

**My Interview  
Of  
John Morgan Rex**



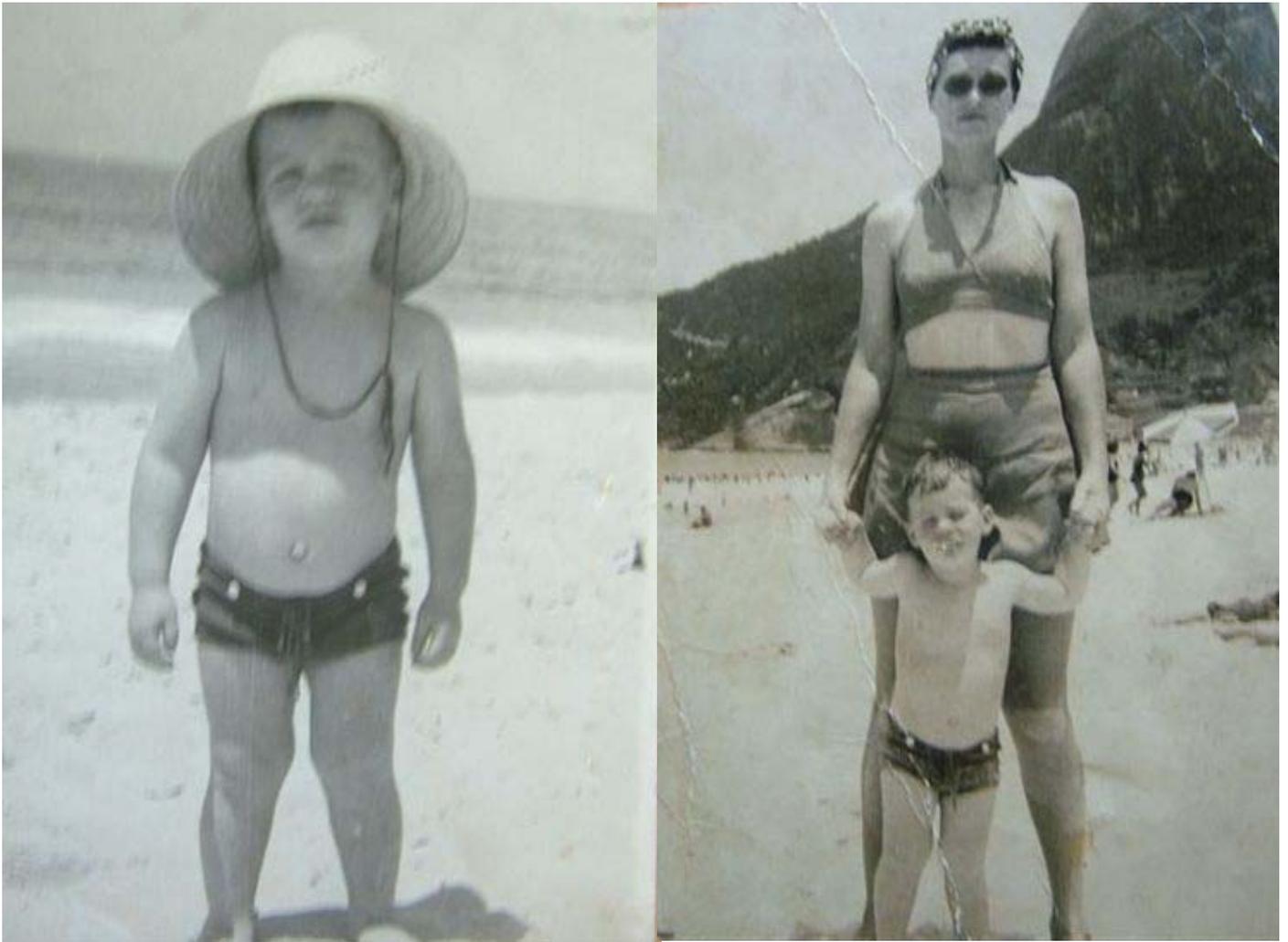
**Jordan Rex  
December 15, 2005  
Sixth Grade  
Melinda Heights Elementary**

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## **Introduction**

John Morgan Rex was born on March 8, 1942 in Tacoma Park, Maryland, just outside of Washington, DC. His parents were Harold Morgan Rex and Diania Haycock. He is my grandpa and that's why I chose him.



