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August 2020



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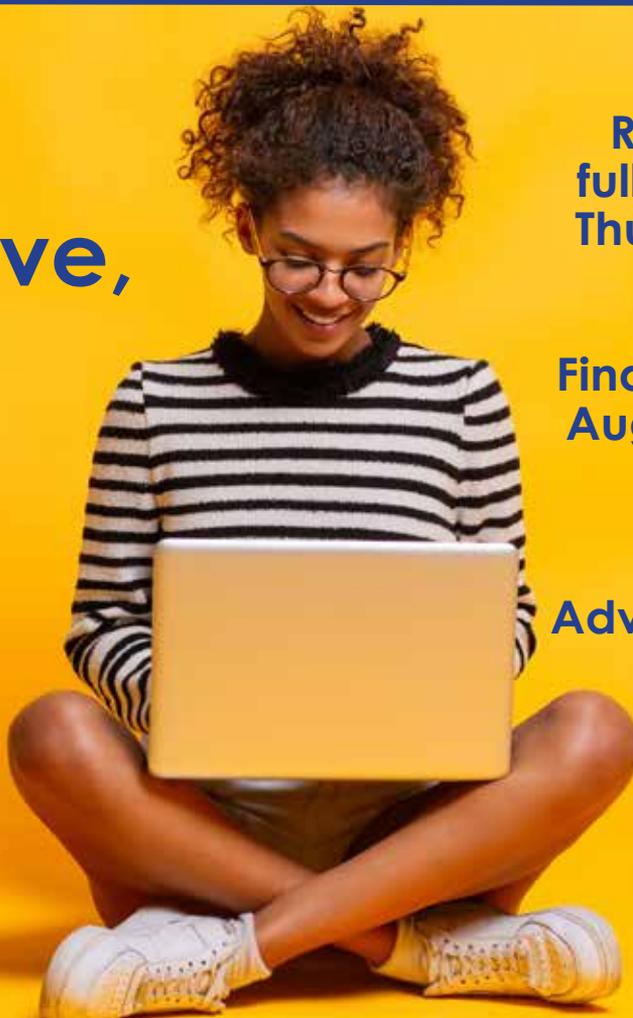
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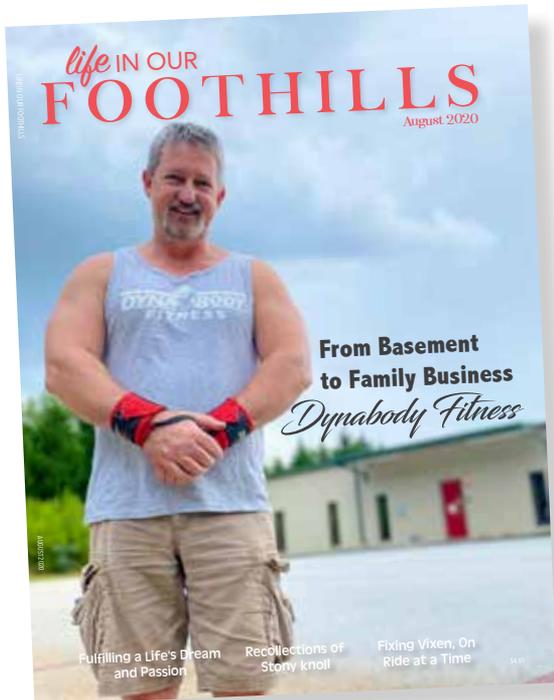
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**Kevin Powell**  
General Manager

**ON THE COVER**



**Dynabody Fitness**

(Story on page 20)

Photo by Macy Cochran

**FROM THE EDITOR**



**W**ithin each new issue of Life in Our Foothills, we present to you a few more examples of what makes the Foothills such an incredible place to live. This month's edition is no different.

Every town has a local vet to tend to the needs of our four-legged friends. South of the border in Landrum is Landrum Veterinary Hospital and Donna Raines. For eleven years, she has been helping not only dogs and cats, but birds, reptiles, goats and pigs, as well! She will share a few stories with you in this month's edition.

Also in Landrum, there is a family run Christian based gym called Dynabody Fitness. Originally starting in a bedroom, Chris Cochran has built his "hobby" into something much greater. So, if you're looking to bulk up for the next weightlifting competition or just a jog on the treadmill, Dynabody is the place to get it done.

The Stony Knoll Library has been a jewel in Mill Spring for over 80 years. Started by Mrs. Della Hayden Davenport Jackson in 1937, supporters of this local treasure are working to have it added to the National Register of Historical Places. Turn the pages to learn more!

We hope you continue to enjoy this edition and as always, we encourage your suggestions for stories or events to feature. Feel free to contact us at [news@tryondailybulletin.com](mailto:news@tryondailybulletin.com).

Still nervous about venturing out? Sign up to have Life in Our Foothills magazine delivered to your home or office for only \$30 a year. Call 828-859-9151 to subscribe today!

*Kevin Powell, General Manager*  
[kevin.powell@tryondailybulletin.com](mailto:kevin.powell@tryondailybulletin.com)

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# *life* IN OUR FOOTHILLS

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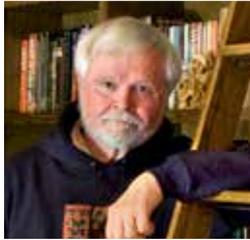
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## **Mark Levin**, Writer and Photographer

Mark is retired from a career in education. In addition to the classroom he has had a lifetime of experiences earning a buck as a photographer, videographer, author, musician and camp director. You can follow his blog about people & places in the foothills at [www.FoothillsFaces.com](http://www.FoothillsFaces.com) or check out his new podcast he enjoys with a friend of 50 years at [www.garyandmark.com](http://www.garyandmark.com).



## **Vincent Verrecchio**, Writer and Photographer

When not working in advertising as a copywriter, art director, photographer, creative director, and finally agency owner, Vince was on a horse with a camera on hand somewhere in North America, Europe, or Africa. Now lightly retired from advertising more than 40 years, he writes about whatever strikes his fancy, looks for interesting photos everywhere and wanders in the Foothills on a horse



## **Macy Cochran**, Writer and Photographer

Macy Cochran is an English Writing student at North Greenville University. She is a lover of books, coffee and binge watching sitcoms from the 90's. As a creative writer, she often spends her time working on her novels, poetry and short stories.



## **Jimmi Buell**, Writer

Jimmi is an extension agent for the Polk County Center of the North Carolina Cooperative Extension Service. She teaches cooking and nutrition classes with a focus on improving health with better food choices. She can be reached at [jimmi\\_buell@ncsu.edu](mailto:jimmi_buell@ncsu.edu) or 828-894-8218.



## **Pebbles**, Writer

Pebbles is the “spokespony” for HERD, or Helping Equines Regain Dignity, a local nonprofit that saves equines from dire conditions and in many cases slaughter. She dictates her monthly columns about her adventures and what a rescue organization does to Heather Freeman. Pebbles and Heather can be reached through [HerdRescue.org](http://HerdRescue.org)



## **Jullia Zeleskey**, Photographer and Graphic Designer

Jullia has always had a passion for art and design. These two interests have blossomed into a career she can enjoy on a daily basis. As a photographer, her keen eye for that unique shot are showcased in the Tryon Daily Bulletin, Life in Our Foothills and Visitors Bulletin magazines. Most weekends, she can be found spending time outdoors hiking or mountain biking a trail off the beaten path or sipping a vanilla latte.

