

The Boy Who Would Make a Mountain

A Jozo Weider Story



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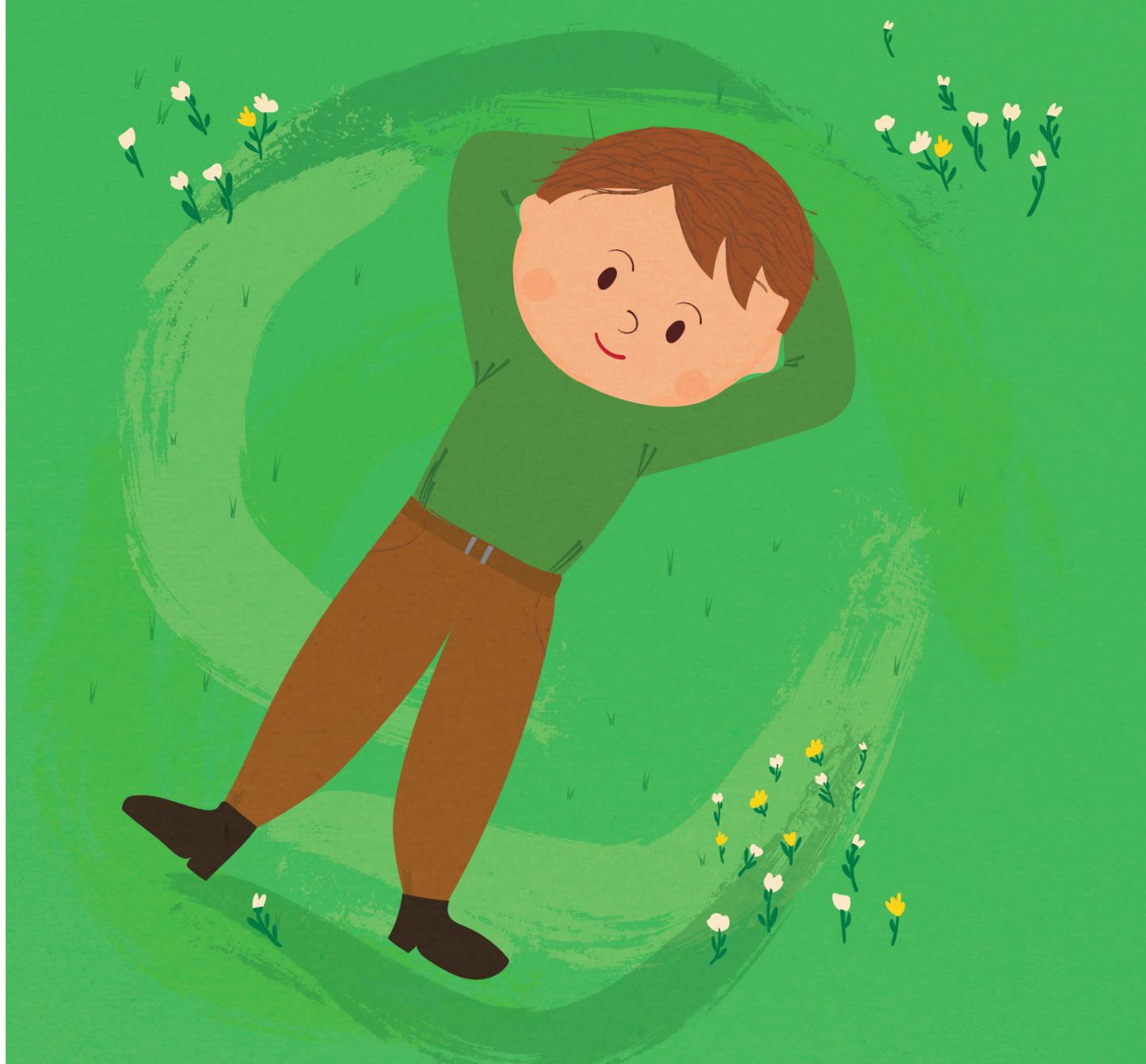
In 1909, a boy named Josef Weider was born in Žilina, the eastern part of what was known as Czechoslovakia.



Josef was his name, but for most of his life he would be known as **Jozo**.

