

Cheering Up Grandpa

By John Starley Allen

(Based on a true story)

"Have I cheered up the sad and made someone feel glad?" (Hymns, no. 223).

Do you want to help me in the garden today?" Mike's grandpa asked.

"Sure!" Mike said.

Mike loved gardening with Grandpa. The garden had all sorts of flowers, but their favorites were the roses. Mike helped Grandpa water and trim the rose bushes all summer. It didn't feel like work—it was too fun!

When fall came, Mike and Grandpa trimmed the rose bushes one last

time for the year. When they were done, Grandpa said, "These bushes look so healthy! I think next year's garden will be our best yet."

That winter Mike's grandma passed away. At her funeral Mike put his arm around Grandpa when he saw him crying. "I'm sorry, Grandpa. I love you," he said.

"I love you too," Grandpa said with tears in his eyes.

Day after day, it was hard for Mike to see Grandpa look so sad. One day Mike thought Grandpa might enjoy walking through the garden. But as soon as Grandpa saw the frozen rose bushes, he turned around.

"You go ahead. I don't like seeing my rose bushes so bare," Grandpa said.

Mike helped Grandpa walk back to his recliner. *Maybe he'll be happier when spring comes*, Mike thought. *Then we can work in the garden again.*

When spring came, Mike came to help Grandpa trim the rose bushes. They worked in the garden just like before, but Grandpa hardly ever smiled.

Mike prayed to know how to help Grandpa feel happy again. One morning an idea popped into his head: *Look in the newspaper.*

That's strange, Mike thought. *How would that help Grandpa feel better?* Then the thought came again. So he looked through the newspaper.

This is a waste of time, Mike thought. Then something caught his eye: "Now taking nominations for Gardener of the Year." Mike didn't understand the word *nominations*. But it said that readers could send in a letter about a gardener they knew. The newspaper editor would read the letters and choose a Gardener of the Year.

Mike asked Mom to write a letter about Grandpa. "Well, it's your idea," she said. "So maybe you should write it. But I'll help you."

Mike wrote about how Grandpa was a great gardener. He wrote about how much fun they had working together in the garden. And he told about how happy his grandpa would be if he won the award.

Three weeks later Grandpa got a



"We are surrounded by those in need of our attention, our encouragement, our support, our comfort, our kindness."

President Thomas S. Monson

"What Have I Done for Someone Today?" *Ensign*, Nov. 2009, 86.

surprise visit while he and Mike were working in the garden. A newspaper reporter said that she was writing a story about him.

"Why?" he asked.

"Because you've been chosen as Gardener of the Year!" she said.

Grandpa smiled big and said, "What? I can't believe it!" Mike had missed seeing Grandpa smile like that.

Later that week Mike, Mom, and Grandpa went to a special dinner to honor Grandpa. The people from the newspaper gave Grandpa an award and asked him to give a speech. Grandpa talked about how he enjoyed gardening with Mike and how much he loved flowers. Just before he sat down, Grandpa smiled right at Mike and said, "This year, we're going to have one of the best rose gardens ever!" ♦

The author lives in Utah, USA.

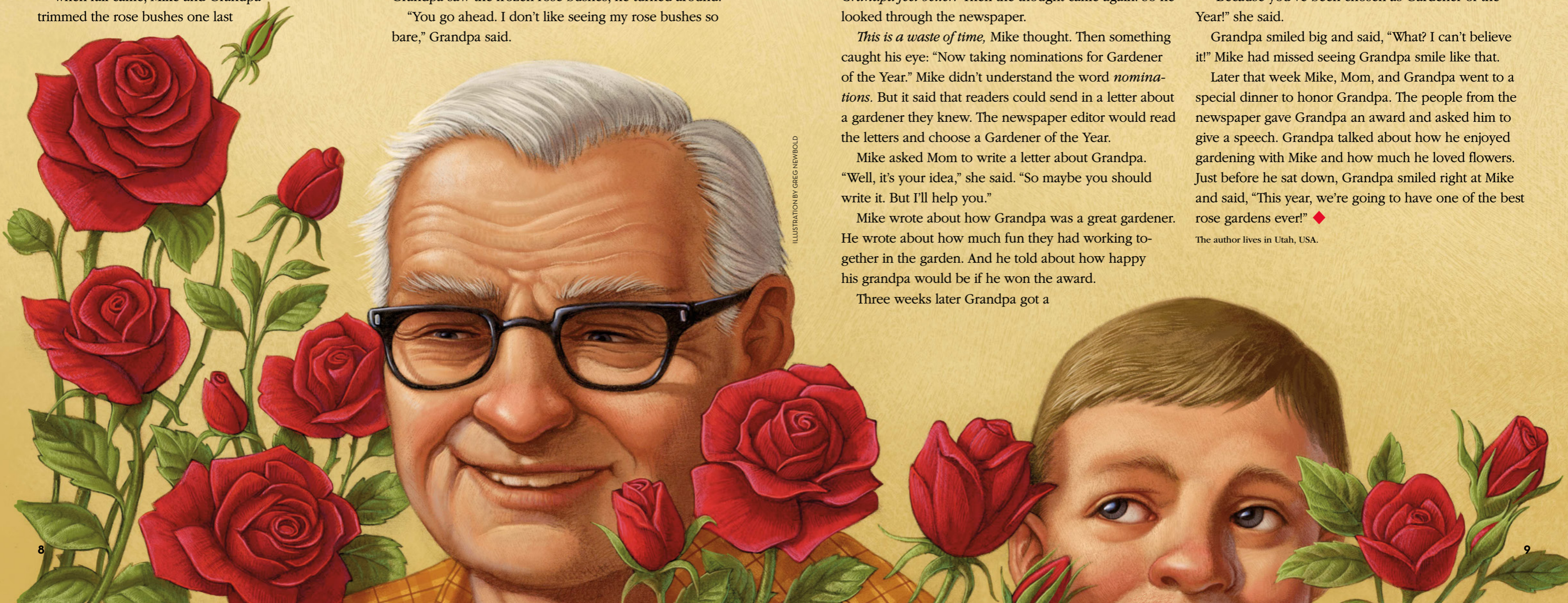


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