

Inspired *Woman*

December / January 2012

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**Betsy
Dalrymple**
Volunteering Across
North Dakota



*Holiday
Issue*

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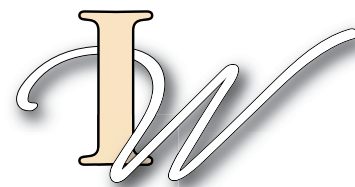
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Our Mission

The mission of **Inspired Woman** is to use our
community presence to celebrate, encourage,
empower, educate and entertain women.

Holiday Issue



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Editor's Notes

Welcome to the Holiday Issue! We are focusing on volunteering, and have some wonderful stories to share. First Lady Betsy Dalrymple leads by example and is promoting volunteerism across our state. I am also excited to share photos of the 'people's house' - the North Dakota Governor's Residence.

You are invited to share your "Who Inspires You" stories once again. And, please save the date for the first ever, Destination Inspiration - a day for women. We are putting together a conference and trade show to be held Saturday, May 5th, 2012. We will have more details in the February/March issue.

Enjoy the issue and stay inspired!

Deb

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Volunteering in Minot

North Dakota's First Lady Betsy Dalrymple

by Deb Seminary



The Governor introduced the First Lady as his "soul mate" during his announcement speech.

Growing up just outside of Detroit, Michigan, North Dakota's First Lady Betsy Dalrymple learned early in life how to make a difference in her community. "My father was a lawyer and my mother was a stay-at-home mom. She did volunteer work and really encouraged me," she said. "When I started getting involved, I had some friends whose parents were equally interested in having them do things in the community. I have always enjoyed volunteering."

Betsy recalls one her first volunteer efforts - helping out at her family's church. "Our church had a day care for individuals with special needs and my friends and I would assist there," she said. "When we got older and could drive, we would go into inner-city Detroit in the summer and tutor in the elementary schools. When I went to college I majored in developmental psychology with a teaching degree. I don't know if that started because of my early exposure, but it may have been a factor."

Betsy and her husband, North Dakota Governor Jack Dalrymple, have known each other practically their whole lives. "We have a picture of each other when he was around seven and I was about five," she said. "His family and my family vacationed at the same place. So, we knew each other, though not well. The spring of my senior year we started looking at each other with a little more interest. We started dating that summer and dated all through college."

The couple was able to see a lot of each other, since Jack went to Yale and Betsy went to Briarcliff College outside of New York City. "Our families were good friends, so when Jack and I started dating our parents decided they wouldn't talk about it," said Betsy. "They kind of put their friendship off to see if ours' flourished. They were obviously thrilled when we decided to get married and they had even more of a connection with each other."

That decision caused the First Lady to have a lot of changes in her life over a short period of time. The couple married right after she graduated from college and then she made the move to North Dakota, since Jack was already running his family's farm outside of Casselton. "I had always visited Jack in the summer and fall," she said. "The first night we were up here there was a blizzard, so that was a little adjustment. The people of Casselton were really friendly and just opened their arms to me. I think it also helped I started substitute teaching right away that winter. When there were some openings in Fargo the next fall, I was asked to teach part-time and it evolved into full-time."

Betsy taught for several years before becoming a stay-at-home mom to the couple's four daughters. However, that did not keep her from staying busy outside of the home. "I started volunteering in the Casselton School," she said. "I was also on the Casselton School Board for nine years."

In 1984 Jack was encouraged to run for a District 22 House Seat. He won and served his first term in the North Dakota Legislature in 1985. "He served eight terms and each time we moved the girls out (to Bismarck) for



Betsy gets a special treat – all five grandchildren in one place.

four months," said the First Lady. "We rented different houses around town and the school district was very good about trying to let us go back to the same schools so the girls could be with their friends. The girls say they are really glad we did that. It was a growing experience for them, attending a bigger city school. It was a little out of their comfort zone, but they all did great."

When Jack became Lieutenant Governor, Betsy continued to find ways to volunteer. Last November, when it was apparent Jack would become governor, she felt, as First Lady, she needed to find more of a focus for her volunteer efforts. "My passions are early childhood education and volunteerism," she said. "I figured I didn't need to reinvent the wheel, so I looked for programs already going in North Dakota that I could promote. That's when 'Dolly Parton's Imagination Library' and 'Gearing Up for Kindergarten' came to my attention."

'Dolly Parton's Imagination Library' program plays an important role in getting young children excited about reading," said Betsy. "It was started by Dolly Parton in her home county in Tennessee. Her Dollywood Foundation funded the program that sent age-

appropriate books to every child in the county, from birth to age five, once a month for a cost of only \$25 per child per year. It was so successful it expanded throughout Tennessee as communities adopted and funded the program. The books come addressed to the child, so what child is not going to read that book and look forward to next month when the next book is coming?"

"The best part is, the Dollywood Foundation does all of the mailing and has a team of experts that chooses the books," she continued. "In Bismarck, the Missouri Slope Area United Way is offering 'Imagination Library,' but they have limited funds, so they can't offer it to as many children as they would like. In Cass County, Cass-Clay United Way is actually looking for children to enroll in the program because they are so well-funded."

Dolly Parton's Imagination Library is also currently offered in Dunseith, Flasher, Fort Totten, Theodore Jamerson School at United Tribes Technical College, Williston and Wilton.

The First Lady has been making presentations around the state promoting 'Imagination Library.' She hopes the

Dolly Parton's Imagination Library was started in 1995 by Dolly Parton for the children of Sevier County in her home state of Tennessee and has spread throughout the country. The program inspires a love of reading and guarantees all children, regardless of income, will have quality books in the home. The Dollywood Foundation partners with communities willing to bring this gift to the children of their area. Once children register with the program, they receive a free, age appropriate book each month from birth until the age of 5. The community partners fund the cost of the books, postage and mailing, which is only \$25 a year. For more information, visit <http://governor.nd.gov/first-lady/imagination-library>.

Gearing Up for Kindergarten is a new school readiness and parent education curriculum designed to facilitate successful school experiences for young children and parent knowledge and involvement. It is a collaborative school readiness and parent education program, developed and tested by North Dakota State University and the NDSU Extension Service. The program focuses on engaging families with a child entering kindergarten in the next 1-2 years. This curriculum teaches sound principles and practical approaches for parents and other adults to assist children entering kindergarten to reach their full potential. For more information, please contact Judith Konerza at 701.787.4216 or judith.konerza@gfschools.org.

increased awareness will encourage communities to participate in the program and several communities have already begun the process of incorporating Imagination Library into their area, including Ellendale, Grand Forks, Napoleon and Wishek.

One of the other programs Betsy supports and promotes is 'Gearing Up

for Kindergarten,' which was started by the NDSU Extension Service. The organization developed, implemented and tested the program, and then went to the legislature for funding. "I looked at some of the legislation during the last session and 'Gearing Up for Kindergarten' fit me to a 'T,'" she said. "It makes sure kids are ready for

kindergarten. The parents and child go in together and work with the kindergarten teacher. It helps the children get comfortable and builds relationships even before they actually start kindergarten."

The First Lady also focuses on volunteerism, specifically teenage volunteerism. "We have researched what kind of teenage volunteer opportunities there are in the schools around the state and there are three terrific programs we found," she said. "My untested theory is if you can get a teenager to start volunteering and they see their personal growth in giving back to their community, they will do it as an adult. I think they will continue to do it the rest of their life, especially when they realize how good it makes them feel."

In Fargo the public school system offers a class called 'Service Learning' in which area youth can get credit for volunteering in the community. At Dickinson Trinity, the school has a program called 'Treasure and Talents' where the teacher assigns students to agencies or organizations that need volunteer help. The students then write reports and make presentations to the class about their experiences.

The final program Betsy is most excited about takes place at Red River High School in Grand Forks. Students can begin the ROPES Program in ninth grade by signing up to document their volunteer hours. At graduation, depending on the number of volunteer hours each individual has served, the students then get to wear a certain color rope. A white rope signifies 100 volunteer hours, a black rope signifies 200 hours, and a red rope signifies 300 volunteer hours. Students with at least 400 volunteer hours wear a rope combining all three of the school's colors.