*Whinny Hill Farm*  
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**A handsome 10.7-acre equestrian property  
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While cliché adjectives like prestigious, luxurious, and gorgeous may well apply to Whinny Hill Farm, they don't do justice to its depth of character. As a whole, it is a handsome farm, with a residence of dignified demeanor in somewhat of a contrast to its dynamic setting within the Golden Hills of Fairview Farms. Earth-hued stucco finish anchors this tall home to its elevated site that faces the changeable mood of the mountains and overlooks a domain of verdant pastures. The earth-toned theme, enhanced by cherry wood floors, and enlivened by a vast

array of windows continues throughout the home. There are over 5,000 sq. ft. of living area, in addition to a stalwart pavilion and extended ironwood deck. The dressage arena with mirrors is regulation size; the 4-stall barn measures 48 x 60 and is equipped with all amenities, including a wash stall. The pastures are board-fenced. Golden Hills is a premium equestrian community comprised of more than 500 acres with a well-maintained trail system of approximately 8.4 miles. \$1,295,000

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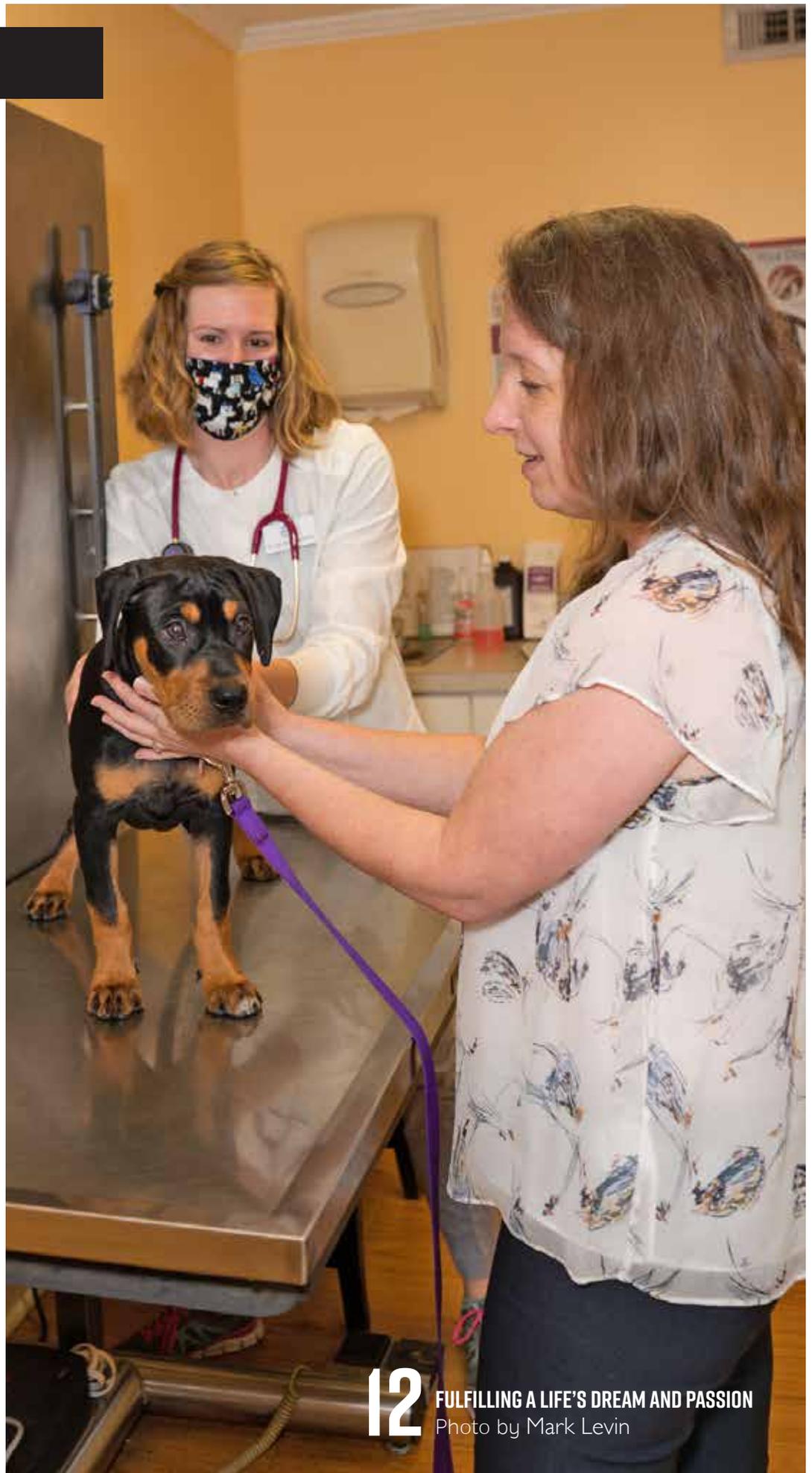
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# Music at the tracks

During the summer, Landrum hosts Music at the Tracks on Saturday evenings for families of all ages to enjoy. On this June evening out by the depot, it wasn't unusual to find children dancing in circles and adults snapping to the music of the Showman Band.

By Macy Cochran

Scott Toney, Dorris Wooten, Marie Pierce, and Johnny Dekker



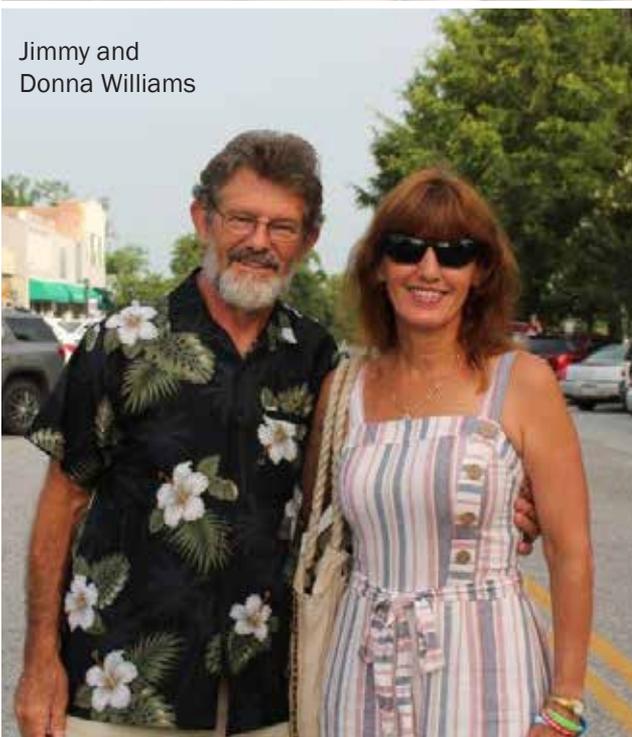
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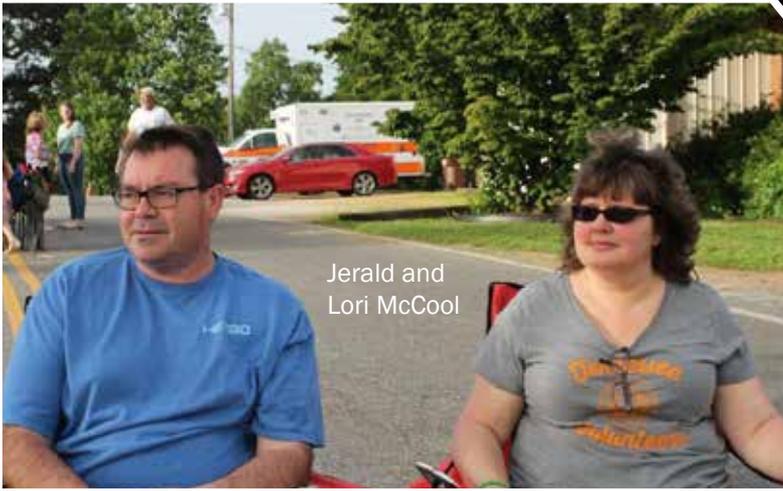




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Steve and Sharon Parsons



Donna Raines

# Fulfilling a Life's Dream and Passion



Writer & Photographer Mark Levin

Growing up in Lexington, South Carolina Donna Raines always knew she wanted to be a veterinarian. Her friend's dad was the town's vet, and Donna always thought he had the best job ever. That planted the seed. She followed her dreams and passion to see that it happened. And as an aside, Donna's childhood friend also became a veterinarian. Donna's family is still in Lexington, but Landrum has been her home for the past eleven years.

Donna went to the highly respected College of Veterinary Medicine at the University of Georgia in Athens. That makes sense as the University's mascot is a bulldog! Her first job as a vet was at Shandon-Wood Animal Clinic in Columbia, SC.

"Shandon-Wood was an amazing experience. They were practicing the best medicine of all the places I interviewed, and the mentorship I received there was phenomenal."



