

Adult Learner Writings

Volume #3

Published in April 2000, by The Literacy Action Center

Table of Contents

You can click on the titles below, or scroll through the pages, to find the story you want. You can return to this table of contents by clicking on the publication date, [April 2000](#), at the end of each story. You can print any of these stories in the usual manner. Be sure to specify which pages you want to print or you will print all 23 pages.

Introduction

Researching Wildlife

Angels Among Us

Dear Mother

Ms. Molly's Pets

My Birds

Things I Do

Kissy the Cat

A Prayer for Those Who Live Alone

The Excitement of Getting Ready to Meet an Illustrator

Journal Entry

My Life Story

Steve's Story

I Love Puppies

Introduction

Welcome to our third volume of adult learner writings. This booklet is a collection of writings our adult learners have produced during the past year. Writing is an important part of literacy and our adult learners work hard to reach their writing goals. Literacy Action Center and our adult learners are pleased to share this collection with you.

As well as hard work on the learner's part, many volunteer tutor hours have gone into these writings. They exist because two people—an adult learner and a volunteer—worked together to reach a writing goal. For this reason, we have chosen the theme *Charting Our Course Together*.

We hope you enjoy this collection.

Literacy Action Center
Salt Lake City, UT
[April 2000](#)

(Please note that all of the stories in this collection were reported by the authors to be original works when submitted to the Literacy Action Center by the adult learners.)

Researching Wildlife

By Bernard

This story is about two people hiking in the valley. They hope to see wild animals. They see birds, snakes, and fish. While they were eating lunch, the snake came out of the rock. The snake hissed at them. Pam jumped up. Sam grabbed a rock. Pam stopped Sam from killing the snake. After lunch, they met up with Uncle Will. He told them to watch for the eagle. They watched the eagle pick up a fish.

The end.

April 2000

Angels Among Us
By Sindy

Yes, there are angels among us.

They have a certain grace.

They know how to wipe a tear and lend an ear.

They always know the right words to say and how to mend a broken heart.

Yes, there are angels among us.

An angel can be anyone another calls a friend.

[April 2000](#)

Dear Mother

By Geneen

Oh, dear mother, I'd like to remember the
first time I saw your face!
I know that I was young, and had just come
into the human race.
You and my father welcomed me into your
family alongside my sister and brother.

As I grew older and looked up to you,
I found the will to be a mother too.
I wanted to work so very hard to be a good
one just like you.

I have set my sights to get my life going as
well as you do.
You have shown me that loving and caring
was the best way to go.
You have shown me that I did not have to
let myself go down low.
You did give me something to look
forward to as I grew up.
When the time came to look around and
get someone to love, I had a full cup.
When things got bad, and it was hard to
take, you were right there.

Oh, dear mother, I am so grateful that we
decided to be daughter and mother.
I know that God was so very pleased when
we asked to be together!

April 2000

Ms. Molly's Pets

By Jerry

Ms. Molly likes cats. She has two cats. Both cats are black and white. The name of one cat is Kicks. The name of the other cat is Boots. The cats are big and fat. They run after mice for Ms. Molly. They catch and eat the mice.

Ms. Molly has two cows. One cow is black and white. The other cow is brown and white. The name of the black and white cow is Hungry. The name of the brown and white cow is Mother cow.

Ms. Molly likes to milk her cows. Ms. Molly likes to drink milk. Kicks and Boots like to drink milk, too. When Ms. Molly is milking her cows, she likes to squirt Kicks and Boots. Her cats like to drink milk that way. Kicks and Boots also drink milk from a bowl.

After Ms. Molly milks her cows, she feeds Mother Cow and Hungry some hay. The cows drink water. They do not drink milk.

April 2000

My Birds
By Donna

I have two birds.

They are good birds.
They are funny birds.

They are our children
at home in the cage.

They play in the cage
with their toys, too.

They names are Buttercup and Snowflake.

[April 2000](#)

Things I Do

By Sarah

I like the weather class. I enjoy learning about the weather. I learned how to watch the clouds. I enjoyed going to the University of Utah meteorology weather station. I liked going up on the roof. We saw a windmill and a bucket that measures the rain and snow. I have met some new friends.

