

Children of the Greatest Generation

Thanks to Dick and Dan Anaya

I think this is one of the best nostalgia + essays I've received.

If you were born in the 1930s to the mid 1940s, you exist as a very special age group. You are the smallest group of children born since the early 1900s.

You are the last generation, climbing out of the depression, who can remember the winds of war and the impact of a world at war, which rattled the structure of our daily lives for years.

You are the last to remember ration books for everything from gas to sugar to shoes to stoves.

You saved tin foil and poured fat into tin cans.

You saw cars up on blocks because tires weren't available.

You can remember milk being delivered to your house early in the morning and placed in the "milk box" on the porch.

You are the last to see the gold stars in the front windows of our grieving neighbors whose sons died in the War.

You saw the 'boys' home from the war, build their little houses.

You are the last generation who spent childhood without television; instead, we imagined what we heard on the radio.

As you all like to brag, with no TV, you spent your childhood "playing outside." The lack of television in your early years meant, for most of you, that you had little real understanding of what the world was like.

On Saturday afternoons, the movies gave you newsreels sandwiched in between westerns and cartoons that were at least a week old.

There was no little league. There was no city playground for kids.

Soccer was unheard of.

Telephones were one to a house, often shared (party lines) and hung on the wall in the kitchen (no cares about privacy).

Computers were called calculators; they were hand cranked; typewriters were driven by pounding fingers, throwing the carriage, and changing the ribbon. The 'INTERNET' and 'GOOGLE' were words that did not exist.

Newspapers and magazines were written for adults and the news was broadcast on our radio in the evening by Paul Harvey, Walter Winchell and Gabriel Heatter.

As you grew up, the country was exploding with growth. The G.I. Bill gave returning veterans the means to get an education and spurred colleges to grow.

VA loans fanned a housing boom. Pent up demand coupled with new installment payment plans opened many factories for work. New highways would bring jobs and mobility. New cars averaged \$2,000 full price.

The veterans joined civic clubs and became active in politics.

The radio network expanded from three stations to thousands . We weren't neglected, but we weren't today's all-consuming family focus. They were glad you played by yourselves until the street lights came on or Mom called you for supper. They were busy discovering the post war world. Although depression poverty was deeply remembered.

Polio was still acrippler.

You came of age in the 50s and 60s. The Korean War was a dark passage in the early 50s and by mid-decade school children were ducking under desks for air-raid training. Russia built the "Iron Curtain" and China became Red China. Eisenhower sent the first 'Army Advisers' to Vietnam.

Castro took over in Cuba and Khrushchev came to power in Russia. You are the last generation to experience an interlude when there were no threats to our homeland.

The war was over and the cold war, Muslim terrorism, "global warming" and perpetual economic insecurity had yet to haunt life with unease.

Only your generation can remember both a time of a great war, and a time when your world was secure. You lived through both. You grew up at a time when the world was getting better, not worse.

You are "The Last Ones." More than 99% of you are retired and we feel privileged to have "lived in the best of times"!

**I ALWAYS SAY HOW BLESSED WE WERE AND WE NEVER REALIZED HOW LITTLE WE HAD.
BUT IT WAS GOOD TRAINING FOR THE FUTURE WHICH OUR CHILDREN NEVER GOT.**