Donna Raines



Donna and Scrubbs



Donna with Dana Mayer from Paws, Prayers & Promises



Donna with Dr. Lara Anderson-Bailey and patient Millie



Jerry Lawson and Harley



Donna with Robi Smith front desk





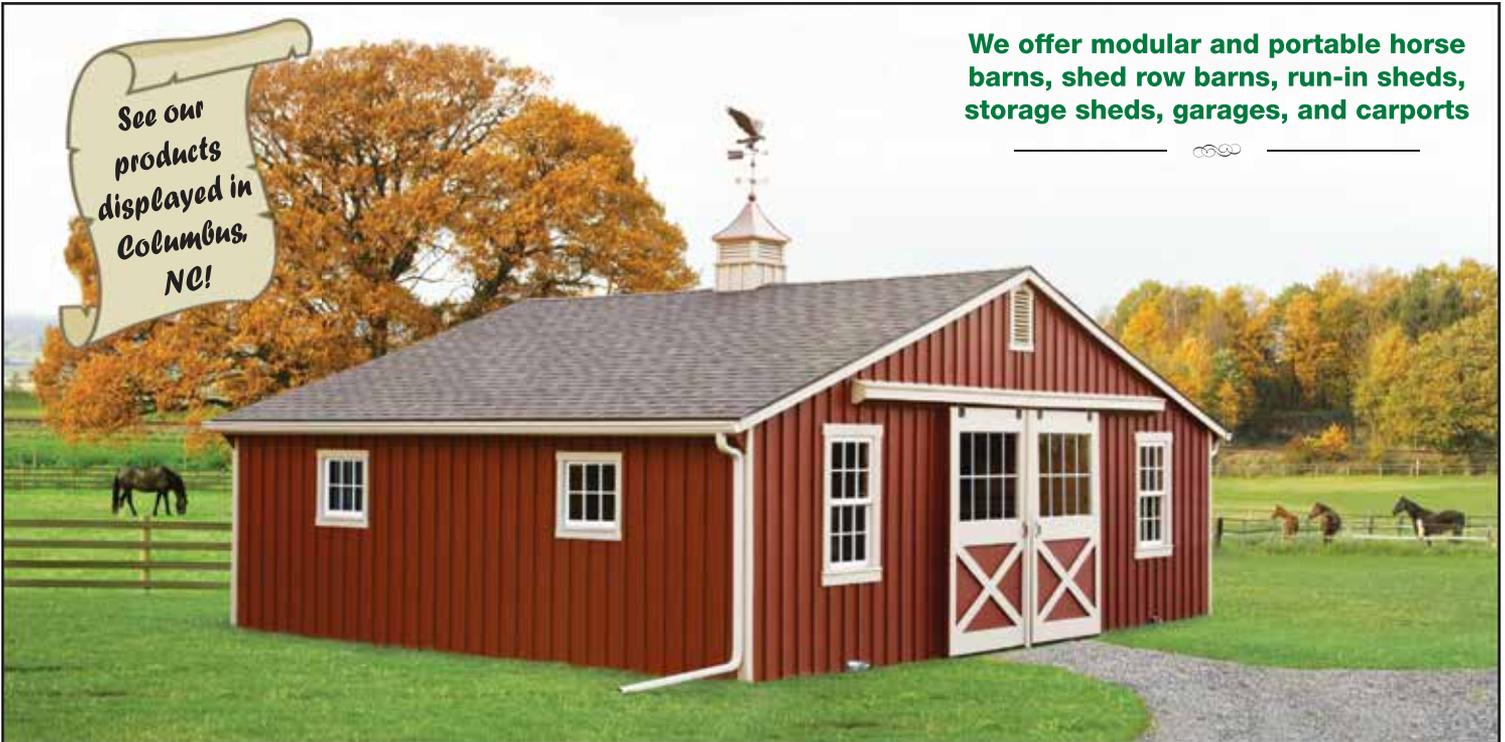
When it was time to branch out and start her own practice, she looked at several places. Donna had many friends from the Upstate she met during her undergraduate work at Winthrop University in Rock Hill, SC. She fell in love with the area during her visits. Donna checked out several vet practices, but she says it could have been “kismet” that brought her to Landrum. She knew right away that Landrum Veterinarian Hospital was the right decision.

Donna has owned Landrum Veterinarian Hospital for eleven years. During that time she has seen her practice flourish into a major provider of vet care for the region. Today there are four full-time and one part-time

veterinarians. Twenty people in all make up the staff at the hospital. The practice primarily takes care of dogs and cats, but they also see birds, reptiles, pocket pets (gerbils, hamsters, etc.), goats, and pigs. There’s never a dull moment. Donna says, “While we specialize in small animals, if a pet can fit in the door, we’ll take care of it.”

The days are long. It’s a team effort to take care of the menagerie of pets that come through their doors. The office opens at 7 AM and by 8 o’clock they are well underway with appointments and surgeries. While in theory they stop for lunch, in actuality the staff is usually using that time to fit in an extra procedure for someone.

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Donnan Raines  
eagerly waiting for  
the next patient

When a frantic pet parent walks through the door, lunch is no longer important. The day continues with wellness visits and sick pets until closing at 5:30. The work is often stressful, Donna says, "It's a fun work environment. We collaborate on cases frequently. We're always asking each other to look at x-rays, give a second opinion, and discuss treatment plans."

Being a vet is not easy work. As might be expected, having to euthanize a beloved pet is the hardest part of the job. Donna says they hurt for the pet and for the family. But that is tempered a bit by some of the most fulfilling parts of the job. Seeing the tail wag or hearing the purr when a pet is recovering from illness makes for a happy day. And of course, seeing puppies and kittens and sweet old dog faces makes the job complete. One old dog, Scrubbs, takes up full-time residence at the hospital. She took in this aging pet from her dad when he passed, and it's obvious Scrubbs is loving all the attention he gets from the staff at the hospital.

Landrum Veterinary Hospital is a progressive practice. Donna mentions that the veterinarians stay current on recommendations and therapies. "The building might have a few years on it, but our equipment is top of the line. I am incredibly proud of this clinic and the medicine that we practice. I feel fortunate that so many talented veterinarians and staff have chosen to be part of the Landrum vet team."

Plenty of people in the community feel the same way. Dana Mayer, founder and director of a local animal rescue organization - Paws, Prayers & Promises-commented that, "I am forever grateful that Donna Raines came into my life. Not only for her friendship over the years, but also for everything she and her staff at Landrum Veterinary Hospital have done for our Po' Kitties program. And of course, for the many animals she has helped through Paws, Prayers & Promises. You rock, Doc!"

Donna repays that compliment from Dana by saying, "I was very impressed with what Dana was doing. She has given Landrum Veterinarian Hospital the opportunity to give back to the community through our services. She has become a good friend and became a fixture at the clinic as soon as we met."

Donna's practice continues to grow. She says they need to expand and are studying the options. "We're bursting at the seams in this building."

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Donna with Ny'Sheria Lightner  
Hearn nursing staff



## Business Info:

Landrum Veterinary Hospital offers wellness and diagnostic services, soft tissue surgery, dentistry, acupuncture, breeding, and herbal medicine. The hospital also offers pet boarding and grooming.

The hospital is located at 1600 E. Rutherford Street in Landrum. 864/457-3351. Hours – Monday through Friday from 7 AM until 5:30 PM and Saturdays from 8 until noon.  
**Email is: [landrumvet@gmail.com](mailto:landrumvet@gmail.com).**  
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Donna with Ashley Moore

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From Basement to Family Business

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# Dynabody Fitness

— From Basement to Family Business —



Writer & Photographer Macy Cochran

Dynabody Fitness on the outskirts of Landrum marked its fourteenth anniversary last March. Each day, owner Chris Cochran celebrates by stepping into the gym and welcoming new members.

Dynabody Fitness claims hundreds of members and dozens of people tracking through the door every hour, but little do they know that Chris' gym budded to life in his childhood home's basement. Prior to that, Chris never lifted weights a day in his life. Overall, his story went from small to big to hefty.

"As a four-year-old," he says, "I was diagnosed with asthma, and a few years later, I actually died from it briefly. So I have no working memory of ever breathing correctly, and not being able to breathe that well as a kid meant that I couldn't go out and play sports or run around with my friends as much as I wanted."

