



Hats off for the veterans

By SARAH HINCKLEY

Herald Staff

Sunday was Veterans Day, but most of you have today off.

There were a number of commemorations in schools around the area last week. Castleton Elementary had an interesting experience during its ceremony, when a flag made by students three years ago returned with the soldier to whom it was sent while he was stationed in Kuwait.

Thank you to all the veterans for your service, first and foremost, and for sharing your stories with students and a younger generation. One day they will understand how priceless it is to have the opportunity to hear of history first-hand.

This week is National Geography Week and students are encouraged to wear T-shirts with different geographical locations highlighted. What part of the world are you exploring? This year's theme for the National Geographic Society is Asia and before long a gigantic map of that continent will be visiting the Rutland region. Stay tuned for more details.

This week is also National Library Week, which means books, books, books. Find out where your favorite tale can take you.

In those books are words, words, words. Congratulations to Wallingford Elementary School for winning the regional spelling bee. Sherburne Elementary School came in second. Sounds like a fine job on the part of all participating teams.

Food drive

The Sherburne Elementary School Student Council is collecting food at the school through this week for the Rutland Community Cupboard. Bring nonperishable and canned food to the school.

Ah! Cappella

Students of three area schools will be treated to the sounds of Vermont Symphony Orchestra's "Ah! Cappella" Vocal Quartet on Thursday. As part of their Musicians-in-the-Schools programs, the singing group will be performing at 10 a.m. in Currier Memorial School, at 12:45 p.m. in Clarendon Elementary and at 2 p.m. in Wallingford Elementary. Raise your voices.

Cyber bullying forum

Rutland City Schools is sponsoring a public forum at 6:30 p.m. Wednesday for parents of kindergarten through 12th-grade students on bullying, specifically cyber bullying. Interested community members are also invited to the Rutland Intermediate School Auditorium to listen and ask questions about the unseen form of bullying. Computer tech teacher Cathy Farman, school psychologist Susanne Engels and prevention specialist Jerry Kreitzer will be speaking at the event. Those needing childcare to attend, call 786-1942.

Abridged version

Join Mount St. Joseph Academy's Shoestring Theater, this Friday and Saturday, when they perform "The Complete History of America." Evening performances begin at 7:30 p.m. on both nights and there is a 2 p.m. show on Saturday. Tickets at the school's theater door are \$6 for adults and \$4 for students and seniors. For more information, call 775-0151.

Nuggets of knowledge

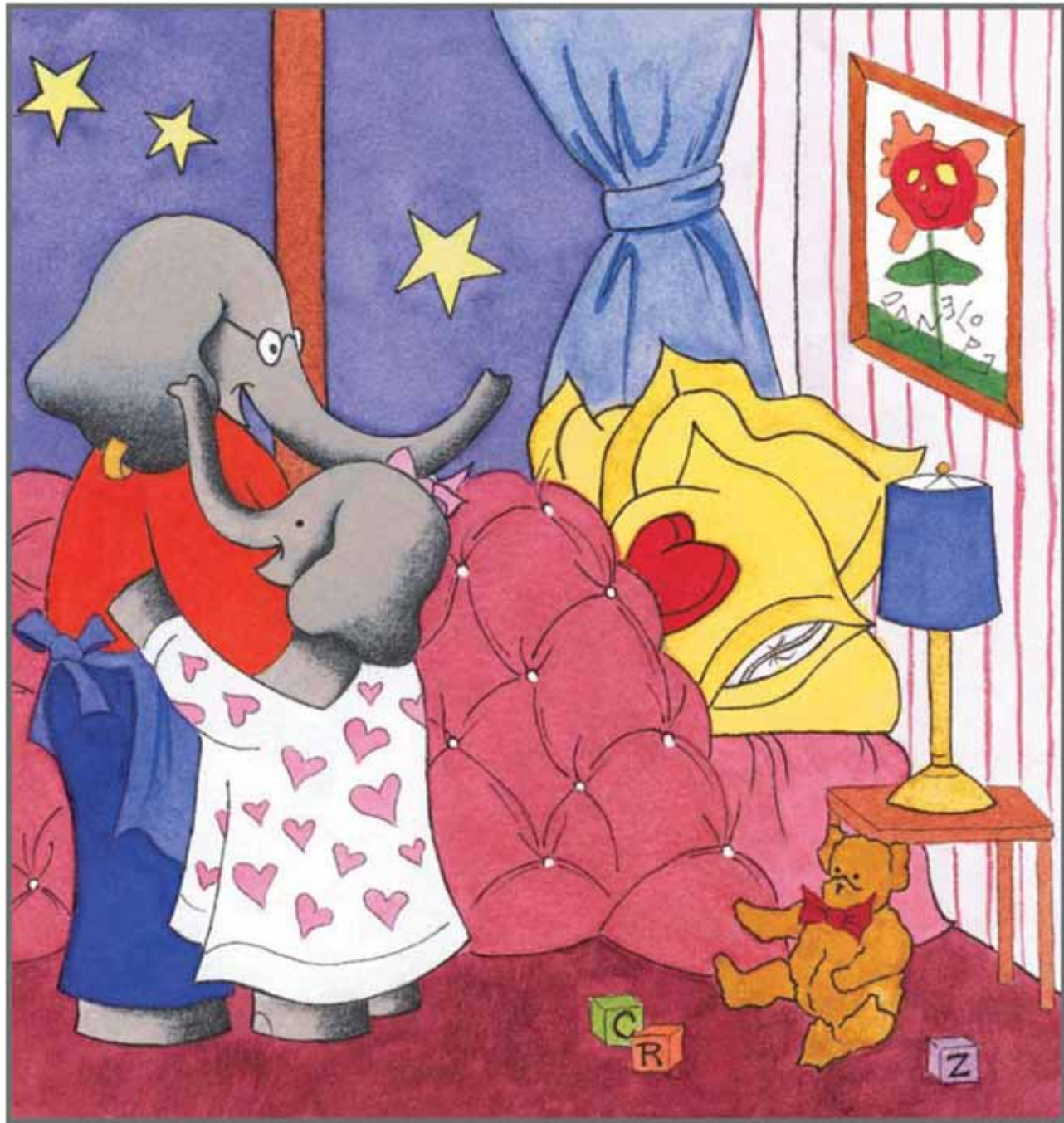
On this day in 1954, Ellis Island stopped serving as the chief immigration station for the United States. In 62 years of operation, 20 million immigrants came through the checkpoint just outside New York City.