**Ipanema Beach, Brazil, 1943, 1944**

## **Early Life**

His original name when he was born was Michael. But, a few days before he was born, his uncle, John Morgan Rex, was shot down off the coast of Australia by Japanese forces. His parents, Harold M. Rex and Diana Haycock Rex renamed him in honor of his uncle.

His early childhood was filled with travel. His father got a job with the United States government in Rio de Janeiro Brazil. John and his mother lived in Utah while his dad went to Brazil to find a place for them to live. When he was ready, it took John and his mother seven days to travel to Rio, first by train to Chicago, then train to Miami. Then by amphibious airplane from Miami through the Caribbean and down the east coast of South America to Brazil.

He lived in Brazil for seven years, and then lived in Bolivia, Peru and Paraguay in South America, Trinidad in the Caribbean Islands, and Libya in North Africa. He was the oldest of five children, four boys and one girl. Their names are John (my grandpa) Jeff, Yara, Judd and Jay. Except for him, all were born in South America. Most of the children learned to speak English, Portuguese and Spanish.



**Family Picture in Brazil**

He enjoyed traveling with his dad in a jeep through the jungles in Brazil and singing songs with him even though neither of them could sing very well.

He always had pets growing up, especially dogs and horses. The first horse he had was sort of mean to him. One day she

stepped on his foot and

wouldn't get off. He yelled and screamed but she wouldn't budge. Finally, after sitting on the ground for a while, he got an idea. He stood up, leaned over, and bit her on the leg. She immediately got off his foot and he rode her back to town.

He always rode horses, and even raced as a jockey in Paraguay. Some of his favorite memories come from riding his horse into the mountains in

Paraguay and meeting the Guarani Indians who lived there. They were always very friendly and invited him to have dinner or lunch with them. He remembers one phrase from the Indian language the he learned. It is: Ipo Na Caba Ju Moro Ti. In English that means, “That is a beautiful sorrel horse you’re riding.” Sorrel is a color of horse that is sort of brownish red.

He was outside a lot as a kid, and got sunburned a lot. They lived in La Paz, Bolivia, a city that is at 15,000 feet above sea level. His mom said that she thought the whole time they lived there his nose was peeling. That’s not too good for a person with light skin and reddish hair.

## **Young Adulthood**

Since he didn't live in the United States most of the time he didn't have the opportunity to go to schools like we do. He was mostly taught at home by his mother. When he was in High School he lived in Libya near a huge United States Air Force Base. Finally, he was able to go to a real school. This was also the first place he ever went to movies and the first dance he ever went to with American girls. His favorite dog was a German Shepherd named Kitten he had as a teenager in Libya.



**Old Village in Libya**

After living in Libya he moved back to Washington, DC and went to High School there for a year. He was on the track team and the football team. He “lettered” in both sports – that means he got awards in both and had a letterman’s jacket. The next summer the family moved to Trinidad, an island in the Caribbean. He snorkeled and dived in the ocean and learned to spear fish. He lived there only for the summer, then moved to Salt Lake City, Utah and lived with his grandma from his mother’s side and went to his senior year of high school there. He was on the track team there.



**Running Track in High School**

It was very strange for him to live in the United States for long periods of time. He lived in a city, with no horse and no dog, and that was strange, too. His first car was a little Fiat two-door coupe. He used to put a lot of friends in it with him, and got a ticket for that once.