"It is so helpful when schools promote volunteerism," she said. "When they say, 'you can do something good for your community, and get credit for it,' what a great idea!"

The First Lady has also been spending time reading in the state's elementary schools. "What is really fun now is I am back in the schools again," she said. "I really enjoy talking



The Governor and First Lady with volunteers in Minot.



The first couple enjoy hunting together.

to educators from across the state and learning about their individual schools."

Betsy is enjoying her role as the First Lady of North Dakota and being able to support many important programs across the state. "To a great extent, I can set my own schedule and find the time to promote some of these opportunities," she said. "It is also a great opportunity to learn about our state."

Volunteering is a way of life for the First Lady and she still makes time to volunteer when her schedule allows. "I went out with the Salvation Army during the flooding here in Bismarck," she explained. "I would call and ask if they needed help and just show up. I wouldn't tell them who I was, that wasn't why I was there. Sometimes while we were out, someone would say something to me and the other people in the Salvation Army truck would say, 'Who are you?'"

That recent experience gave Betsy a whole new appreciation for the Salvation Army as well. "Jack and I went out with the Salvation Army this

summer," she said. "The volunteer output in Minot has been unbelievable and the really remarkable thing, with all of this flooding, is the resiliency of North Dakotans. It is so inspiring."

The First Lady also spent a day volunteering in Minot with Lieutenant Governor Drew Wrigley and staff from the Office of the First Lady, the ND Department of Commerce and All Hands volunteers removing debris from a flooded home.

"Volunteering makes me feel good. It's not so much about yourself, it's about other people," says Betsy, summing up her thoughts on a lifetime of volunteering. "That is a really nice feeling for people to have, that you can help someone else. It has always given me a lot of satisfaction. It is just who I am."



Deb Seminary is the editor of Inspired Woman.



Can You Solve This Mystery?

First Lady Betsy Dalrymple is asking for your assistance to identify the origin and images of an emblem given to Former Governor Allen Olson during his tenure as Attorney General, 1972-1980. The emblem (pictured here) was made by L&H Manufacturing in Mandan, North Dakota.

Governor Jack and First Lady Betsy Dalrymple have been loaned the emblem by Representative George and Kathy Keiser of Bismarck. The Keisers acquired the emblem through the purchase of their home, which was built by Former Governor Olson in the early 1970s. Unfortunately, Governor Olson, L&H Manufacturing and the North Dakota Capitol Facility

Management division do not have any further information or files on the emblem.

Through assistance from the North Dakota Historical Society and Secretary of State's office the following images on the emblem have been identified: Custer and a 7th Cavalry man; Sitting Bull; Fort Lincoln blockhouse; combines in harvest; buffalo; State Capitol building; coal mining; a Prairie Rose; a Mandan earth lodge. The top and lower right images have not been identified.

First Lady Betsy Dalrymple welcomes any information on this emblem. If you can identify the remaining images or have knowledge of the origin of the piece, please contact Sarah Johnson at the Office of the First Lady at 701-328-1010 or firstlady@nd.gov.



Helping People Help Other People

*Your Invitation to Serve
North Dakota*

by Mary Siverson

Recent events in this area have brought attention to volunteerism and the need for communities to have large pools of volunteers ready to assist, whatever the challenge. During the 2011 Flood in Central North Dakota, volunteers played a major role in preparation, response, and on-going recovery activities. When the call came, volunteers stepped up. And the organization I currently lead as regional director stepped up, too.

RSVP+ North Dakota has facilitated meaningful volunteer service opportunities for 40 years. In fact, Bismarck-Mandan was one of the first RSVP projects in the nation. The initial 11 grants were awarded in 1971 aimed at tapping into a senior citizen volunteer labor force and, by doing so, improving their own health and well-being through their service. Because the endeavor was successful, RSVP nationwide was formed to match older-adult volunteers with community partners who are non-profit organizations and government agencies.

In 2009, the six RSVP regions under NDSU sponsorship rebranded as "RSVP+ North Dakota: Your Invitation to Serve North Dakota" with the mission of inviting individuals of all ages to enhance personal growth, develop leadership skills, and meet critical community needs through meaningful volunteer service opportunities. The rebranding was intended to allow volunteers of all ages the opportunity

to serve and also paved the way for connecting specialized initiatives such as the Foster Grandparent Program, AmeriCorps*VISTA, Bone Builders, and the Amachi Mentoring Program.

For the year ending June 30, 1511 volunteers served 204,967 hours in the seven counties assigned to RSVP+ Central ND. Volunteers helped 224 host stations (partner agencies) that submitted requests and job descriptions. When asked, RSVP+ searches among the registered volunteers and facilitates a match. Host stations, in turn, help us track the volunteer hours according to the types of service provided: tutoring in elementary schools, delivering meals to the homebound, mentoring children, transporting wheelchair-bound residents to activities, tax consulting, and fundraising to name just a few -- the list quite literally is endless.

Of course, volunteers step up in times of disaster also. RSVP+ took on the role of registering and tracking volunteers at the sandbag-filling sites so that city officials would have accurate volunteer records and timesheets. During major events, the benefit to communities of partnering with a volunteer matching organization is clear; nothing so obviously unifies a community like imminent peril. It's all the other days of the year (those without an overt threat to life, safety, or property), however, where an organization like RSVP+ demonstrates its enduring value. For the host stations whose service mis-

sions year in and year out often cannot be achieved without support from volunteers, there is the tangible benefit of more hands and hearts to help them do their vital work.

For the volunteers, there are both tangible and intangible benefits. Beyond the personal satisfaction that countless volunteers say they get from sharing their time and expertise, the opportunity to lead projects and develop new skills, building resumes and networks, gaining connections to community, being part of something bigger than themselves--those who volunteer tend to live longer. According to the Corporation for National and Community Service, volunteering brings significant positive health benefits. And it's more than just longevity; volunteers tend to be more physically and socially active, have greater functional abilities, and have lower rates of depression.

As I often say to our many volunteers of all ages, service is personal. Being needed is personal. We all likely volunteer more than we realize because we see it as "helping out." Older adults lead the way because they have the most time and expertise to give, but placing inter-generational volunteers into service opportunities has been especially rewarding for me. Working with high school students serving hours for honor societies or service clubs, or with college students fulfilling their various service requirements brings



Mary Siverson receives Certificate of Appreciation from Bismarck City Commissioner, Brenda Smith.

both rewards and challenges. Younger volunteers typically are available only evenings and weekends, which has required some creativity by our host stations. And introducing grandchildren to the world of volunteering is particularly gratifying. One set of RSVP+ grandparents have their grandson help at a local food pantry. He was able to arrange the soup by their labels before he could read the printed words. He thought he was just spending time with his grandparents when, in reality, he was giving quality volunteer time to his community.

Being appreciated is personal, too. We host multiple events each year to thank our volunteers, and many of our host stations do as well. Bis-Man Transit provides free rides to registered volunteers. We also provide supplemental insurance coverage to help cover out-of-pocket costs if an accident occurs while volunteering. The most meaningful thanks, however, come from service recipients—the children, the hospital patients, the homebound, the isolated, the disabled, the homeless, and at times the general public. Whole communities sometimes have themselves to thank when issues are big. I was invited to a recent Bismarck City Commission meeting where RSVP+ Central ND was presented a Certificate of Appreciation for the volunteer service provided to the City of Bismarck. All the volunteers should feel good about such recognition even though we know it isn't why we serve.

I am fortunate to be involved with the RSVP program for almost 11 years. I tell people I have the best job ever because I get to "help people help other people"

every single day. This is a very rewarding job, and at least once a week I experience the role of a volunteer when I deliver meals to the homebound through the Burleigh County Senior Adults Program. I personally benefit so much from the connections I have on my meal route. This assignment has also allowed me to introduce service to my grandchildren. When schedules allow, I bring them along and help them understand why we take hot meals to those who cannot prepare lunch for themselves. The clients love to see children, and my grandchildren have fun. How often do we get to create opportunities where everybody wins? Volunteers do, every day.

For more information, contact RSVP+ at 701.258.5436, email mary.siverson@ndsu.edu or visit their website at RSVPNorthDakota.org.

