

FAYETTE Woman™

EVERY ONE OF US HAS A STORY™

\$AVE with
Fayette
Woman
FIND\$

Valuable Coupons
Inside this Issue

Adventures in
Learning with
Dr. Bisa
Batten Lewis

Back to
School
It's For
Everyone

WIN WITH
Fayette Woman
FanFare

Prize Package Worth More Than

\$400

AUGUST 2012 | FREE
Issue 127

We Learn

Welcome to the August issue of **Fayette Woman** magazine, where we're exploring adventures in education, beginning with the story of Dr. Bisa Batten Lewis.



Dr. Lewis is several ladies rolled into one. She's earned a doctorate in education, is a parenting expert, a home-schooling single mom, published author, and entrepreneur. In summary, this one-woman dynamo is the ultimate encourager. Her contagious enthusiasm may leave you feeling like you can take on the world. We're thrilled to share her story! [Page 8]

A small group of men and women from Brooks United Methodist Church teach us that "there are no cast offs." The church operates Second Chance Thrift Shop, giving donations a "second chance" by turning them into affordable, quality merchandise. The proceeds of their efforts benefit local service organizations. [Page 16]

We reach back to Fayette Woman's first year, 2001, and find out what former JC Booth Science Olympiad Coach Mary Wilde is doing now. The busy grandmother of four gives us her unique perspective on how the program has affected the lives of former students, and her family! [Page 20]

The education theme continues with information on Peachtree City's "One Book, One Seed" series of events.

Local residents are reading and discussing a book about the renaissance of local food and farming, and the importance of saving seeds. A number of events are planned, including a recipe swap we're sponsoring Aug. 11 at the Peachtree City Farmer's Market. We hope to see you there! [Page 24]

The school bell is ringing for students of all ages in this issue. Our "Lifetime Learning" focus spans toddlers to empty nesters, touching everything in between. If you're headed to the classroom, there's something here for you. [Pages 36-56]

Feeling like a winner? Don't miss the Fayette Woman FanFare photo contest. Take the winning picture and you could walk away with a prize package worth more than \$400. Details are on page 34 and on our Facebook page. We can't wait to see what you do with this!

As always, we appreciate your loyal readership and welcome your feedback. Let us know what is important to you. Email suggestions and feedback to us at fayettewoman@gmail.com. We're listening!

Joyce
Publisher

Fayette Woman

411

Contact Us:

fayettewoman@gmail.com

Fayette Woman Online:

fayettewoman.com

Visit us on Facebook:

facebook.com/fayettewoman

Follow us on Pinterest:

pinterest.com/fayettewoman

Follow us:

twitter: [faywoman](https://twitter.com/faywoman)

Tell Us About It:

Email story ideas and cover nominations to:
fayettewoman@gmail.com

Find A Copy:

8,000 magazines

are distributed monthly to more than 400 high-traffic businesses and service providers, including:

**Kroger
Publix**

Libraries
Medical Offices
Hair and Nail Salons
and more!

Special Focus Next Month:

Taste of Fall

All things fall-related:
home, garden, travel, autumn
festivals and things to do, food.

Advertise:

Email: sales@fayettewoman.com



cover story

8 For Dr. Bisa Batten Lewis
On the 'Road Less Taken,'
Life Is An Adventure



22



46



28

August

Lifetime Learning

- 36** Organizing for Back to School
- 38** First Day of Preschool: Avoiding Tears and Tantrums
- 42** 4 Ways to Avoid Middle School Meltdowns
- 46** 11 Back to School Budget Tips
- 48** Dual Enrollment: A Step to Success
- 50** Fast, Fun and Frugal Path to College
- 52** Distance Learning 101
- 54** Business for Pleasure
- 56** Empty Nesters: It's Time to Fly

WIN WITH FAYETTE WOMAN

- 34** \$400 Prize Package Goes To Winning Fan Photo

IN EVERY ISSUE

- 71** Out & About
- 76** Bliss
- 79** Calendar
- 85** Directory of Advertisers
- 86** Scrapbook

FEATURE

- 16** Second Chance to Make a Difference

WHERE IS SHE NOW?

