, she would bring out her rifle. Of course at her size, it was like a small pistol. At first, her escape plans were going great. Though later she recalled, "One of those gol-darned white owners found out about my plans. I had to work harder, much harder, on the underground railway."

To get that white owners off her back, she had to be clever. So she had a very clever plan. Betty's plan was to go to all the white owner's plantations, and yell as loud as she could, "All aboard the underground railroad, next stop freedom!" The owner would try and capture her, while she escaped into the woods. While everyone was distracted by Betty, the slaves would go and escape on the Underground Railroad. She did this for years, until one day; she disappeared into the Great Dismal swamp of Virginia and was never seen again. Some say you can still hear her singin'.

Go down Moses

Let my people go!

How Baseball Was Made By Michael M.

Once there lived a man named Abner Doubleday. He was a soldier in the Civil War. Some days there were big battles, but most days were boring. So Abner and his friends wanted to make a game. They found a walnut and a stick and said, "Let's make a game called walnut. You have to hit the walnut with the stick and the other team has to get you out."

So they made teams. They started to play. Abner was up at bat but when he hit the walnut he broke the stick and walnut. They wanted to make a bat, so they cut down a tree and used the trunk but made it littler. They had another problem: the ball didn't work so they wanted to make a ball that worked. So they thought...lets use a circle rock and sew paper to it. They needed padding for the catcher. So they used a big pillow for the chest and little pillows for the legs. For the mask, a long hat with holes for the eyes and mouth.

When they played there was another problem: when someone hit the ball and ran they would disappear. So they thought...let's ask the cook for 4 tin plates. They decided to change the name of the game to baseball. There was one more problem. When someone hit the ball it would hurt the fielders' hands so they used four gloves on one hand. Now baseball was good and there were no more problems.

The Amazing Joe Martin

By Peyton S.

One hundred years ago a boy named Joe Martin was born in Kentucky. When he was older he got a job of working at a mine. He was so strong and so good at mining that he could dig one ton of coal a day! He worked really hard at mining and it gave him arm muscles as big and as hard as boulders! He was so strong that in one swing of a hammer he could dig up 100 pounds of coal. After only one season he had to get a different job because he had dug all of the coal mines in Kentucky. His 3 friends, who also worked in the mines, lost their jobs too, so they went with Joe looking for work.

They traveled for days before they came across a huge farm in Virginia. It was so big that the corn field was 10,000 acres. The farmer didn't have any workers to plow the field. Joe and his friends asked if they could. The farmers agreed so they set to work.

They used horses to pull the plows. Joe walked behind the horses and held the plow steady. After a month of walking behind that plow Joe's legs got so strong that they were as big as barrels and as hard as rocks, and he started to pull the plow instead of the horses! He could plow 100 acres of land a day. In a short time he had the whole field plowed! After that he had to get another job.

He brought his friends and three other farmers with him. They traveled for days before they came to the city of New Orleans where they got jobs as longshoremen. They had to haul barrels and crates of supplies onto ships. They also had to catch the barrels when other longshoremen tossed them. Joe's arms were so strong from mining that he could fit the barrels in each hand and throw them onto the ships! He could also catch crates that weighed up to 1 ton! They worked there for the whole summer loading any ship that came into the harbor. At the end of that summer they had loaded every single ship that was anchored in New Orleans. Again, they had to leave.

Joe took his three friends from mining, his three friends from farming and three more friends from working as a longshoreman, and decided to go home.

On the way they walked past a baseball field. They could hear the team, The Grizzlies, playing. Back then they didn't wear gloves and they only used a little stick as a bat. Joe said he wanted to try baseball. He would be good because he had arm strength from mining, leg strength from farming, and could catch and throw from being a longshoreman, so Joe and his friends decided to start a team. They practiced every day for two months before they were ready to play. They called themselves the Cougars.

When the day came for them to play their first game they were ready. Joe was going to pitch and his friend John was the catcher. John had to wear a glove because Joe threw so fast! It was the day of the game, the Cougars started in the field. Joe threw the ball so fast that when it hit the little bat, the bat spilt in two. They had to get a thicker bat! After that Joe didn't pitch as fast. When Joe was up, he hit the ball so hard that when the pitcher caught it he dropped it because it stung his hand so much. After that everyone on the field started to wear mitts. Joe ended up getting a triple! In the end of the inning the Cougars were winning 6-2. The Cougars ended up winning 10-6. After that game the Cougars traveled all over the United States. They played every team they came across, and they beat every team they ever played. Today the reason why we wear mitts and use thick bats in baseball is because of Joe Martin.