I want a job as a greeter, so I work word search puzzles to learn to read and write. I would like to know where things are in the store. Reading will help me learn where things are in each section.

I like to use *Quick Words* to find words I don't know how to spell. I think of the letter the word begins with and find the word on the page.

April 2000

Kissy the Cat

By Ann

Kissy is a black cat who belongs to two families. He is called Shadow by the neighbors. He is with Ann by day and the neighbors by night.

In the fall Kissy tried to go over the fence to get away from a dog. He caught his toe in the wire fence. Some children going by got him down. He was in a lot of pain.

Ann missed him when he didn't eat the food she put out. She went to the neighbors and asked about Kissy. Kissy just said a sad "Meow" when Ann asked what happened.

The neighbors took him to the vet. He had a cast on his leg for two months, and had to stay indoors. Ann would visit Kissy and bring him a piece of cheese in a napkin.

Kissy loves to follow Ann again. He likes to try to slip into her house.

April 2000

A Prayer for Those Who Live Alone
By Ramona

I live alone, Dear Lord, say by my side,
in all my daily needs, be thou my guide.

Grant me good health, indeed I pray,
to carry on my work from day to day.

Keep pure my mind, my thoughts, my every deed.
Let me be kind, unselfish in my nights' need.

Spare me from fire, from flood, malicious tongues,
from thieves, from fear, and evil ones.

And when I'm feeling low or in despair,
lift up my heart and help me in my prayer.

I live alone, Dear Lord, yet have no fear,
because I feel your presence ever near.

April 2000

The Excitement of Getting Ready to Meet an Illustrator

By Julie

When I began to learn to read, I became very interested and excited by the illustrations in the books.

Deborah gave me a book called *Balloon Farm*. It was illustrated by Mark Buehner. His illustrations made me very excited. I had so many questions I wanted to ask him about his pictures. I wanted to meet this children's book illustrator.

Deborah said, "First, you have to read all his books." She took me to the library to get a list of his books. She helped me get some of his books. After I read each book. I got more excited and wanted to read more of his illustrated books. I made many trips to the library to get his books. I even had to order some books from other libraries. I finished all his books. I am waiting to read Mark Buehner's new book he is working on just now.

The illustrations are done so well. They put me in a happy mood. I had to share my excitement with the others at my work. One day when I was reading a book called *My Life with the Wave*, illustrated by Mark Buehner, to my group, a miraculous thing happened. When I showed David, a worker, the illustrations, he said, "Water." This was his very first word ever spoken. His parents who had NEVER heard him speak before now can enjoy a few words. I think my excitement rubbed off on David.

I wrote a letter to Mark Buehner, telling him how much I enjoyed his illustrations. I think if he looked at his pictures and laughed as much as I did, he would not have time to concentrate on his work. Deborah said the letter was good. She asked him if I could meet him and ask my questions.

I have thought about the questions I would ask Mark Buehner. The most important would be: will you write and illustrate a book for children about children with disabilities? Then all children who are not disabled can read it and understand. They would not be afraid to ask questions about disabilities. Mark Buehner might show what had happened in my life when I was young and disabled.

I was in a cast because of my legs. My mother wanted to give me something to do. She gave me a penny bank and some pennies. She showed me how to put the pennies into the bank. May months later when my doctor was changing my cast, he saw green spots on my body. When my mother saw the spots she cried, saying that I had gangrene. The doctor laughed as he pulled the pennies from the spots. My mother laughed when she noticed I was green because of the pennies.

Another story in my life is about when I went for a boat ride with my daddy. The boat broke down. When I told my daddy I had to go to the bathroom, he quickly lowered me over the side of the boat into the water. This was very funny.

I am excited to meet Mark Buehner. I call Deborah each day and ask when I will meet him. She says she hopes I won't be disappointed after all my efforts.

April 2000

Journal Entry
By Dave

Dear Fellow Students:

One winter about four years ago, the snow was so bad that it was hard to push the snow. It kept on snowing. I didn't know when it would stop. I also had to shovel the snow off my roof. I was afraid it would break the roof in.

