

Rick D. Niece, Ph.D.



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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High-res photos available upon request

Perfect in Memory: Tender Reflections on a Mother's Love During Simpler Times

Ranked #1 on Amazon Kindle for memoirs; #9 on Amazon for books on parenting boys

CHANDLER, AZ (Fall, 2016)—Memories, like bubbles in the air, change shape over time. But memories continue to improve in their perfection instead of vanishing. This is how acclaimed author Rick D. Niece, Ph.D. describes the journey of recalling the beautiful life his mother provided in the simpler times of the 1950s and 60s. His new book, *Perfect in Memory: A Son's Tribute to His Mother* provides heartfelt remembrances to which many can relate.

"If we were as lucky as Rick Niece, Dortha Jean "Dodie" Niece will remind us of our own mothers. You'll find yourself smiling one moment and with tears in your eyes the next as you read," wrote Rex Nelson, columnist for the *Arkansas Democrat-Gazette*.

Perfect in Memory, the third and final book in the nostalgic, award-winning "Fanfare for a Hometown" series was released on September 1 and is based on Niece's life growing up in small town America. A celebration of the life of Niece's beloved mother, *Perfect in Memory* has ranked #1 on Amazon Kindle for memoirs and #9 on Amazon for books on parenting boys.

"The roles in the life of a family are often connected by the strength and enduring memories of one person. In our case, that person was our mother," says Niece. "It is a rare life that is perfect, but it is a blessed life that is perfect in memory."

Perfect in Memory represents the best of what a family achieved through the earnestness of their relationships, recapturing singular, iridescent moments that readers will wish were their own. Niece's first two books, *Side-Yard Superhero: Life Lessons from an Unlikely Teacher* and *The Band Plays On: Going Home for a Music Man's Encore*, have earned more than 15 national and regional awards. *Perfect in Memory* delivers the same uplifting reading

experience, making even the physical end of one of life's most important relationships bearable.

In further tribute to his mother, Dr. Niece and Five Star Publications, Inc. are partnering with Arkansas Hospice to donate one dollar from the sale of each book to the program dedicated to enhancing the quality of life for those facing serious illness and loss.

Perfect in Memory: A Son's Tribute to His Mother (ISBN: 978-1-58985-238-9, softbound; eISBN: 978-1-58985-239-6, eBook; \$15.95 US) is distributed worldwide by Midpoint Trade Books, Ingram Baker & Taylor, and eStarPublish.com. For more information, visit www.RickNieceBooks.com. To learn more about Five Star Publications, Inc. and its 30-year history of producing award-winning books for all ages, visit www.FiveStarPublications.com or call 480-940-8182.

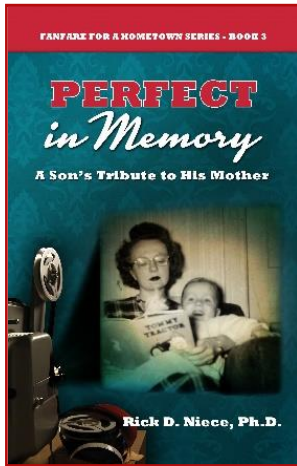
Professionals wishing to obtain a copy of *Perfect in Memory* for review are welcome to email a request to info@fivestarpublications.com, noting the title in the subject line.



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Perfect in Memory:
A Son's Tribute to His Mother
Fanfare for a Hometown series – Book 3
by Rick D. Niece, Ph.D.

FACT SHEET



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P.O. Box 6698, Chandler, AZ 85246-6698
Phone: (480) 940-8182 / Toll-free: (866) 777-5475
Price: \$15.95 US
Size: 6 x 9 (paperback, perfect-bound, 226 pages)
Pub Date: Summer, 2016
ISBN: 978-1-58985-238-9 **eISBN:** 978-1-58985-239-6
Website: www.RickNieceBooks.com
Distributors: Midpoint Trade Books, Ingram, Baker & Taylor, and
eStarPublish.com

ABOUT THE BOOK

“All I ever wanted in life was to be a good mother and to make everything perfect for my boys.”

