

# Lib Stewart

*A distinguished woman indeed*



Lib Stewart at a special church lunch.

This week, many people in town have honored Lib Stewart – a fine Christian lady, a friend to many, a loved aunt and sister to some, and to me – a great mentor.

On Thursday night, Aug. 5th, the Cleveland County Commission of Women will recognize Lib as a Distinguished Woman. The recognition is much deserved and I think it's safe to say that Ronnie Hawkins, who submitted her as a nominee this year, and I are very grateful that they chose her out of a bunch of other worthy candidates.

On Sunday, Dixon Presbyterian Church, of which she is the last remaining charter member, honored her in a special service. We were all able to keep it quiet enough so that she was surprised on Sunday, although I'm sure the reporter in her got suspicious when she saw me walk in and then Ronnie and Libby Hawkins and Myrtle Christenson and Arlene Barrett. (We were all guests to Dixon Presbyterian that morning.)

And on Tuesday night she was surprised again by Mayor Rick Murphrey and the city as he read a special proclamation in her honor. At least I hope she was surprised. She's very smart.

Several people stood up at church on Sunday and spoke about her smarts. Her pastor Randy Patterson read verses from chapter 8 in Proverbs that spoke about wisdom and how it is more precious than rubies.

"I think Lib chose wisdom," he said, "and we are all blessed for that."

Her brother Gary Stewart, longtime leader of the

Herald and current sports editor, also talked about her knowledge and other attributes he's admired in her over the years. His heartfelt talk was peppered with humorous accounts from when they were growing up.

She's kind, loving, fair, honest, just, and faithful. Someone you hope to be around when times get tough. A doting aunt you hope to have when your birthday rolls around. She's an unspoken leader who leads by example and who works just as hard, if not harder, than her counterparts.

Several others shared memories of her. I only wish now I would've had the courage to stand up and speak that Sunday. The irony is I thought of speaking about her courage. That's one of the things I admire most about her.

Like Gary pointed out she was born premature; small enough to fit in the hand of an adult they say. Her bed was a pillow. And being born premature and with the symptoms of Typhoid fever that plagued her mother and other family members, her prognosis wasn't good.

The doctor, who came to the house, said, "Don't worry about this one. She won't make it."

But by the grace of God she did. She grew up healthy and strong. Years later she relied once again on that strength to become a survivor of breast cancer.

Courage. If anyone has it, she does. I've seen that courage rear its head when she covers stories for the paper. I was with her once when she decided to drive out and see what was going on at the spot where Southern Power was supposed to

# Beach Blast 2010



photos by EMILY WEAVER

Left to right, Megan Clampett, Tyler Cutler (with back to camera), Christian Quevedo, and Kaleb Norris compete with others in the watermelon eating contest Saturday at Beach Blast.



Beach baby Jasmine Suarez looks like she might be wondering what the judges are writing about her in the Teenie Weenie Bikini Contest.



Piper Green won first place in the youngest division of the bikini contest.



Fourteen-month-old August Terry plays up to the judges during the Teenie Weenie Bikini Contest. He won first place among boys in his age division Saturday.

be building its new plant off of Battleground Road. She had called the company, but hadn't heard back.

"We'll just go and see what they're doing," she told me.

We drove out there, down a dirt road, past a "no trespassing" sign (I kept quiet

about seeing) to where the gravel gave way to grass. I looked in the rearview mirror and saw that we weren't alone.

"We've got company," I said.

She stopped and got out of the car and walked up to the company truck behind

us. Within a matter of minutes she was laughing and smiling with the guys in the truck. She gave them her card and said, "just tell them to call us."

Within a day or so they did. And I saw then, as I've seen at other times, she is not afraid to go after a story.

Being in the newspaper business isn't easy, even though some of the truly best ones make it look that way. Like my first mentor here, her brother Gary, she's one of the best – a distinguished woman indeed.

**Come on down to the**  
**63<sup>rd</sup> Annual Bethware Fair**  
**August 3<sup>rd</sup> - 7<sup>th</sup>, 2010**

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**Food Vendors**  
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**Rides**  
**Ride Armbands Available!**

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**Miss Jada Roberts**

**Entertainment Nightly:**  
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