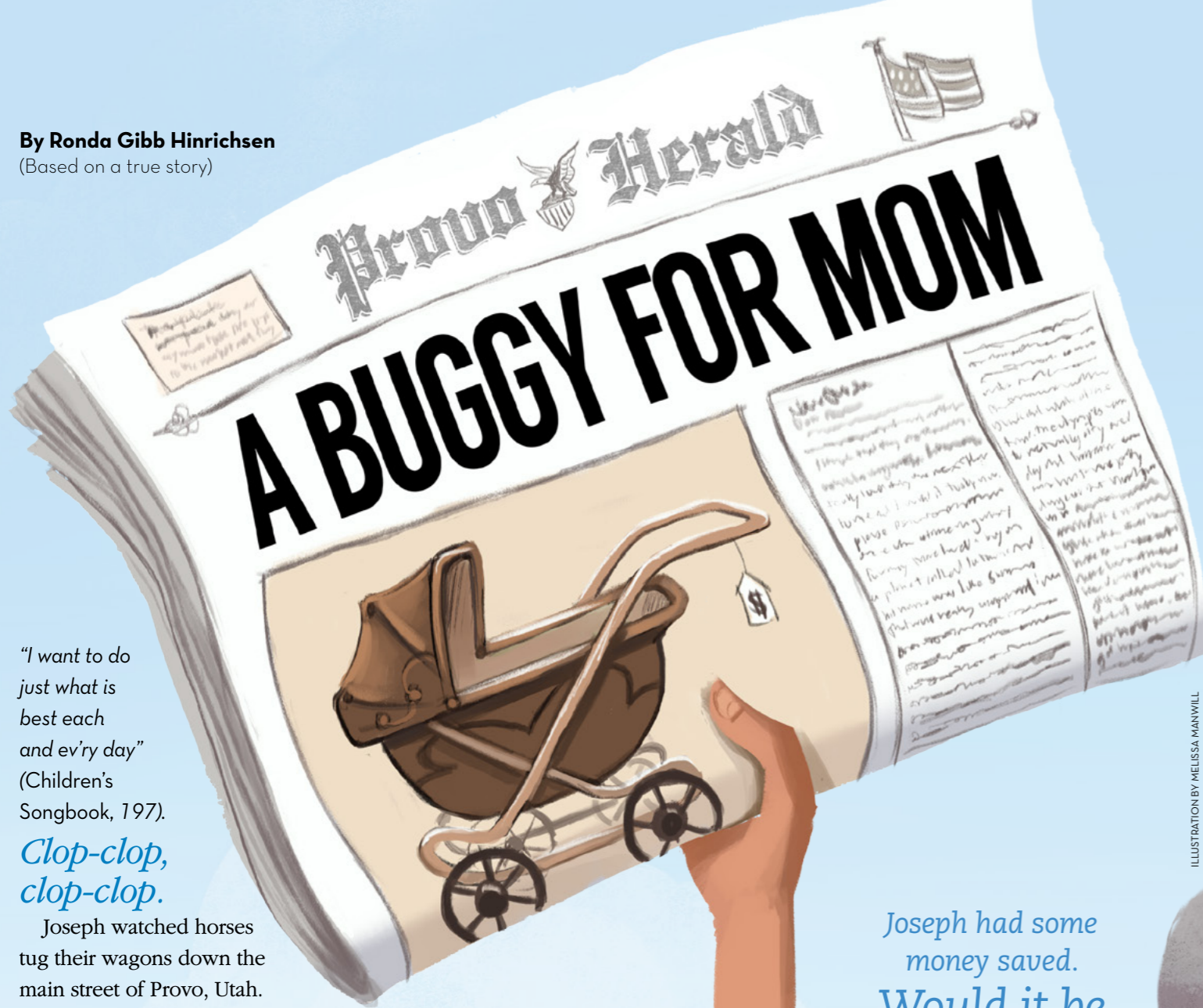


By Ronda Gibb Hinrichsen
(Based on a true story)



"I want to do just what is best each and ev'ry day" (Children's Songbook, 197).

Clop-clop, clop-clop.

Joseph watched horses tug their wagons down the main street of Provo, Utah.

People walked quickly past the brick buildings that lined the street, eager to get home at the end of the day. Joseph had only one more newspaper to sell, and then he could go home too.

"Get your paper!" He waved it over his head.

Some newsboys thought this job was boring, but not Joseph.

It reminded him of the busy marketplaces in Syria, where his family used to live.

"You are the oldest son, and your siblings look up to you," his father had told Joseph

Joseph had some money saved. Would it be enough?

ILLUSTRATION BY MELISSA MANWILL

one day as they walked through the market. "You must set a good example."

Joseph's memories were interrupted by a man walking toward him.

"Would you like to buy a paper?" Joseph asked him.

"Yes. Thank you, lad." The man handed a few coins to Joseph. He couldn't wait to add them to his savings at home!

A few minutes later, Joseph stepped onto his front porch. He took a deep breath. The air smelled delicious. "Lahmajoon," Joseph said with a happy sigh. He loved the taste of the pizza-like meat pies from his home country. He hoped it was time to eat.

But when he opened the door, instead of seeing dinner already on the table, he saw his mother struggling to take the meat pies out of the oven. His little sister, Leah, cried loudly and tugged at Mother's skirt.

"Let me help you with that," Joseph said.

"Thank you." Mother strained to lift Leah.

"She's getting too big to carry," Joseph said.

"My children are never too big for me to comfort," Mother answered.

A few days later, Joseph walked down the street, thinking of all Mother did for their family. And that's when he saw it! A baby buggy in the furniture store window. Suddenly he knew what he needed to do.

He ran inside.

"What can I do for you?" a gentleman asked.

"I want to buy a baby buggy for my mother."

"That is thoughtful, but do you have enough money?"

"I have two dollars now. If you will keep the buggy here, I'll come in every week and give you more until I've paid for it."

The man nodded. "Let's go and pick one out."

Joseph chose a brown leather buggy. It cost five dollars. He thought about how long it would take to earn the money.

Helping Mother will be worth it, he thought.

Weeks later, Joseph opened the kitchen door.

"You're home early," Mother said. She was facing away from Joseph, and he quietly pushed the buggy inside behind her back.

"Mother," he said, "I got you something!"

Mother turned around and saw the buggy. Her brown eyes grew round with surprise, and tears started flowing down her cheeks. "Oh, thank you, son," she said, hugging him tightly.

Later that night, when Joseph's father came home, Mother showed him the buggy. Father put his hand on Joseph's shoulder.

"I am proud of you. Very, very proud. You are a good example to the family."

Joseph couldn't stop smiling. It was amazing what hard work, stacks of newspaper, and a baby buggy could do. ♦

The author lives in Utah, USA.



One day my mom was very stressed. She had a lot of things going on, so I helped her. I played with my sister. And when my mom needed something, I came right away. I was very helpful that day. I hope I can do it again.

Morgan A., age 9, Florida, USA