The Inspiration -- A LOCAL TALL TALE

Taken from http://genealogytrails.com/ill/whiteside/landis.html
Written by Landis Fay (1992) Second Edition Edited, Transcribed and Contributed by Larry Reynolds

In the early days of Whiteside County, the prairie rattlesnakes were plentiful and always expressed a willingness to bite by rattling. On this particular occasion, when several families had pooled together to harvest wheat on the land of one of the members of the group, one of these serpents was discovered. The snake drew itself into a coil and sounded its rattle; ready to strike. The reapers fell back in a record retreat and had a council of war on how best to attack the challenger.

However, before anyone could speak, Watson Parrish came to their rescue and hollered out in a stentorian voice, "Boys, stand back, and I will show you how they kill snakes in Tennessee!" The order was promptly obeyed as he approached the enemy with extrasensory perceptional bobbing and weaving. When within three feet of the rattler, he sprang into the air with the intention of landing on it with his feet close together, thereby crushing it; but, in his exuberance, he made a miscalculation and came down on the opposite side.

In his attempt to save himself he fell flat on his back across the snake, very much scared, as was also the snake. The unengaged parties came to his aid pronto, and separated the belligerents without either having received any injury. The snake was finally killed with a club.

After deliberating, they gave the snake to Mr. Parrish for rattlesnake stew with a stern warning that he wasn't living in Tennessee anymore.

THE CONTEST:

Write an original tall tale. Come up with your own **larger-than-life character** who lives in our area and is the **hero** saving Erie, Albany, Fenton, Spring Hill and/or Prophetstown, Lyndon, Tampico from a disaster. Be sure to include **hyperbole** (exaggeration) that makes it a tall tale and funny.

Read the included resources to see some examples of tall tales and the word bank with ideas to make it sound like it's straight from the lumber camps of Paul Bunyan or the Wild West of Pecos Bill, or come up with your own dialect words that show it is taking place now in the fields of Whiteside County.

TALL TALE RESOURCES

Wonderopolis Article – WHAT IS A TALL TALE?
https://www.wonderopolis.org/wonder/why-do-they-call-it-a-tall-tale

HYPERBOLE: EXAGGERATION – example from "Babe the Blue Ox"
SAMPLE - https://americanfolklore.net/folklore/tall-tales/
Well now, one winter it was **so** cold **that all** the geese flew backward **and all** the fish moved south **and even** the snow turned blue. Late at night, it got **so** frigid **that all** spoken words froze solid afore they could be heard. People had to wait until sunup to find out what folks were talking about the night before.

Jargon: DIALECT Word Bank

Pa / Ma – Mama/Papa/Mammie / Pappy	Ol' (old)
Well now,	all-fired
Now I hear tell …	Ain't
Afore (before)	bronc-buster
holler (yell)	Right proud
On account	bush-whacking
scalawag	Up _____way. (up Texas way)
Spunky lil' critter	catawampous
folks	_____-like --- all calm-like, quiet-like
'cause	chuck wagon
kin – kinfolks	Biggest gol-durned _____ I ever did see
Lickety-split	dry gulch
cowpoke	No ma'am
Yeller (yellow)	Fandango
jest (just)	Gonna (going to)
wrasstle (wrestle)	greenhorn
____in' (drop the *g* at the end of -ing words	Mad as a hornet
Yep	madder than an old wet hen
helter-skelter	Make hay while the sun shines
Higgledy-piggledy	make tracks
high-falutin	makins' fixins (ingredients)
High tail	mosey – shuffle along – walk slowly
hitch in the giddy-up	nohow – no way
Hold your horses	pack iron
hornswoggle	P'shaw
Wrangler (horse wrangler)	Rattler
huckleberry	rip-roarin – impressive
Jawing – talking	ruckus – loud noise, racket
By Jiminy!	scrape – close call
Knee-high to a grasshopper	lock, stock and barrel
lands sakes	

CONTEST RULES

The GOAL:
The goal of the contest is to have students writing in the summer, showing students' creativity, focusing on our local heritage and history, and having fun. The winning stories will be published on the aroundptown.com website and winners will receive a cash prize of $50.00.

SPONSOR:
AroundPtown is sponsoring the Tall Tale Contest. Contact Information: Dan Eyrich: aroundprophetstown@gmail.com or Amy Achs: aroundptown.erie@gmail.com. More information can be found at aroundptown.com.

ELIGIBILITY:
Students from the Erie school district, ECUSD #1, are eligible for the Erie contest and students from the Prophetstown-Lyndon-Tampico school district, PLT #3, are eligible for the PLT contest. There are 3 age categories and all are based on your grade level for the 2020-2021 school year (that we just finished):
LEVEL 1: 3rd & 4th graders
LEVEL 2: 5th & 6th graders
LEVEL 3: 7th & 8th graders
The story needs to be original work written by the student named on the entry form. Students may receive some help with editing (spelling, punctuation, capitalization, organization, etc.), but the story needs to be their original ideas and work.

TIMELINE:
The contest is open starting at 8:00 AM, May 24, 2021 and closes by 11:00 AM, June 21, 2021.
Submissions may be turned in:

- PDF digitally to: aroundptown.erie@gmail.com
- on paper and mailed to: Dan Eyrich
  35 Ferry Street
  Prophetstown, IL 61277

ENTRIES MUST INCLUDE the following:

1. Contest entry form – signed and agree to terms
2. Story – **HANDWRITTEN** on PAPER:
   a. No longer than 3 pages
   b. Single spaced
   c. Blue or black ink pen
   d. Write on the front side only of the paper

   Story – **TYPED** - DIGITIAL DOCUMENT:
   a. No longer than 3 pages
   b. Single spaced
   c. Font size 14
   d. Times Roman or Arial font if typed
   e. Front side only of the paper (if printing and mailing your story)
   f. Submit in PDF format

Final Deadline for submissions is by 11:00 AM, June 21, 2021.

PRIZES:
There will be a winning story for each of the schools in the three age levels.

- ECUSD #1 - 3rd & 4th grade – 1 First place winner receives $50.00
- ECUSD #1 - 5th & 6th grade – 1 First place winner receives $50.00
- ECUSD #1 - 7th & 8th grade – 1 First place winner receives $50.00

AND

- PLT #3 - 3rd & 4th grade – 1 First place winner receives $50.00
- PLT #3 - 5th & 6th grade – 1 First place winner receives $50.00
- PLT #3 - 7th & 8th grade -- 1 First place winner receives $50.00

Entries from ECUSD #1 and PLT #3 will be scored separately.

Judges will be: Dan Eyrich, Amy Achs, Sam Wolf, Corrie Zschieche, Jenny Pinkston, Angie Schroeder, Nikki Arians, and Lindsey Pons.

Results will be published by Saturday, July 3, 2021. Students will be notified by phone call, their story will be published in AroundPtown.com, appear on the AroundPtown Facebook page, and students may be asked to meet to receive their prize and take a photo to be published, as well.

GOOD LUCK!
Please contact Amy Achs at aroundptown.erie@gmail.com if you have any questions.