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# Plain Brown Rapper

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News of the Tandy and Grace Brown Family

April, 1999

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## From Mike



Pictured: Vivian and Mike, February 1999, Austin, TX

Nanette and I just returned from a trip to Texas where we had the opportunity to spend an afternoon with Vivian, Nancy and Bob. It was great seeing them and we had a chance to do a lot of reminiscing. The last time Nanette was there, we were on our way to see the University of Wyoming football team play in the Sugar Bowl (December, 1967). Vivian and Frank had offered to baby-sit our kids; Bill, 4- Amy, 2; and Katy, 3 months. As expected, Katy fell in love with Vivian (her soft bosom), and Bill and Amy adopted Frank. Amy couldn't pronounce Frank so he became "Uncle Fink." One day while "helping" him in the back yard, she asked, "Uncle Fink, would you be my Grandpa?"

When we returned from New Orleans, everyone was upset that we came back so soon. They were sure we would stay an extra day, and they could continue to have fun without Mom and Dad to muck up the works. The return home was the trip from Hell. A storm moved in and we were stuck

for several hours in the Austin airport and overnight in the Dallas airport. Fortunately, Vivian had convinced us to take extra formula, snacks, etc. in case we were delayed. We learned that traveling with infants and toddlers was, as best, challenging!!

Our conversation then turned to memories from my youth. When I was about 3, Mom and I went to Lansing, Michigan, to visit the Beardslee's. It was quite a treat, my first big trip and a chance to see my older niece and nephews. Bob was 10 and thought it would be great fun to take his little Uncle Mike to school for show & tell. I don't remember all the reactions, but I remember a lot of disbelief. I also watched as Bob climbed a tree (there was a big forest very close to their home) and had Bill and the other boys chop it down so he could ride it to the ground. It was quite a sight for a young pup from the plains of Wyoming. We also remembered when Nancy was bent over the front porch railing and Bill unexpectedly helped her the rest of the way over. She caught her front tooth in the railing and has spent the rest of her life with a false tooth. Bill got in trouble.

A few years later, they moved to Cheyenne and stayed with us at 1717 Alexander. Vivian told about the time Bob and Bill decided to investigate the radio Dick and Charles had built. They took it apart, but couldn't get it back together again. She said Dick and Charles were very adamant that "it was time those hoodlums left Dodge!!" There were also the many occasions when glasses of water would mysteriously find themselves on top of the doors into the upstairs bedrooms - positioned so they would fall when the door was opened.

The doorways stayed very clean from the constant mopping.

The best memories, however, were from the years they lived on the farm in Colorado. It was great because I was old enough to enjoy everything, but too young to really work, even through I wanted to. This is where I first tried to milk a cow, rode a horse and learned many interesting things from Bob and Bill. The worst was what it was like to be trapped under the bedcovers while they displayed the effects of the beans we had eaten at dinner. Also, the joyous wagon ride down the sugar beet dump and finding the huge rut between the end of the wood planks and the dirt road. There was a lot of blood and a few tears. There were the many times we would line up (4 deep) on the back of their work horse, Blackie, and ride around the yard. Occasionally, we would head for the clothesline and those that did not get off voluntarily would be swept off by the wire. The first time it happened I couldn't understand why Bob, Bill and Nancy were bailing out, but I quickly learned. Other times the person in back would turn around and grab Blackie's tail, causing him to buck us off. Fortunately, he was big, slow and very gentle so no one ever got hurt. The stories could go on for pages (like the time they put red ants down your pants, Mike?) And would be a great feature for a later "Rapper." I'm sure the Beardslee's and older Brown kids have many more tales they could tell. One of the saddest days in all of our lives was when Grandpa Eidam sold the farm and they had to move.

