

"Can-do" credo creates resurgence

Students at Bennett should be proud of their new president because her confidence and positive attitude will help Bennett be the best.

Dr. Gloria Dean Randle Scott is a very positive role model for young black women, but she is also a role model for any woman. Scott's administration will prove to be a very long, productive and progressive one. She has a very strong, positive direction for Bennett to take, and students should be glad to be included.

Belles should be boasting about the determination and dedication that Scott has shown for her new home. Her plans for improvement and change for Bennett are long overdue. Scott plans to see that Bennett is more than a college; she wants it to be a place where history can be made. Scott is a very poised and optimistic leader and likes and welcomes others to share in her outlook.

Not only students should be impressed with Scott but faculty and staff as

well. It will an experience for new students and old ones to see the change that Bennett will undergo with its new leadership.

There seems to be a feeling of rejuvenation on Bennett's campus and it is generated by the presence of the new president. The new administration seems to be full of new ideas and plans for Bennett. The ease with the way things are going adds a new positive frame of mind for those who are involved with the progress.

The can-do and will-do attitude of the Scott administration will help Bennett jump into the 21st century.

Scott will provide lots of new opportunities for Bennett to become renewed institution, and she will provide vigorous leadership. (Karen Horne)

Mother's ordeal enlightens daughter

an essay
by Taundra Woodard

Aunt Clara's strained, almost inaudible voice still echoes hollowly through my mind. Although 10 years have passed since the accident, the horror and shock that I felt still send shivers down my spine. Being told that my mother had been in a near fatal accident made me reevaluate my worth as a daughter and my faith in God.

The accident had happened only two blocks away from my aunt's home, but it took almost an hour before we received word because all of my mother's personal effects had been crushed beneath the twisted metal. I felt a strong sense of foreboding when Aunt Clara called me into the house. Her voice was shaky, and as she looked at me, tears began to stream down her face. It was then, in almost a whisper, that she said, "Your mother has been in an accident."

There must have been a change in my facial features because my aunt fell to her knees and told me everything would be OK. I really don't know how I felt at the time because all kinds of thoughts were coursing around in my brain like a great swarm of bees attacking its prey.

Three hours later as I came back to consciousness, there was an extreme sense of loss and emptiness inside of me. At first I wondered why, but then I remembered the accident. After my aunt had told me what had happened, I cried so long and hard that I had made myself ill.

My mother was the center of my world. If anything happened to her, I would lose the only person in the world who truly cared about me. Every since my parents had gotten divorced four years before, my mother and I had been on our own. To think that a drunk driver could jeopardize the special relationship we had was unfathomable. I was filled with rage that someone could be so careless as to drive under the influence of alcohol and hurt someone that I loved more than anything in the world.

In a sudden rush of remembrance, the details of the accident rushed into my mind like a high-speed locomotive cutting through the blackness of an overnight trip. My aunt said that my mother had been driving along Market Street on her way to work when a man driving an eighteen-wheeler

changed lanes, suddenly crushing my mother between the truck and a car in the other lane.

The Gremlin my mother was driving was mangled. The front end of the car was flattened along with the back end. On the passenger's side where the truck had rammed into my mother, the door and the hatchback had been ripped from the car. The driver's side which had been shoved into the car in the other lane was practically caved in and all of the glass had fallen across my mother's body.

I began to feel guilty because I was thinking only of the pain I felt, not that of my mother who was lying helpless in a hospital bed, unconscious of the world around her. What kind of daughter was I to think of my loss and not my mother's pain? I realized what kind of person I was becoming, self-centered and selfish. I began to pray as my grandmother had often told me to do when I was depressed. Through a renewed sense of faith, I was able to overcome my thoughtlessness and channel my anxiety into something positive.

When they finally let me into the hospital to see my mother, all the anger and loathing that I felt toward the truck driver came back. How could he hit my mother and leave her so near death? As I approached the bed, I could feel her trying to focus on me and realize who I was.

The woman lying on the bed could not possibly be my mother because she looked so fragile and hurt. There were large red bruises covering most of her face. One arm was in a sling because the force of the truck had knocked it from the socket so it had to be set into place. Both of my mother's legs were bandaged because the broken glass had cut deeply into the flesh, causing an infection. Looking down at her, I wondered if she would ever be the same again.

Three months later, my mother came home from the hospital. Although she was still bruised and sore, there was a vitality about her. She did not allow the accident to destroy her hope. My mother had always been a fighter and would not allow an accident to destroy her love for herself and for me.

This experience forced me to reevaluate my role as a daughter and my faith in God. Eventually I was able to come to grips with my pain and go on with my life.

Junkyard "trips out" girl

a column by
Shawane Lassiter

My favorite place from childhood was a remote junkyard located in the dark depths of many trees, large stepping-stones and small streams. As I entered this special secluded spot, all survival instincts were instantly put into motion. There were no trails or signs of any human habitation, besides the junk.

Upon entry to our secret haven, my brother and I were instantly lost. No one knew of our whereabouts and we weren't aware of any escape routes. On each adventure, we would find different survival tactics and different ways of exiting our place. Outside of our secret place, we were siblings competing for attention and power, but inside, we were one person with one thought in mind—Survival.

