

Students create henna art



Sam Gorden/Index

Left, sophomore Cara Tom tattoos a student with Henna Monday afternoon on the Mall. Above, senior Nas Patterson tattoos junior Jessi McMichael's shoulder. The henna tattoos were part of a fundraiser for the African Students' Association.

Editor embraces mother's traits



BY JENNIFER MARKS
Assistant Features Editor
index.featureseditor@gmail.com

This past weekend, after I had blow-dried my hair upside down and began to douse it with a layer of slightly-firm-hold hairspray, I had a frightening thought — I am my mother.

I can't tell you how many mornings I spent as a child watching my mother blow-dry her hair, set it in curlers, then douse it with hairspray. I had never paid much attention to my morning routine until I found myself doing exactly what she does every day.

Then my mind began to race through my routines of the previous few days. I had grossly over-packed for my weekend out of town. I had taken my vitamins to prevent catching the cold and I had turned down a soda because of the high fructose corn syrup and artificial flavors. When my roommate had a headache, I medicated her and tucked her in with a cold washcloth for her forehead.

My mother has trained me well. Some people are ashamed or angry when they discover they're just clones of their parents. However, I'm definitely not in that group of people. My mom is awesome. Why wouldn't I want to turn out like her?

First off, she's practically fearless (except when it comes to being sick or chemicals in food). When I first started riding horses, my mother was petrified of them. For her, feeding an old horse a treat was akin to feeding a rabid lion. Today, my mother drives a horse trailer and rides my horse while I'm at college. Pretty awesome, right? And when my custom horse show outfit wasn't fitting correctly, her solution was an impromptu eight hour road trip to the middle-of-nowhere Illinois to guarantee a perfect fit.

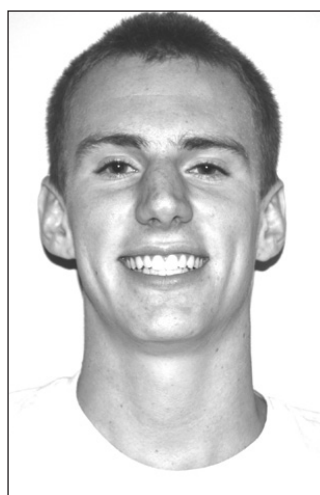
And consider her job — she is a registered nurse at a children's hospital, where she gives Botox to children with muscular and skeletal deformities to help relax their contorted bodies. Not many people can handle doing that every day and raise three equally strong children.

Take my sister, for example. She moved more than 700 miles to a city where she didn't know anyone to attend graduate school, where she earned a masters of psychology with honors from the University of Houston. She is now teaching preschool at Head Start for underprivileged kids in Houston. As much as she pretends not to be, my sister is in the same boat I am — the U.S.S. I'm Just Like My Mother.

Not only is my mother the strongest woman I know, she also makes a mean plate of cookies. Now, everyone thinks their mothers' cookies are the best. It's just how you're programmed. But trust me. Your mom's cookies haven't got anything on these bad boys. I can use the exact same recipe and bake them for the exact same amount of time, but those cookies are never the same. I think it's all the love and affection she bakes into them. Or she has a sixth cookie sense. My money is with the second one.

On those days when I realized I'm turning out exactly like my mother — except instead of cookies, I make awesome croissants from scratch — I embrace it. Because let's face it: awesome is hereditary.

Humor heals wounds



Reporter reflects about laughter's healing influence

BY JOHN BROOKS
Staff Reporter

They say humor is a coping mechanism. Fair enough, I suppose, but for me humor has become much, much more than a coping mechanism. It's a way of life, an approach to stressful and troubling events. Only strong people can smile when they don't feel like it.

I've loved to laugh for longer than I've needed to. I didn't need to start laughing until my senior year of high school, when my Grandpa was diagnosed with stage IV lung cancer and given three to six months to live. I didn't know what else to do, so I tried to make my way through the days as best I could. It was around this time I discovered *The Onion*, with all its satirical glory.

The writers at *The Onion* kept me smiling, day after day, even as my Grandpa's health grew worse. I laughed at headlines like "Barack Obama — Either Doing His Best In One of The Most Difficult Times In American History, Or Hitler" and "Tiger

Woods Hits Rock Bottom, Aside from Being Worth Over \$600 Million."

That's part of the beauty of satire though: it's funny, but with a point. There's a reason I didn't turn to Adam Sandler movies to cheer me up. "Character 2 making crude bodily function noise" as the main conflict gets old. It takes something intelligently funny to make me smile when I don't want to. Something like "Landon Donovan — A Disgrace to the Soccer-Loving Country of America."

There does come a point when humor loses its potential to allow a person to cope and, in some ways, to escape. After a certain point I lost interest in *The Onion* and looked elsewhere for humor. It was around this time that the chemotherapy began to rob my Grandpa of his hair and extra weight. I never knew he wore dentures until then, when I saw him without them for the first time. It also was then that I stumbled upon George Carlin.

If you've heard of Carlin, it's probably because of his infamous "7 Dirty Words" routine about things you can't say on television. But Carlin's comedy covered a much broader scope. He shared segments about the death of the American Dream and comments regarding why people are boring and voting lacks a point because it only serves to preserve the illusion that power is in the hands of the populace. Carlin made me laugh harder than ever on my way to school, in the hallway between classes, at lunch and on my way back home. But I was still using this laughter merely to cope. Laughing feels good. I wanted to feel good, to escape.

The Onion and Carlin did have one major similarity beyond mere humor. They made me think while I laughed. Twelve years ago, after 9/11, *The Onion* published a brilliant piece with the premise that God has a press conference to clarify the rule about no killing, particularly in his name. It was when I happened upon this piece that my view of and relationship with humor began to change. It began to change because I recognized this piece for what it was trying to do: not only draw attention to the inconsistency of killing in God's name, but also to bring healing in the wake of a national tragedy.

Humor makes me feel good. It makes me think. And eventually, humor helped me heal. After my grandpa died, I could have simply thrown my hands up and said, "That's it. I can't smile again." But today, I'm going to make a joke. I don't know what it will be, but I know that at some point it will happen.

Maybe one of my professors will unintentionally use a double entendre, and I'll be able to smile at the inherent humor in the vagueness of the English language. I'll be able to smile because I've moved on from the asphyxiating grief I felt most of my senior year. I'm able to smile because every time I laugh I heal a little bit more and because I know that no matter what happens to me or the people I love, I'll eventually be able to laugh again.

Humor helps people cope, but it also helps them heal. If I hadn't been able to laugh in the midst of pain, life's terrible permanency would have crushed me. Humor helped me heal, and it always will be there for me.



202 S. Hwy 63, Greentop, MO
660-949-2130

Serving Fresh, Local Food & Drinks

With food made from scratch, our menu features locally-raised beef & pork.
We also use local produce as much as possible.

Open Wednesday through Saturday 11 a.m. to 9 p.m.
Sunday 11 a.m. - 2 p.m. & 3 p.m. to 8 p.m. with a
Sunday Brunch Buffet from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.

www.sebrees.com

Check us out on Facebook for our daily specials.

Reservations required for parties of 8 or more.

Welcome Back Students!

BUCK BROS.

SUNNY SLOPE AUTO, LLC

660 - 665 - 8464

Tune Ups • Brakes • Exhaust • A/C

710 W. Potter Avenue

at the Corner of Osteopathy & Potter Ave

LOCKED OUT OF YOUR CAR?

Month of September only, Buck Bros.

is offering free lockout service for students with a student ID between

8:00 and 5:30!

NAPA Service Center