This winter was real bad at work because we did not have room to plow the roads and keep them clear. We used one lane of the road to store the plowed snow. I remember working 18 hours without a break during one bad storm.

It is my sincere hope that we do not have another winter like that for a long time. Never would be soon enough!

Thanks for listening.

April 2000

My Life Story

By Roy

I was born in Ogden, Utah, at St. Benedict's Hospital. My parents' names are Phil and Rhea. I used to live in a house in Verlin Park subdivision, which no longer exists. Today the Layton High School football field is where my house used to be. The home was actually two different houses that were hooked together like a twin home, which was separated by a wall down the middle. The house had no basement and the outside of the house was made out of wood. The house was not unlike other houses in the neighborhood, in that all of the houses were painted white. The house was built in the early 1900s. Today where once was a neighborhood of primarily houses made of wood is Layton High, Layton Library and a park.

I lived in this house up through first grade. The school that I attended is no longer used as a school, but is now being used as a recreation place. When I was in first grade, I was held back three different times. I was related to my first grade teacher, she was my great Uncle John Adam's wife. Her name was Ruth. She kept me back because she thought it would help me learn better.

When I was nine or ten years old, I was playing with my friend. We were lighting matches and throwing them on the ground. All of a sudden we noticed there were flames, which continued to grow and grow. We got worried that we had set a big fire, and that we were going to get in trouble. We took off as scared little boys, hoping that nobody saw what we had accidentally done. When we came back, the Fire Department had put out the fire. Fortunately there was no real damage, other than a bunch of burned weeds. We acted surprised or shocked to see that there was a fire, so that nobody would suspect that we were the ones who were responsible. Even though we may never win an Oscar, our acting was sufficient, because nobody suspected that we were the ones who had set the fire. We learned a valuable lesson from this experience. We learned that if we are not careful we can accidentally cause problems. This is the first time that I have disclosed this incident. My friend was the only other person that knew about the field fire.

One time my friend and I built a tree fort out of wood and cardboard. It wasn't very waterproof, but we sure had a fun time building it. He was my best friend, and we used to do a lot of fun things together. For example, we would go ride a horse that a farmer had. This farm was about a mile away from my house. During the summer, my friend and I went to the farm and rode a mare bareback. The horse was very gentle and would let us jump up onto her back and go for a ride. One day about two years after the fire incident, I was busy and could not go with my friend to ride the horse. He went with some other friends. While they were riding, my friend foolishly stood directly behind the horse. The horse kicked my friend in the head and he was killed instantaneously.

My friend's funeral was a sad occasion. Afterwards when I came home, I had a deep feeling of despair in my heart. It was so intense that I thought that my heart was going to stop. From time to time, I have thought about how much I have missed my

friend. Someday, I will again get to see my friend and I expect that it will be a joyful reunion. I have a lot to tell him, and I am sure he has a lot to tell me.

After being held back in the first grade for three years, I was finally going to advance to the second grade. During the summer before I was to start second grade, my family moved into a new red brick house located in Clearfield. This house was located in an area called Cherry Hills, not to be confused with the camp ground/water park called Cherry Hills, which is in Kaysville just off Highway 89. This red brick house was a single level with three bedrooms and one bathroom. It also had a kitchen and a living room. When we moved in, there was no basement. My dad started to dig a basement, but it was never finished. We lived in this house until I was in the seventh grade.

During the time that I lived in Cherry Hills, I had a friend who was named Larry. We used to play a lot of sports together. We played mostly baseball and basketball. Larry was really good in baseball. When he went to Clearfield High, he was on the State Championship team. He was a pitcher. Larry had a relative that was a professional ball player. This relative taught him how to throw different types of pitches such as a knuckle ball, curve ball, slider, and fast ball. Larry was a pretty good pitcher.