When Chris was a teenager, one of his friends bought a simple bench press which made Chris recognize how he could excerpt all that energy he had that wasn't being used on playing sports.

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Chris with daughter Macy



Rita and Chris Cochran

“Normally, when people go out to jog or run, their main concern is getting a cramp or getting tired,” Chris states. “My worry was always losing my breath or being taken to the hospital because of my asthma.”

There, in his friend’s bedroom, is where he started to work out. Chris soon came to find that this didn’t affect his asthma, and he could benefit from it physically and hang out with friends in the meantime.

A few short months later when they had outgrown their small space to work out, Chris moved their gym to his parents’ basement and called

it “Cochran’s Gym.” His gym became so popular, he had tee shirts made with their new logo.

For the next twenty years to come, Chris called working out a hobby. A hobby that would soon become that of many more.

One day, after years of lifting weights alone in his basement, he told Rita, his wife, “You know, I’ve always wanted to have my own gym.”

She was hesitant to push toward opening a new business, especially one she knew so little about. It was a scary investment and a long process. However, once she braved the uncertainty, they finally agreed that the time was right.

Chris along his biggest supporter, Rita



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Dyna Body Gym offers weights for the more serious body builder

Chris simply needed space—a place to put all of his machines and allow others to enjoy his hobby along with him. So on the many acres behind his house, he planted Dynabody Fitness, a family owned, private gym—what Chris calls “a small, personal gym with a Christian atmosphere.”

Thanks to his many years of working out every day, Chris has won numerous awards and medals for having the heaviest bench press. He set the national record of 340lbs for bench pressing in 2014 for his age group among several state records, as well. He didn't, however, do it for recognition: “I simply wanted to see if I could do it at all.”

Currently, two men are training at Dynabody Fitness for the 2021 Summer Olympics, as well as

many college students who are preparing over the summer for sports in the Fall. Back in 2018, the Olympians from the equestrian games became members. The Landrum Police Department and a handful of Landrum Firemen call Dynabody home, too.

Unlike most gyms, Dynabody is known for its unique method of operation. The gym was the first in the area to be open twenty-four hours with unlimited access. This helps to keep it from becoming overly. When someone signs up for a membership, they are given an electric key which allows them to come and go at their leisure. Being open twenty-four hours a day, people are able to work out when they want to and not have to worry about a closing time and allows people to



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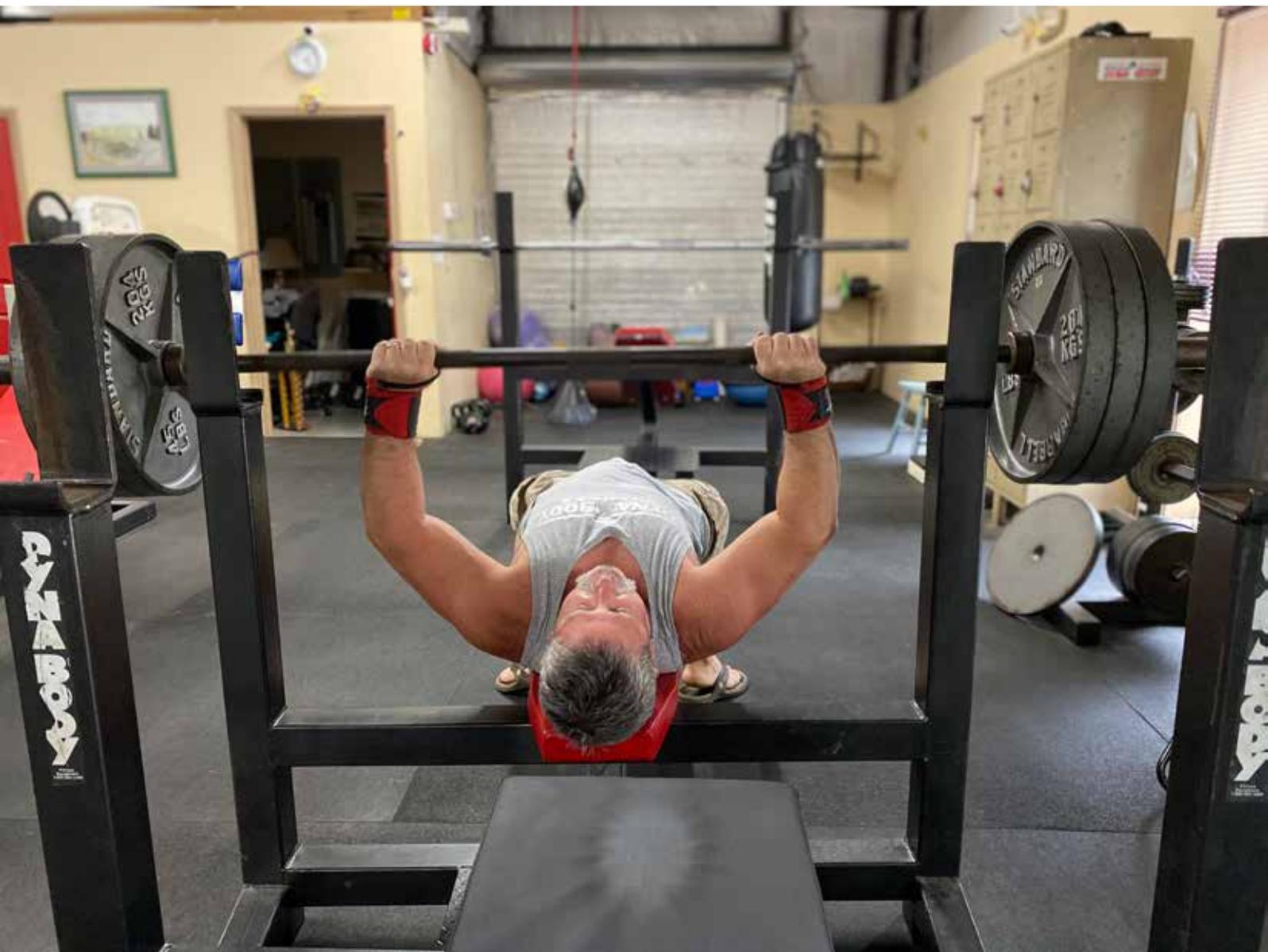
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work out when it best fits their schedules.

Dynabody offers many machines and hearty equipment such as bench presses, rowing machines, ab crunchers, treadmills, ellipticals and other varieties of cardio, free weights, dumbbells and more. This gym caters to those who are working to gain muscle, lose weight or train for activities.

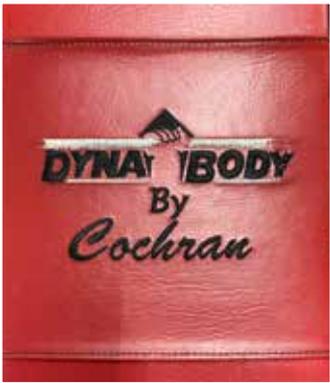
The inspiration Chris has come from Jesus, who keeps Dynabody Fitness a humble success.

“I’ve made a lot of friends over the years,” he says. “I’ve gotten to meet a lot of new people and I enjoy getting to work out with them, but the best part about owning Dynabody is getting to work out at a place that I made my own. It’s my own personal gym, and that’s what I hope I make it for everyone.”

At the end of the day and with every new member that joins Dynabody Fitness, Chris claims that “All the glory goes to God.”