- 20** Former *Fayette Woman* Cover Girl, Mary Wilde

FOOD

- 22** Love Your Local Fruits & Vegetables

HOME & GARDEN

- 24** One Book, One Seed
- 28** Gibbs Garden
- 32** Not Your Mama's Lightbulb

HEALTH & FITNESS

- 58** The Art of Saying No
- 60** The History of Gestational Diabetes

- 65** How Mothers Can Prevent SIDS

BEAUTY & STYLE

- 66** How to Conceal Undereye Circles

BUSINESS

- 68** 6 Ways to Spot Fake Online Reviews

Let's Potty!, Dr. Bisa's second children's book published in 2006 by Our Rainbow Press. *Let's Potty!* is internationally renowned and is available at Barnes & Noble, by Baker & Taylor, and other major book stores.



BY MAGGIE WORTH
PHOTOS BY MARIE THOMAS

Adventures in Early Childhood Education: The Extraordinary Tales of **Dr. Bisa** **Batten Lewis**



Dr. Bisa supports Premier Academy's 40th Anniversary Gala in March 2012 at the Loudermilk Center in Atlanta, Ga. pictured with publicist Tamika Morrison of the T. Morrison Agency.

An Ed.D., a parenting expert, a home-schooling single mother, an early childhood educator, a published author, and the founder of two successful educational firms walk into a bar. Wait, hang on. They're all the same person: Bisa Batten Lewis of Tyrone, known affectionately as "Dr. Bisa." And her energy, knowledge, and enthusiasm are certainly no joke!

This one-woman dynamo has accomplished an astounding number of things in her life, and she just keeps right on going. With her radiant smile, Dr. Bisa projects a fascinating mixture of perfect calm and perpetual motion. It's clear she plans to conquer the world and is perfectly willing to include anyone with passion in her triumphant journey. Just a short time in her

presence leaves you feeling that you can do anything you put your mind to. That alone is a rare and precious thing, but it's just one of her many talents.

Bisa grew up in South Georgia and credits her grandfather, a Baptist minister and business owner, with inspiring both her abiding faith and her entrepreneurial spirit. She started seeking out business opportunities young: selling candy at school, producing musicals with refreshments in her neighbor's backyard, and selling cookies she'd baked to friends and neighbors. With all those childhood endeavors to her credit, a business degree would seem the

obvious choice. But taking the obvious path has never been Bisa's style.

"Choosing my major was difficult in college," she explains. "I have so many interests and am the epitome of an indecisive Libra. I changed my major four times! All I knew when I entered college was that I liked math. I started in accounting, then went to computer science, then middle grades education, then early childhood education."

She'd finally found her niche. One of them, anyway. And, when she thought about it, it made sense.

"I have always had a special connection with children and can relate to them wherever I go," Bisa says.

Once she'd settled on a field, she earned both a Bachelor of Science and Master of Education degree in early childhood education at Albany State University.



Above: Dr. Bisa and her boys volunteer at Hosea Feed the Hungry and Homeless in December 2011, along with college friends and associates.

Left: Dr. Bisa motivates students at Jean Childs Young Middle School to attend college, think about career options, and set goals, during the Black Child Development Institute (BCDI-Atlanta) "Entering the College Zone Day".





WINGS: The Ideal Curriculum for Children in Preschool by Dr. Bisa was originally published in 2009, with a second edition published in 2011.

In true Bisa fashion, she then decided to ignore the traditional route and explore career options outside of the elementary classroom, choosing to focus on teaching adults how to care for, guide, educate, and parent young children.

Along the way, she tried out a number of different opportunities. She's served as an education consultant for private child development centers, public broadcasting systems, and other education-focused organizations. She's supervised multiple child development centers and college labs, provided education for learners from preschool to the university level, and led programs from state licensure to national accreditation.

Eventually, she returned to school in order to expand her opportunities in adult education. She attended the University of Georgia, where she earned a Doctor of

Education (Ed.D.) in adult education with a concentration in college leadership. Since then, she's served on the early childhood education faculty at Albany State, Kennesaw State, and, most recently, Mercer University. She held the prestigious position of Director of Instruction at Albany Technical College, where she supervised the early childhood care and education division.

But her entrepreneurial spirit never disappeared. As she worked in classrooms, with teachers, with parents, and with children, she saw many opportunities for improvement. The need for additional training became clear and she began to get ideas. And when Bisa gets an idea, she starts a company.

In 2000, she founded Ideal Early Learning, LLC, a training company for teachers and others who work with young children.