“Mom, you are a good mother, and we tried to be good sons. But nothing is perfect, except in memory.”

Perfect in Memory: A Son's Tribute to His Mother is the third and final volume in Rick D. Niece's award-winning *Fanfare for a Hometown* series. Shared from the perspective of an adult son looking back with loving nostalgia on how his spirited, nurturing mother shaped his life, Niece's heartfelt stories are celebrations of family and the timeless endurance of a mother's love.

As Dodie Niece's life comes to a bittersweet end, Niece and his family gather at her bedside and share tender memories of their experiences in idyllic DeGraff, Ohio. Written as a tribute to a remarkable woman, *Perfect in Memory* focuses with tender reflection on the richness of simple gestures that make life so beautiful.

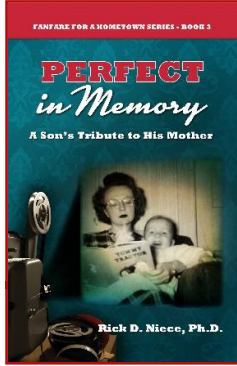
THE FANFARE FOR A HOMETOWN SERIES

Side-Yard Superhero: Life Lessons from an Unlikely Teacher and *The Band Plays On: Going Home for a Music Man's Encore* are the first two award-winning books in Dr. Rick D. Niece's nationally-

recognized *Fanfare for a Hometown* series. *Perfect in Memory: A Son's Tribute to His Mother* brings the series of personal, touching stories full circle. Each volume builds on the next as young Rickie grows to adulthood and shares memories that honor the three people who influenced him the most—his mother, Dodie Niece; his father, Lewis Niece; and Bernie Jones, a childhood friend with cerebral palsy.

WHAT MAKES *PERFECT IN MEMORY* UNIQUE?

Drawing closure to the *Fanfare for a Hometown* series, *Perfect in Memory* honors the lasting impact of childhood friends and family, while memorializing the effect small towns have on the children they help to raise. “Each one of us has an ‘automythography’ waiting to be written,” says Niece, and *Perfect in Memory* captures a piece of his own personal history in a way that resonates with readers from all walks of life.



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ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Rick D. Niece, Ph.D.

Rick D. Niece, Ph.D. is a lifelong educator who has served as a classroom teacher, public school administrator, and university professor, provost, and president. In 1997, he was named president of the University of the Ozarks in Clarksville, Arkansas, where he served successfully until his retirement in 2013. During his 16 years of presiding over a campus of 600 students, Dr. Niece raised over \$140 million and increased the university's endowment from \$25 million to \$96 million. The university trustees honored Dr. Niece by naming him president emeritus of the university.

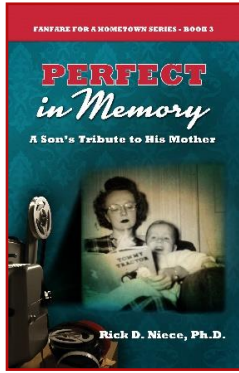
A small-town boy who has maintained his small-town values, Rick remembers his childhood with fond nostalgia. Growing up in picturesque DeGraff, Ohio, young Rickie was influenced by many endearing friends and neighbors who taught him the important life lessons that shaped his future—lessons he took with him from his early years as a newspaper boy to a distinguished career in academia. *Perfect in Memory: A Son's Tribute to His Mother* is the third book in the award-winning *Fanfare for a Hometown* series. Each book in the series is an “automythography” about Niece’s upbringing in DeGraff. The books celebrate his childhood in rich, vivid detail. Considering himself a “memory keeper,” Niece takes readers with him on a poignant journey back in time to a safe haven of heartfelt remembrances. *Perfect in Memory* honors his beloved mother, Dodie Niece. Vibrant, poetic, and charming, Rick Niece’s writing captures a bygone time of innocence and communal caring that small towns and kinder times provided, making DeGraff an open book that anyone who appreciates a strong narrative and memorable characters will want to read.