Mary Siverson is the Director of RSVP+ Central ND

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Volunteers Make the Zoo Go Around!

by Terry Lincoln

Since its inception 50 years ago, the Dakota Zoo has relied heavily on volunteers in virtually all areas of operation. Many early supporters spent countless hours clearing brush and making the 90 acres of Zoo land habitable for the animals to come. Whether it was plumbing projects, fence building, painting, welding or a host of other specialty jobs, volunteers were one of the main driving forces that ultimately made the Zoo a success.

Today more than ever, volunteers continue to play a huge role in helping the Dakota Zoo continually win the Bismarck Tribune's "Best of the Best" award in at least one category each year. Volunteers can also take much credit for our Zoo being awarded North Dakota Tourism's "Best Tourist Attraction" in the state for 2011.

In 2012, the Dakota Zoo will provide over 50 special events for our visiting public. Events such as Junior Zookeeper Day Camps, Breakfast at the Zoo, Children's Day, Wine-tasting, Zoo Run...to name just a few, all have one common denominator that helps to make them successful. VOLUNTEERS!

In addition to special event volunteers, the Dakota Zoo enjoys the benefit of having numerous volunteers that continually help out in a variety of ways.

Veterinarians— since the beginning (1961), the Dakota Zoo has enjoyed donated veterinary services from some very caring individuals. Dr. James Wheeler, who continues in the capacity of Senior Veterinarian, has provided care for our 600+ animals almost since day one. Most recently Dr. Kelly



Two of our most faithful volunteers, Joan Klemer and Breezy Kohls, often sell memberships at the Zoo.

Thorsness has joined the ranks of caring individuals who set aside time each week to help keep the Zoo animals in tip top shape. Other veterinarians from area clinics have also assisted in various capacities and we owe them much.

Docents— since the early 1970's the Dakota Zoo Docents have played a vital role in helping to educate thousands of visitors of all ages. From helping with camps to visiting nursing homes and classrooms, docents continue to help the Zoo carry out one of its most important missions...education.

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Youth— the Zoo has a considerable number of young volunteers, ages 12-18. Helping in various ways with things such as face painting, animal presentations, work projects, etc., these young workers make the Zoo a better place and learn some responsibility and organizational skills at the same time.

Office and Clerical— a small but dependable group of volunteers help out with membership sales, clicking in members on very busy days, setting up the gift shop, folding maps, etc. But for them, the Zoo would have to spend more on labor costs.

Board of Directors— to be a member of the Zoo Board it takes more than just saying “yes!” There are more than 20 committees that members of the Board are asked to help with. From Fundraising to Exhibits to various Special Events committees, Zoo Board members are required to be some of our best volunteers.

For all of the above events, tasks and programs we utilize upwards of 200 volunteers of all ages and from all walks of life.

Other Volunteers— just when we think that we have covered all of the bases for how volunteers have helped and continue to help the Dakota Zoo, something like a flood comes along. When we received word in late May that the Zoo should plan for up to 4’ of water in the center of the facility we wondered how we would go about evacuating animals and sandbagging buildings. A Facebook plea, along with some helpful stories by the local media provided over 300 volunteers the next morning for assistance in filling and



A few of the 300+ volunteers place sandbags around the Discovery Center during the flood event of 2011.

hauling sandbags. Likewise, offers came from all over for help in hauling animals and providing homes for some of them if necessary.

Volunteers really are what “makes the zoo go around” and we are so thankful for everyone that helps in a variety of ways.

For volunteer opportunities, call Dakota Zoo at 223.7543.

Terry Lincoln has been the Director of the Dakota Zoo since 1987.

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My

Three

Kings

by Rhonda Gowen

Christmas has a way of sneaking up on you -- even in February.

Last year, my son Evan, his two confirmation classmates and I went to Pride Manchester House for a service project. The three boys, Evan, Nick and Bryce, met at our church to prepare eight Valentines with gift cups of pencils and candy. We drove from the church toward the facility, a psychiatric residential treatment center, which that year housed eight boys. I missed the correct turn, but Nick helped me get back on track, since his family often drove through that neighborhood. We parked in the back and tromped around the building to ring the doorbell. A young teacher answered the door. I had called ahead a couple times, but they weren't expecting us for the Sunday 1:00 appointment. Thankfully, she allowed us in anyway. Once we were in the entry, the greeter asked if we wanted to give the treat cups directly to the boys ourselves or let the staff present them. "Whatever's easiest for you," I said, but Nick would have none of it. "We'll give them to the boys," he piped up. "We



Bryce Emineth, Nick Erickson, and Evan Gowen

want them to see us." She nodded, and we proceeded past walls decorated with froggies to a larger area. In a few moments, we were facing eight attentive boys seated cross-legged on the rug.

Now Evan, Nick and Bryce each had a gemstone heart sticker shining like a fresh pimple on his forehead, remnants of the card preparations. One of the Manchester boys asked about the stickers. Nick again said, "We just wanted to show the Valentine spirit, to pass it around." His answer satisfied the curious one; the Manchester boys seemed very happy with the surprise visit and, of course, with the stashes of candy.

After we got back to the car, Nick said, "Well, that did my heart good." I did a quick double take. A seventh grader said what?

Later, having dropped Bryce and Nick back with their parents, I reflected on how the three confirmation boys anticipated the meeting with the Manchester kids. As we were printing messages on the cards, Bryce was particularly creative with wording. One line I recall



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-- because he asked me if he should use it -- "Watch over the little things now, because later they'll be big things." Not sure what he meant, I asked, "Can you give me an example?" He said, "My sister is little now, but one day she will be older and grown up."

As I considered the Manchester boys' situation, I couldn't imagine being away from home at that age, with no parents to ask advice or get help. Floundering at sea I'd be. I recently spoke with Mindy Norton, Family & Volunteer Coordinator at the school. She said the students, boys or girls, are accepted at the Manchester House between ages 5 and 13. They may have been placed there by parents, their school, or social services as a result of unacceptable or violent behavior. A child stays at the House an average of five months; some children stay as few as two and some up to twelve months. The children have emotional, mood, impulsive or attachment disorders.

Before admitting a student to the school, Transition Coordinator Bryan Winterberg ensures that other services have been tried, since Manchester House is considered the last resort in the child's treatment. Once admitted, Mindy said, the students engage in a mixture of testing, behavior plans, and psychological and family therapy. Further, she said, when the students are ready, they have an individual education plan and transition to a day treatment school, receiving the services of a para-



Volunteers Needed

- Assisting individuals to and from activities
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- Writing letters for individuals
- Visiting with individuals and being a friend
- Providing music
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professional aide. Students might also arrive at the House when transitioning from out-of-state facilities.

By evening back at our house, my son Evan, true to form, had said nothing about the whole outing. Since I had heard no response, I asked at the supper table, "What did you think of Manchester House?" His immediate reply was, "I thought it'd be, like, they would climb all over me." In fact, they were absolutely calm and attentive. It was as though he was looking in the mirror at a rational human being. So went my son's introduction to children of emotional distress.

In spite of the growing favor of online education, my offline enlightenment sprang up far from a mouse or keyboard. First, I saw and felt within myself how some youth and adults view with uneasiness their more unfortunate peers; I saw how insightful and sensitive young people can be; and not least, I saw firsthand how hidden is the nature of emotional abuse. Next time I volunteer to transport "three kings" bringing gifts to "Baby Jesus," I'm going to have a little more respect for the Star guiding them. It was right all along. The "Christ Children" were there, cross-legged on the rug.



Rhonda Gowen is a piano instructor at the University of Mary and a clarinetist with the Bismarck Mandan Symphony and the Missouri Valley Chamber Orchestras.

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by Deb Seminary

In Mary Tello-Pool's basement are two file cabinets dedicated to every event she has worked on since the 1970s. "I can go back to a Holiday Home Walk from 1984, tell you what the theme was, who the chairs were, even what food we had," she said. "When anyone needs to find out anything from the past, they say, 'Call Mary and tell her to look it up!'"