The company's stated mission is to "provide early childhood care and education practitioners the necessary knowledge and skill enhancements to appropriately guide tomorrow's leaders." Most of her programs allow participants to earn continuing education credits and her clients include early childhood program administrators, child care providers, pre-k teachers, and school-age/after school care providers. One of her most popular offerings is formal child development associate training, which prepares educators to earn the national CDA credential. In addition, however, she offers workshops on a vast array of topics including nutrition, lesson planning, recognizing and dealing with child abuse, scheduling, appreciating differences, professionalism, milestone development, arts education, monitoring student progress, grant writing, mentoring, coaching, and literacy.

Bisa also saw a distinct need for a strong infancy to pre-k curriculum. After all, students in kindergarten through college are educated according to a formal curriculum. Given the exceptional learning ability of very young children, shouldn't schools have a formal plan for nurturing and educating them as well? Bisa set out to write such a plan, based on the standards set forth by the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC). The result was WINGS Curriculum, LLC, incorporated in 2009.

WINGS is an acronym for Wonder, Interests, Needs, Goals, Skills – the key facets of her curriculum. Through WINGS, Bisa offers learning plans for infants, toddlers, preschoolers/pre-kindergarten, blended classrooms, and family/group child care. She also offers on-site curriculum training to help schools and centers implement the curriculum effectively. Honey the Bumblebee, the



Dr. Bisa presents an interactive session, "Making Home Connections", for Mt. Zion Primary School's first Parent University session in Jonesboro, Ga. The goal was to actively engage parents in discovering innovative methods for enhancing student learning through simple, everyday activities that maximize academic outcomes.

WINGS mascot, is a nod to the often-used inspirational story of how bumblebees fly because they don't know the laws of physics. Though researchers eventually came up with a scientific explanation for bumblebee flight, the traditional defying-the-odds tale remains popular.

Bisa uses the story to remind teachers that every child can learn.

"If children are offered suitable opportunities to learn," she points out, "they can do more than just fly; they can soar!"

Soaring is something Bisa knows well. As if all her other achievements aren't enough, she serves on numerous early learning boards, foundations, leadership councils, and committees. She is a preferred partner advisor to the United Way of Metro-Atlanta, Kids II, and a toy advisory council for Baby Einstein and several Disney lines including Bright Starts. In addition, she serves as a parent's advocate and coach with the National Coalition of 100

Education for Everyone

GMC COLLEGE

Fairburn Campus

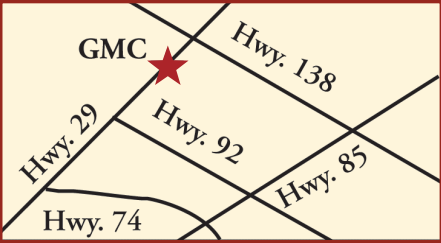


A Liberal Arts Junior College

Ask about the First-term Scholarship Program!

- No Military Obligation
- Two Year Liberal Arts Program
- Fully Accredited by Southern Association of Colleges & Schools
- Daytime, Evening and Weekend Classes
- Small Class Sizes, Personal Attention, and Free Tutoring
- Dual-Enrollment Courses Available
- All University Students are Welcome to Take Courses
- Leased Books
- Weekend Classes Also Available

**WE OFFER
ON-LINE
CLASSES!**




Start Here - Go Anywhere

Call Today! 678.379.1414

See Our Website for Details
icangraduate.info



Dr. Bisa's son, Jordan, reads to Kool Joe for the Reading PAWS program at the Tyrone Library.

sneeze ('a-choo'). I truly believe negative energy is toxic so I try my best to stay away from it."

This doesn't mean her life has been all roses. She's had her ups and downs, experienced loss and disillusion like the rest of us, but she takes bumps in the road as learning opportunities.

"I call her a phoenix," says longtime friend Kim Davis. "Every time something bad happens, she just rises out of the fire, better and stronger than before."

One of her most difficult personal challenges came in the form of divorce. The split left her a single parent to two boys, but she's managed not only to raise them, but to homeschool

them effectively as well. And she's adamant that she wouldn't change a thing.

"I regret nothing that has ever happened in my life," Bisa asserts. "My experiences, collectively, made me the person I am today. I make a concerted effort to find the lesson in every experience and accentuate the positive. I really feel that all of my experiences prepared me to do just what I am doing and maybe even more, once my sons get older and out on their own. For now, I feel content with being able to make my own schedule and work around my sons' events and needs, instead of vice versa."

