

# ***Operation Clean Sweep***

**By:** Darleen Bailey Beard

**Publisher:** Farrar Straus Giroux

**Copyright:** 2004

**Genre:** Historical Fiction, Humorous Stories

**Lifeskills:** Caring, cooperation, courage, friendship, organization, problem solving

**SYNOPSIS:** Based on a historic event, *Operation Clean Sweep* is about a boy living in Umatilla, Oregon, in 1916. Corn finds himself in an impossible situation when he discovers that his mother is secretly planning to run against his father for the office of mayor. Although he loves both his parents, he has trouble getting used to the idea of a woman running for office, not to mention the idea of women actually voting. A parallel story involving a notorious pickpocket adds interest.

**BOOKTALK:** Imagine this: Your father, the mayor, is running for re-election. He's a good guy, but there is room for improvement. For example, he lets the town's chickens run wild in the street, so you're always stepping in chicken you-know-what when you go out. One day, quite by accident, you find out that your mother is ALSO planning to run for mayor! She's a little annoyed about the chickens and a few other things, like the gravestone in the middle of the street. Having two parents running for the same office is bad enough, but there's one more little detail: Your mother is not telling your father that she is running against him! What do you do? Oh, there's one other thing, it's 1916 and everyone knows that women aren't supposed to be involved in politics. Right? Read *Operation Clean Sweep*, by Darleen Beard, to find out what happens to Corn and his parents. This story is based on an actual historical event.

## **AUTHOR:**

### **Darleen Bailey Beard**

Darleen Bailey Beard remembers her fifth grade year as a "life changing experience" because her teacher, Mrs. Schickling, had her students write newspaper articles, stories, and even their own books. As an adult, Darleen dedicated her first book, *The Pumpkin Man from Piney Creek*, to Mrs. Schickling. In college, Darleen studied professional writing. She enjoys visiting schools to speak to students about her books. They give her the energy she needs to go home and write another book. She says: "Being an author is the job of my dreams."

Source: [http://www.darleenbaileybeard.com/html/photo\\_biography.html](http://www.darleenbaileybeard.com/html/photo_biography.html)

**Other books written by the author:**

*The Babbs Switch Story*

*The Pumpkin Man from Piney Creek*

*Twister*

**CHALLENGING WORDS (pronunciation, spelling, defining):**

notorious, archenemy, clink (jail), duets, commence, impediment, rampant, flounder, shale, gall, salvage, pseudonym, cashmere, fedora, chagrin, disheveled, coup, exhumed, scalawag, conduit, embossed, meticulous, smirking, deciphering, lily livered, nomination, liniment, winced, emphatically, suffragist, assure, gussied up, get your dander up, halitosis.

**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:**

1. We can't imagine living in a country where women can't vote. Are there any countries in the world today where women can't vote? What are their reasons for keeping women from voting?
2. What other groups of people, besides women, have had to struggle for the right to vote?
3. Sticky Fingers Fred commits a lot of crimes before he is finally caught. What methods do they use to try to catch him? What methods would the police use today?
4. If you were mayor, what laws would you make and why?

**ACTIVITIES:**

• **Art:**

1. Create a campaign poster for Corn's father OR for his mother. Use the template at Darleen Bailey Beard's website:  
<http://www.darleenbaileybeard.com>

• **Language Arts:**

1. Write and give a persuasive campaign speech for Corn's father OR for his mother.
2. Write a newspaper article about an incident involving Sticky Fingers Fred. Use the template at Darleen Bailey Beard's website:  
<http://www.darleenbaileybeard.com>

- **Mathematics:**

1. Corn's friend, Otis, loves to measure things. Find at least five things in your home or classroom that Otis would never have had a chance to measure in 1916 because they hadn't been invented yet. Measure them for length, width, area, or volume.
2. Make a graph showing the year women received the right to vote in each state.

- **Research:**

1. Read pages 40-42 to learn about the animals that were used for military operations during World War I. Look at books, encyclopedias, magazines, newspapers, and online databases to learn how animals have been used by the military in other wars. Prepare a display to teach other students about animals in the military.

- **Social Studies:**

1. Study and report on famous suffragettes.
2. Compare and contrast elections in 1916 and today.
3. Read this book aloud and discuss the historical significance of these fictionalized events for Women's History Month.

**INTERNET SITES:**

Author's website: <http://www.darleenbaileybeard.com>

Why women should vote: a document written by Alice Stone Blackwell sometime after 1896:

<http://memory.loc.gov/learn/features/timeline/progress/suffrage/whyvote.html>

**Grades 4-6 Indiana Standards met by activities recommended for this intermediate book:**

**Language Arts:** 4.1.4.1, 4.3.2.1, 4.3.3, 4.4.1, 4.4.6, 4.4.7, 4.5.6, 4.7.1, 5.2.4, 5.3.2, 5.3.3, 5.3.5.2, 5.5.3, 5.5.6, 6.2.5.1, 6.2.7, 6.3.7.1, 6.5.5, 6.7.13

**Mathematics:** Standard 5: 4.5.1-4.5.8; 5.5.1-5.5.4; 6.5.1, 6.5.6, 6.5.8

**Social Studies:** 4.2.6, 5.2.7, 5.2.10, 6.1.18, 6.1.20, 6.2.6