Mary's volunteering hobby officially began when she was 14 and started as a candy striper at what was then the Bismarck Hospital. "I remember how exciting it was when I reached the 50 hour mark and received my cap," she said. "The next milestone was 200 hours when we earned a gold pin to wear on our pinafores. The best thing that came out of that was caring for patients and learning skills that directed me toward the nursing profession."

In college she volunteered in nursing homes entertaining the residents and doing their hair and nails. "The majority of my college life was studying, so the volunteering was a stress reliever and continues to be to this day," Mary said. "Volunteering is a lot of work and can be stressful, but it is a different stress. And, it's fun, because usually you are doing it with your girlfriends!"

After nursing school Mary came back to Bismarck and started working at Bismarck Hospital. She volunteered with

events in the community where she could utilize her nursing skills. Once she got married and started having children, the focus of her volunteering shifted to them and whatever they were involved with. However, she was fortunate to be able to stay active in some of her other volunteer activities.

"My daughters started going to meetings with me when they were babies and as they grew up, they worked alongside me stuffing envelopes, hostessing, selling pop, whatever came up," said Mary. "It was just a normal part of growing up for them. I told my girls, volunteering is a gift you give to the community, because your community provides you with many gifts every day. It is everyone's obligation to give back to the community in which they live."

Mary has served on numerous boards over the years, but there are some organizations she is particularly passionate about. "Thirty two years ago I was asked to bake cookies for a membership gathering of what was going to become the Bismarck Mandan Symphony League," she explained. "I became a member and still am, to this day. It is one of my favorite organizations to volunteer for."

Mary has been married to Duane Pool for thirteen years; they actually met at a fundraiser. Mary was not interested in dating at the time, but after he called the house several times,

her daughter finally convinced her to start dating again. "I was very fortunate to find a husband who not only supports my volunteering, but volunteers himself," she said. "Our wedding was a fundraiser. We had a friendly competition - Duane's wedding guests were raising money for Ducks Unlimited and mine were raising money for the Symphony. My team won!"

As her girls moved on to college and Mary had a little more time on her hands, she thought about her passions and looked at the Red Cross. "I inquired what their needs were and sixteen years later, I am still a volunteer with them," she said. "I have served in many capacities with the Red Cross, including as a member of their disaster action team and the Red Cross Nurse Corps."

She recalled one particular Christmas: "I got a call about a family who had recently moved here, that had just lost their trailer in a fire," she explained. "They lost everything, even their holiday gifts. We were able to get them a nice suite at a local hotel and Target donated a gorgeous tree decorated with snowmen. My girlfriend network donated gifts and my husband and I delivered everything to them. As we were leaving the little girl came up to me and said her mom had lost her snowman collection in the fire. It was very touching and it made me realize how much impact one person can have. I didn't pay for the tree or the gifts, all I gave was time."

Mary shared another story: "Another group I'm involved in became aware that the Carrie's Kids organization was looking for prom dresses for girls. In about a week, after a few phone calls, we had a dinner scheduled and over 100 people attended. We collected over 100 dresses, shoes, jewelry, nail and hair care and limo rides for these girls. Never underestimate the power of the girlfriend network. If we can do something like that in that short amount of time, we can do anything. It is amazing what you can accomplish when you put your mind to it."

Mary offer these suggestions to anyone who is interested in volunteering:

- Identify what matters to you - what are you passionate about
- Identify a need in the community
- Know your strengths and weaknesses, skills and talents
- Know your limitations



Deb Seminary is the editor of Inspired Woman.

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A Slice of Inspiration

Audrey Herman, RN

If you have visited the Medcenter One Same Day Surgery Center, you may recognize Audrey Herman, or at least the sound of her voice. Her distinct voice and personality are a great combination that help make her patients comfortable.

"I try to put my patients at ease by making a connection," she said. "I ask a lot of questions to see if there is any way we can give them better care. People like to be in control, but before they get here we tell them not to eat and not to drink. Then, the first thing we do when they get here is take their clothes!"

The entire staff works to create a fun atmosphere. The nurses station is always decked out in decorations for the season or holiday. On 11/11/11 at 11:11 am, Herman gathered everyone at the nurses station to sing the Star Spangled Banner. "It was just a moment we created," she said. "I am lucky to be part of such a great team."

There may be times Herman should not be singing. "I like to sing country western songs sometimes," she said. "During one song the gentleman I was taking care of turned to the other gal in the room and said. 'She should sing solo. So low that I can't hear her.'"

When someone does receive bad news after a procedure, Herman consoles them and simply tells them to write everything down. "You have to be a helicopter for your health," she said. "You may have three different doctors, a lot of new terms, so much information...it helps to write it down."

After 37 years, Herman continues to give quality care and make her patients feel comfortable.

"When I was in the eighth grade I told my mom, 'I hope I can be a nurse'," said Herman. "I am living the dream. To be this age and to have a job I love, I am truly blessed."



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North Dakota Governor's



The current governor's residence was first occupied in 1960 by Governor John Davis. Governor Jack Dalrymple and First Lady Betsy Dalrymple are the eighth family to call the residence home.

A major renovation was completed in 2000 involving a complete remodeling of the state living and dining areas, the foyer and hallway, the guest bedroom and bathroom, and public bathrooms. The main entrance was reconstructed and now features stately, cherry wood doors and an inlaid marble "area rug". Paul's Woodworking from Minot restored the original dining area furnishings including a dining table which seats sixteen comfortably, china cabinet and side table.



Governor's Residence

The first lady has been getting her hands dirty, literally, by working to enhance the outdoor beauty of the residence. "I really wasn't aware of the gardens before we moved in, but they are beautiful," said Dalrymple. "I asked Doug Prchal, Lisa Carlson and Bob Christman if they would advise me. Plus, Carolyn Godfread with the Bismarck Garden Club has been working on these gardens over 20 years. She brings the Garden Club in every spring to plant annuals and I helped them this year."

"There are also two new garden beds, one is in front by the sign, and the other extends an existing bed toward the flag pole," she said. "I am excited about adding those touches to the exterior, it adds to the ambiance."

For more information about the governor's residence visit governor.nd.gov/first-lady/governors-residence.



Frosty Paris, Andrew Hofmeister, Jon Offutt, Richard Bresnahan, Brad Bachmeier, Randy Rick, and Alice Berning have artwork displayed at the Residence. In addition, the North Dakota Pottery Collectors Society is preparing a rotating display. Governor Jack and First Lady Betsy Dalrymple are currently working with Friends of North Dakota Governor's Residence to acquire more pieces by North Dakota artists for display in the Residence.

Simple Seasonal Transitions

Pam Hellman has been decorating the home of Tom and RaeAnn Kelsch for several years. She let us tag along and demonstrated you don't have to spend a lot of money or time to get your home in the holiday mood.



Switch out the greenery, add a ribbon and a holiday figure - gorgeous!

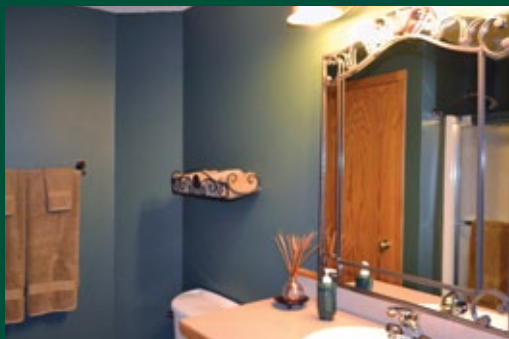


This change is simple - new runner and a sleigh.



Pillows, a wreath and a blanket add holiday flair.





Yes, even the bathroom needs a holiday touch!



The floral arrangement is a gathering of various pieces Pam holds together with a rubber band.



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The Person Who Inspires Me

by Leslee Smith

Editor's Note: This was an entry in the 2011 'Who Inspires You' contest. Look for details on our 2012 contest on page 28.



The author, Leslee, with her aunt Carol reading Inspired Woman.

The person who inspires me is someone who has lived a life with blessings and challenges, has gone on to bless others and always grown to meet and exceed those challenges.

My aunt, my favorite uncles' wife, grew up on a farm in South Dakota, with hard work her daily routine. She never complains about what she didn't have growing up, but lives in the present to the fullest.

