

# **The Best Money Can Buy**

By Matt Shea

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This Book Is Dedicated To My Daughter,  
Laura Marie Shea



My daughter, Laura, (pictured here with yours truly) has always made me happy. A happiness accompanied with many laughing sessions and a magic that keeps us both young forever. Laura, you are that one special girl whose always *my little girl*.

Hope you like the book!

Love you!

Dad

## We Can't Forget the Cover



Thank you, Renée, for finding time to add your artistic touch to another book cover for me- this being the fourth one!

It's only been the last three plus years Renée considers living her second childhood through her artwork. She uses mainly acrylic paints but is adding watercolor and color pencil.

Also any photography in my books have been done by Renée as well. She is currently collecting a series of photographs for an exhibition.

Renée most enjoys the freedom in Expressive Abstracts, Representation, Impressionism and mixed media. She displays in local art shows, including the Seattle Recycle Art Fair. In just a few years, she has already been awarded Artist of the Month several times in the local art club. Additionally, she is a floral designer of 35 years, and continues to use her talents for weddings, home, office and church decor.

Renée plans to have her own website in the near future, (she says, "I'm a right brain person, techie stuff is Greek to me!") but for now you may contact her and view much of her artwork on Facebook at Artistic Xpressions by Renée Klause.

Thanks again, Renée. Looking forward to our next book cover!

Wishing you blessings.

Matt

A Special Thanks To  
'This Week In America With Ric Bratton'



Matt Shea Books is grateful to Ric, his famous radio show; as well as his family and staff. Ever since my first paperback came out, *The Groundskeeper And Other Short Stories*, Ric has taken notice and extended his hand.

Ric has then gone further by encouraging me as a writer and being a friend throughout the year including birthdays and holidays. He has even sent me gift cards to coffee shops as a treat for the seniors I volunteer for!

All this from a radio personality heard the world over! A guy from the Eastern part of the country who took notice of my little operation on the West Coast.

Ric, thank you so much for entering our lives and always let me know if there is anything we can do for you!

*And we love your show!*

Matt and the gang

It's The 'Jupiter Rising Show'  
Starring  
Eileen Grimes  
With Her Co-host Doug Johnston!



'The Jupiter Rising Show' is clearly one of the most talked-about radio shows from our area. It airs on 1150 AM on KKNW. This plays on Saturdays from 11:00 am to 12:00 noon and is located in Bellevue, Washington. It's a spontaneous talk show which evolves around world-renown astrologers Eileen Grimes and her co-host Doug Johnston. A potent combination where each exceeds twenty-eight years in the field!

After that, things begin to get a bit crazy...

Their guests range from fellow astrologers who are widely known, to other such personalities including famous psychics, authors (*like me*) and a host of various other interests that goes all directions. They even have a nut from Ireland who gets on once in a while. An amazing individual who has charmed the world with his fascination of tracking airline flights!

Eileen and Doug are also known to make an appearance at fairs and clubs. Eileen also has a very popular 'Readings After Dark'. A two-hour session at the famous Bur's Restaurant in Lakewood, Washington on Wednesday Nights. You can actually go back in time to a local landmark of seventy years, have a traditional home-cooked meal, meet Eileen and have her personally do a reading for you. It's from 6:30 pm to 8:30ish. It's an evening that will bring you back!

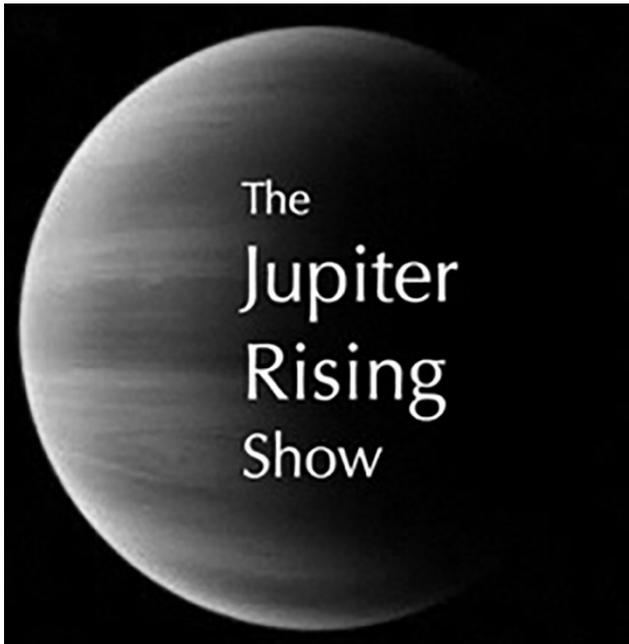
I guarantee !