We also used to fish at a little pond that was in Clearfield. The pond is still there. Most of the time bluegill fishing was really good. Sometimes it was so good that we could catch fish even with a bare hook. There was also bass in this pond. They were a lot harder to catch. The biggest fish I caught in this pond was a one pound bass. Grasshoppers seem to work the best for catching the bass. We used bread and sometimes grasshoppers to catch the bluegill.

When I was in the seventh grade, my teacher was concerned regarding my ability to keep up with the others. She recommended to my parents that I be sent to a special school which was located in Farmington. I went to this school until I was in 10th grade. When I was in 10th grade, I went to Davis High. I graduated from Davis High in 1965.

The school in Farmington was established for students with various learning disabilities. Many of the students were considered “mentally retarded.” Some of the students were like myself, who had some type of learning challenges that made it difficult for them to stay with the regular class unless there was some specialized help. Nearby to this special school was Farmington Elementary. Kids going to Farmington Elementary many times would make fun of the kids at the special school. They called anyone going to the special school an “M-R,” an acronym for being mentally retarded. This made me feel bad because these kids just did not understand my situation. It is true that I had learning problems, but I knew my disability did not make me any less important than anyone else. Sometimes I would think to myself, “Why me?” I really felt bad about how I was being treated. It took me a long time to really understand and deal with this.

This made it difficult for me to communicate with others because I was afraid that I might say something wrong and they would then start to make fun of me. Nobody likes other people to make fun of them. I believe that if these kids really would have known the

situation and understood how they made me feel, at least some of them would not have called us “M-Rs.” Later on in life when people would make me feel bad because of the learning challenges that I had to deal with, I would often say to myself, “Forgive them for they do not understand what it is like to have a learning challenge.”

During high school I was on the wrestling team during my sophomore year. I ended up having to quit before the year was over because of knee problems. My kneecaps were slipping out of position. (The doctor called this Slaughter Disease.) I ended up having to have a cast on both legs so that the kneecaps would heal properly. It was difficult to walk with the rigid casts. They were slightly bent so that I could walk around, swinging one leg forward at a time, somewhat like a penguin. I became pretty good at walking with these casts. I could even maneuver my way up the stairs on the bus. It was hard to get up when lying down because of the casts. Bath time was a real adventure. I had to keep the casts on for almost a year.

One of the problems with having a cast on for a long time is that when an itch came, it was difficult to scratch the itch. Sometimes even a little itch could be very tormenting. With a cast, if you have an itch, you have to find something that you can slide up the cast to scratch the area with the itch. Some areas, such as round my knees, were very difficult to reach. I used a clothes hanger to make a scratching device. Sometimes the itches got so bad that I felt like tearing off my cast.

Finally, one time when I went to the doctor, he took off both casts. My legs were very white with a log of visible dead skin on the outside. I immediately began to scratch my legs, to make up for all the times I wasn't able to scratch properly with the clothes hanger. It sure felt good, and the dead skin flaked off in a cloud of dust. For some time after, I struggled when I would try to walk. I had to spend a lot of time exercising my legs to help them regain strength. Within a few weeks, my legs were functioning as they had before I was in the casts.

I met my wife when I was 21 years old. Pamela was a senior at Davis High. She knew my sister, Connie. Connie set us up for a date. I had never seen Pamela before, and I was a bit nervous as I walked up to her house for the date. Her family invited me inside of the house, and as I waited for her to finish getting ready, I talked with her father, Grandpa Hales. He was a nice person. However, he made it clear that I needed to have Pamela home by no later than midnight. If I failed to have her home by this time, then this would be my last date with her.

When I first saw her I immediately thought that she was beautiful. We then went out to the car and proceeded to go to the Davis drive-in to watch the movies. The date went very well. We both had a fun time eating the snacks from the snack bar and watching both movies. During the movie, I continued to glance at the time frequently. I did not want this to be our last date. When it was time, I took her home. I told her that I had enjoyed the date and that I wanted to go out with her again. She said that she would like to go out again, and we said goodnight.