The answer to last week's question — "The Roof of the World" is the nickname for what East Asia region — is the Tibetan plateau.

This week's question: What is the name given to the narrow band of volcanoes that is located around the Pacific Ocean?

Send answers, questions, awards, announcements and events to Sarah Hinckley at sarah.hinckley@rutlandherald.com.

I LOVE TO VISIT MY GRAMMY



STORY AND PICTURES BY MARY CROWLEY

Art with heart

Rutland's Mary Crowley creates new children's book

By KEVIN O'CONNOR

Herald Staff

Page 5 of Mary Crowley's new children's book, "I Love to Visit My Grammy," features a watercolor illustration of an elephant wearing a straw hat brimming with bows, flowers, American flags and a toy chicken.

"We put on silly hats from Grammy's hat collection," the playful pachyderm says, "and we sing and dance."

Visit Crowley's Rutland home and you'll spot a real straw hat brimming with bows, flowers, American flags and a toy chicken. So is her seemingly fanciful book more fact than fiction?

Crowley, a retired art teacher, acknowledges that she, like her title character, is a grandmother who lives near a duck pond (see page 4), likes to sway on a tree swing (see page 10) and has a big window where "sometimes there is a sunset, and the sky is full of beautiful colors" (see page 22).

But Crowley isn't an elephant. Her bathroom, unlike the bubbly tub scene on page 15, doesn't have palm trees painted on the walls. ("Although it's a good idea," she says.) And her two granddaughters don't usually visit. (Instead, she travels to see newborn Margot in Virginia and 9-year-old Paige in Nevada.)

And so Crowley found inspiration in her great-aunt Kate, whom she visited when growing up in Haddonfield, N.J.

"We didn't do anything out of the ordinary," Crowley recalls.

But having a loving elder in her childhood was extraordinary.

Aunt Kate lived to be 100. Crowley, for her part, graduated from Middlebury College and then, for almost three decades, taught art in Rutland public schools. Retiring in 1999, she took an illustration



Rutland artist

Mary Crowley will sign copies of her children's book "I Love to Visit My Grammy" (pictured above) this Saturday from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Book King in Rutland.

class at Castleton State College. For their last assignment, students had to dream up a book.

As a teacher, Crowley was known for her fiery-red hair, skateboard-surfer T-shirt and rainbow-striped robe. So it's not unusual for her to craft a book with elephants splashed in vivid primary hues. Pages 7 and 8 picture Penelope and her Grammy creating art on paper hung floor to ceiling on the wall.

"We always use bright colors and paint BIG," the text says.

Crowley has yet to try that at home. But she can tell you about the time she and her oldest granddaughter spread paper atop a restaurant tablecloth and started drawing two princesses ...

"... and their baby sister Opal, a castle with a moat, a ferocious fire-breathing dragon and Sir Robert arriving with a pitchfork to slay the dragon," she says. "Of course, everyone except the dragon lived happily ever after."

But that's another story. Page 13 pictures a table with cinnamon apple tea and crispy ginger cookies.

"Aunt Kate made the most wonderful

crispy ginger cookies," Crowley says.

Page 15 features the bathroom painted with palm trees.

"I do have a pink flamingo towel" Crowley says as she points to one on the page.

The book concludes with bedtime in hopes that young readers will settle down, too. By page 24, Penelope and her Grammy are saying their special prayer: "For all the children in the world, for every boy and every girl, for grown-ups big and babies small, we pray that peace will come for all."

Crowley smiles at that.

"This is the kernel, the nugget," she says. "A person of any faith can understand this prayer."

They can share it, too. Crowley's book, released by Publishing Works of Exeter, N.H., is on sale at many area bookstores or can be ordered at all others. The author will sign copies this Saturday at Book King in Rutland (from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.) and Nov. 24 at Barnes & Noble in South Burlington (from 2 to 3:30 p.m.).

People can learn more on Crowley's Web site, www.artandmarycrowley.com.

"I have been involved with ART for most of my life — as a teacher, artist and now as an illustrator," she writes on it. "Also, I am married to ART."

(Lawyer Art Crowley, that is.)

"I hope that this book will get across the message that one need not have expensive toys or gadgets and that there is much satisfaction to be derived from having a personal relationship with an elder," she concludes. "I wrote the story and created the illustrations and believe in the themes — simple pleasures and peace on earth."

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