Dr. Niece is the recipient of numerous awards both as an author and an educator. His first book, *Side-Yard Superhero*, was named the *One Book, One Community* reading program selection in Arkansas at the University of Arkansas Community College at Morrilton, and in Ohio with the Tuscarawas County Literacy Coalition and Kent State University.

Following his retirement in 2013 as president of the University of the Ozarks in Clarksville, Arkansas, Dr. Niece and his wife, Sherée, moved from the campus to Hot Springs Village, Arkansas, where they enjoy traveling and the slower pace retirement offers.

SHORT BIO

Rick D. Niece, Ph.D. is an award-winning author and educator who has served as a classroom teacher, public school administrator, and university professor, provost, and president. His first book, *Side-Yard Superhero*, was named the *One Book, One Community* reading selection in Arkansas at the University of Arkansas Community College at Morrilton, and in Ohio with the Tuscarawas County Literacy Coalition and Kent State University. Now retired, Niece and his wife, Sherée, currently reside in Hot Springs Village, Arkansas.

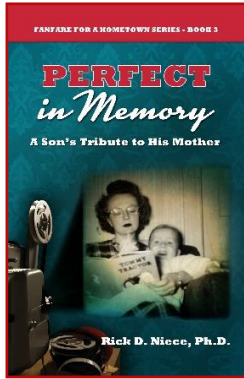


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AWARDS FOR THE
FANFARE FOR A HOMETOWN SERIES



- USA REBA Grand Prize Award
- Pinnacle Book Achievement Award
- Readers Favorites Silver Award, Non-Fiction Memoir
- Conversations Book Club Top 12 Choice
- Cyrus Webb “25 Books Every Man Should Read”
- National Indie Excellence Awards, Regional Non-Fiction Finalist
- New York Book Festival Honorable Mention
- Eric Hoffer Award Finalist
- Royal Dragonfly Book Awards, Biography/Memoir Honorable Mention and Newbie Non-Fiction Honorable Mention
- New Mexico-Arizona Book Award, Biography Finalist
- Reader Views Regional Great Lakes Winner, Reviewers Choice Award
- Dan Poynter’s Global eBook Bronze Award
- The Great Southeast Book Festival, Biography/Autobiography Honorable Mention
- The Great Northwest Book Festival, Biography/Autobiography Honorable Mention
- The Great Southwest Book Festival, Biography/Autobiography Honorable Mention



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ABOUT THE PUBLISHER



Linda F. Radke

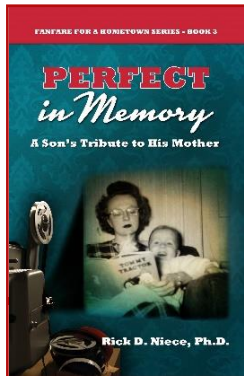
Linda F. Radke, president and founder of Five Star Publications, Inc., has been ahead of her game since 1985, producing and marketing award-winning books worldwide. Her clients and the media describe her as an industry leader in creativity, innovation, and customer service. Named “Book Marketer of the Year” by Book Publicists of Southern California, Radke has received numerous publishing, public relations and marketing awards and shares her publishing and marketing expertise at workshops and as a keynote speaker.

Many Five Star titles have been recognized across the globe, including one adapted for a major motion picture. Recent accolades include: National Book Festival Kids & Teachers Resources “52 Great Reads” selections; One Book, One Community designations in Ohio and Arkansas; ONEBOOKAZ for Kids; Southwest Books of the Year selections; Moonbeam Children’s Book Awards; and numerous Glyph, London Book Festival and Paris Book Festival honors. Five Star Publications has also been featured at events such as Arizona’s Official Centennial Celebration, Book Expo America, and the Arizona Public Schools Back to School Resource Fair.

