

Contact: John Snyder
357 Cornwallis Drive
Mocksville, NC 27028
PH: 336.769-8855
CELL: 336.409.1660
johnsnyder@johnsnyder.net
www.johnsnyder.net

NEWS RELEASE: December, 2011

Grandma's Christmas Memories Inspire Novel

A few years ago at Christmastime, while visiting his grandmother, Anna Snyder, in LaVale, MD, John Snyder began asking her about her childhood, about her Christmas memories, and what it was like growing up in the early 1900s in Meyersdale, PA. As they sat at the kitchen table eating left-over Christmas cookies and sipping their coffee, the elder Snyder told her grandson about one Christmas, in particular, that was her most memorable.

Snyder was so intrigued by the tale; he drove from LaVale to Meyerdsale with his wife and his two daughters to visit the small western Pennsylvania town where his grandmother grew up, and where his father was born.

The town remained much as Snyder remembered it from his childhood visits there to see his great-grandmother, Elda Beal. When he arrived at the address of his grandmother's memories, Snyder discovered that the house was gone and the lot vacant. As he stood there in the snow, he tried to visualize his grandmother's childhood home as he replayed her story in his head. On the more than 3-hour drive back to his home, Snyder couldn't stop thinking about the story. As he tapped his finger on the steering wheel in time to a Christmas tune playing on the car stereo, the idea occurred to him that he should write down the story his grandmother told him so his children would always have her Christmas memory. Hopefully, they would pass it along to their children – and the story would live within his family forever.

Over the next few years, Snyder wrote and re-wrote different versions of the story, adding to it and elaborating on the tale. "What started out as a short story for my daughters, ended up as this 184-page hardcover Christmas gift book entitled THE GOLDEN RING", said Snyder. The advancing age of his grandmother served as strong motivation for him to complete his mission. And ninety, she was in excellent health, but he knew that soon time would take her from him. Unable to find a publisher, Snyder decided to publish the book himself ... and he did. Initially, he printed 5,000 copies. Snyder anxiously awaited its arrival from the printer and with great anticipation he was finally able to place a copy of THE GOLDEN RING in her hand. "I still vividly remember her enthusiastic smile when she held the finished book for the first time." The hometown newspaper was there for the occasion. It was writing an article about Mrs. Snyder, and the book written by her grandson. The last photograph taken of Snyder's grandmother was taken by the newspaper photographer for the feature article. Ironically, Snyder's grandmother quietly passed away in her sleep just days later. She would never have the opportunity to read the article.

"I remember how beautiful she looked that day. I remember the joy in her eyes when I gave her the book. We buried my grandmother on the day before Thanksgiving – one day before the article was published. With her, we buried her copy of THE GOLDEN RING," the author said. After its release, THE GOLDEN RING quickly became a best seller everywhere it was available. All 5,000 copies sold out that year. The following year Snyder printed 25,000 copies. It was among the top selling books in the Washington, DC DMA, outselling many books atop the *New York Times Bestseller List*, as THE GOLDEN RING was featured in *Family Circle Magazine* and other media, both local and national. Between October and December of that year, all 25,000 copies were sold.

People stood in long lines at book signings to have Snyder personalize their copy. Snyder recalls going to one book signing and seeing a long line leading from the front doors of a Borders Bookstore to the signing table near the rear of the store. "I thought perhaps there was a well known author who had a signing before me and that there was still a line," Snyder said. "The closer I got to the signing table; it became more apparent that all those people were there for me. I signed books, one after another, for a solid 2-hours without a break. What a tremendously gratifying feeling." He said.

Snyder was surprised at how deeply his book touched many of those who read it. "I receive many letters, e-mails and telephone calls from readers all over the world who have the nicest things to say." At book signings, some were moved to tears when telling Snyder how deeply they were touched by the story.

Due to the success of the self published edition of THE GOLDEN RING, Warner Books signed Snyder to a book contract and published the book under the Warner Books label. Additionally, a prominent German publisher purchased the German language rights and published the book in Germany. Snyder's relationship with Warner Books was a rocky one, as they failed to sell as many books as Snyder did on his own. As a result, the author sought and received a reversion of rights to his work. He purchased the remaining Warner Books stock and is now selling both versions of the book.

The story is set in a small Pennsylvania town in the year 1918. It takes readers back to a nostalgic era when times were simpler. "THE GOLDEN RING is a touching Christmas story about giving, faith, love and loss. It is a good, wholesome story that has family appeal," said Snyder. "People of all ages, both men and women, have told me they have enjoyed the book tremendously."