## Business Info:

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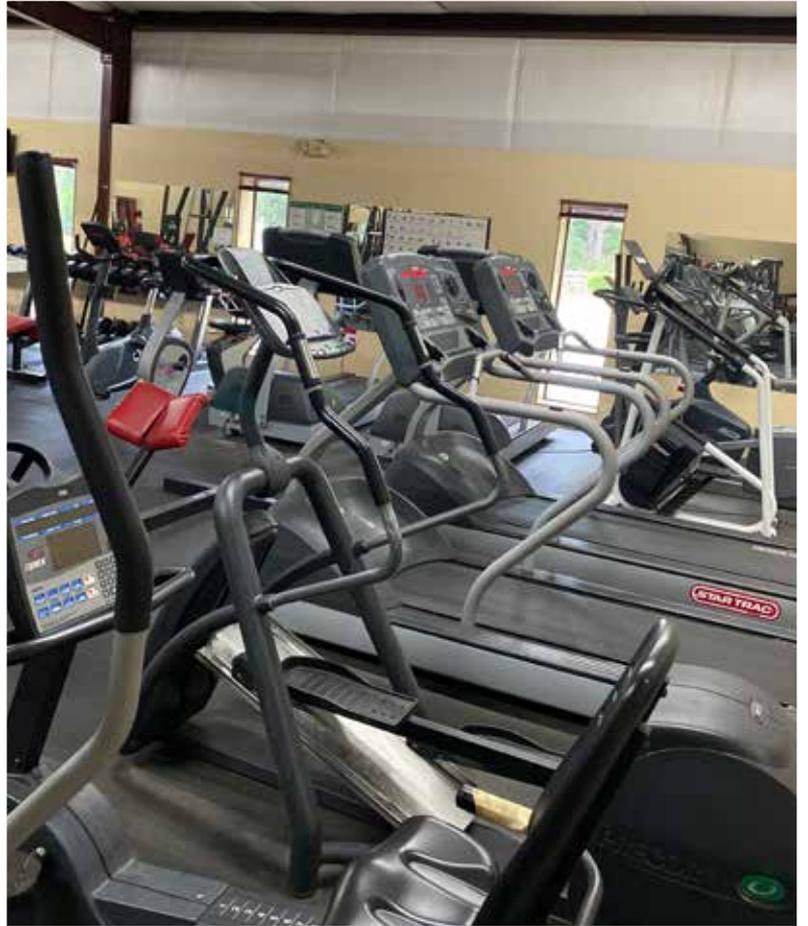
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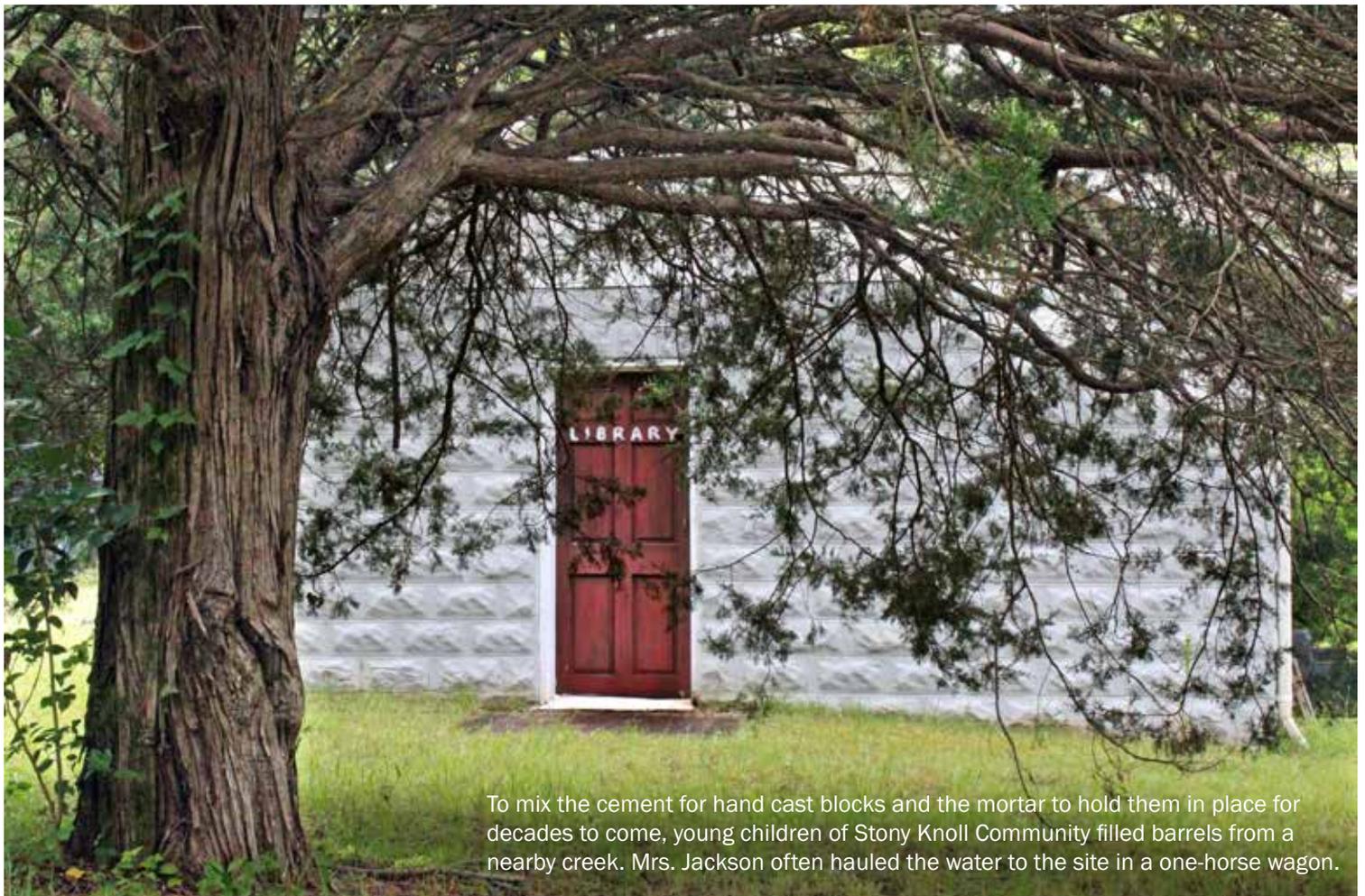
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To mix the cement for hand cast blocks and the mortar to hold them in place for decades to come, young children of Stony Knoll Community filled barrels from a nearby creek. Mrs. Jackson often hauled the water to the site in a one-horse wagon.

# *Grandma's Library*

## Recollections of Stony Knoll



Writer & Photographer Vincent Verrecchio

“The first time I came into the library after Grandma died, I could feel her presence,” recalls Sandra Petty Forney. That was 1993, and today, 27 years later, Sandra still believes that Mrs. Della Hayden Davenport Jackson is part of the books and shelves and the very walls of the 20 by 24-ft room of the Stony Knoll Community Library.

“Grandma started the library in 1937 in a rented room of the Jones house. A donation of 10 cents from one of her adult education students was the start of the funding for the

Library that still stands today after 83 years. She saw the need for a library for the black community and took up the cause. She did all this as a young widow, raising three children under five years old and helping with an invalid mother. There were no other options for black students, and Grandma was determined to do something about it.”

From talking with Sandra and researching and compiling history from the many newspaper articles published about Mrs. Jackson, and she was determined about something, it happened.



Sandra has set herself the task of cataloguing the collection and often gets lured into reading, for example, a Life Magazine double issue on the Bible.



Books no longer circulate at the Library. Sandra's mission is to preserve and, in some instances, display some of the collection in a museum environment. She notes an illustrated book published in 1946 about childhood friendships.



The library had always been privately funded and maintained mostly through the good will of volunteers, friends and donors, such as Walker's Store donating a now historic bookmark. (Photo courtesy of Sandra Petty Forney)

For example, one article reports that Mrs. Jackson as a pre-schooler was determined to win a Bible in a Stony Knoll Church contest where contestants had to recite Bible passages from memory. She hadn't learned to read yet, so she memorized 10 passages by listening to her older sisters practicing. Little Della won.

With seasonal work to be done growing up on a farm, she was always a month late before getting to the one-room Stony Knoll Elementary School. She was so determined to do well, however, that she always caught up quickly and was eventually helping other students learn, even with seven grades in the same room.

Sandra adds, "Grandma was the first member of her family to attend high school, the Allen Home School for Girls in Asheville, graduating in 1923. After subsequent teacher training, she started a teaching career that spanned more than 50 years. She taught students from the cradle to the grave. Teaching grandparents, parents and even grandchildren of some families. She also started the first legalized daycare in Polk County that was opened to black and white."

Sandra remembers her Grandma always dusting and said, "Some of these books have been on the same shelves since her death or longer. Some look like someone has been carefully dusting them and it hasn't been me."