My aunt Carol is the prettiest girlfriend my uncle ever dated. I was a child when they first knew each other and, because my uncle Vern was so special, who he dated was a subject of great interest to me. (I was also a very snoopy little kid – there aren't many still around to confirm that fact, so I must tattle on myself.) She remains a beautiful woman, married to my uncle for over fifty years. I don't ever think of her age, and it doesn't matter, because she seems so ageless to me. She is always interested in what is happening in the lives of her family and friends and the world around her and though she is a grandmother, she is not a stereotypical older woman. She is very classy, stylish, youthful, and always looks lovely.

She came to Bismarck and found work as a young woman, and after marrying my uncle, stayed home to be a wife, homemaker and mother to their two wonderful children. Their door was always open to me, even in the first apartment they lived in just blocks from my childhood home. Carol never seemed

to resent me popping in, and she always talked and listened to me as if what I would have to say was as important as anything any adult would offer.

Through the years their homes have always been immaculate, and decorated with an eye to beauty, but also to comfort and a feeling of welcome. The essence of hospitality, she is a wonderful cook, offering both a feast to the eye and the palate. I have fond memories of Christmases celebrated with our families gathered, and she would bring the "Christmas Punch" – a seasonal lime green foamy beverage in a glass punch bowl that signaled the festivities had begun. It was non-alcoholic, and mostly, I think, for the children, but she wouldn't stint on lovely serving dishes for us.

Carol was a traditional homemaker of her time, with the separation of responsibilities that represented that era. She cared for the home, was a wonderful wife to her husband and a great mom to her kids. After their children were grown, Vern and Carol had years of traveling to far-off wonderful places. They enjoyed their grandchildren as they grew up, attending all their activities and being their biggest fans. As they moved away from home, they have kept in touch via the Internet -- doing things (skyping!) a farm girl would never have imagined. But along with those unexpected benefits, came all-too-real life challenges. Carol has had health issues that she faces head-on, and our dear Vern began to show signs of Alzheimer's. Gradually all the responsibilities shifted to Carol's shoulders, along with caring for her husband in a very pro-active way. Carol's mother also moved to Bismarck during that time, and Carol included her in her families' life and cared for her needs.

Carol reached out for support from experts and from her family to care for Vern in the most loving, respectful way, always including him in every family gathering, to our everlasting gratefulness. She became an advocate not only for her husband, but a compassionate public advocate for Alzheimer's patients and their caregivers. My own mother, Vern's loving older sister, was aging and became confined mostly to her home, and Carol made it a point to get brother and sister together for gin rummy, peppermints and coffee regularly. She was also a faithful encourager to me as I waded through the maze of caring for my elderly mother and struggled with my own inadequacies. Carol has been at the heart of family reunions, drawing our extended family closer as we are becoming smaller. She has a delightful sense of humor,

and has always approached life with such a positive outlook. Her honesty and laughter has put things in perspective again and again. Her many friends attest to her amazing positive outlook.

With the passing of Carol's mother, my mother, my mother's twin sister, and finding a safe placement outside of their home for her husband all within a year, she has again and again been the source of gentle strength for those around her, and found the way to mourn the losses and continue living a meaningful life.

And just since I began writing this, Carol, after a sweet evening with her beloved Verner, tucking him in and kissing him goodnight, got her last smile from him until she embraces him again in heaven. As always, she has led us through this painful time, with her loss so profound but open and honest in her grief, drawing her loved ones together and showing us the way to walk through life with love, tenderness, strength, and faith. She has no time for regrets, only gratitude for what life has brought her. My affection and admiration for her know no bounds and I am so grateful to have her as a model for my life.



Leslee Smith is a local writer and retired homeschool teacher.

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Love Simply, Simply Love

Inspiration from Grandma Evelyn

by Kylie Blanchard



Editor's Note: This was an entry in the 2011 'Who Inspires You' contest. Look for details on our 2012 contest on page 28.

how lucky I am to have THE Grandma Evelyn in my life. And, yes, she is still doing most of those wonderful Grandma things and, yes, they are still making me feel loved.

To tell Grandma Evelyn she is an inspiration would surely evoke a sigh and a quick brush of her hands through the air as to disperse such a statement. "Oh, I am nothing special," she would say, a response on which I am willing to bet. But Grandma Evelyn truly is inspirational in many ways.

She is a strong, independent woman and, for as long as I can remember, she has always been busy taking care of her family and her home, tending to her large garden and lawn (only this past summer retiring from push-mowing her lawn and growing a large garden at the tender age of 81), traveling to see her children and grandchildren, playing cards and games, "walking uptown" to visit friends, the cafe and the post office, and cooking one or more of her delicious signature dishes.

She is a survivor of breast cancer. Facing her diagnosis in 2004 with courage and the request that we not worry too much about her after her surgery and during her recovery, she is now cancer free.

She is a woman of faith. She puts her trust in God and has lived as an example for her family in leading a Christian life. She spends time in devotion and prayer and plays beautiful hymns on her home piano as well as in church.

The youngest of eight children and the only girl, she followed eight years after her nearest siblings, twin brothers. She was the talk of the town upon her arrival as the surprise girl in a family of strapping boys. Clearly, she has

been a special lady from the beginning. She has many stories of her family, the farm, and growing up in the small rural North Dakota community where she lives today. After her brothers were grown, Grandma continued to help her parents, and I believe this is where she began to develop her strong caring spirit. She raised four beautiful daughters and now also plays an important role in the lives of 14 grandchildren and four great-grandchildren; as well as son-in-laws, grandchildren-in-laws, and many others who call her "Grandma Evelyn."

But what is truly inspiring about Grandma is her capacity to simply love. While doing the "little things" for her family and friends, there is never an overriding feeling of obligation, it just



I suppose I can't say my Grandma Evelyn has changed THE world, but it is safe to say she has changed MY world.

Growing up, I thought everyone had a "Grandma Evelyn." The kind of Grandma who made caramel rolls on weekends, the aroma of homemade dough and sticky caramel drawing you sleepy-eyed and smiling to her cozy kitchen. The kind of Grandma who organized pre-bedtime bingo and card games complete with prizes for all the winners, which meant everyone. The kind of Grandma who happily stayed with you when your parents vacationed; who attended your school and sporting events in a coat adorned with picture buttons of the various family athletes; and who never let birthdays pass without a card in the mail. The kind of Grandma who stayed up late, laughed at your silly jokes, bent the rules in the name of fun and memories, and made you feel loved in hundreds of little ways.

For many years I thought everyone had a "Grandma Evelyn" but, as I have grown older, I have come to realize

seems to come to her naturally. Even as her grandchildren have grown into adulthood, and her family expands with marriages and births, she continues to take the same approach to showing love and carry on the traditions she knows we love.

One of my favorite traditions begins each year on Christmas morning when Grandma Evelyn disappears behind closed doors. We all sit smiling with anticipation as we listen to the familiar crisp ruffling of shopping bags and wait for the door to open. Soon the Christmas-clad, red-sack-hauling "Grandma Santa" emerges, shuffling down the hallway in her festive sweater, reindeer socks pulled high out of her boots, red gloves adorned with "ho-ho-ho," and Santa hat with a big white ball bouncing in time with her steps.

She dives into her velvety bag, picking out gifts and loudly announcing the name of each recipient until each of her children, grandchildren, grandchildren-in-laws, great-grandchildren, and friends in attendance has received a present. And although her youngest

grandchild is now 18, she continues with this tradition because it is her way of showing us an extra dash of love during the holidays. I believe she has just as much fun seeing our smiles and hearing our laughter as she scoots around the room as we do in watching her play "Grandma Santa."

What Grandma Evelyn gives to us isn't extravagant, expensive or over the top, instead it is amazing, priceless and wonderful. Her greatest gift is just being who she is and her ability to simply love. This is a gift I will accept from her any day.

As her age has inevitably, and much to her dismay, slowed her, I am glad she has been such a great example in doing the little things for others that often get overlooked or taken for granted. It's our turn now to give back and show our love through helping her. She has truly inspired me to not overlook loving my family and friends simply and also simply loving them. Because it is truly the simple actions that can fill a person's heart and make them feel loved.



Kylie Blanchard is a local writer. She is also a self-diagnosed chocoholic, just like her Grandma Evelyn.