By visiting the book's web site, www.johnsnyder.net, readers can to read the prologue, plus the first three chapters of the book on-line. They will also be able to learn more about the author, and his motivation for writing the book. The site has copies of the numerous articles written about the book and author, as well as, reviews and comments from readers. The hardcover book retails for \$15.95 and is available at a limited number of stores. Readers can receive an autographed copy and free shipping at www.johnsnyder.net.

Snyder just completed another book; JACOB'S BELL and is awaiting publication. He is also working with a well-known producer in LA writing a screenplay for THE GOLDEN RING.

Here is what the media has said about THE GOLDEN RING

"I read a lot of fiction, particularly Christian fiction. And I enjoy novellas, particularly Christmas stories. Having read scorers of them over the past decade or so, I can say without reservation that in every regard -- style, story, substance -- *The Golden Ring* merits a place on the Christmas Classics shelf right alongside *A Christmas Carol*, *The Other Wise Man* and more contemporary bestsellers VanLiere's *The Christmas Shoes* or Richard Paul Evans' *The Christmas Box*."

Randall Murphree
American Family Association

"A new book published last year must be added to your collection and given as gifts. THE GOLDEN RING by John Snyder is destined to become a classic that will be read chapter by chapter by anyone who wants to get closer to the essence of Christmas."

Jill Kamp
The Washington Times - Washington, DC

"THE GOLDEN RING is not only a meaningful gift for those you love, but will also serve as a catalyst for giving and receiving your own family stories. What better package to place under the tree?"

Jamie Whitfield
BookPage

"This is a book that is a must read for the holidays."

Ella Leasure
Morning Personality - WROG-FM Hit Country 102.9 - Cumberland, MD

"One of the most incredible stories I have run across for a long time." ... "This is a story you'll want to read every Christmas." ... "It really puts the heart into what the Christmas season should be all about." ... "It's a beautiful story that embodies the true meaning of Christmas." ... "A few tears came to my eyes when reading this book." ... "It makes you feel warm all over. It was so realistic, I put myself in every scene. I was there."

Dr. Jerry Fuller
Talk Show Host - WGTS-FM - Silver Spring, MD

"Here is a story that deals with the real meaning of Christmas. This is the kind of story you that you could sit around with the entire family and read. It's very entertaining - very heart-warming."

Doug Griffith - WAYM-FM - Nashville, TN

"The Golden Ring is a touching, beautiful Christmas story that brought tears to my eyes. John Snyder has captured the true spirit of Christmas, both the religious & festive sides of the holiday. Surprisingly, it is a true story that his beloved Grandmother told him one Christmas a little while before she passed away. I loved this book. I recommend it for a good Christmas read. It's definitely a four-tea-cupper!"

RebeccaReads.com

Excerpts from some cards, letters and emails written by readers ...

"I just had to write to you after finishing your book, THE GOLDEN RING. It is 2:00 A.M. here in Wilmington, DE. I started your book before going to bed at midnight and just finished, WOW! What a story!!!! There are not many stories that have affected me as much. The true spirit and meaning of Christmas was found in our book and I so wanted to share that with you. Thank you for the wonderful story, I plan to save this and share it with my girls some day, and there aren't too many books you can say that about." - **Ellen Anderson, Wilmington, DE**

"This is one of the best books I have read in a very long time. I could just about feel the snow on my face as I read it. Thank you for your talent and ability to put this story on paper." - **Linda Tyndall, Creedmoor, NC.**

"The book made me cry, smile & laugh. Very enjoyable reading." - "I thought it was one of the most beautiful stories I have ever read." - **Katherine, Los Angeles, CA.**

"I was unable to put it down except, of course, to replenish my tissue supply." - **Sandra Robinson, Stafford, VA.**

"It was one of the best books I have ever read, and I read a lot! I am anxious to read your new novel you are working on. I loved your characters, they were so real. Thanks again for your wonderful book." - **Carolyn Melton, Cedar Rapids, IA.**

"After September 11th, my family joined the world in sorrow. Everyone in my family said that they didn't want to celebrate Christmas in our usual fashion of decorating, they'd rather not even put up a tree. My family compromised with me - we will just put up a tree and I will decorate a small pine in front of the house with red, white and blue lights and Angels on either side to honor those we have lost in the Trade Center. But it is because of your book that I was able to do this with new understanding of Christmas. Thank you so much for your book. I will take it out every year to place on my coffee table to share." – **Angela, New York**