Della Hayden Davenport Jackson erected signs on Fox Mountain Road, one at each end of a mile and half stretch, welcoming travelers. "I don't know how many people in the area knew that freed slaves founded the community in the 1880s but I do know Grandma frequently replaced damaged signs...[until] she finally had boulders installed..."

Sandra continues, "In 1939, the library success began to take shape." A newspaper article provides details that Mrs. Jackson envisioned a sturdy new building on a 2.8-acre plot in her community. She didn't have enough money for a down payment, but Taylor Whitesides sold her the land for \$100 an acre with five years to pay. Shortly thereafter, Mrs. Russell Walcott, a white benefactor, seemed to have found a spirit to admire. She paid off the loan and delivered the title without fanfare.

Mrs. Jackson stood for all of the construction materials until money could be raised through fundraising activities and donations. Her nephew, Robert Tryphonia Hayden, and her brother-in-law Clarence Thompson laid each block with deliberate care. To mix the cement for hand cast blocks and the mortar to hold them in place for decades to come, young children of Stony Knoll Community filled barrels from a nearby creek. One newspaper article reported that Mrs. Jackson often hauled the water to the site in a one-horse wagon. Many of the same children and other volunteers moved about 1,500 newly donated books onto the new shelves that joined Mrs. Jackson's original collections of 90 books, papers, and magazines.

As the collection grew, Ms. Jackson shared the books from the Stony Knoll Library with the black schools in Polk County, urging the teachers to start their own school libraries.

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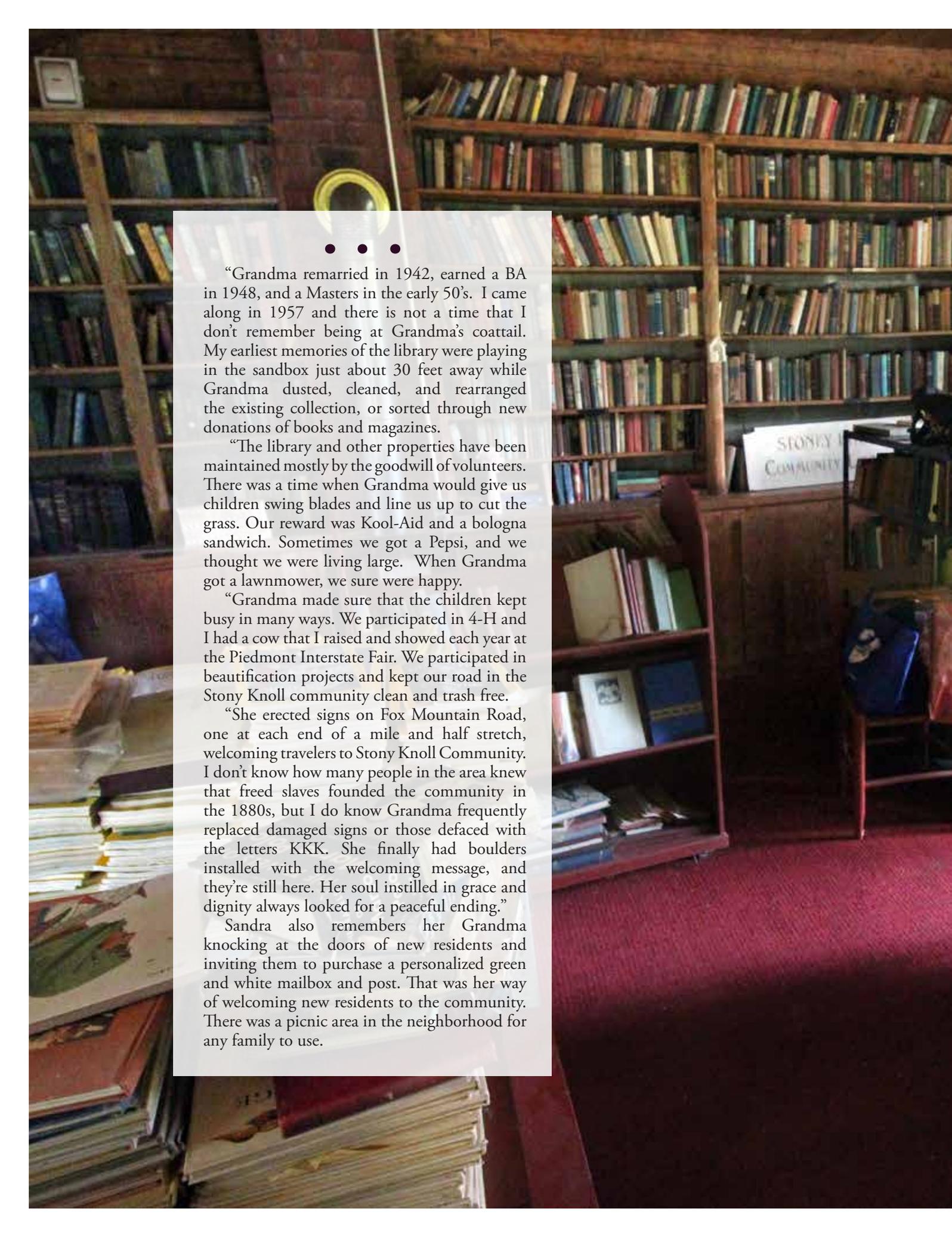
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“Grandma remarried in 1942, earned a BA in 1948, and a Masters in the early 50’s. I came along in 1957 and there is not a time that I don’t remember being at Grandma’s coattail. My earliest memories of the library were playing in the sandbox just about 30 feet away while Grandma dusted, cleaned, and rearranged the existing collection, or sorted through new donations of books and magazines.

“The library and other properties have been maintained mostly by the goodwill of volunteers. There was a time when Grandma would give us children swing blades and line us up to cut the grass. Our reward was Kool-Aid and a bologna sandwich. Sometimes we got a Pepsi, and we thought we were living large. When Grandma got a lawnmower, we sure were happy.

“Grandma made sure that the children kept busy in many ways. We participated in 4-H and I had a cow that I raised and showed each year at the Piedmont Interstate Fair. We participated in beautification projects and kept our road in the Stony Knoll community clean and trash free.

“She erected signs on Fox Mountain Road, one at each end of a mile and half stretch, welcoming travelers to Stony Knoll Community. I don’t know how many people in the area knew that freed slaves founded the community in the 1880s, but I do know Grandma frequently replaced damaged signs or those defaced with the letters KKK. She finally had boulders installed with the welcoming message, and they’re still here. Her soul instilled in grace and dignity always looked for a peaceful ending.”

Sandra also remembers her Grandma knocking at the doors of new residents and inviting them to purchase a personalized green and white mailbox and post. That was her way of welcoming new residents to the community. There was a picnic area in the neighborhood for any family to use.



"Grandma founded the first and only civic institution in North Carolina built by blacks for blacks to foster literacy," asserts Sandra with pride.

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Sandra Petty Forney has been a member of the Stony Knoll Library since her mom, Evelyn Petty, had to carry her to stop in and see Grandma and her books. Brother Robert Petty was old enough to walk. (Photo courtesy of Sandra Petty Forney)

Della Hayden Davenport Jackson, March 2, 1905 - April 4, 1993. (Photo courtesy of Sandra Petty Forney)

“My grandmother founded the first and only civic institution in Polk County built by blacks for blacks to foster literacy. She was born ahead of her time,” asserts Sandra with pride. “My hope is that the Stony Knoll Library will be a museum and I’m determined to see it added to the National Register of Historic Places. I want this place and Grandma’s accomplishments to be remembered long after I’m gone. Even though the books no longer come and go, this building is her legacy and so much of her will always be here.”

Gesturing to a wall of books, Sandra adds with a smile, “Some of these books have been on the same shelves since her death or longer. Some look like someone has been carefully dusting them and it hasn’t been me.”

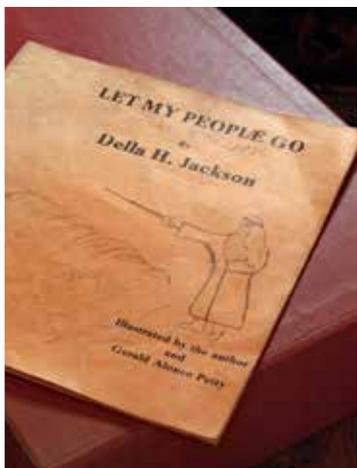


Grandma at left and Sandra at right could celebrate a birthday as well as Della’s many accomplishments. During 17 years after Della retired from teaching, she was recognized with 52 service awards at the local, regional, and state levels.

