

## HOME OF FINNS AND PORCUPINES

"National Mine, National Mine,  
the home of Finns and porcupines,"

is how my grandpa, Oscar Aho, described National Mine for me. He tells me National Mine isn't very different now than it was during the Depression except all of the hiking trails are gone.

He started school in 1924 the first year they opened National Mine after the original school burned down. Before the school opened they went to school in churches. He quit school in the 8th grade to work on the farm and around the house.

After school he enjoyed playing football and baseball like we do, but his equipment was quite different. He had to wind rags to make a football or baseball.

When playing basketball a 3/4 inch wire rim was used and the ball wasn't very big, not as big as now. It wouldn't bounce and it was heavier.

He received one pair of shoes for the summer and one pair of boots for the winter. If he wore them out he wore wool socks and rags. He even took rags off the footballs or baseballs and wrapped them around his shoes.

My grandpa doesn't quite remember all of the Depression. He said the Depression didn't affect National Mine as much as many other cities. But it was in effect longer here.

After visiting with my grandpa about the days of the Great Depression, I learned why he appreciates all of the things that he has now. I cannot imagine playing with a ball made out of rags and I think kids today are really lucky to have so much.

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