Little Oak and the Cougar
By Ali F.

Little Oak was born a long time before the French first came to Michigan. He was talking to animals when he was only 2 years old. First he was talking to mice and squirrels. They told him that rats were invading Michigan and were scaring and killing so many animals.

“Stay clear of rats because they might kill you,” said Mouse and Squirrel to Little Oak.

Soon Little Oak was talking to Fox and Wolf. Fox and Wolf said the same thing. “The rats are scaring the animals. Stay clear of them or they might kill you.” As Little Oak grew, he started to talk to the big animals. Like Bear and Cougar.

Again, they warned Little Oak, “Stay way from the rats, they might kill you.”

Little Oak asked Bear and Cougar, “Where do the rats live?”

“They’re in Maine. About 1000 miles away,” said Bear.

“If you ride me, I will take you there in just three days,” said Cougar.

Cougar was young and strong. Little Oak rode Cougar, and Bear followed them to Maine.

“Oh, everyone had been talking to me about the rats! Every animal I’ve been talking too,” said Little Oak.

“I know, everyone is scared of them,” said Cougar.

“Hold on a minute! What if we chase the rats around everywhere?” said Little Oak.

“He’ll get smaller and smaller!” said Cougar.

“Let’s go,” said Little Oak.

“If he turns small, every rat would turn small,” said Cougar.

They found the place where the chief rat lived. They got ready to chase the rat everywhere. Little Oak got on Cougar, and Cougar roared. The rat started running. Little Oak and Cougar chased him everywhere. They chased him around and around every tree. But every tree they went around the rat got a little smaller. After a while, the rat was puny.

“Yes!” said Little Oak and Cougar.

“No!” said the rat.

“Now we can go home and live peacefully,” said Cougar.

And this is why every rat is small and mean.

Isabell Cope the Tiniest Girl in the World
By Meghan L.

Isabell was born on a farm in Shenandoah Valley weighing 4 pounds, and was only 14 inches long. She had 6 brothers and 3 sisters. When she was born her parents were always afraid she'd get run over by the horses. When the horses were running at her Isabell would say, "Stop!" and the horses would come to a halt.

When she turned four she automatically became the "animal calmer". She would walk to the pigs and they'd be splashin' around in the mud and she'd say "Shhhh!" They sat down and waited for her to give them their food. With the chickens, Isabell would walk up to them and say "quite down!" and the chickens would sit down in their nests and wait for her to collect the eggs. Her parents couldn't see how she did it, was it her blonde hair and green eyes? They couldn't figure it out.

As she came to be 16, Isabell would soon leave! When the circus came to town she knew she'd have to leave. She told her parents. Her father gave her a kiss good-bye and her mother kept crying.

When Isabell asked for a job the circus ringmaster laughed and said, "You can't do it. You're way too small."

Isabell said, "I'm more than what you think I am."

"Prove it." He said. So she stood on the horse, she whispered something in its ear, and the horse walked around. He was amazed. And of course Isabell got the job.

At the first circus when she performed everyone laughed at her. They told her to get off the stage and she went off crying. During the elephant act the elephant was refusing to do its tricks. She ran out and whispered something in its ear and suddenly the elephant was back in shape. Everyone asked what she said, but Isabell wouldn't tell. She had a very special power. When the word got to other people she became famous.

When Isabell turned 32 she had a baby girl name, Mary Belle. As her little girl grew up she decided to be an acrobat. She was just as small as her mother. Isabell set 418 different records and died at the age of 113. Isabell set the world record for setting the most world record and has never stopped going!

Mike Mountain
By Jessica R.

One day in the green Appalachian Mountains, a boy named Mike Mountain was born. Mike was no ordinary boy. He had eyes like an owl and fingernails as sharp as a bear claws. When he was young he was always digging and didn't like the sun because it hurt his eyes.

When he turned ten years old he was as strong as a full grown man and he decided he wanted a job. He asked the boss at the mine if he could have a job as a miner. The boss said you have to prove that you are strong enough to be a miner. So Mike dug up the whole mine in ten minutes! He got the job as a miner.

That very same day when he was deep in the darkest part of the mine there was a cave in! It blocked up the entrance of the mine! The other miners thought they were trapped and would die there. But then they heard scratching and scraping. All of a sudden they saw light! The entrance was open! There was Mike Mountain holding a huge boulder. His arms shaking and face sweating!

As soon as they got out, the entrance collapsed on Mike. They thought he was killed, but then they heard scratching and scraping! Suddenly rocks were flying through the air and there was Mike! He was alive! After that day Mike said he was going to save miners until he died and that's what he did. To this day, whenever miners are in a tough spot, they call Mike's name.

