

Cathy



Hi Chair



Play Pen



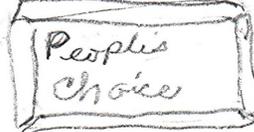
Day Care



Camp Green Top



award



My Sister, My Hero

Cathy Porter

Ms. Wheelchair MD

2007

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Illustrated by: Cathy Porter and Cathy Moser

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Author's Notes

In Memory of Catherine Virginia Fogler

Writing this memoir was a true labor of love. I didn't write it alone, but by the inspiration of God.

Once God "nudged" me to write, the words flowed like rivers of living stories. I couldn't type fast enough to record them.

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Ms. Wheelchair America 2008 Contestants for all the incredible pictures and memories.

But most of all, to Cathy Porter for being My Sister My Hero!!!

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Chapter 1

Chesterfield Community Weekly

Memoirs are treasures; life stories too precious to remain silent. Stories of triumph over adversity. Stories of hope and encouragement. Stories not of one person, but of many who gave and received great love, respect and admiration from one person whose life made a difference.

My Sister, My Hero Cathy Porter, has such a story. A woman whose triumphs over adversity must be told.

Few sisters share a relationship like ours – never a cross word or argument. We laugh about this and many don't believe it, but it's true. When we hopped on the "memory train" for this book, we laughed a lot and even shed a tear or two. And what we came away with is a story of ENCOURAGEMENT for those in need of HOPE.

As you read the story of my HERO, remember this: **Don't let your disability disable you.**

God has a plan and purpose for all of us. Some are fortunate to discover their plan at a tender age, while others wade through life in search of it.

And still others sense their purpose at a tender age, but never find the "perfect" place to serve.

I always sensed a need to help those with cerebral palsy. And for years I prayed, "God, I want to help those with cerebral palsy, but don't know how." The answer never appeared - that is until March 11, 2006, when I opened the Chesterfield Community

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Weekly. A day that changed my life and Cathy's forever.

Although we receive this newspaper every week, I rarely read it. But that particular Sunday God had a divine appointment for me.

I grabbed the paper and sat down to browse through its pages before discarding it. I glanced over the first few pages; nothing caught my eye to read further. When I turned to the next page, my eyes froze on the headline, "**Ms. Wheelchair Virginia.**" Along with the headline were pictures of two beautiful ladies proudly displaying their sash and crowns, Dr. Pam Clark, President of Ms. Wheelchair Virginia and Angie Wilkerson, Ms. Wheelchair Virginia 2005.

My heart raced faster with each word, "The event will be hosted at the Holiday Inn Kroger Center on March 16-18, 2006." The Holiday Inn was only 15 minutes from my home.

I read and reread the article, then headed straight to my laptop to check out the program. First, I reviewed the Ms. Wheelchair Virginia www.mswheelchairva.com website, and then the Ms. Wheelchair America of which I learned about Ms. Wheelchair Maryland www.ms-wheelchair-md.com. I must admit, I was impressed with all three web sites, but the one that drew my close scrutiny was Ms. Wheelchair Maryland. www.mswheelchairamerica.org.

My eyes focused on the criteria:

Contestants must meet the following criteria:

1. A Maryland Resident between the ages of 21 and 60
2. Utilize a wheelchair for 100% daily community mobility
3. Marital status is not a factor

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“Wow,” I thought, “Cathy met all the requirements.”

Then I heard that still small voice say, “This is it!” A sense of joy overwhelmed me. Then I was transported back in time to Kauai, HI. In 1998, the Carey family (Curtis, Nancy & Dusty – Jason stayed behind in college) accepted God’s call to mission work. God called us to this mission trip, not sponsored by a local church, but by God. While some are called to places like Africa, we were called to a beautiful tropical island to minister the Word of God. Kauai is known as the Garden of Eden for a good reason. Its lush greenery and breathtaking rainbows are incredible. We joined a local church, a beautiful island church with open windows and doors. www.kauai.com

God speaks to us through song; I believe it with all my heart. One particular Sunday, the pastors’ wife sang, “The Potter’s Hand” by Darlene Zschech. The words touched the core of my heart. I felt the Lord’s presence all over me.

This song led to the start of a women’s Bible study on the north shore of Kauai, HI.

It was daja' **vue** ... I heard and I felt the presence of the Lord again. The article was God calling me into his service not only for those with cerebral palsy, but for all wheelchair users.

The Ms. Wheelchair Program began in 1972, and I never heard of it. Since the article asked for volunteers, I immediately picked up the phone and left my name and phone number on the voicemail. As soon as I hung up the phone, God spoke to me again, “Cathy.” With pure delight, I picked up the phone and called her.

“Cathy, I just read an incredible article about a program called Ms. Wheelchair Virginia. The Ms. Wheelchair America

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program has been around since 1972, and we've never heard of it. The Ms. Wheelchair Virginia Pageant is here in Richmond this weekend and I'm going to volunteer."

Excitement was evident in my every word, and Cathy heard it.

I read the article to her, and then asked the all important question, "How about entering the Ms. Wheelchair MD Pageant?"

Cathy's response, "As long as I don't have to wear a bathing suit, I'm in!" I laughed so hard at her answer ... but that was Cathy. Nothing stopped her, except wearing a bathing suit in competition.

And that, my dear friends, is how the path to the Ms. Wheelchair MD pageant began.

Not really, the path began many years ago – to be exact – January 20, 1951.

The journey to the crown was years in the making.

**For surely I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord,
plan for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future
with hope. Jeremiah 29:11**