

The Up Side Of Down

by *Cathy Conheim*

Most of you are now familiar with the spunky hometown boy, Henry, the three-legged cat. What you probably don't know is that Henry has a hero, and her name is Chris Timmins. What both of them share in common was an ordinary day like any other day, that became an extraordinary day – one in which they discovered their life's challenges. Julian is a town that has had many such days. It can be a hot, sunny day as it was the morning of the Cedar fires, and suddenly the town is crippled and changed forever by raging wildfires. A man who goes to fight the fire loses his life that day, and his family and loved ones are forever changed. Someone can be driving to Julian to have a piece of apple pie, and an accident changes their life forever. What is special about Chris is not the event that changed her life on a sunny day at Fiesta Island over 3 decades ago. What is special about Chris

is what she has done for the past 34 years of her life since that sunny day.

Throughout the past almost 40 years, she taught high school students about business, computers, ethics, courage, and self-esteem. She taught them how to become responsible for themselves and their actions, how to enjoy learning, and become conscientious citizens. During this time she was also a 25-year member of her local Kiwanis, and she spent as many years as advisor to Key Club, the high school affiliate organization. In this capacity, she met weekly with the 100-member club and helped them learn leadership, public speaking, and organizational skills. She oversaw over 500 community service projects performed by these students during those years. In addition, she served for ten years on the Board of Directors of the nonprofit organization, Tender Loving Canines Assistance

Dogs, Inc. – five of those years as President and CEO.

While confined to bed for the better part of two years healing pressure sores, she wrote a book, *The Up Side of Down*, researched and started a business to self-publish, market, and distribute the book. She also created a website, <http://braidedstreams.com>, and started a blog. In addition, during this time lying in bed, she listened to over 50 audiobooks.

One of her favorite quotes is from Nelson Mandela's 1994 Inaugural Address. In a portion of that address he says,

"...Your playing small doesn't serve the world. There's nothing enlightened about shrinking so that other people won't feel insecure around you. We were born to make manifest the glory of God that is within us. It's not just in some of us, it's in everyone. And as we let our own light shine, we unconsciously give other people permission to do the same."

She taught this to her students. This soft spoken woman with a smile bigger than life is proud of her accomplishments and of the way she has come through her challenges. She is proud of the person she has become with the help of faith, family, and friends, and is excited about the new possibilities the future will bring.

Chris has a resume and daily schedule that would tire most of us out. The things she has accomplished in her life don't seem to wear her, only inspire her to do more. She is deeply grounded in the spiritual life and a life of service.

So, you might say, many people do lots of things in their life like





like Chris. You can find it at <http://braidedstreams.com> or in the trunk of Cathy's car if you see her around town. I can't think of anything that is under \$15 that would be more worthwhile to have and to give. Henry has a money back guarantee. If you liked his story, you will love hers! You can always find Henry at henrysworld.org

Chris. What is remarkable about Chris is not the auto accident on that sunny day that left a vibrant, young wife quadriplegic. It is her life energy in response to that accident. She had to fight to get her job back at the school where she taught. After a couple years, her husband sought and got a divorce, she discovered the words "in sickness and in health, until death do us part" are more easily said than to carry them out.

What's remarkable about Chris is that the accident which broke her neck and paralyzed her body never broke or paralyzed her spirit. That is why she is Henry's hero. In her latest challenge, almost 2 years of having to lie in bed for a deep wound to heal, she was talked into writing her story. I say talked into, because she is not a person who would ever want to brag or toot her own horn. Henry convinced her that if

the three-legged cat and his life deserved a book, certainly her life should have one, too!

So, last Saturday a very, very large truck arrived at Henry's doorstep. 5000 of his and Dolly's books were unloaded onto the driveway. I then went on to lead the truck to Chris's house where 2500 of her remarkable new book, *The Up Side of Down*, was delivered to her doorstep.

Chris' book is a gift to all of us who need to have our spirits lifted, to be reminded of all that we have and can do no matter what life gives us. She shares some of her favorite quotes that she collected over the years. It is an easy and uplifting gift that should be on everybody's nightstand. On any day that you might feel sorry for yourself, her book and her life invite you to get a swift kick in the pants and get yourself going. It is an optimistic, ebullient book, just

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