Willa
1st Place
3rd Grade, Almond School

Searching for My Roots

Have you ever wondered where a passion or hobby comes from? I wonder this every time I tend the plants in my beloved mud kitchen where I love to feel the breeze, to watch animals skitter and skatter, and to harvest the plants in the garden that I grow. I have always loved nature and I was thrilled to hear that this passion goes back at least five generations in my family. I'll start this story with my ancestors Anne and Hoie, who came from Norway all the way to California in the 1880s. They moved to America to start a new life on a new farm, because land was cheaper and more widely available. Let's turn the spotlight on them.

Anne and Hoie eventually settled on a red wheat farm in Minnesota. One of their sons married Anne Graves (a different Anne), and they moved to a grain farm in North Dakota. Their five children included Grace, my grandfather's mom. When my grandfather was a child, buffalo roamed in his backyard. His mother had a strawberry patch which attracted rabbits. The rabbits attracted coyotes, so unfortunately, one day, they had to shoot a coyote to protect the children. Later they moved to California and my grandfather ended up in Los Altos which also has a strong farming history.

Now we get to stay here in paradise. My grandparents have a garden behind their house where they grow zucchini. When they're ripe we pick them and make zucchini bread (yummy!). They also have a bee hive in their back yard. I love to peacefully watch the bees. I appreciate how my own love of nature comes from my family history of farming and gardening. I am excited to keep the tradition going.