

Against the odds

Teen mother graduates from GED

By YVETTE N. FREEMAN
Community News Editor

Like many teenage girls in high school, 18-year-old Tabitha Murdaugh didn't know what the future held in store for her when

would depend on her for at least the next 18 years.

As in most teen pregnancy cases, Murdaugh dropped out of school to become a fulltime mother to her new daughter, Tekira.

At the time, graduating with a



Tabitha Murdaugh receives her diploma from Bob Greene, president of Forsyth Technical Community College.

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— Tabitha Murdaugh

she became pregnant. All she knew was that a tiny bundle of life

high school diploma seemed just a dream that would have to wait.



Tabitha Murdaugh says her 20-month-old daughter, Tekira, was the inspiration for her attaining the GED diploma.

And unfortunately, for many teenage girls who become pregnant, that dream never comes true. It usually gets pushed way down to the bottom of the list of necessities behind diapers, baby food, baby clothes, and other more important items.

By the time a young mother can even get to the bottom of the list, it's usually too late. The dream has either faded or there just isn't enough time to study, do homework and take care of the baby.

Fortunately for Murdaugh, her dream didn't fade, and she made the time to attend GED classes at Forsyth Technical Community College. After a year of hard work and determination, she graduated this past November.

"When I became pregnant, I didn't know what I was going to do. I didn't know if I was going to go back to school. But I think I made the best decision," she said.

Now with her GED under her belt, Murdaugh plans to enroll in the two-year Medical Assistant Program at Guilford Technical



Tabitha Murdaugh recently graduated from Forsyth Tech's GED program. Her daughter, Tekira, holds up the GED final exam.

Community College in Greensboro. She is already a Certified Nurses Aid (CNA).

"The medical assistant sounds very interesting to me. That's what I think I want to do," she said.

Murdaugh, who is a native of South Carolina, moved to Winston-Salem with her parents about a year ago. And she says it has been the love and encouragement of her family that has helped her to achieve her goals.

However, Murdaugh also said that Tekira is the guiding light

behind her success.

"I feel like everything I do, I have to do it for her. When I went to get my GED, I was like, 'I have to do this because of Tekira.' She's the reason I do most of the things."

She added that although being a teenage mother is not easy, it has matured her. "It's not easy because it's a lot of responsibility and a lot of persistence," she said. "It's a lot involved. It's developing the personality, the type of person you want her to be. And me being a child myself, it's hard."

Community

EVENTS CALENDAR December

How to Schedule Your Event: Send your information, concisely and neatly printed or typed, to the *Chronicle* Calendar, 617 N. Liberty St., Winston-Salem, N.C. 27102, before 5:30 p.m. the Monday preceding the week in which your event will occur. Our FAX number is (919) 723-9173.

THURSDAY, DEC. 12

• *African-Americans in Bethabara and Salem* will be presented by Camille Roddy of Historic Bethabara at 3 p.m. at the Neighborhood Government Services Office, 2305 Patterson Ave. The program is free and open to the public.

• The Winston Lake Family YMCA's 67th Annual Meeting and Awards Banquet will be held at 6:30 p.m. at the YMCA. The keynote speaker will be Coach Bishop Harris, head football coach at NCCU. Tickets are \$20 per person, or \$160 for a table of 8, and may be purchased at the Winston Lake YMCA, 901 Waterworks Rd., or from any staff or board member. For more information, call 724-9205.

• A *Holiday Spectacular*, a song and dance show of the popular and classical tunes from the varied celebrations of the *Winter Holidays*, will be presented by the Main Event Show Choir today and tomorrow at 7:30 p.m. in the RJ Reynolds Auditorium, 301 N. Hawthorne Rd. Tickets are \$3 at the door. For more information, call 727-2061.

• The Forsyth Technical Community College Board of Trustees Standing Committees Meeting will be held at 3 p.m. in the Board Room.

