

# To be perfectly **FRANK**

Because he's three years my junior, brother Francis G. Hauprich was too tiny to gallop beside the preschool version of me whose wild imagination easily transformed the wide arms of a vintage rocker into buckin' bronchos.

But Frank was just the right size – and disposition – to be hitched to Annie Oakley's wagon, holding tight to the sides of a Conestoga that faded black and white photos would later reveal had been nothing more than a wicker laundry basket.

While other toddlers might have squirmed or thrown temper tantrums, Frank's gentle nature made him a welcome addition to the western entourage and we'd inevitably reach our destination before the clanging of a cowbell signaled it was chow time.

Though the laundry basket of life pulled us in polar opposite directions on occasion during our young adult years (most notably when Frank was in Brazil while I was in Canada), the lasso that binds our hearts, minds and spirits is stronger than ever.

It was while we were both home for the holidays in the late 1980s that Frank and I first transformed our shared passion for word play into an essay about our "Happier By The Dozen" family that was later published in *Catholic Digest* and reprinted in *Deadlines Headlines & Porcupines: The Laugh Lines Behind the Bylines*.

Frank, a master of the English language who also holds a degree in Religious Education from the College of St. Rose in Albany, subsequently helped to lay the editorial foundation for *Saratoga Living* when he gave generously of his time and treasure by assisting with the editing of the then young magazine's pages.

More than one early edition also showcased samples of Frank's powerful poetry as well as in-depth articles that had been researched and written by him.

But the mettle of his pioneering spirit was never more rigorously tested than when Frank burned the midnight oil to create a play that commemorated the Village of Ballston Spa's Bicentennial in 2007.



*The many faces  
of Francis  
Hauprich*



Frank's recent 60th birthday became a truly landmark celebration when a decoration showcasing his face along with those of other greats on Mount Rushmore was created by prankster pal Dave Sherwood. Of course, Frank had faced the camera many times before -- including as a toddler preparing for a ride in a wicker basket and at a birthday party for sister Ann in Latham, NY in the 1950s; on a beach in Brazil in the 1980s; and as a Godfather in the 1990s.

# The Pot of Gold



An original play written by Francis G. Hauprich  
especially for Ballston Spa's Bicentennial Year



To be  
(or not to be)  
perfectly  
**FRANK**

*The Pot of Gold is a play about Ballston Spa...  
Like the village itself, each character is a work in progress...  
— building upon the past and dreaming of the future.*

*If walls could speak, what stories would our little village tell  
Of sons that rose in glory and of shooting stars that fell  
Of Camelot's round table and unsurpassable sports teams  
Some came here on hillbillies and some with great ambition  
To work and raise their families with values and tradition  
And left behind a legacy of love that's mine and the stone  
And thus our village is a stage where you and yours  
Without a script read this page of history's been turned  
And as the final curtain, if actors take a bow  
It's for a fine performance in the parts we're playing now  
To teach our little munchkins how to live, for it's agreed  
A world of peace and brotherhood and love is what we need  
For love can feed the hungry and love can help the poor  
And make the world one family and put an end to war  
Both in our dear home country and in lands across the sea  
So, perhaps our friendly village has a story to be told  
That could send the world a message as we share a pot of gold!*

#### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Longtime village resident Francis G. Hauprich is a graduate of Ballston Spa High School and The College of  
Professor at St. Mary's School. Frank's creative and literary work has been published in local, regional and national  
of America and Poet's Haven as well as Starbuck Living, a regional magazine he founded to serve five stations in  
the late 1980s. *The Pot of Gold* is his contribution to Ballston Spa's 2007 Bicentennial Celebration. Although the  
play is fiction, it contains historical facts sprinkled with philosophy, poetry, romance, spirituality and humor — that  
reflecting the broad spectrum of life in a similar festive setting where an imaginary village breathes in a real pot of gold.