(Photo courtesy of Sandra Petty Forney)



Stony Knoll Community Library started in 1937 with a dime and 90 books collected by Sandra's Grandma, Mrs. Della Hayden Davenport Jackson.



Sandra's most treasured book in the Stony Knoll collection.

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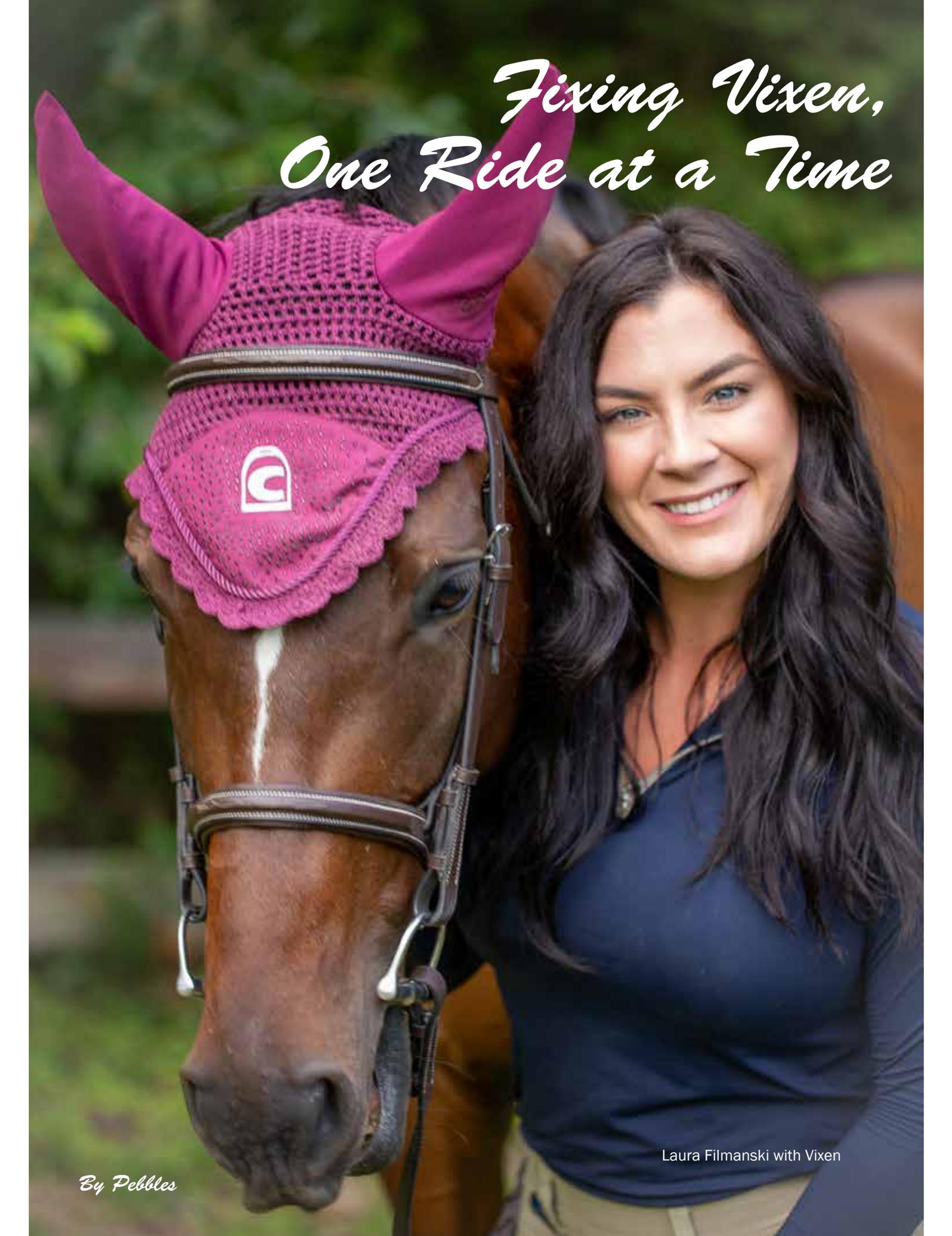


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Sandra loves to read and remembers wanting to read everything in the Library.



*Fixing Vixen,  
One Ride at a Time*

Laura Filmanski with Vixen

*By Pebbles*

# Fixing Vixen, One Ride at a Time

By Pebbles

From time to time, our equine rescue, Helping Equines Regain Dignity (HERD) is offered a quality horse at no charge to us to purchase. Most often this happens because the horse lacks training and is too much of a project for the current owner. Such was the case with the lovely, young mare Vixen. Her owner had purchased her on a whim for her beauty and ideal size. At age five, she was the perfect age to begin a riding career.

This dark brown beauty possesses the kindest eyes and exceedingly good looks. She is almost as fancy as I am! Her new family planned to have her trained as a western trail horse for pleasure riding.

My mistress Heather was first contacted by Vixen's South Carolina family asking for advice regarding local trainers that HERD has appreciated over the years. Heather obliged with a list of names and phone numbers. Justin Cave was at the top of her list. He currently had availability in his schedule to work with Vixen. Justin was also a pro at preparing horses to be reliable trail mounts. Heather thought it was a good fit.

Unfortunately, the owner took a different direction with her plans and sent the mare to a reigning horse trainer. Vixen did not think much of the pressure this professional exerted pushing her too hard, too fast, in a 50-foot round pen. Showing her displeasure on two occasions, she jumped out of the five-foot tall round pen and ran back to her pasture.

The trainer called Vixen's owner and said their horse was too spirited. She was not a fit for him to train for them to use as a trail horse. This mishap is what prompted the second call to Heather that very same day with a new request.

"Heather, we need to find a solution for this mare as she is not going to work for our family and would like to donate her to HERD. We need her to be safe and find a good home through your rescue," explained Vixen's concerned owner. "Can you please have her picked up as soon as possible."

Heather made a quick phone call to Delores Riffe who is responsible for all the transportation of HERD horses. Delores and her family have picked up and delivered equines for us throughout the Carolinas, and as far away as Oklahoma, Texas, Michigan and even Upstate New York. Heather explained it was urgent, When could Delores journey to Cowpens, South Carolina and pick up Vixen? She would be delivered to trainer Justin Cave in Monroe, North Carolina. Heather felt certain that Justin was the right trainer for this mare. His calm easy manner and instincts about what each horse needs to move to the next level comfortably were needed for Vixen.



Laura's daughter,  
Sophie, with Vixen





Within 48 hours, Justin had a stall waiting for Vixen at his barn. Delores picked her up and delivered her safely. Vixen arrived anxious and worried. She jumped at any loud noise and moved away from humans in her stall. Clearly something had gone wrong as the mare had formerly been very friendly and approachable according to her previous owner. Her eyes still showed her to be kind, just a bit fearful of what might be expected of her.

Justin spent the first week asking Vixen to move her feet and was cautious with the amount of pressure he applied. The mare noticeably calmed down within this timeframe and never offered once to leap out of his round pen.

During the second week, Justin added a bridle and saddle to his training agenda. Vixen floated around watching carefully for his cues. By week three, Justin was on her back riding in the pen and the covered arena. By week four, he was able to ride her out comfortably at the walk around the farm trails. At this point she was ready for the next step.

Volunteer Beth Harrill, who lives a few minutes from Justin Cave's farm, came to watch Vixen. She photographed her being ridden and sent a detailed report to us to review. We decided on another four weeks of training with Justin to continue building Vixen's foundation of new skills, and then she would be ready to go to Beth's for the next level of training.

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Vixen, Laura and Sophie

Beth was convinced that Vixen possessed great talent. Her athleticism was clear to us all even before we had her in training, by the fact that she had jumped with ease over the five-foot tall round pen at the reigning trainer's farm. We were sure a home could be found for her as an eventing horse or as a working hunter. It was apparent that Vixen was suitable for many disciplines, including being a good trail horse.