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Inspired Woman is excited to announce the second annual “WHO INSPIRES YOU” Contest. We are inviting area writers to submit a story about someone who inspires you.

Here are the contest rules:

- Stories can be written by a woman or man, but the “Inspiration” must be a woman.
- Submissions must be between 600 and 1500 words in length.
- Copy submitted must be in Word format, 12-point font, single-spaced, left justification.
- Please email all stories as an attached Word document to inspired@theprinters.info.
- Include contact information with each submission and a short bio (not more than 25 words).
- **Inspired Woman** magazine owns the first rights to published stories. They may not run in another publication until they have been published by **Inspired Woman**.
- **Inspired Woman** magazine reserves the right to change and edit all articles and publish all, part, or none of any submitted piece.
- All submissions must be received by midnight, January 31, 2012.

The first place winner will receive the cover of the April/May 2012 issue. A photo of author and “Inspiration” will appear on the cover and their story will be the cover feature. See box on next page for complete list of prizes.

Stories not chosen as winners may be published in future issues of **Inspired Woman**. If story is used in a future issue, writers will be paid 15 cents per word. For payment, writers must submit a hard copy invoice, stating date of publication, within 30 days of magazine publication to:

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3RD PLACE

Third Place winner receives: **\$50 cash**, courtesy of Bismarck Arts and
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A Weight Loss Success Story

by Tina Ding

Social norms for healthy weight run the gamut. On one end of the spectrum, celebrities aim for super slim bodies; society notices. On the other, terms like 'overweight' and 'heavy' replace 'obesity' when referring to body image. And obesity is impacting folks – across the board. From medical issues to emotional impacts, we know carrying extra pounds has become a new crisis for America.

For some, genetics contributes to becoming overweight. For others, the pounds pack on over time – due to environment or lifestyle. Busy schedules, lack of opportunity to work out at a gym and higher costs of healthy foods discourage even the most dedicated among us.

Our littlest people recognize challenges of body image and their weight as early as kindergarten, when children seem to recognize clothing sizes and eating habits by observing peers or paying attention to media. As parents, we encourage healthy eating habits and ensure their lifestyle is active – while they draw their own conclusions.

At the age of ten, Bismarck nurse Jackie Wilke became aware of her own heavy image. She became sensitive to comments and suggestions and grew through her high school years knowing she had extra weight. She learned to dress with loose or baggy clothing and tried dieting. Despite her dedication to dieting, Wilke couldn't drop enough weight with any single plan to become healthy. From dietary programs to goofy grapefruit diets, she tried them all.

"After a lot of soul searching, I checked into the weight loss programs with Mid Dakota Clinic and St. Alexius," Jackie Wilke said. "After I researched and learned about the option of gastric bypass, I knew it was for me."

Once on board with the program, she met with her physician, a dietician and bariatric coordinator as well as underwent psychological testing. Rigorous screening ensured the success of the program, while ruling out surgery for others who might otherwise drop the weight on their own. "There is a



Jackie Wilke is pictured here with her son.

misconception out there," she said. "Weight loss surgery is not a quick fix solution."

Wilke went through with Roux-en-Y surgery. The surgery replaced her stomach by creating a new 'pouch'. After four days of hospitalization, she left the hospital knowing her lifestyle had changed forever. Her new stomach held a fraction of what it once had and she became intolerant of some foods. She began dropping weight immediately. At ten months, she'd lost 110 pounds, reaching her goal.

"Having the surgery wasn't a fast decision. To successfully lose the weight following surgery, I had to make immediate lifestyle changes," Wilke said. "Now I know to wait for hunger cues before eating or snacking. This is not simply about reducing the intake, this is changing everything about how I once lived. Now I make sure I'm hungry before eating and keep active."

Wilke walks farther and keeps up with her son, who is busy and involved in activities. She surrounds herself with supportive family and friends and appreciates the weight loss support group folks who helped her in her journey. There she learned tips and tricks, helped and supported others as well



as met people who couldn't keep the weight off. She drinks no soda and tolerates breads poorly. When eating out, she halves her portion to take home. After ramping up her protein intake, she also takes a multivitamin to keep nutritionally balanced.

"This is a process of becoming educated and learning to approach eating and foods in moderation," she said. "I am dedicated to watching

what I'm doing and staying active; I am not going back."

Wilke finds it concerning to learn of those people who gain weight in order to qualify for the surgery, but supports those considering weight loss surgery as a last option – an only option. Once making the decision and meeting with physicians, she feels having the most current literature and tools in hand before making the decision helps in the process and helps to ensure the success.

Today, Wilke dresses in scrubs for work, with an occasional opportunity to dress in street attire. After five years, she's still surprised and complimented when friends or co-workers notice she's lost and kept the weight off. "Absolutely, I feel great and know this is a lifestyle change I'll maintain," she said.



Tina Ding, local freelance writer, is also a wife and mother of three.



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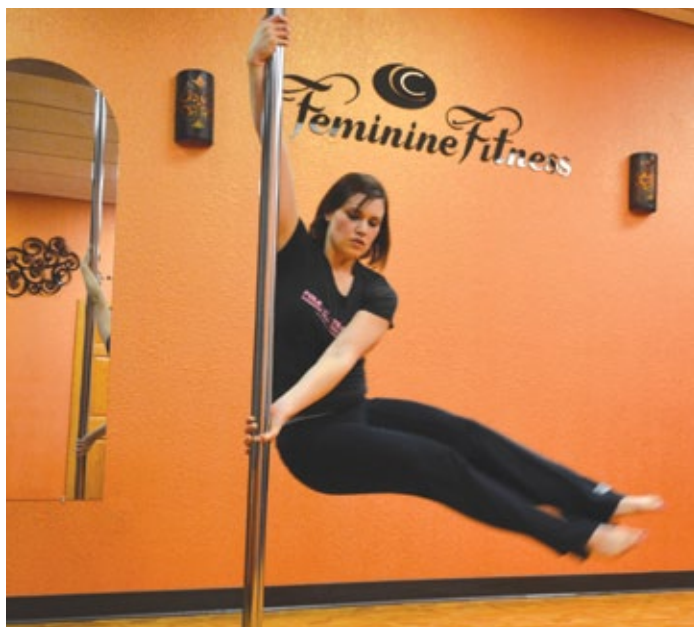
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CC's Physical Therapy and Feminine Fitness Focusing on the Well-Being of Women

by Kylie Blanchard



Dr. April Neshem, PT, WCS discovered her passion for helping women develop and embrace their strength, confidence and femininity while working as a physical therapist at a women's health clinic in Phoenix, Arizona. But as a North Dakota native, she was excited to move back and to have the opportunity to share the knowledge and experience she gained with women in her home state.

In January 2011, Neshem opened CC's Physical Therapy in downtown Bismarck. As one of the nation's 111 board certified specialist in Women's Health Physical Therapy and the only certified specialist in North Dakota, she centered her practice on helping women through a variety of gender specific issues while also providing treatment for all physical therapy needs.

She even chose the initials of two role models, her grandmothers Clara and Catherine, in naming the business. "I wanted the name to represent being a strong woman and my grandmas are examples of the strong women in my life," she says.

But along with her focus on women-centered physical therapy, Neshem also wanted to bring another unique niche to her business. In October she held the grand opening of CC's Feminine Fitness in the same downtown location. The new studio provides a setting for classes teaching sensual dance through a combination of pole, chair, floor and wall elements.

Neshem first discovered this blend of dance at the Express MiE studio in Phoenix, where the Pole~ah~Tease dance program was developed by its founder Christie Simmons. As a participant, Neshem noticed a change in the perspective she held of herself and her femininity, as well as an improvement in her strength and flexibility. It was then she began to focus on how the classes could benefit other women as well.

"In Phoenix, I worked with a lot of chronic pain in women and I noticed these women were beat down by these issues. I started sending patients to the studio and they began getting their 'groove' back," she says. "They felt better physically and emotionally, and were feeling more confident as well."

As a participant and now instructor of the Pole~ah~Tease program, Neshem has witnessed the many benefits the classes offer women. "The classes have a very tasteful, appropriate, and feminine feel," she notes. "It is very personal to each woman and you find out a lot about yourself."