This play is an exclusive limited edition homebound reproducible signed and numbered by Francis G. Hauprich and will  
give \$10 to accompany advance orders of *Dulcinea*, *The Way We Were*, *The Way We Live* — to be published  
during 2007 by Publishers Publishing in cooperation with Area 4 Historical Commission. Copies of this play may also be  
distributed to local schools, libraries and book stores. For more information, please contact [frank@hauprich.com](mailto:frank@hauprich.com)



In keeping with the title of the uplifting play he wrote to commemorate and celebrate Ballston's Spa's Bicentennial (see images on facing page), Francis G. Hauprich agreed to don an elfish cap for an impish photographer on Christmas Eve 2007. The first to receive a signed and numbered copy of the play (which was tucked inside of *Ballston Spa: The Way We Were, The Way We Are* by Ann Hauprich and Michael L. Noonan) was Village History Consultant Maurice "Christopher" Morley. Only those closest to Delivery Elf Francis Fudge knew that his character had been created by niece Jennifer Danison several Christmas Eves earlier when "Jingle Jen" (seen below flanked by her Uncle Andy Hauprich with Grandma Hauprich as Mrs. Claus and Grandpa Hauprich as Santa.





Signed and numbered copies of the limited edition literary treasure were tucked inside the colorful glossy dust covers of 200 signed and numbered copies of the almost 400-page *Ballston Spa: The Way We Were, The Way We Are*.

If you didn't secure a copy of the play then, you might be able to view a copy in the regional history section of a library. Otherwise you'll have to wait until 2057 (the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the village's charter) when a copy we donated to a time capsule is slated to be unearthed.

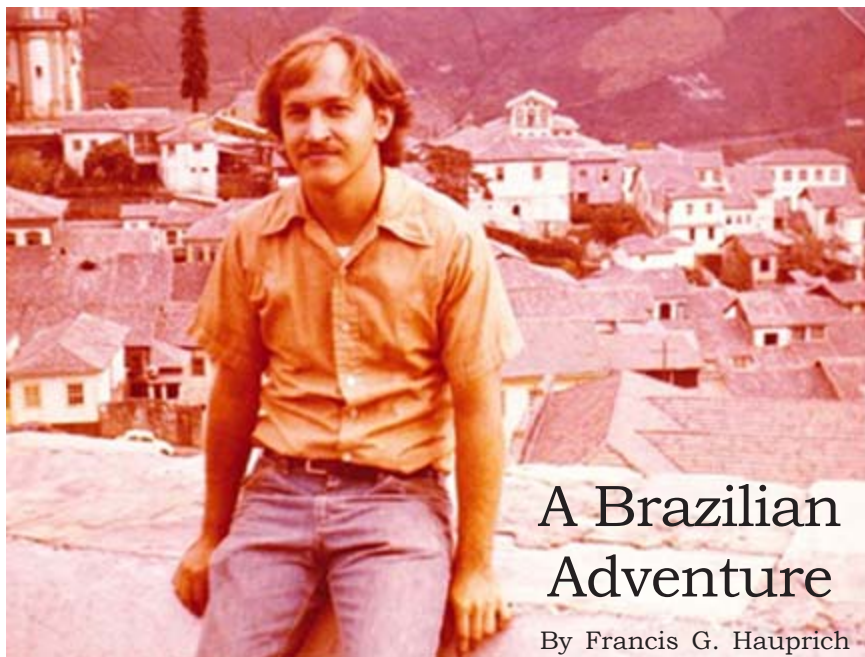
But Frank's contributions didn't end there. Those who had placed advance orders for the Bicentennial book and play would never have received their copies on time had the brother who in the meantime had been immortalized in a jazzy Cole Broderick composition titled Francis Fudge not agreed to saddle his reindeer and assist with last minute Christmas Eve deliveries.

The next time Frank saddled up in the name of preserving the past for present and future generations was when he aided in the editing of a second local history book titled *Ballston Spa: Legacies Unlimited*.

Just when Frank might have been pondering the possibility of hanging up his editorial spurs, I asked if I might lasso him into assisting with just one more literary labor of love. It is the one you now hold in your hands.

Proof that he has the patience of a saint, Frank agreed to make this latest journey with me even though neither could be certain where the trail might lead.

To be perfectly Frank, I don't care – just as long as he is at my side when we reach our destination. (I'm kinda hoping it might have to do with the Brazilians who were photographed with Frank in upstate NY in October 2015. Please turn page.)