One final remembrance that Vivian asked be included was her version of the infamous shooting of Frank, her then fiancé. It does not jive with the several versions I have grown up with, but I'm not about to question my big sister's word. It started when they were out taking target practice. Vivian was a good shot, a member of the high school

shooting team. While she was firing, Frank would raise his foot to distract her. She noticed that he had picked up a burr on his shoe (here comes the part that is hard to believe) so she decided to brush it off with the rifle barrel. Unfortunately, she had the safety off and her finger on the trigger, and sent a round through his buttock. (Now is gets fun) She drove him home to have Mother fix him up. She said, "Mom was trying to pull his pants down and he was trying to keep them up." But, Mom prevailed and he ended up bent over with his cheeks in the air. Mom took a thin stick with cotton on the end, dipped it in iodine (Mom's cure all), and ran it through the bullet hole. Vivian had to take him back to the base and report what happened to his CO. As you can imagine, the CO was suspicious and sent them to the First Sergeant so he could investigate and make sure it was no more than an accident. She said that Frank dropped out of sight for a couple of weeks, but she finally caught up with him, they patched things up (no pun intended) and, as they say, the rest is history.

Vivian told us Frank suffered many indignities from his fellow sergeants over the incident, but was able to turn the tables on the main instigator, a Sgt. McGrath. In those days, the Brown family lived in a place several miles West of town. One cold and snowy night shortly before Christmas, Vivian and Mom were finishing up their baking for the holidays and planning the last few things they needed to get done. Suddenly, they heard a terrible racket outside, accompanied by a lot of cursing. The house had an outside entrance to the cellar, with concrete stairs. When they looked out, they found McGrath and another soldier climbing up the stairs from where they had fallen in. Accompanying them were two "ladies of the night" decked out in their finest and freezing to death. Needless to say, all four were well in their cups and totally confused. Mom brought them into the house to warm up

and find out what was going on. She learned they had been out for a drive when their car broke down. McGrath remembered that Beardslee's girlfriend lived somewhere around there so they went looking for the house — which turned out to be 4+ miles from the car. When they got to the house, the snow and booze hid the cellar stairs and they went tumbling down. McGrath was very remorseful (Mom could do that to you) and apologetic, and begging for a ride back to town. Mom did not have a car and did not care for drunks or hookers, so she let them warm up, gave the ladies some hand-me-down boots, showed them the direction to go and sent them on their way. McGrath was gushing with thanks and promises of all the food stuffs and supplies she would ever need being delivered. None ever arrived, but Frank reported that from then on McGrath kept his mouth closed and stayed clear of Frank as much as he could.

Editor's note: The time frame for Frank's courtship of Vivian and the McGrath saga would have been in 1932. They married in May of 1933.

## Letters to the Editor:

From Bill Beardslee regarding the "Blizzard of '49":

"During that storm Dad had bought some milk cows at an auction in Ft. Collins and was to pick them up that weekend. That night we had the first of the heavy snows and the roads were badly drifted. We; Dad, Bob and I took off in the Jeep with the cattle trailer and headed for Ft. Collins to get the cows. We probably got about three miles from the farm and we hit a snow drift we couldn't get through or out of so we had to leave the Jeep and trailer in the drift and walk back home. We had to walk in the big irrigation ditch along the road to get out of

the wind that was still blowing hard. We stopped at one of the houses, I can't remember their name, and got something warm to drink, thaw out some and hit the road again. It took us several hours to walk back home. Actually, it was a good thing that we did get drifted when we did because had we made it all the way to Ft. Collins, we wouldn't have made it back and the cows would have probably frozen to death before we got them home, as it was, they were well taken care of at the farm where they were sold.

I also remember very well the rope from the kitchen door to the barn door so we could milk as normal.

Thanks for the Memories.

## In the News!!!!

You might want to check the web to keep up with our brother Charles Brown. As all of you know he is a County Commissioner for EIPaso County, Colorado (Colorado Springs area) and to make things even more exciting, he is the Chairman. For several years they have been trying to zone some rural areas in EIPaso County that are growing at an extremely rapid pace. Concerns about surface and well water as well as sewage and horrible structures have been on the Commissioners minds. This is not a new problem, however it finally came to a head at the last meeting of the Commissioners.

Charles said he was presented with three hours of name calling, foul language, presentation of a Communist Flag and other rude and ignorant behavior. Several of the protestors were ushered from the room and not allowed to return. Charles seems pretty philosophical about the whole situation and was pleased to have a "standing ovation" the next day at the Rotary Meeting.

You can check the progress of this story on the Net at <[www.Gazette.com](http://www.Gazette.com)> (the

Colorado Springs Newspaper) or <[www.chuckbrown.org](http://www.chuckbrown.org)> at the El Paso County Web site. Both are fun, however, the El Paso County Web site has a great picture of Charles to enhance its worth.