**Grandpa's Cool Car**

His grandfather (his father's father) owned a ranch in Randolph, Utah, a few hours away near Wyoming. His grandpa would sometimes call him and ask if he would come help him herd cows and take care of the ranch. He loved to do that and sometimes skipped school to do it.

When he was growing up outside of the United States his mother always ordered American clothes for the family from the Sears catalog. He almost always wore Levi's jeans and flannel shirts. He was happy to live in the United States and have a choice in clothes.

His senior year of high school he met his future wife, Deann Dalton. He was afraid of her dad, but really liked her and was persistent. They got married after they graduated from high school. They had a small wedding with just a few family members.

Since he grew up outside of the United States they didn't get to see much news of what went on at home. They hardly ever got to see movies or read magazines. But, he remembers the wars, both the U.S. ones and the ones that happened in the countries where he lived.

## **Adulthood**

They lived in Utah for a couple of years where their first two children were born, my uncle John and my dad, Daniel. Then they moved to Bogota, Colombia, where he worked for Braniff Airlines. Since he could speak English, Spanish, and Portuguese, he was a valuable employee. After a couple of years they moved to New York, New York, where he worked at Kennedy International Airport. He still worked for Braniff as an operations manager.

His children started to grow up and when the oldest child was in Kindergarten they decided to move away from the big city. They moved back to Utah where grandpa went to Brigham Young University. He always loved books and reading, so he majored in English. He enjoyed raising his family there where they could go camping, ride horses, go hunting, and ride motorcycles. They had a big yard and planted a garden every year and canned the vegetables to be eaten later. In 1975, when my dad was 11, my Aunt Summer was born.



**What a handsome man!**

Two things my grandpa really remembers from those years were the end of the war in Vietnam and President Nixon and Watergate. Although he didn't go to Vietnam some of his cousins did and not all of them came home alive. He told me a bunch of stuff about Watergate that I didn't understand.

He and my Grandma have worked together in their real estate business for a long time. They like working together and being in charge of themselves.

My grandpa still loves to ride horses. He is 63 years old and last year still competed in horse races that are 50 miles long through the mountains. He is very proud of his children who he says have grown up to be good people.

## **Senior Citizenship**

My grandpa is getting older but he still acts like a kid sometimes. He has kept the same hobbies, riding horses, going on adventures in the mountains and the desert. He also likes to see his grandkids. He comes to California from Utah a lot to visit us. He likes to play with us and take us places, but he rally can't wrestle too much any more.



**John and Deann Rex**

My grandpa is very sick right now. I wrote before about how he always got sunburned as a kid. Now he has melanoma cancer. This is a kind of skin cancer that can spread fast in a person's body. His cancer started on the side

of his head by his left ear. He has had to have a couple of surgeries to take out the cancer. He has also had to be in chemotherapy, which makes him very sick. He was just in the hospital last week for a whole week having chemotherapy and is very sick so he can't come to the Holiday Program and Tea.

My grandpa has very strong opinions about our country. Since he lived outside of the country for so long, he says he really appreciates America and all the things we are able to do and have. He says we need to support our soldiers who fight for the country. He says if we don't like what the government is doing then we should do something about it and not just complain.

He tells me that getting a good education the best way to start life. He remembers times when he didn't have a school to go to and thinks I'm very blessed to live in a place like Rancho Santa Margarita and to have a great school and teachers. He says there aren't too many things that he would do differently in his life. He is proud of his family and wants me and his other grandkids to live good lives.

## **Conclusion**

It was very interesting interviewing my grandpa. I went to his house in Utah in interviewed him. Since he is sick with cancer he lay on his bed and I asked questions. He has done a lot more things than I ever knew about. I think it was cool that he lived in South America and Africa. He told me how important it is to be friends with all kinds of people from all over.

I love my grandpa a lot. We have had a lot of fun together so far in my life. I hope that he can beat cancer so we can still do things. My grandpa has taught me that you can have fun in life.

I had a good time interviewing him and listening later to the tapes I made. I plan on keeping the tapes so I can listen to them again later.