The physical side of the Pole~ah~Tease classes focus on building the participants' strength and flexibility. "Everything done from an exercise and strength standpoint is used in sensual dance and is worked on in every class," says Neshem. "It's really about learning to move your body in a different way."

Women are also brought together in a supportive and safe environment through the program. "This is a great opportunity for friendship and bonding with other women from all walks of life. This program is set up for women of any age and any size to be able to accomplish their goals," she says.

CC's Feminine Fitness is one of a growing number of Express MiE sister studios being opened across the nation and in Canada. It is required instructors are trained and certified at the Express MiE studio in order to teach the Pole~ah~Tease program, and Neshem and other former class participants just completed the training course. "What's really amazing about this program is, it is growing into a national and international network of women," she says.

Neshem notes of all the benefits the Pole~ah~Tease program offers, one of the greatest is what women gain on a very personal level. "It helps to give you what I call your 'x-factor.' It's that thing nobody can give you except yourself through building your inner strength and confidence."

"Everybody will get something different out of these classes," she continues. "But when women come to class each week, it's about letting go and escaping themselves."

A variety of classes are offered at CC's Feminine Fitness, along with party options for girl's nights, bachelorette parties or other special events. Pole~ah~Tease classes are scheduled one night a week for 90 minutes and run in six-week session. The entire Pole~ah~Tease program includes seven levels which participants can choose to complete at their own pace.

"Starting in January, we will also be offering weekend intensives which cover the entire six-week session in one weekend. This is great for out-of-town clients or for the ultimate girlfriends' getaway," says Neshem, adding fitness classes will soon be included in the studio's schedule and gift certificates are also now available.

Neshem says she is excited to be offering both women-centered physical therapy services and feminine fitness classes in the Bismarck-Mandan area. "Its fun to bring my product to the community in the way I want to present it."

And she encourages others to find their passion and take a chance in sharing it with others. "Just go for it. If you're passionate about something and put your mind to it, you can make it happen."

Additional information on the services and classes available at CC's Physical Therapy and CC's Feminine Fitness is available online at www.ccsbismarck.com or by calling 701-751-0994.



Kylie Blanchard is a local writer.

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Healthy Holiday Decadence

by Kristin Rosenau

It's that time of year. The time when cakes, cookies, and sweet treats emerge from our piping hot ovens and proceed to haunt us wherever we go, turning up everywhere from holiday parties to the office break room. The holiday season is certainly about family and friends, but let's be real—it's also about the food. If your family is anything like mine, all social activities and get-togethers seem to feature cookie trays, pies, and lavish feasts as another reason for the season.

With so many sweets in sight, it's difficult to keep a healthy diet during the season where tight pants and growing waistlines are as common as the twinkling lights on the homes of each street. In fact, the average person gains 7-8 pounds over the holiday season alone. With statistics that bleak, it's no wonder there are so many healthy diet resolutions being made for the new year.

This year, instead of gaining the obligatory weight, I want to go against the grain and keep my belt notched firmly in place. Since I don't want to miss out on the snack mixes and pies I look forward to each year, I spent a little time in the kitchen developing new recipes. Recipes that feature healthier, lighter desserts masked as decadent treats. Recipes that feature good-for-you ingredients to fool your taste buds into thinking you are indulging. I hope these simple (but delicious) creations will lead you through the holiday season and follow you well into the new year.

Remember, decadence is okay during the holiday season! Keep your portions small or reasonable and indulge only on those items you can't bear to live without. This will keep both your body pleased and your taste buds satisfied. Now that's something I think we can all be happy about!

Pumpkin Gingerbread Smoothie

The flavors of pumpkin and gingerbread come together to give the classic smoothie a gift of spice and holiday flair. Although this smoothie does feature tofu as a main ingredient, please don't let this be a turn off. The tofu cannot be tasted in the finished product, but instead lends a thickness and creaminess to it that is hard to replicate any other way. This smoothie is also packed with protein, meaning it will fill you up and keep you full for a long time. A seasonal drink to keep the winter blues away.

Yields 2 servings

In a blender combine all ingredients except crushed gingersnaps and blend until smooth. Serve cold, garnished with crushed gingersnaps.

Nutrition per 1-cup serving: 156 calories | 4.9 grams fat | 8.5 grams protein

1 cup milk
1/2 cup soft tofu
1/2 cup canned pumpkin puree
1 tablespoon molasses
1/2 teaspoon ground ginger
1 teaspoon cinnamon
1/8 teaspoon nutmeg
6-8 ice cubes
Brown sugar, to taste
Gingersnaps, crushed (optional garnish)



Candy Cane Popcorn

This Candy Cane Popcorn snack mix is as addictive as it is colorful. Popcorn, by nature, has more protein than any other cereal grain, more iron than spinach, more phosphorous than pretzels, and almost as much fiber as bran flakes. It's a super food. By simply coating the popcorn with a drizzle of chocolate and a sprinkling of crushed candy canes, it turns the popcorn into a decadent tasting sweet that's good for you at the same time! This is the ideal snack to zap your chocolate cravings without indulging in something you may regret later.

Yields 12 1-cup servings

12 cups fresh air-popped popcorn
(or no butter/low fat alternative)
2 ounces semi-sweet chocolate, melted
2 ounces white chocolate, melted
4 full-size candy canes, crushed

In a large mixing bowl, drizzle popcorn with 3/4 of the melted semi-sweet and white chocolate. Sprinkle on 3/4 of the crushed candy canes. Mix together and spread out the popcorn on a large serving platter and drizzle the remaining chocolate and candy canes over the top.

Nutrition per 1 cup serving:
98 calories | 4.1 grams fat | 3.1 grams protein



Raspberry White Chocolate Muffins

To ring in the new year, these Raspberry White Chocolate Muffins will help you keep your New Year's resolutions intact. Though these muffins taste as if they have the richness and decadence of a cupcake, they stay true to the muffin name, containing much less sugar and fat compared to their dessert counterparts. The tartness of the raspberries contrasts nicely with the sweetness of the white chocolate, creating a well balanced flavor combination that will have you making this recipe again and again. The white chocolate chips can be omitted for a lighter (but no less delicious) muffin for true raspberry lovers.

Yields 1 dozen

1/2 cup sugar
1 cup non-fat buttermilk
1/3 cup vegetable oil
1 large egg
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
2 cups all-purpose flour
2 teaspoons baking powder
1/4 teaspoon salt
1 1/2 cups fresh or frozen raspberries
1/2 cup white chocolate chips (optional)

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Grease or line a muffin pan with baking liners.

In a mixing bowl, combine sugar, buttermilk, vegetable oil, egg, and vanilla. Mix until smooth. Stir in the flour, baking powder, and salt until just combined. Carefully fold in raspberries and white chocolate chips.

Fill muffin cups 3/4 full of batter and bake for 20-25 minutes, or until a toothpick inserted into the center comes out clean. Cool muffins in pan for a few minutes before transferring to a cooling rack to cool completely. Store in an airtight container for up to 2 days.

Nutrition per muffin: 184 calories | 7 grams fat | 3.5 grams protein

Pumpkin Panna Cotta

Look for this Pumpkin Panna Cotta recipe at inspiredwomanonline.com



**Nutritional information does not include optional garnishes and ingredients. The nutritional information may also vary slightly depending on brand or any changes in ingredients used.*



Kristin Rosenau is a baker and professional blogger at *The Pastry Affair*, a blog about butter, sugar, photography, and life. <http://www.thepastryaffair.com/>

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Improvised Traditions

by Pam Vukelic

Kids grow up and have lives of their own. Holidays aren't as predictable as they once were. But that doesn't have to mean you can't keep traditions alive.

Perhaps I should have suspected something was up when our daughter, Meredith, invited us to a home-cooked meal at her condo last Wednesday. Cooking isn't really her thing... Yet, anyway... She's more of an HGTV girl than a Food Network foodie.

Things started to come into focus, however, when she appeared at the door of my classroom Wednesday afternoon and said she had a surprise. Our son, Reed, came in to the room behind her with flowers and a big hug for me. Dressed in his ACUs (army combat uniform) and just off the plane from Louisville, KY, he was quite an amazing sight! And, that, Meredith explained, was the impetus for dinner at her house that night.