## A Brazilian Adventure

By Francis G. Hauprich

Brazil is a South American country famous for the Amazon rain forest, coffee beans, and samba music. The Carnival at Rio de Janeiro is a colorful festival celebrated in this vast and beautiful country with almost 200 million hard working, fun loving people.

In 1980 I was invited to Brazil by Marcio Melo, a comical and philosophical Rotary exchange student who had lived with my family's Ballston Spa, NY homestead in 1972. Several years later, Marcio returned for a visit and invited me to come and stay with his parents' family in Brazil. Here are some highlights and insights concerning the places seen, people met, and lessons learned in my Brazilian adventure:

When I arrived in Brazil, I was greeted by Marcio's family with warm hugs and welcoming words in broken English. The only thing I could say in Portuguese was "obrigado" for thank you, and I would say it many times in the five months ahead.

The name of Marcio's hometown is Belo Horizonte — which means beautiful horizon. It is a bustling city with a subtropical climate in southeastern Brazil. Belo Horizonte is the capital of the mountainous and mineral rich state of Minas Gerais. I soon learned that the most precious jewels in Brazil are the people who enrich your life with their kind hearts and generous spirit.

Marcio's father, Jonas Melo, co-owned a leather tannery called the Curtume Santa Helena. He was a friendly man filled with enthusiasm for life and love for his family. Jonas and his wife Dinorah had eight children. Four were married and living in various parts of Brazil. Marcio, two younger brothers, and a younger sister along with two adult cousins lived with Mr. and Mrs. Melo.

They occupied a large, two story house that seemed like a beehive of activity. Dinorah gave orders to the servants and chauffeur who taxied everyone around town in a huge station wagon. People were coming and going at all hours, and Mrs. Melo would sometimes apologize to me for the “bagunca” or crazy confusion.

The Melos helped me learn the Portuguese language, or at least important words concerning things like food. I was not a great student and once told Marcio’s mother that she had baked a delicious ball instead of birthday cake. There were often celebrations at the Melo home, and every day there was a delicious meal at lunchtime. Rice and black beans were daily staples served along with fresh fruits, vegetables, meat, bread and cheese. As the food was passed and enjoyed the Melos discussed everything from national news to family plans.

The Melos took me along on memorable vacation trips. We whizzed through Sao Paulo on a subway, and spent a few days at the Hotel California in Rio de Janeiro. There we saw the famous beaches and statue of Christ the Redeemer who looks over a country where religious faith is important to many.

I also took bus trips to Brazilia, the modern national capital city, and to a former colonial mining town called Ouro Preto or “Black Gold” which has a mineral museum and some beautiful churches decorated with gold and sculptures allegedly carved by Aleijadinho, “the little cripple,” in the 18th century.

I also saw a professional football game in Belo Horizonte. It is said that soccer is the second religion of Brazil, and the fans were very loyal and loud in support of their team. I especially enjoyed watching a boy circle the field while juggling a soccer ball with his feet.

Because Brazil is a large country with a long history, there is a great variety of natural and cultural treasures to discover. Wherever I went I met friendly people who were eager to teach me about their country and learn about mine. As I struggled with the language I gained great sympathy for foreign visitors to the United States as well as for the immigrants who helped build our country while adapting to American customs. I also realized that Brazil and the USA are not only melting pots of many nationalities, but living mosaics of things young and old, rich and poor, sacred and sinful, ridiculous and sublime.

You can broaden your horizons and deepen your appreciation for life by traveling and studying in another country. But you can also grow by establishing roots in your own family, church, community and career. The little things we do and say are what move the world closer to that distant utopia that always seems to lie beyond the beautiful horizon.

I imagine Brazil has changed much in the 36 years since I left. Today Belo Horizonte is a metropolis of five million people and Brazil has one of the world’s fastest growing economies. I hope technology and modernization have not replaced good traditions like family barbecues and soccer games on Sunday afternoons. I hope visitors still receive warm hugs from Brazilians and long letters from home.

Mostly I hope that people from different countries will continue to build bridges of friendship so the world can live in peace.