Tireless in her efforts to help deserving authors achieve visibility, Radke is proud to sponsor the Dragonfly Book Awards program, a prestigious national contest recognizing exceptional authors for excellence in writing and publishing, and the Story Monsters Approved! program, where books are kid-tested and judge-certified, to help parents and educators choose titles that inspire, teach or entertain.

A former special education teacher for grades K-12, Radke is dedicated to improving children’s literacy skills and helping kids develop a love for reading and writing. As a result, she launched *Story Monsters Ink*, a monthly, subscription-based family magazine that provides the latest book news for kids, parents, librarians and educators. Furthermore, Radke founded Five Star Literacy Foundation, an organization dedicated to improving children’s literacy skills. Radke is also a member of the Children’s Book Council, National Federation of Press Women, and Independent Book Publishing Association.

Based in Chandler, Arizona, Linda F. Radke is passionate about her work and is invested in serving her community. Radke’s personal hobbies include camping, photography, and enjoying time with her family.



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BOOK DESCRIPTIONS

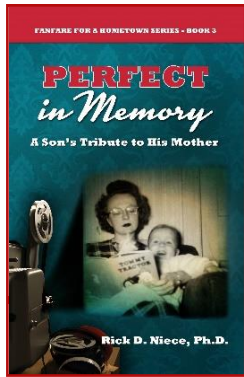
- 10 Words:** A tender reflection on the bond between mother and son.
- 15 Words:** A son's tender tribute to his mother during the last four days of her life.
- 25 Words:** Called home to support his family at his beloved mother's deathbed, a devoted son nostalgically shares tender reflections of his childhood and his mother's influence.
- 50 Words:** The third book in the nostalgic *Fanfare for a Hometown* series, *Perfect in Memory* celebrates the life of Rick D. Niece's beloved mother, Dortha Jean "Dodie" Niece. Written as a tribute to a remarkable woman, Niece's heartfelt remembrances focus with tender reflection on the richness that makes life so beautiful.
- 100 Words:** The third book in the award-winning *Fanfare for a Hometown* series, *Perfect in Memory: A Son's Tribute to His Mother*, is a gift Rick D. Niece wishes he had started sooner. Gathering with his family at his mother's bedside, Rick prepares to say goodbye to the woman who shaped his life and will live on through his memories. During the last four days of her life, Rick remembers his mother's legacy with tenderness. Savoring the "little moments" of life, he reflects upon his childhood in DeGraff, Ohio, and shares the carefully pocketed memories readers will wish were their own.

EXCERPTS

"Mothers remain their children's security blankets for life, somehow managing to keep ahold of our hands in spite of passing years and separating miles."

"During our moments of reflection, she seemed to regain some of the dignity the disease had stolen from her, and I think we both breathed more easily."

"We breathed as we wished she could breathe, and we waited."



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SUGGESTED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. How would you describe the *Fanfare for a Hometown* series? How does *Perfect in Memory: A Son's Tribute to His Mother* complement and complete the series?
2. What do you think made DeGraff, Ohio, such a special place to be raised?
3. *Perfect in Memory* reflects on the last four days of your mother's life. What made those days most difficult? What made them most bearable?
4. Several stories in the book celebrate the loving relationship shared by your parents. What was their secret?
5. What is the most important life lesson you learned from your mother?
6. Your first book, *Side-Yard Superhero*, is written from the perspective of young Rickie, while *The Band Plays On* is from the viewpoint of Rickie maturing into Rick. *Perfect in Memory* is narrated with the wisdom of middle-aged Rick. Is this progression symbolic?
7. The books in the *Fanfare for a Hometown* series are companion pieces written as "automythographies." What does this term mean? How is an automythography different from the more conventional autobiography?
8. *Perfect in Memory* is accented with poignant poetry. How does writing in verse complement your narrative?
9. You often refer to yourself as a small-town newspaper boy who grew up to become a university president. How did your mother shape this journey?
10. If you could see your mother one more time, what would you say to her? What do you think she would tell you?
11. How will readers benefit from reading your series of books?
12. Do you have any advice for aspiring writers?