FRIDAY, DEC. 13

• The Faustwork Mask Theatre will perform at the Southeastern Center for Contemporary Art (SECCA) at 7:30 p.m. Faustwork will present a two-man show, *Mask Messengers* in SECCA's McChesney Scott Dunn Auditorium. Tickets are \$5 for SECCA members, senior adults and students, and \$10 for the general public. Children under 12 are free. SECCA is located at 750 Marguerite Drive. For more information, call 725-1904.

• Historic Bethabara Park will host "Christmas in Bethabara" through Sunday. The

event includes Candle Light Tours of the 1788 Gemeinhaus and the annual Christmas Concert by the Piedmont Chamber Singers. All events are free and open to the public. Reservations are required for the Candle Light Tours. For more information, call 924-8191.

• An exhibition of ink drawings and sculptures by the late Carlos Alfonso will open at the Southeastern Center for Contemporary Art (SECCA), 750 Marguerite Dr. The exhibit entitled, "Habitual" will be on view in SECCA's Porch Gallery through April 12, 1992. For more information, call 725-1904.

• The Piedmont Triad Engineering Research Center Study Committee will meet at 9 a.m. in Room 139 of the Anderson Center on the campus of WSSU.

SATURDAY, DEC. 14

• The Youth Program at the Sawtooth Center for Visual Art will hold its second session of its annual series of Holiday workshops for children. The workshop, entitled "Toys," will meet from 9:30 a.m. to 12 p.m. The fee is \$20. The workshop is open to children in kindergarten through eighth grade. For more information or registration, call 723-7395 between 9 a.m. and 5 p.m.

• A bazaar, yard sale, and bake sale will be held from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m. in the Walkertown Middle School auditorium. Craftsmen may rent space for \$10 to sell items. Contact Mary Hutchins at 595-2161 or 595-2224.

• A "Christmas Carol Sing-A-Long" will be held from 6-7:30 p.m. at Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd. Bring your family, neighbors, and friends to enjoy an evening filled with music and entertainment. Participants will line MLK Jr. Blvd. from Cleveland Ave. to First St., and sing

the old yuletide carols. All civic, social, and church groups are invited to participate. For more information, call The Best Choice Center at 722-0597.

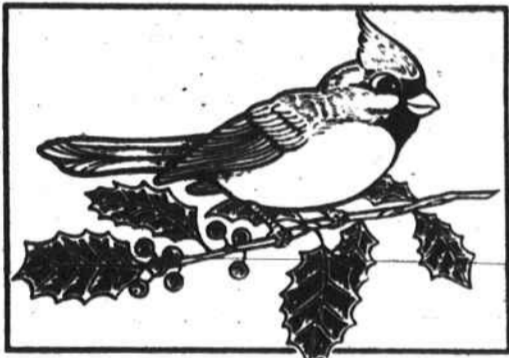
SUNDAY, DEC. 15

• The three historic houses, Reynolda House, Museum of American Art, Graylyn Conference Center of Wake Forest University and the Southeastern Center for Contemporary Art, will open their doors to the public from 1-6 p.m. The afternoon will feature festive holiday decorations, entertainment, and refreshments at each house. Admission is \$7 for adults and \$3 for children. Tickets will be available at the door the afternoon of the event.

• A Holiday Benefit Concert for the Ronald McDonald House of W-S will be held from 7:30 p.m. until 12 p.m. at Cowboys Nitelife, located on Hwy. 66 South in Kernersville. Doors open at 7:30 p.m. with entertainment from three bands beginning at 8 p.m. Admission is \$5 per person. For more information, call Nancy Fagg at 723-0228.

• The Winston-Triad Chapter of The Lupus Foundation will sponsor a "Holiday Party and Covered Dish Dinner" at 2:30 p.m., in the Activity Building of Highland Presbyterian Church. There will be Christmas crafts, a flea market table, door prizes, and special guest physician Dr. Molly Burgoyne, a Rheumatologist at Bowman Gray School of Medicine. She will present some "Highlights of the National Meeting of the American College of Rheumatologists." Tax deductible credit will be given for any donated items. The event is free and open to the public. Please RSVP at 768-1493.

Please see page B7



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