The next day I called and talked with Pamela. We spent a long time on the phone talking about many things. I asked her what type of food she liked because I wanted to take her out to dinner. She told me that she really like Mexican food. On our second date we doubled with Pamela's friend, Carol, and her boyfriend. We went to a Mexican restaurant in Ogden. The second date went very well. We started to hold hands. I gave her a good night kiss when I dropped her off. I was a little hesitant at first to give her a kiss because I didn't want to rush things. However, I found the courage and gave her a kiss. She was a little bit surprised, but I could tell that she did not mind.

From then on we started to date regularly. After we had been dating for awhile, someone told Pamela that I had attended a school for the mentally retarded. Someone from my neighborhood was dating Lois, who is Pamela's sister. He told Lois that I had attended the special school in Farmington. Pamela's family had lived in Farmington and knew all about the school. Lois told Pamela. Pamela asked me about this, and I felt really bad thinking that this was going to end our relationship. I went home and cried, thinking that Pamela would not want to go out with me again. Later on, she told me that she thought I acted normal. Her family was really good about knowing this. They continued to support our relationship and treated me like one of the family. Even if Pamela wanted to break up, it was too late because she was already madly in love with my hazel-colored eyes.

At first, I felt angry with the guy that was dating Lois for telling them about my past. I came to realize that he did not intend to hurt me by telling them, but wanted to make sure that they knew. He didn't want Pamela to find out about this sometime later if it was going to be difficult for Pamela to understand and accept. Pamela is a wonderful, caring person, full of love towards all. Despite my weaknesses, she was able to recognize that I had many good traits and we continued to see each other regularly.

After we had been dating for awhile, we started to get serious and talked about marriage. She really wanted to get married in the temple. However, I was not ready for the temple at that time. I was smoking at the time, and occasionally I would drink some alcoholic beverages. Because of my hazel eyes, she was willing to take a chance on me, hoping that sometime later we would get married in the temple.

We started to shop for her diamond wedding ring. We went to a couple of places and she picked the ring that she wanted. We bought the ring and she began to wear it regularly. When she got the ring she told her family about our plans to get married. Her family was happy for us, and a wedding date was set.

We went on a trip to Reno, Nevada with my parents. Pamela's parents were not able to come to the wedding because they were out of town. We were married on November 9, 1968 at a chapel in Reno. We spent our honeymoon in Reno. We both tried our luck at gambling. Pamela played some slots and she won a jackpot. After winning the jackpot, she immediately stopped gambling. I wasn't so lucky. I lost all of my money. I asked her if I could gamble with her money, and she said no. She was smart enough to

hold onto her winnings. This was the last time that both my wife and I have gone gambling.

After we came back from our honeymoon, we lived in a motel for a few days until we found an apartment. The apartment was located in Layton. At the time I was married, I was working at the Del Monte warehouse in the Freeport Center. It was a storage facility for canned goods. I worked as a stacker. We would take the boxes of canned goods off of pallets and had to stack them neatly inside railroad cars. It was really hard work stacking boxes of canned goods. After working as a stacker for a couple of months, I was moved to the damage department. We would separate out the damaged cans. Some cans were smashed. If they were really bad we put them in the garbage. Other cans that were not smashed too badly we kept, and Del Monte sold these at a discount to the employees. Some cans had a little bit of rust on top. We used steel wool to get rid of the rust, so that these cans could be shipped to the stores.

I worked at the Del Monte plant for about two years. There was a slowdown in production and then ended up laying off some of the employees. I was one of the unfortunate ones, having minimal seniority. At the time that I was let go, we lived at Pamela's parents' house. I was worried that my wife would not understand, so I pretended to go to work every day. Instead of going to the Del Monte plant, I went around looking for work. When my wife finally found out that I no longer worked at Del Monte, she was very unhappy because I had been lying to her. She was pregnant at the time with our first child, Shane. For a while, Pamela wanted to divorce me. My father-in-law, Will, kicked me out of their house and told me to "stay away until you have grown up." Pamela refused to talk to me for a long time. During this time, I went back home and lived with my parents, while Pamela remained at home with her parents.