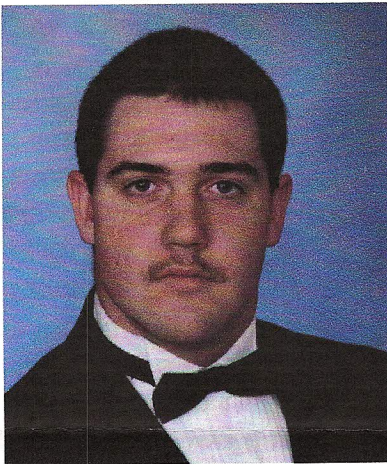
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## Congratulations:

Exciting news from Major Bob Beardslee, Vivian's Grandson, he will gain the Air Force rank of "Lt. Colonel" the end of March and take over as the "Operations Officer in the 564th Missile Squadron" at Malstrom AFB in June. Congratulations, to Bob and his wife Kim.

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## An Eagle Boy Scout:



Devon VanAlyne, Grandson of Bob and Dolfe has just been awarded the rank of Eagle Scout. I guess I should give credit to his mom and dad, Susan and Roger. Devon will graduate from Douglas County High School in June of this year and plans to enter the Navy Nuclear School in the fall. Needless to say, we are very proud of Devon and his younger brother Drew.

## New Arrival:

In the new Grandchildren department: A granddaughter for Pat. Anastasia Catherine White was born at 5:58 p.m. on March 8, 1999 at the Campbell County Memorial Hospital. She arrived with the following statistics: 20" long, 6 pounds, 8 ½ ounces, reddish brown hair and blue eyes. Congratulations to Bruce and Sarka White of Wright, Wyoming on the little sister for Garnett Snow.

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## UPDATES:

Vivian is currently staying in Stonewall, Texas with her daughter Nancy Eckdahl. If you want to communicate with her over the net, write to <[nancyek@fbg.com](mailto:nancyek@fbg.com)> and she will get the message. Or call, 830-644-2705 (Nancy's house). Nancy's address is Nancy Eckdahl, P O Box 972, Stonewall, TX 78671 if you want to write her a letter or send a card. Vivian will be there for about three weeks and would love to hear from any or all of us. She is really having a tough time and wishes she could be feeling better after about 6 months of fighting the ill effects of the broken vertebra in her back. Her recovery will be slow and painful and your loving cards and prayers are more than welcome.

Anna continues to live in the Assisted Living Facility in Walla Walla, Washington. She has good days and bad, is very lonely since losing Norman and would love to hear from everyone. You can write to her in care of Kathy Yenney, 54043 Matthews Lane, Milton Freewater, OR 97862. Or you can call directly to Anna at: 509-522-5252.

Please keep these two great ladies in your prayers along with the other members of the Brown family.

## Two Little Boys

There were two little boys who were so naughty their parents couldn't do anything with them. Try as they might, those two were into trouble all the time and nothing seemed to help. Finally the father sent them to the preacher to see if he could get through. The preacher took the oldest one into his office. The little boy just sat there ignoring the preacher and everything he had to say. Finally, the preacher said to him, "Pay attention, you're not listening, do you know where God is?" The little boy looked at him briefly and looked away, again ignoring the preacher. In exasperation, the preacher slammed his hand down on the desk and said, "DO YOU KNOW WHERE GOD IS?" The little boy turned white as a ghost, jumped out of his chair, ran all the way home, up the stairs, into his bedroom and slammed the door. His little brother was running after him as fast as he could and when he reached the bedroom, he rushed in and said, "What's the matter?" His brother looked up at him, still white as a ghost and said, "God's missing and they think we did it!"

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 Birthdays:

Frank Brown	April 8
Marilyn Brown	April 19
Pat White	May 31

## Anniversaries:

Roy and Alice (57)	April 4
Nancy and Bob (51)	April 25

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Please send me your news and upcoming events. Its wedding and graduation time. Feel free to send along a picture, this scanner seems to do a pretty fair job. The May issue will be about Grace

(including some very old pictures) and the June issue will be about Dad (including some very old pictures).

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