I Can't express how fun it is when they allow me to join them on live radio!  
My friends and family all listen in, and rib me about it later...

Eileen and Doug; thanks for everything and let's go out to dinner soon!

*And your show is fantastic!*

Matt



## Special Thanks

This writer has never covered any ground on his own. If I didn't have the Ella Rays and the Sally Jones out there who took the time to review my rough drafts and offer suggestions; I'd go nowhere.

Sally Jones out of Indiana was an educator for the elementary school system for thirty-nine years. She has also acted as a principle. She was unbelievably outstanding when it came to editing, storyline and encouragement. Sally proved to be an ideal fit for this project. For that, I thank her!

Ella Ray has been with me from the very start. Every one of my publications has been assisted by Ella's genius and dedication.

Girls: You're the best!

Matt-

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# Introduction

SOMEWHERE IN THE OUTSKIRTS of small-town USA lies a small oval track.

It can be found at the end of a lonely road nestled amongst the tall trees. An otherwise undeveloped area where only one house stood. It's here where the local legend had made a name for himself: Stanley Victor Hampton, alias *Rusty Hampton*.

This homegrown sprint car champion was every schoolboy's idol. The guy who usually won, visited classrooms and signed autographs. That *big brother* image who often remembered your name in the grocery store and wished you a good day.

When racing season was underway, this site was the most popular place in town. On more than one occasion, famous names were even seen mingling in the pits!

On any given day, somewhere, someone in town was mentioning the thirty-two year old's name. It seemed that the wiry, handsome man who stood at 6'-1" with dark brown hair and Frank Sinatra-blue eyes had it all: a fast racer, a beautiful wife, and the charisma that would surely cast him a leading role in Hollywood.

*There was another side to the coin, however.*

Much like the many who wanted to grow up to be just like him, he, too, had a quest that eluded him throughout life. *A feeling that something was always missing.*

Matt Shea

The dashing man who always had a float in the local parades and fans who emulated him on Halloween *always felt an emptiness deep inside*. Throughout life, this product of adoption yearned to know *who* he actually was. More important, he needed to find out *why he was different...*  
And now our story begins.

# Chapter 1

SWEAT CONTINUED TO DRIP OFF Rusty Hampton's eyebrow as he polished the last wheel.

Upon finishing, he stood to use his tattered sleeve for a final time, wiping his face as if it were a washcloth. He stepped back and tossed a damp rag on his workbench. It was now time to inspect the labor of love just completed. Leaning forward, he meticulously began to survey the ever-important project that consumed his entire morning. Slowly, a concerned look became one of pride. Soon he could only marvel at what he was looking at.

What stood before him was a glistening display of four-wheeled modern art that turned heads. The latest in a long line of chariots that embraced his name in vibrant colors. A sparkling sensation that suggested he was getting closer to his childhood dream: *the Indy 500*.

Testimony that *races are won in the wintertime*.

It was moments like this that allowed the boy in one Rusty Hampton to come out. Doing a silent *Jitterbug step*, he walked out of his shop and entered an adjoining room.

Rusty was now in the other part of his *man cave*, where an old wooden desk and oversized leather chair awaited him. This grossly mismatched set fit in perfectly with the confines that smelled of Armor All and Windex. Rusty was in his element and leaned back, resting his feet on the desk.

Scanning from side to side, he glanced at the many framed newspaper articles that had his name in bold print.

Pictures that graced every local newsstand. All newcomers had their jaws drop when they saw that *two* display cases were needed to hold the many trophies he had won!

Souvenirs such as checkered flags, various car parts that had stories attached to them, and more framed pictures with celebrities were displayed in an unorthodox fashion. There was also an old coffee table that held racing programs from every event he ever entered. An old television set and a semi-obsolete computer helped balance out the equation.

*There was more.*

To the far left was the bathroom. A home-built do-it-yourself project that was still in progress — but functional! Finally, there was the customary 1970s off-white refrigerator that almost touched the backside of his desk (giving easy access).

What more could a man want?

All seemed in order as Stanley Victor Hampton reached over and placed a faded red baseball cap on his head. A trademark that had always followed him.

Questions now arise:

*Why the hat; and where did the name ‘Rusty’ come from anyway?*

To answer these questions, one would have to hold on to Rusty’s hand and travel back twenty-five years. We now find our star sitting in front of a cake with seven lit candles...