Why Beavers Build Lodges

By Alea A.

Once upon a time there lived a chipmunk, a bird, and a beaver. They all lived in a tree and all were happy except beaver. He kept eating all the branches off the tree until they fell off. The animals were scared, because their home was getting smaller and smaller and they didn't know what to do. As for beaver, he went down to the pond to think. Then fish swam up.

“Beaver, what are you doing here?” asked fish.

“I'm trying to find a new home. I'm eating all the branches off the tree until they all fall off.” So fish told beaver to get the sticks so he could make a lodge. Beaver didn't know what a lodge was, but he did what fish told him to so he could make a lodge. Fish told him to just stick the sticks on top of each other. He had a beautiful home in just a couple of hours and he loved it.

And that is why beavers build lodges.

The Great Falls
By Mackenzie L.

A long time ago there were no great falls at Niagara and no Lake Ontario. In that land there was a white snow owl that had been through a lot. She was constantly bothered by vicious crows! One day the owl was being chased by her enemies. The owl flew for eight long weeks without food or water. Because she was flying so long, the owl was exhausted, so she closed her eyes and swooped down to earth. She could not see a bit of light. That was really terrible because there was water right where the poor owl was landing. She fell, fell, fell into the blue water. She was like a falling star. She hit the water so hard it created a great crater, and threw waves as high as the tallest pine trees. A second lake was formed where the owl fell. This lake was lower than the first and water began to spill over the great cliff between the two lakes. That's how the great fall at Niagara came to be.

Big Billy
By Jessica D.

Big Billy was a big baby. When he was born he was 4 ft. tall and weighed about 160 pounds! The Bigs lived in Colorado on a ranch. Every day he would eat about 100 pieces of bacon and 200 eggs. He grew so strong that he decided to start taking care of horses. He became very good at taking care of horses. Big Billy was just the best rider in all of Colorado and was so good with the horses that the horses thought he was one of them!

He became so good he could brush a horse in 5 seconds and he could ride all around the state on a horse in one day. Big Billy loved horses. He learned about horses by taking care of them. He took care of them every single day. Big Billy had about nine horses, and there was one mean horse called "Ben the Mean." Big Billy was the only one that could ride him!

He could also jump his horse over the wildest rivers in Colorado! One day Billy was on a break when he heard a loud noise and saw a huge rockslide. He saved a horse from a rockslide! After he rescued the horse, he saw the animal was a little bruised, but was okay. Big Billy decided to adopt the horse and name him Jake.

One day while Big Billy was racing into town, an old man said, "That's the fastest horse and rider I have ever seen."

"Hey, Big Billy you know what? There is a horse race at the state capital," said another man.

"I never knew that," said Bill. Then he said, "I guess we're off to Denver to ride in the race."

Once Billy and Jake got to Denver, they went right to the starting line and this is what they heard: "Get ready, set, boom!" The race started and they were in last place! Jake ran faster and moved into second place. He was almost at the finish line and he ran faster again and won! He wasn't watching where he was going and they ran into a fence.

Everyone rushed over, but Big Billy and Jake didn't make it. To this day horses and riders way out west say they can still see him running through the sky on a never ending race.

Cody Areanas
Collin S.

Cody Areanas was 5'2" the minute he was born. He was born on a farm in Minnesota. He could throw pumpkins through the top of a barrel that was up in a hayloft in the barn.

When Cody was only two years old he could run from his barn to the town and back (10 miles) in 10 minutes! When Cody was eight he was so strong he picked watermelon with his family. He could throw a watermelon 50 feet and it would land neatly on the pile without breaking. When Cody was all grown up he left home and went to Cleveland in Ohio. Cody got a job loading and unloading ships. Other men saw how big and strong he was and he made lots of friends.

One day Cody and his crew were on the deck of a ship. Nearby was another ship and crew. Both crews were loading melons with cargo nets. Cody's crew challenged the other crew to a game of melon ball. The other ship accepted the challenge. The two crews went on for six days until the melon was completely loaded onto the ships. The two crews wanted to play again. And that is how Basketball was invented.

A Girl That Could Clean Perfectly By Madison H.

A long time ago there was a girl named Sara that lived in Michigan. She was a tall young woman, who moved very fast, so fast, that people said she looked like a tornado when she moved. Her arms and legs spun so they were a blur. In fact, she spun so fast that her dad Tom was getting mad because Sara wouldn't stop flinging and moving her arms and legs. So when Tom was mad he asked his daughter Sara to clean the barn. Off Sara went to the barn to start cleaning.