At the end of 60 days in Justin's care, Beth loaded Vixen into her trailer and took her to the farm where she boards her horses. This would be a whole new world for Vixen. This large facility is complete with zebras, a camel, a kangaroo, and a flock of emus so the mare would have lots to discover, expanding her horizon of exotic encounters. Vixen took all the new show-and-tell experiences in stride. She enjoyed long

trail rides in the woods with Beth. She also did well over the log jumps and banks on the outside event course. Her new-found confidence was evident. Her relaxed demeanor was also a magnet for attracting a new partner.

A young woman named Laura Filmanski came to meet and ride Vixen. She was smitten with our talented horse and returned for a second visit to hack her out among the distractions around the farm. Once again, the mare was outstanding. A decision was made, Laura wanted Vixen.

We are all extremely happy with this wonderful outcome. Time, patience, and consistency resulted in a happy ending for this special horse. After a little fixing, Laura now has a fabulous new equine partner, Vixen!

# Blueberry Blue Cheese Dip

*A fancy dip, easy to fix for delighting company*

## Ingredients

- ½ cup of dried blueberries
  - 1 cup of boiling water
  - 8-ounce package of cream cheese, softened
  - 6 ounces blue cheese, coarsely crumbled
  - 2 green onions, chopped fine
  - 1 clove garlic, minced
  - ½ cup coarsely chopped pecans
- An assortment of multigrain crackers or toast points is ideal for serving this dip.

## Directions

Frist place dried berries in a small bowl. Pour boiling water over berries. Let stand for 1 minute. Drain; set aside. In a large mixing bowl beat softened cream cheese and blue cheese with an electric mixer on medium speed until nearly smooth. Stir in drained berries, green onions, and garlic just until combined. Transfer spread to a serving bowl. Cover and refrigerate up to 4 hours before serving. To serve, sprinkle with chopped pecans pieces and serve with crackers or toast points. Makes 16 (2-tablespoon) servings.



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# Making time to eat together promotes Healthy Eating Habits

Gathering around the table to eat as a family has all kinds of benefits. Family meals allow parents to be role models who create a supportive environment for the entire family.

August is Kids Eat Right Month™, when the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics and its Foundation focus on the importance of healthful eating and active lifestyles for children and their families.

“Research shows that families who regularly dine together are more likely to eat more fruits, vegetables and fiber and are less likely to eat fried foods,” says Kristen Gradney, a registered dietitian nutritionist.

Eating together promotes healthy weight in children (perhaps due to more nourishing food choices) and can encourage them to try new foods. Research shows that families who eat together tend to be closer because it encourages conversations. Children feel more comfortable sharing their feelings, which can help lessen behavioral problems and may even improve grades.

Here are some ideas to help you make and enjoy family meals after a busy day:

- Keep it simple. Don't try to make meals that need a dozen ingredients or more. With your kids, develop a small collection of favorite go-to recipes to help you get in and out of the kitchen in less than 30 minutes.
- Choose ingredients that multitask. Save time by stocking

up on ingredients you can use for more than one meal. Grill six chicken breasts tonight for dinner instead of three, then reheat the leftover chicken tomorrow and make fajitas.

- Drive past the drive-through. A trip to a favorite takeout place might seem like a speedy way to get dinner on the table, but it could be adding to your family's collective waistline. A simple homemade meal, with lean protein, whole grains and fresh (or frozen or canned) vegetables can provide the nutrients your family needs without the extra salt, added sugars and saturated fat. Serve with low-fat or fat-free milk and fruit for dessert.

- Make family meals a habit. Tell every family member to be home for dinner at a set time. They'll start to look forward to this special family time and arrange their schedules around it.

- Share the experience. Talk and listen to each other while you eat. Have everyone at the table share something that happened that day or week—funny, weird, scary, good or bad.

Start your new tradition today, making a commitment to eating at least one meal together each week. Before you know it, dinner will be a time everyone in the family looks forward to. For more healthful eating tips, visit [eatright.org](http://eatright.org).

Here is a fun, healthy and simple recipe that you and your children will enjoy making together again and again.

# Crustless Mini Quiche

Makes: 6 mini quiches

## Ingredients:

Nonstick cooking spray  
1/2 head broccoli, thick stems or any vegetables removed and separated into florets  
6 large eggs  
6 large egg yolks  
2/3 cup (5 fl oz/160 ml) 2% milk  
2/3 cup (5 fl oz/160 ml) heavy cream  
1 tsp kosher salt  
1/2 tsp ground black pepper  
3/4 cup (3 oz/90 g) shredded sharp Cheddar cheese



## Preparation:

1. Preheat the oven to 375°F (190°C). Lightly spray two 24-cup mini muffin pans with cooking spray or line with paper liners.
2. Have ready a bowl of ice water. Bring a saucepan of lightly salted water to a boil over high heat. Add the broccoli and blanch until bright green and softened but still crisp, about 30 seconds. Using a slotted spoon, transfer immediately to the ice water to stop the cooking. When cool, drain thoroughly and pat dry. Chop coarsely and set aside.
3. In a bowl, whisk together the whole eggs, egg yolks, milk, cream, salt, and pepper. (If you like, heat a small frying pan over medium-low heat, pour in about 1 tbsp of the mixture, and cook, stirring with a wooden spoon, just until soft curds form and are cooked through. Taste and adjust the seasoning.) Transfer to a large glass measuring pitcher.
4. Place the prepared muffin pans on 1 or 2 rimmed baking sheets to catch any drips. Add a few small pieces of broccoli and a generous pinch of cheese to each of the cups. Pour the egg mixture over the broccoli and cheese in each cup, filling as many as you can to just below the rim. Add a small piece of broccoli and a pinch of cheese to the top of each quiche.
5. Bake until the tops are puffed and just beginning to brown, about 15 minutes. Transfer to wire racks and let cool for about 5 minutes, then turn the quiches out of the pans, arrange on a platter or individual plates, and serve.



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## Skewered chicken goes great on the grill

Grilling chicken is an easy way to transform this versatile food into something even more delicious. Various cultures serve chicken in kebab form after grilling it over an open flame, and taste is a big reason this particular method of cooking chicken is so beloved.

While you might not expect to see kebabs on the menu at your favorite Italian restaurant, “spiedini” is Italian for “little skewers,” proving

that Italian chefs recognize how delicious chicken can be when served in kebab form. In this recipe for “Spiedini of Chicken and Zucchini with Almond Salsa Verde” from “Cooking Light: Dinner’s Ready” (Oxmoor House) by The Cooking Light Editors, skewers are paired with a zesty salsa full of nuts, herbs and citrus, which makes for the perfect complement to the smoky grilled flavor.

# Spiedini of Chicken and Zucchini with Almond Salsa Verde

Makes 6 servings

## Salsa:

- 1 cup chopped flat parsley
- 2 tablespoons chopped almonds, toasted
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh chives
- 3 tablespoons capers, chopped
- 1/2 teaspoon grated lemon rind
- 3 tablespoons fresh lemon juice
- 1 tablespoon extra-virgin olive oil
- 1/2 teaspoon chopped fresh thyme
- 1/2 teaspoon chopped fresh oregano
- 1/4 teaspoon kosher salt
- 1/8 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- 1 garlic clove, minced

## Spiedini:

- 1 1/2 pounds skinless, boneless chicken breast, cut into 1-inch pieces
- 6 small zucchini, cut into 1-inch slices (about 1 1/4 pounds)
- Cooking spray
- 1/4 teaspoon kosher salt
- 1/8 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper

## Preparation:

Soak 12 (10-inch) wooden skewers in water for 30 minutes to prevent burning.

Bring the grill to medium-high heat

To prepare the salsa, combine the first 12 ingredients; set aside.

To prepare the spiedini, thread the chicken and zucchini alternately on each of the 12 skewers. Coat the spiedini with cooking spray; sprinkle evenly with 1/4 teaspoon salt and 1/8 teaspoon pepper. Place on a grill rack; grill 6 minutes or until done, turning once. Serve with salsa.

*Tip: Prepare the salsa up to a day ahead, and assemble the skewers earlier in the day. Coat with the seasonings just before grilling.*



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