We would sniff the dank decaying smell of junk as we sat by the quiet streams and watched tadpoles. Often we would dream of panning for gold in the stream and finding big nuggets to take home and surprise our parents with. We would fantasize about going on the ultimate adventure and finding a dead

body lost to the world for centuries. We dreamed of digging up long-lost dinosaur bones and ancient fossils. Our secluded junkyard opened our imaginations and offered a whole exciting world of fabulous adventure, and most of all, purpose. Our junkyard gave us purpose. On the outside we were bratty kids being a nuisance to our family. In our world we were the adults.

I enjoyed jumping from large rock to rock. Sometimes I would even miss a rock and land in the stream. I liked the feel of the cool, clear water wetting my pants, but as we would continue with our adventure, the wet pants, that eventually collected dirt which turned into mud, became quite uncomfortable to me.

On one excursion, my brother and I had been trapped in the junkyard for what had seemed to be several hours. We knew that my parents would soon be getting worried. We could find no possible exit and couldn't find the original entrance.

Soon we were becoming frightened as the day began to descend to dusk. The trees took on an eerie overcast and started to make frightening shadows. We had to find a

way out.

We fought our way blindly through the dark of the junkyard until finally we came to a high dirt mountain. This dirt mountain surrounded the junkyard. We clawed our way through worms and other creatures. I could feel the filth and slime sticking to my wet pants. I was scared and miserable. I vowed to myself right then and there that I would never enter that secret haven again.

Finally we got out of the junkyard and walked along a railroad track. We followed the track until we reached home.

As I look back now, I recall the darkness and the gloomy dusk that seemed to fall upon the junkyard and entrap us. But as we came out onto the railroad tracks, it was again daylight and the sun was shining again brightly. It was as if our secret world were an illusion and we had fantasized it all.

The junkyard was like the underworld described by Edgar Allan Poe in "The City in the Sea": "No rays from the holy heaven come down/ On the long night-time of that town;/ But light from out the lurid sea/ Streams up the turrets silently./ Gleams up the pinnacles far and free."

Brush with death robs counselor of curiosity

an essay
by Robbin Walton

The place I dreaded the most was a swamp at Timber Trails camp, located in the mountains of Massachusetts. My near drowning in the swamp has caused me to fear deep waters and to lose traits in me that I appreciated.

I was a counselor at the Timber Trails and, one day we all decided to go brookstomping. Brookstomping is similar to hiking, but you are in the water instead of on land. That was all I knew about brookstomping, but I was willing to learn; and did I learn!

Everyone dressed in jeans, sweatshirts, thick socks and sneakers. I was very excited about our journey. I imagined the beautiful flowing brook with birds chirping. I could see the bright green trees and the sun shining upon the trees. I could not wait to conquer my endeavor with nature.

When we arrived at the brook, it seemed as if all that I had imagined about the atmosphere had been shattered. The once beautiful day suddenly seemed foggy. The air was as thick as clouds on a stormy day. The sagging willow trees surrounded the narrow brook. I could not hear the birds chirping, but the sound of the crickets was overpowering.

The water in the brook was still. It was gray which did not seem to hide the moss that covered the brook. My beautiful stream had been distorted into a dreary swamp. Suddenly, I was not too thrilled about our journey.

We began our hike. The waters started off shallow. I could feel the mud gush under my sneakers. The flying insects seemed to be attacking me. I hiked, fanning the insects from my face. The little light of day turned into the darkness of the late evening. The stale smell of the moist damp air filled my nostrils. I wanted to turn back, but we were almost to our destination. We came upon an open area of the brook which had the appearance of a river.

I could not swim, but everyone said the water would not exceed our knees. I continued the journey. Everyone stayed within close range of one other. This did not comfort me; I was still afraid. We came to the center of the water. Half of my body still remained out of the water. I could still feel the earth under my feet, so I set out to complete the journey.

There remained about 10 feet to hike. All I had to do was make it across this river. I was nervous. One girl noticed my uneasiness, so she decided to stay close to me.

The more steps I took, the farther my destination seemed. Suddenly, I could not feel the earth under my feet. I panicked. I had gone under the water.

All I heard was the distorted voice of the girl that once stood by me. It seemed as if I was screaming; and no one could hear me. All I saw under the water was hues of gray. I could not breathe; there was no air. I closed my eyes and my body became motionless.

When I awoke there were people everywhere. I still had trouble breathing. I was on land, but I wasn't aware of how I got there. The river seemed very still and I shuddered as I looked at it. I said to myself, "I will never go near a body of water again."

The crickets were louder than ever and the trees still sagged. The thickness of the air remained and the darkness was still present. Everything was the same except me.

My adventurous nature was no longer a part of me. I did not want to learn to swim, ever.

My brookstomping journey turned into a nightmare of near death. I will never regain the adventure and curiosity of the days before the incident. Those two traits in my personality died that day in a swamp at Camp Timber Trails.

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