Stanley’s seventh birthday found him surrounded by state workers who wore party hats. The employees put forth their best effort by wearing a smile while singing “Happy Birthday.” When their shift ended, they wished him well and went home to their families.

The seven-year-old was once again left behind; but this time like a prisoner after visitation hours. The youth, who was recovering from two failed foster homes, was on a downward spiral in life. He now resided in a youth center that had him on probation.

It was obvious that Stanley was just another abandoned child who entered life like a hot potato — bouncing from one

group care setting to another. At an early age he concluded one thing: that no one would ever have him *unless there was a payoff*.

It wasn't long after his birthday when a meaningful event changed his life.

He was on a mountain retreat with other boys his age. The counselors involved were a group of good men he had never met before. It was essentially a clean slate where no one seemed to know anyone's background— or even care.

On this outing, he was treated like a man. When volunteers were asked to scout around for firewood, Stanley's hand immediately rose. Without receiving any cautions about the wilderness, he and others simply *went* to challenge the task. When it was time to fish, one of the men pointed at the gear and said, "You know what to do..."

It was the first day in his life where he felt *normal* and not branded by the stigma he had to start life with.

The outing then reached its pinnacle.

Rain drops started to lightly fall around the campfire. Drops that could only give a light sprinkle, but still required covering.

Stanley was enjoying every aspect of this trip and welcomed the rain. When asked if he would like to take shelter under a branch, he gave this response: "It's just a little rain. Besides, I like it!"

Then came a life-changing moment. A likeable old cuss said, "Then you better have this..." A red baseball cap appeared from nowhere and was placed on his head.

Stanley peered under the visor and replied, "Gee, thanks!"

"Why don't you keep it?" suggested the old man. "Then we can call you *Rusty*..."

The boy was flabbergasted to be gifted a grownup hat and questioned his good luck. "Really?" he replied.

"Really!" explained the man as he reached over to shake *Rusty's* hand.

Wonderful emotions hit the boy on all sides. Among other things, he liked the sound of 'Rusty.' Knowing that it would be the furthest thing from an insult, he wanted to know more. "Why Rusty?" he asked.

“Its a perfect name for an honorable rugged guy like you — even if you don’t have red hair,” said the old timer. “Don’t worry,” he chuckled. “With this hat and that great character of yours, you’ll make a fine Rusty!”

The other counselors all put in their two cents’ worth.

“That name is perfect for you!”

“You are a ‘Rusty’ if I ever saw one!”

“You will get famous with that name!”

“The girls are going to tear you apart!”

Rusty beamed with pride accepting his new name. For the rest of that trip he wore his hat and was known as ‘Rusty.’ *A name he loved!*

The night at the campfire changed his life. The boy who was still searching for a family had just acquired his first milestone:

*He established his identity.*

# Chapter II

THE UPCOMING WEEKEND was especially important for Rusty Hampton. It was Golden Hills' annual Spring Spectacular.

A two-day event where the main drag of town was closed off for the celebration. This stretch of three blocks would have exhibits and displays from local businesses and charities, along with the school system making its presence known. Vendors along with clowns, jugglers, and musicians would fill in the gaps.

It was here where our champion always stole the show. The latest # 37 would once again be the main draw where flocks would gather to meet Rusty. The white man-eater with rich gold, red, and black highlights was further enhanced by the dazzling trophies that surrounded it, all dancing in unison under the sun. It was as if a rock concert was about to start.

Despite the many artifacts that spelled out glory, there was one more touch that surpassed everything: The slender, attractive woman who handed out autographed pictures and helped sell shirts. His one-of-a-kind wife, Jean. The model wore one of the lively '*Go! Rusty, Go!*' shirts that had a picture of his car, along with his number and a checkered flag.



Jean Marie Hampton was the Florence Nightingale in Rusty's life.

Matt Shea

The 5'–2" beauty with long blonde hair and blue eyes was of a quiet, sophisticated nature. She also held a record in Rusty's life: Jean was the sole survivor from his early childhood, being the only one having known him since grade school. *It was as if she was the soul mate he needed in life.*

True, opposites have been know to attract, but this phenomena seemed to go off into infinity. Rusty's marriage was indeed one of unconditional love, not one where each complimented the other.

It would be safe to say that Jean was watching over the boy she secretively cheered for. *The one who was dealt an unfair hand from the very beginning.*

