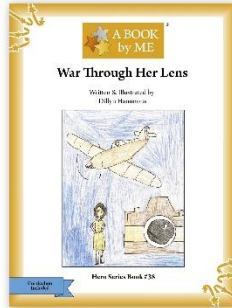


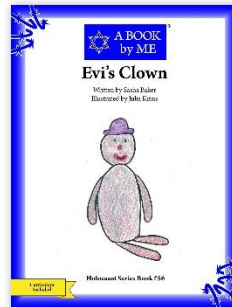
Victims to Victors

Real People who Triumphed over Adversity



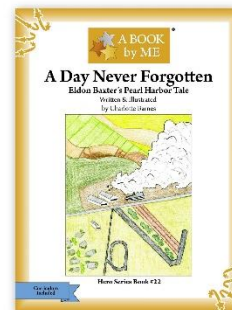
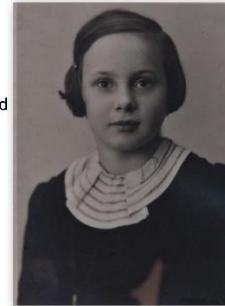
Eugenia Clark Woodward grew up helping her parents at their camera shop, not knowing one day she would use the skills she had learned there to defend her country. After high school graduation, she enlisted with the United States Naval Reserve in their new branch called the WAVES (Women Accepted for Volunteer Emergency Service). Her role was to repair the cameras that were attached to the bottom of bomber aircraft. These photos were helpful in providing naval intelligence and insuring targets were hit.

#newjersey#wwii#navy#hawaii



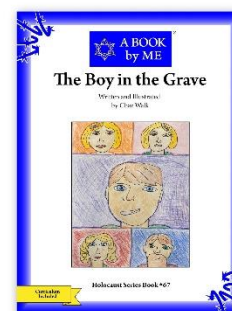
Evi Kohn was only 8 years old when the Nazis invaded Vienna. Her mother was a smart woman, and she sewed loose diamonds into Evi's toy clown so she would have valuables if she needed food or other necessities. She bought passage on a ship to America so Evi and her sister could be safe. Once they reached New York, each girl was assigned a family through a Jewish agency. The girls were kept safe until their mother, a Holocaust survivor, came to join them after the war.

#austria#courage#tolerance#illinois



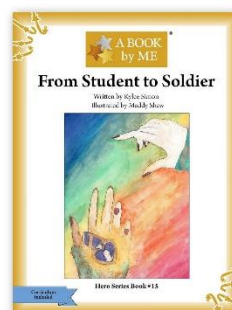
A young sailor named Eldon Baxter was aboard the USS West Virginia when the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor. Thankfully, he lived, but many of his fellow servicemen lost their lives that day. Many years later, his young author learned firsthand about December 7, 1941, a date which will live in infamy. Eldon passed away in 2017; it was fitting that he was laid to rest on the 76th anniversary of the attack on Pearl Harbor. Eldon was the last known Pearl Harbor survivor residing in the Quad Cities.

#veteran#survival#honor#iowa



Harold Kasimow was a young boy whose wise Jewish parents knew they must hide to survive the war. They made arrangements with a farmer for their family of five to hide under the floor of their barn until the war ended. They call their hiding place the "grub" which means grave in Yiddish. Over nineteen months later they learned the war was coming to an end and it was safe to come out. They hadn't used their legs for so long that Harold couldn't walk and his mom could only crawl away.

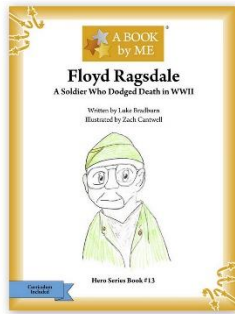
#poland#antisemitism#resilience#iowa



Henry Wood was a small-town boy who was called to serve in Europe during WWII. He experienced digging foxholes and being shot at by snipers during the war. He was wounded and was very proud to have received a Purple Heart. He was also proud that his sister served as a WAVE during the war. Two middle school students interviewed Henry and preserved his story for young readers.

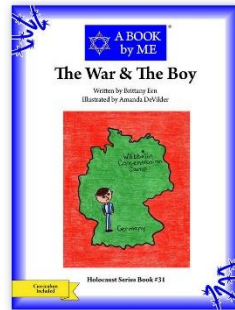
#hero#wwii#patriotism#illinois





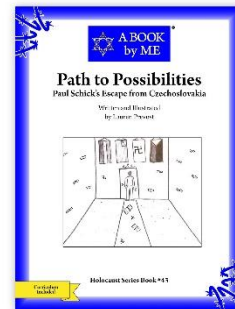
Young Floyd Ragsdale was ready and able to serve his country during WWII. The Battle of the Bulge was a bloody battle which resulted in the most American casualties of the war. The Allies regrouped and won the victory, but Floyd was wounded. Decades later, this man was able to wear his WWII uniform to the interview. This meeting happened just days before the old soldier passed away in his sleep.

#iowa#courage#livinghistory#illinois



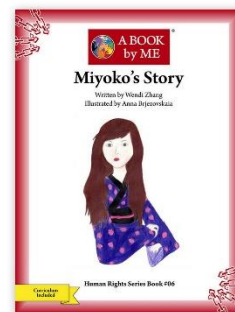
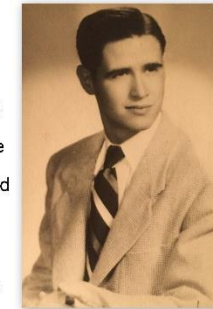
Roy Kouski was very pleased when his granddaughter volunteered to write his story for young people. This WWII veteran served in many ways in Europe. After the Allies won, he helped Jewish survivors from Wobbelin concentration camp start a new life. He had a special encounter with a Jewish boy named Paul that haunted him until his death. His young author and artist are both very proud of their hero.

#compassion#dignity#tolerance#illinois



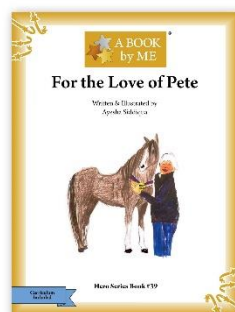
Paul Schick was born in eastern Europe in 1932. As a child, he remembers practicing putting on gas masks for protection in case they were bombed. He had no idea his friend was in Hitler's German Youth Movement, until one day they painted swastikas on a building. His parents were mortified but realized their son didn't understand that it was a Nazi symbol and that the Nazis hated Jews. His parents had a friend who helped them get to America, but loved ones who remained in Europe were murdered by the Nazis.

#czechoslovakia#tolerance#compassion#pennsylvania



Miyoko Mikasa was the proud daughter of Japanese immigrants. Their lives changed when the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor. The U.S. Government feared Japanese Americans could not be trusted and sent them to Internment Camps. Her father had just bought a small farm, but once interned, he couldn't pay the bank note. His frustration and depression caused him to commit suicide. Miyoko became a nurse after the war and had a wonderful family, but she could not forget the pain of the past.

#california#disadvantaged#resilient#michigan



Pete the horse was for sale. He was older and had a swayed back, so he appeared ready to be put out to pasture. But, Karen Angotti saw the promise in him as a therapy horse for Rainbow Riders Therapeutic Horseback Riding Center. Pete proved her right and became a hero to the children with disabilities who came there to learn how to ride horses. Pete may not have looked perfect, but he had a big heart and became the backbone of the riding program.

#purpose#empathy#inspiration#illinois