When she was done cleaning she said to herself that she had done a really good job on cleaning the barn because everything in the barn was set up perfectly. A the chickens were starting to lay their eggs, and all the cows and pigs and other animals were in their stalls with fresh food in their mangers.

Soon other farmers and their wives heard about Sara. The farmers wanted Sara to clean their houses. Sara began to travel from Michigan to Ohio, from Ohio to Indiana, and from Indiana to Illinois. All along the way she cleaned barns and houses. The farmers and their wives loved Sara. She could clean a bucket full of dirty dishes and stack them neatly in the cupboards in 10 seconds. She could wash a basket full of dirty clothes and fold and stack them in 20 seconds. She could scrub the floors in a big farm house in 30 seconds. When she was done the floors were so shiny it looked like a brand new house.

One day a rich man heard about Sara. "I want Sara to come to my mansion and clean from basement to roof and from wall to wall!" the man said. The mansion was 10 stories tall and had 100 rooms in it. No one had cleaned it for 30 years.

When Sara saw that mess she said," This mansion really needs lots of work!" She rolled up her sleeves, pulled on her gloves, and spun into action. They say that Sara never came out of that mansion, and she is still cleaning, to this very day!

Tamwenn
By Noah K.-M.

From age one, Tamwenn loved to watch his father, a blacksmith, work. He especially loved the flames in the furnace, and the sparks flying from the anvil. Sometimes, when his parents weren't around, he would talk to the fire. At age three his parents caught the first sign of talent. It was the winter solstice, and in Oregon, that's one cold day. His mom was trying to light a fire, and Tamwenn asked if he could help.

"I don't see what you can..." but before the words left her lips, a fire had started. Tamwenn's family was short of money, so his mother told him to fire-eat on the city streets for cash.

One day, coming home from a show, Tamwenn smelled smoke. He ran into the forest, and saw nothing. But as he watched, he saw flames licking up his legs. This was the first time fire had disobeyed him!

He shouted, in the swishing language of fire, "Get Back!" The fire calmed, but only a little. This was enough. He grabbed his water gourd and threatened the fire. The fire extinguished at his words. Then Tamwenn saw it, a red tailed hawk was trapped under some vines. Tamwenn ignored his burns. He ripped away vines and the hawk flew away.

Tamwenn ran to the stream. He filled the water gourd as much as possible. In five minutes, the fire was gone.

When he got home, the hawk was perched on his porch. He and the hawk became inseparable friends. Tamwenn ended up naming the hawk, Quickfire, for her speed at learning the firetongue.

Tamwenn learned the family business. Soon with his fire skills he became the best blacksmith in the land!

Quickfire would beat her wings to heat the fires, and Tamwenn would hammer swords as fast as lightning. Soon, people started saying he could make ten thousand knives in a week. Tamwenn is the father of all blacksmiths, but none are greater than him.

How the Sun and Moon Came to Be By Jessica R.

A long time ago, in southern Michigan, there was a tribe named Ottawa. At that time there was only night and no day. In that tribe were four sisters, Oak, Little Doe, Green Grass, and Big Cloud. The mom was Sky.

One night Little Doe got scared. So she went to her mom and said, “Mom, why is it always dark at night?”

“I am not entirely sure why it is always dark. You may go to find Manabozo, the sky god, and ask for light.”

Little Doe said, “I will start my journey in the morning.”

The next morning Sky made lunches for her little darlings, a lunch that would last for three days, no more, no less, and let them go, with tears in her eyes. One day later they found Manabozo and asked for light.

Now Manabozo was lonely and a little greedy for fur, so he shouted, “Give me 1,000 animal furs and spend the rest of your lives with me and I will give you light!”

Oak said, “We will get you your animal furs!” So they set off to find the furs. Two days later they got all 1,000 animal furs, because 1,000 animals were be willing to give up their lives to help make light.

All at once the animals got very hungry. That took up two lunches, one lunch left, and time was really running out now. They had just reached the cave where Manabozo lived.

“Hello. Is anyone home?” asked Green Grass.

The sky god said, “Did you bring me my...” then he gasped, “...but I thought...”

“We know what you thought. It’s just we told bear and eagle that we needed fur to get light, so they went to find 1,000 animals and asked for their help.” Then all the animals walked gloomily and sadly into the cave with the four girls right behind them.

Manabozo said, “Instead of you being cooped up inside, you can be constellations. So in a flash they were the constellations, and shot up into the sky. So now when you look up into the night time sky remember Oak, Little Doe, Green Grass, and Big Cloud and all the animals that gave up their lives to make light.