During this time I got another job working at Jetway Equipment Company. I have worked there for over 30 years. My first job was working as a machine operator. I had a difficult time using a tape measure so I was moved to another position. The metal pipes and tubes were cut by the machine operators. I would then take the cut pieces and grind the ends until they were smooth. After awhile I was moved to a tunnel finisher. I would prep the tunnel, getting it ready for painting. This included using putty to fill in any dents, and sanding to buff the inside.

While we were separated, Pamela gave birth to Shane, our first child. I got to see Shane born in the delivery room. When Shane was first born, he looked a very dark bluish color. The nurse gave him a slap on his bottom. Shane started to cry and his color became normal. Pamela said that Shane resembled her father, Will. Not only did Shane resemble his grandfather, he was a bit ornery, too, just like Will. My father, Phil, thought that Shane got his good looks from him. Regardless of whom Shane resembled the most, he had colic as a baby. He was constantly crying, even most of the night. It took quite a while before Shane grew out of this and started to sleep better.

It took a lot of talking to Pam and her parents to convince them that I was sincerely sorry that I had hurt Pamela with my lies. I think Shane's 'colic also helped.

Pamela was getting pretty worn out taking care of a constantly fussy baby. She decided to let me come back, and I immediately took my turn in helping to take care of Shane. I promised Pamela that I would never lie to her again. I learned that I must not lie to my wife, because this really hurt her. No matter how bad the new may be, it's my policy to always share information with my wife. She really is a very understanding person, especially when I tell the truth.

Sometime later they started to use sandblasters at work. I was about 25 years old, and I worked on the sandblaster. One day I was using a sandblaster to profile a large metal bridge tunnel that was shaped like a rectangle. While I was sandblasting up on the top, the nozzle came off of the blasting hose. The pressure from the escaping air was so great that the hose picked me up and threw me from side to side, flapping around up in the air like a loose balloon. I let go of the trigger on the blasting hose. It took a couple of seconds before the sandblaster turned off. When it turned off, the momentum carried me and I crashed into the top of the metal bridge tunnel. I then started to fall off the top, so I reached out with an arm, trying to catch the edge of the tunnel. I was able to slow down my fall for a brief moment and to change the direction I was falling away from some dangerous scaffolding. I felt like I was falling in slow motion. I looked down below on the ground and saw tire rims.

When I hit the ground, my right foot hit first on the side of my ankle. Immediately, I felt pain in my right ankle. The pain was due to the ligament damage that happened when I hit the ground. I laid on the ground for a few moments. I looked at my ankle and since there was no blood, I tried to stand on it. The pain was too great to try and walk. I ended up crawling out to find someone that could help me. They took me to a doctor. The doctor put a walking cast on my right foot. Fortunately, I did not need surgery. Even today, when the weather changes and a cold front is coming, I can feel a little bit of pain in my ankle. My ankle is a pretty good weather indicator.

When Pamela was still living with her parents, we were looking to buy a mobile house to live in. We saved some money, \$2000 or \$3000 for a down payment. Her brother, Stanley, talked to us about living in a mobile house. He told us not to buy one. Her brother gave us some good advice. So we went to a realtor to look at some FHA homes for a low-income loan. We paid \$500 down, and the government paid the other \$500 that was part of the down payment.

When we first took a look at the home that we were going to buy, Pamela and I fell in love with it, so we went back with the realtor to see if we could qualify for the house. We had to fill out some paperwork to see if we could qualify. Some weeks later the paperwork came back to the realtor's office and we qualified for the house. Four weeks later we moved in and we paid \$150.00 a month for 30 years. We went down and bought some furniture for the house. Shane had his own room to sleep in. There were three bedrooms upstairs and a kitchen and a living room. Downstairs was the basement that was unfinished when we first moved in.

Later, we finished the basement. Pamela's brother, Mike, helped to finish the basement. He did the framing and put up the sheet rock and did the taping. I primed and finished painting the basement. Mike later helped lay the brick for our fireplace downstairs and put up the fireplace for us. We lived there 15 years, then we decided to buy another home, the one we are currently in. We decided to sell the old home for a down payment on the new house. We finally sold our home to the same person who sold us the new home. His name was Dave. My sweet wife, Pamela, got to pick the brick for the home. She also picked the type of siding, lighting, carpet, and the other things in the home. Once it was completed, we moved in. The upstairs has three bedrooms, one bathroom, a kitchen, pantry, and living room. Downstairs is a garage, and half of a basement, which was not completed. Later, Pamela's brother, Mike, came over and framed the basement for us. In the basement, there is a bedroom, a bathroom, washroom, and family room.