This flexibility and life balance is critical to Bisa; she absolutely refuses to live her life "in a bubble." She experiments with life, mixing ingredients, trying out differ-

Black Women, advocates for the health, education, and economic empowerment of black women. In her ample (ha!) spare time, she maintains a blog aimed at encouraging parents to take charge of life and develop healthy families.

But wait—there's more! Published author, remember? Her articles have appeared in *Essence*, *Business News Daily*, *The Network Journal*, and other publications. She's been interviewed by Focus Atlanta on CW 69, Blog Talk Radio, and The Wendell Show. She's written early learning handbooks and chapters in college textbooks. She even wrote a children's book, *Let's Potty!*.

Another book is in the works.

Now how in tarnation, you may ask, does she manage all this? She attributes much of her success to positive thinking.

"I put large quantities of positive energy into the universe and expect the same in return," she says. "I often tell people, 'I am allergic to negativity' and then I pretend to



Above: Family game night at Dr. Bisa's (generally on Fridays)—no TV, video games, or electronics allowed!



Right: Dr. Bisa hanging out at Shamrock Park in Tyrone with her favorite two people in the world—her sons!

ent combinations, and always looking outside the commonly-accepted for her answers. This applies to her career, her personal life, and even her faith.

"Although I grew up as the granddaughter of a Baptist pastor," she explains, "I began to search for more in-depth study of the Word as a young adult. As a result, I went from Baptist to Church of Christ to Church of God in Christ, back to Baptist, then to Methodist (CME), and finally settled on the fact that I am a Christian at-large. All the experiences in the various churches enabled me to better understand that I didn't have to place God in a bubble. This lesson transcended into my daily life, helping me to realize that I don't have to limit my goals and dreams, to live my life in a bubble. I can be successful at-large."

"Successful at-large" seems an apt description of this incredible woman. But it's important to note that she's built her success by helping others succeed. After all, her career is focused on helping people parent, care for, and educate young children.

"I have lived as a single woman, married woman, divorced woman and single parent," Bisa explains. "My family wasn't, and still isn't, perfect by a long shot. But my experiences have prepared me to advise diverse parents on family issues. I wouldn't want anyone advising me who has not been through some issues of their own. While I don't proclaim to be a parenting 'expert,' I feel very secure in advising families on how to deal with situations in daily life. I feel that's a major part of my God-given purpose."

Unsurprisingly, however, her outreach doesn't stop at mentoring and educating.



Dr. Bisa volunteering with United Way of Metro Atlanta at Easter Seals of North Georgia's Winter Wonderland Festival.

She's also an active children's advocate with a goal of ensuring that "all children have sufficient opportunities to live and learn in safe, healthy environments."

Bisa's active in her community, too. Soon after moving to Tyrone in 2008, she coordinated the Entrepreneurs Network of Fayette County. Her purpose was to bring together local small business owners, increase awareness of their specialties, and encourage them to support each other through personal use and customer referrals. Her first event was an expo held at Glendalough Manor. Like virtually everything else Bisa touches, it was a rousing success and business owners quickly clamored for more.

Her friend Kim loves to tell how Bisa,

then at a director level in Mary Kay (yeah, she did that, too), provided the encouragement, support, and mentoring Kim needed to begin her own Mary Kay business—and to succeed in it.

"I admire her so much," says Kim. "Her tenacity, her drive. It's for herself and for her boys, but she has this urge to help people, too. She always wants to grab you and bring you along with her. She wants people to be informed and empowered. Her energy is contagious. She's the kind of person you want in your life."

And life, for Bisa, is very sweet. She's working on an updated edition of her curriculum, expanding her training offerings, teaching classes for Mercer, writing another children's book, and enjoying her boys and her friends. She's recently developed a keen interest in the needs of grandparents raising grandchildren.

When asked what's next, her eyes light up and you can practically see the options flitting through her brain. She smiles and shakes her head a little.

"Anything," she suggests. "Everything."

Her views on education are highly respected and her views on life are intensely unique. A personal quote on her website seems to sum it up best: "Die empty. The cemetery has no use for your potential."



Maggie Worth is a freelance writer and consultant with a PoliSci degree and 15 years in project management and marketing. An avid mystery reader, co-founder of the Southside Scribes writer's group and member of BWFC, Maggie lives in Fayetteville with her husband, Shane, and their "kid," Rowdy.