This young boy had no idea that one day, he would transform a small farming area in Ontario into the province's largest ski destination.

One day, Jozo would make a mountain.



Even as a boy, Jozo showed that he had great creativity and ambition to make his dreams come true.

He was very adventurous and loved nothing more than to be outside in the towering mountains and rolling valleys of his home.

He skied.

He hiked.

He kayaked.



Jozo also loved to entertain.

He could play the accordion.

He could sing.

He even joined a travelling dance troupe
doing traditional Slovak dances!



Jozo loved the mountains and especially loved winter.

His dream was to share the mountains and his love of skiing with as many people as he could.

When Jozo was in his 20s, he built a ski chalet in the soaring heights of the Carpathian Mountains.

It took a long hike into the mountains to reach Jozo's chalet, but that did not stop people from all over from visiting the peaceful place he called home.



Visitors would spend the days hiking or skiing and Jozo would take photographs and entertain them with his accordion and songs.

One visitor was a young woman named Helena. She shared Jozo's great love for the mountains and it was not long before Jozo and Helena were married.

Life was beautiful and they were incredibly happy.



In 1939, Jozo travelled to Britain to promote their chalet so that more people would visit.

He made the long trek down the mountain not realizing that he would never see his home again.



World War II was about to break out and enemy forces would soon be occupying much of Europe, including Czechoslovakia.

Jozo realized that the war would be a great risk to his family.

He sent an urgent telegram to Helena, asking her to bring their infant son George and join him in Britain where they would be safe.



While in Britain, Jozo heard about a group of people going to a colony in northern British Columbia, Canada.

Never short on courage and optimism, Jozo and Helena decided to join the settlers and start a new life.

Farm life at the settlement was very difficult, even for a hard worker like Jozo.



To make money in the winter months, he travelled by train to Quebec to teach skiing.

This new life may not have been exactly like his cherished Carpathian home life, but Jozo was doing what he loved.

In 1940, Helena, George, and their new daughter Helen, left British Columbia and joined Jozo in Quebec.



Jozo was enthusiastic and also very, very smart. His lively presence and keen sense of business caught the attention of a man named Peter Campbell.

Peter had heard about a new opportunity for skiing and development near a place called Collingwood, Ontario.

He wanted to pursue it and so asked Jozo to join him on the adventure. Peter and Jozo would end up being business partners and lifelong friends.



In the spring of 1941, the Weider family arrived at the base of Blue Mountain and Jozo quickly got to work.

He could once again feel his dream of a mountain resort within his grasp.



At first, people did not know what to make of this man with the funny name. But Jozo had a vision and his passion was magnetic and contagious.

Soon a team of farmers, artists, and craftsman were clearing ski trails and building a lodge.



Toronto, the largest city in Ontario, already had lots of people who loved to ski.

They would travel to Blue Mountain by train.

Once they arrived at the station, farmers with horse-drawn sleighs were waiting to bring them to the slopes.



What started out slow and steady was picking up speed.

More and more people came to ski the great runs at Blue Mountain.

As more people came, Jozo put more ideas into action!



But building a ski resort took a lot of money and a lot of teamwork from friends.

Jozo had to use his imagination to find new ways of doing things.

His ideas did not always work out, but Jozo never, ever gave up!



Jozo used old truck engines and scrap metal to make rope tows that would pull people up the hill faster.

He used the lumber from the trees cut down on the slopes to make buildings.



He harvested apples from the orchards,
grew vegetables, and raised chickens
and cows.

Helena would sell hand-knit sweaters
in the ski shop.

The children George, Helen, and twins
Katherine and Anna, would help with
the animals, sell ski tickets, serve food,
and wash dishes in the Ski Barn.

Everyone had a job!



After a day of working and skiing, Jozo would throw fantastic fireside parties in the Ski Barn.

Just like in Czechoslovakia, he would play the accordion, tell stories, sing, and dance well into the night.



The resort that Jozo dreamed of and worked hard for had come to life. He was sharing his love of winter and skiing once again.

And although there would be many more years of development to come,

**Josef “Jozo” Weider
had made a mountain.**



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We hope Jozo's story inspires you to adapt to new situations,
overcome obstacles, and trust in friendship and teamwork
to make your own dreams come true.

