

Good morning everyone. I'm Ilsa Weinert, George's granddaughter.

On behalf of Jo Ann and the rest of the family, thank you for making time to remember George and support Jo Ann. I'd like to share with you all one of my happiest memories of him. Thinking about it always makes me smile, and I hope it will make you smile too.

One particularly hot summer weekend when I was about five or six, I distinctly recall going over to my grandparents house, barging into my grandfather's study and announcing rather defiantly, "Opa, I'm bored." My grandfather was amazingly good at finding fascinating things to do with his time due to his years of

working as a chemist and background in biology; he was a scientist.

In all of his endless patience, he smiled at me and said, "I have an idea, but we'll have to be pretty careful, because we might burn something down." My younger self was jumping for joy, simply because he had just used two phrases that interested me greatly: *idea* and *burn something down*.

He stood up from his chair, walked over to the printer, and brandished a piece of paper at me. Opa then stated, "We'll be needing this later," rather ominously. Imagine my surprise when he reached over to his desk and pulled out a magnifying glass.

I'm fairly certain I would have lost all interest but for the fact that the next words he said were, "I can teach you how to set fire to paper with a magnifying glass, if you're interested. This is how your school's old gym burned down." I think I squealed at this, and my eyes probably grew to be as wide as saucers.

We went outside and sat down on the brick path, and he placed the piece of paper between us. Opa explained to me that for this to work, the sun had to be overhead, and did I see that there was a large bright spot in the magnifying glass where the light went through? He explained that one has to rotate and move the glass so that the spot would become smaller and more focused.

After several minutes, a wisp of smoke emerged from the paper. It was barely visible, but Opa noticed it almost immediately after the first lick of it was emitted from the paper. He pointed to it and said, "Look! You're almost there. Just adjust it a hair more..." I followed his brilliant advice and sure enough, a brown mark grew on the paper, slowly grew wider, and then finally, a very transparent flame emerged. I remember giggling, and then blowing it out. He just smirked and said, "Guess we'll have to try again!"

We spent the rest of the day doing this, and when we were prepping dinner later that evening, Oma asked what we had been doing outside for so long. I proudly announced that Opa had been teaching me how to start a fire using a magnifying glass, only for her to turn to Opa, place her hands on her hips, and say, "George!" in that tone of exasperation perfected after years of loving each other so incredibly much.

My Opa was an incredible person who we were ridiculously lucky to have in our lives- whether that was as a teacher, a friend, a partner in crime, a relative, a father, a husband, or as a grandfather. This day was a ton of fun, and we'll miss him dearly.