It turns out that Reed's friend, Roger Krueger, had made arrangements for Reed to participate in Hunting Dakota with Roosevelt. It is a remarkable event that combines hunting and conservation, honors military personnel, and raises money to help pay expenses for persons with cancer. In its fourth year this fall, the hunters have access to areas where Teddy Roosevelt hunted during his visits to North Dakota from 1883 to 1887. Through gifts from some generous donors, Roger and his co-chair, Jon Hanson, were able to afford Reed this once-in-a-lifetime experience.

Having Reed come home was especially sweet since our plans to be together as a family for Thanksgiving had been dashed by the military's need to send Reed to school in Missouri for two months beginning the end of October. He'll be back home at Ft. Knox in time to be present for the birth of his and Mollie's first child, and then will deploy to Afghanistan. So time together, whenever and however we can get it, is precious. And traditions, an important element in families, are sometimes improvised.

Child development experts espouse the value of traditions in child rearing. Even for infants, a ritual or routine makes bedtime and bath time less problematic. For older children, knowing that some parts of life are predictable is calming and beneficial. A weekly family game night, first day of school routine, and activities associated with holidays are all occasions children look forward to repeating. Traditions create memories, strengthen family ties, raise awareness of ethnic backgrounds, and build lasting bonds.

Since it's not going to be possible for us to be together for Thanksgiving or Christmas this year, I decided to bump up our traditional Christmas eve dish to be our last meal before Reed left for home. Coupled with the bottling of Jim's latest batch of homemade wine, we managed to spend some memorable good time together.

Our standard Christmas eve meal features an old extension homemaker's recipe of my mother's called Crispy Cashew Chicken. It's a far cry from the oyster stew and lutefisk we had as kids, but much more palatable to this generation of

young 'uns. Instead of stirring in cashews just prior to serving, the typical procedure for cashew chicken, these cashews are finely chopped to serve as coating before the frying takes place. The result is a crunchy, rich chicken that can be used as an appetizer or as, in our case, the entrée.

And, by the way, the from-scratch spaghetti sauce Meredith made for our Wednesday evening meal was scrumptious. Perhaps she's watching more Mario Batali than I know. It's good enough to become part of a new tradition.

CRISPY CASHEW CHICKEN

1/4 c cornstarch
2 t salt
1 t sugar
1/4 c unsweetened pineapple juice (or dry sherry)
2 egg whites, lightly beaten
1 3/4 c cashews, finely chopped
2 whole chicken breasts, cut into 1 1/2 inch cubes
Oil for frying (peanut oil is a good choice)



In a small bowl, combine the cornstarch, salt, sugar, sherry, and egg whites. Dip chicken pieces into egg white mixture then roll in cashews. Place on cooling rack. When all pieces are dipped, heat oil in a wok to 375 degrees. Fry 4-6 pieces of chicken at a time until cooked through and golden brown on all sides. Serve with Asian Pineapple Sauce.

ASIAN PINEAPPLE SAUCE

3/4 c unsweetened pineapple juice
2 t cornstarch
2 T soy sauce
1 T honey
1 t ginger
1/4 t dry mustard
1 clove garlic, minced
2 T butter



Mix 1 T of the pineapple juice with the cornstarch. Add to all remaining ingredients in a small saucepan, heat slowly until mixture comes to a boil and mixture has thickened slightly. Serve warm as a side to Crispy Cashew Chicken.



Pam Vukelic is a food and nutrition instructor with Bismarck High School.



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Classic Tenderloin with Cranberry Drizzle

Total Recipe Time: 1-1/2 to 1-3/4 hours

- 1 center-cut beef tenderloin roast (about 2 to 3 pounds)
- 2 pounds cipollini onions, peeled
- 2 pounds small Brussels sprouts, trimmed
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1-1/4 teaspoons salt, divided
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh thyme
- 1 tablespoon pepper

Sauce:

- 1/3 cup balsamic vinegar
- 3 tablespoons finely chopped shallots
- 1 can (16 ounces) whole berry cranberry sauce

1. Heat oven to 425°F. Combine onions, Brussels sprouts, oil and 1 teaspoon salt on metal baking pan; toss to coat. Set aside.
2. Combine thyme and pepper; reserve 1 teaspoon thyme mixture for sauce. Press remaining thyme mixture evenly onto all surfaces of beef roast.
3. Place roast on rack in shallow roasting pan. Insert ovenproof meat thermometer so tip is centered in

thickest part of beef. Do not add water or cover. Place vegetables in oven with roast. Roast beef in 425°F oven 35 to 40 minutes for medium rare; 45 to 50 minutes for medium doneness. Roast vegetables 45 to 50 minutes or until tender and lightly browned.

4. Meanwhile, prepare sauce. Combine vinegar and shallots in small saucepan; bring to a boil. Reduce heat; simmer 3 minutes. Stir in cranberry sauce; bring to a boil. Reduce heat; simmer 6 minutes to blend flavors, stirring occasionally. Remove from heat; stir in reserved 1 teaspoon thyme mixture and remaining 1/4 teaspoon salt. Keep warm.
5. Remove roast when meat thermometer registers 135°F for medium rare; 150°F for medium. Transfer roast to carving board; tent loosely with aluminum foil. Let stand 15 to 20 minutes. (Temperature will continue to rise about 10°F to reach 145°F for medium rare; 160°F for medium.)
6. Carve roast into slices; season with salt, as desired. Serve with vegetables and sauce.

Makes 8 to 12 servings

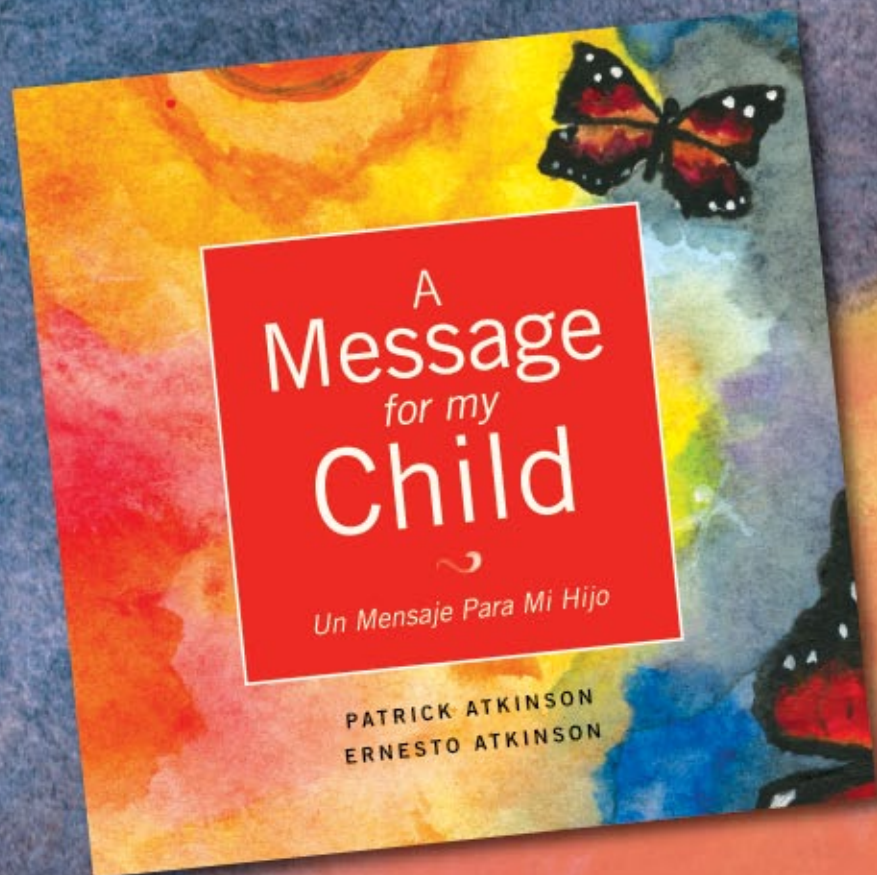
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