After living there for a long time, we wanted to put tile in our kitchen and bathroom. We went looking for someone to do it for us. We finally found someone who lived in our ward, and his name was Mike. He came over and measured the kitchen and bathroom to determine the square footage of each room. Then we went looking for some tile. We finally found what we wanted. Once we had bought the tile, we got Mike to come over to install the tile. Mike and I first had to pull up the floor in the kitchen and chisel around the counter.

[April 2000](#)

Steve's Story
By Cathi & Mark

Once there was nice little gray mouse named Steve with huge Dumbo-like ears.

He lived in a junkyard in a broken-down car with his other mice friends, until one day, Mac, the bully mouse wanted the broken-down car for his home. He chased Steve and his friends away.

Steve was homeless, living on the street for months. He also ate out of garbage cans until the alley cats scared him away.

Steve ran and ran through a hay field until he saw a white house with a white picket fence. He huddled under a shrub when a huge black cat raced by. Steve cowered fearfully until the danger had passed.

Soon he found the courage to explore beyond the bush. He crept slowly towards a swing hanging from a tree. He circled it carefully until a shadow fell over him and he froze. He turned and was face to face with a human creature. The human was as startled as he was. The two faced down for several minutes. Finally, the boy stammered, "Hello, I'm John."

Steve thought the boy sounded friendly, so he said, "I'm Steve."

"I've never seen you around here before?" questioned John.

"I'm not from here," Steve told the boy. "I've been evicted from my home; I'm living on the streets."

"I am so sorry to hear that. It must be hard," John expressed. "Where are you off to now?" "I don't know," Steve said. "I've got nowhere to go."

"Well," John asked, "Would you like to stay the night?"

That night Steve cuddled into the handkerchief John loaned him for a blanket. His belly was full from the cheese that John provided. In the morning Steve awoke, happy to have found such a sound friend. He waited patiently 'til John arrived.

"Good morning," John said cheerfully.

"Good morning," yawned Steve.

John said sadly, "I don't want to leave you, but I have to go to school."

“I understand,” expressed Steve. The morning went smooth, but soon Steve was bored so he ventured out. Steve walked downstairs to the kitchen to get a bite to eat. John’s mother saw Steve, and screamed for her life.

Steve scurried back to John’s room to hide. Then John came home from school, and Steve told him what happened. John thought he should introduce Steve to his mother, so he took Steve downstairs in his baseball hat and showed his mom his new friend. John’s mother screamed even louder, so John ran out of the room with Steve. He put Steve back in his drawer and went to talk to his mom by himself.

When John came back to his room he had a sad look on his face. John told Steve he could stay one more night, but he had to leave in the morning. John didn’t want to upset his mother any more, and Steve understood.

In the morning John gave Steve the handkerchief to keep, and said goodbye. Steve thanked John for his generosity and headed down the front steps past the picked fence and toward the field.

Along the way he met a little girl mouse named Sarah, who said Steve could come live with her. Steve moved in with Sarah, and they lived happily ever after.

The end.

April 2000

I Love Puppies

By Bob

I love Chihuahua puppies because they are cute and smart. They are funny to watch play and tease each other and us.

Chihuahuas come in different colors and sizes. Some of the colors are black, brown, white, blue and tan, and brown and white. Sizes are small, medium, and large.

We have what are called deer Chihuahuas because they have ears that look like a deer's. Right now we have five Chihuahuas. Their names are Tara, Lily, Socks, Cocoa, and Sassy.

Sassy is my favorite because she is so tiny. She is the runt of the litter from Tara, and she is brown.

I like her because she is so feisty and chases big dogs or little dogs, or anything else in sight.

April 2000