

The Bee

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In fifth grade, I was crowned the winner of the class spelling bee. This meant I was to represent my class in the school wide spelling bee. To say that my win was a complete flook or is it fluke or maybe even phluke - -- was an understatement. (Have you figured out how this ends?)



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My folks were so proud and I endured weeks of my Dad calling out the words on the way to school each morning. I misspelled practically every one he called out. It was a nightmare - for both of us.

On the eve of the bee, I still remember my Dad pulling out the photo of cousin Grace.

“There is no reason you can’t be just like Grace.”

Cousin Grace, you see, was first runner up in the National Spelling Bee. Grace is now in her mid-forties but each Christmas when I visit her parents, they make sure to point out the picture on the mantle of Grace standing next to President Jimmy Carter after her second place finish.

“Do you remember Angel, when our Grace met the President after she came in second in the National Spelling Bee?”

Here might be the right place to tell you that everything Grace has accomplished since that win at age 12 - has paled in comparison. The fact that she is vice-president of a large company now - - has not resulted in a new photo on the mantle.

Sadly, my parents don’t have any photos of me and the President on their mantle or anywhere else in their home. I was the second kid out of the school wide spelling bee - having misspelled the word grapefruit. Spelled it g-r-a-p-e-f-r-i-u-t. Oh, the horror!

The memory of leaving the stage to find my seat in the audience is still seared in my memory as my very first failure in life. Of course, it is often said that you learn more from your failures than from your successes. What I learned that day was, “I was robbed! It should have been me! The fix was in!”

So when my middle child came home announcing she would be representing her class in the school wide spelling bee - I was mortified.

I chose not to participate with her father in calling out the words to her. (It still hurts too much.) But her father told me she was ready and, in fact, a pretty good speller.

On the eve of her spelling bee, she came downstairs to tell us she didn't want to do it.

It was all I could do not to scream out, "run, run, little girl run!" But instead, I sat her down and told her about our family ties to President Carter.

The next morning, she participated in her school spelling bee and did a great job.

Turns out she is no cousin Grace but, on the other hand, she doesn't appear to be as traumatized as I was. Or is it tromotized? Traumitized?

Angel Kane can be reached at [This e-mail address is being protected from spambots. You need JavaScript enabled to view it](mailto:angel@wilsonpost.com) . For more of Angel's and Becky's columns go to www.wilsonpost.com and hit Columns & Blogs.

Telling Tales

Angel Kane and Becky Andrews live in Wilson County. This is their story (or tale) about their life, families and times that they share. Besides their weekly column Telling Tales Angel and Becky Co Founded Wilson Living Magazine. The idea of developing a magazine for Wilson County first came to Becky and Angel one afternoon while they sat on her back porch watching their children play in the backyard.

They were discussing the outpouring of emails, calls and responses to their column "Telling Tales" and wanted to find a way to capture that community spirit. People were stopping them wherever they went to share their own "tales." They suddenly realized everyone has a story to tell and many of these stories were amazing. And in that moment, Wilson Living Magazine came to life. Be sure to check out Wilson Living Magazine at www.wilsonlivingmagazine.com

You can read Angel and Becky's weekly column on-line at www.wilsonpost.com under the

Style section.

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