

Introduction

The conception of this book started with my wife, Erica. Whenever I brought up moments from my past that held merit or could provoke a laugh, she would encourage me to tell another. Then the day arrived when she said, “You should write these stories down.”

Once I heard those words, I was off to the races.

I immediately started building the dream that I could actually become a writer - an author. I thought to myself, *Shakespeare has nothing on me, and who’s this Mark Twain guy anyway?*

Without hesitation, I went out to purchase a scarf, a pipe, and some pens and paper. My new dream was just around the corner. I started thinking, *why did I wait so long? How many languages will my book be published in? How long will it be on the New York Times Best Sellers list?*

Right around that time, I realized I was the guy who barely graduated high school, and English was my worst subject. Growing up, some friends of mine would poke fun at my colorful use of the English language. It’s true; on certain occasions, I would pronounce words a little off. Okay, they were outright

wrong. But in my defense, this was not my fault. This was the doing of my dear, sweet, Polish mother and my loving grandmother. They would twist the English language just enough so you weren’t sure if it was your hearing or their pronunciation. Some of their classic word enhancements were: pellow, melk, kinnygarden, and bailingsuit, to name a few. I do remember repeatedly asking my poor grandmother what number came after two, and she would always deliver the answer with her glowing smile, “tree.”

When I was around 13 years old, I was already in full pursuit of my rock-n-roll dream. Perfecting my guitar playing was my only goal until I realized I needed to polish my grammar to further my songwriting career. Luckily for me, my best friend Dave Gersztyn was a master of the English language. I mean, this

guy would read an entire book on the way to a gig. He would even read in the bathtub! How do I know that? One day, I went to his house to witness his Hunter Davis Beatle biography book basking in the sunshine, totally soaked and swollen like a wet sponge.



GARY AND ERICA SPANIOLA

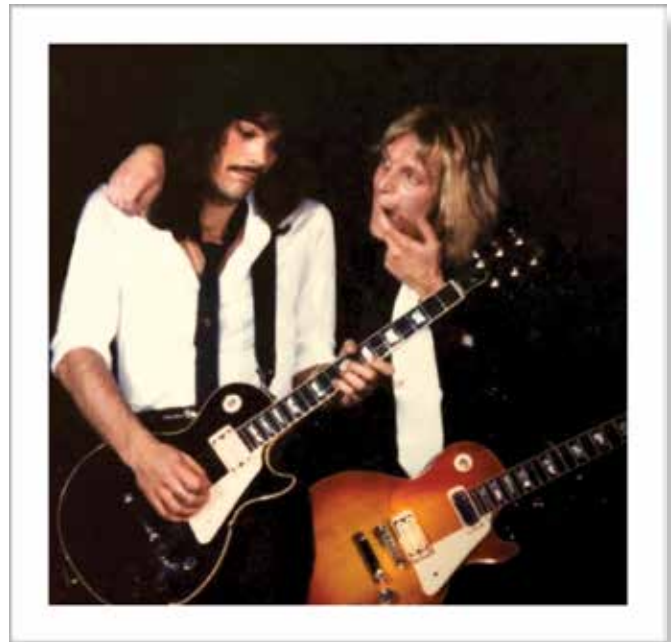
Years passed, and my wife Erica was teaching education classes at Arizona State University. Sure, she has those fancy degrees hanging on the wall and respect from her highly educated peers, but her real training was achieved on me! She taught me the important grammar rules like “funner” is not a word, and you’ll have to put a period in that sentence at some point. She even tried to explain pronouns, pre-verb, adja-nouns, blah, blah, blah.

Where was I? Oh ya! I thought it would be a great idea to include some of these moments from my life and put them in a book.

We all have moments of highlight and sorrow in our lives. We share the highlights to make others smile; we share the sorrows to let others know they are not alone.

I would like to extend a truly heartfelt thank you for taking the time to be part of my new moment. I truly hope you enjoy this book. If I get you to smile, I have succeeded.

God bless,
Gary Spaniola



GARY SPANIOLA • DAVE GERSZTYN


























ANNE SPANIOLA (MOM)



CATHERINE SCHNEIDER (GRANDMA)



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