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PHOTOGRAPHY

Fagan Studios

Mike Hardwick Photography

Olive Juice Studios

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507-529-5385

RWmagazine.com

info@RWmagazine.com

For advertising information:

507-951-3496, 507-753-9935



“Be kind, for everyone you meet is fighting a hard battle.”

—Plato

Ellie participates in a laughter yoga session.

Live, laugh and love. Sometimes it’s as simple as that. Of course, it’s never as simple as that! Life inevitably brings unpredictability, heartache and challenge.

Over the course of our 10 years and 60 issues, we’ve learned one thing: women don’t just land in their happy endings. They work to get there. They don’t ask for the challenges they face, but they meet them. Many of the stars of our feel-good stories have been through the wringer, but they stand tall anyway. They have similar qualities: Strength. Perseverance. Optimism.

This issue is no different. The women featured are living, laughing and loving through their own lives, making us all better for it. Here’s a preview.

Live: On our cover is Julianne Angstman, a mother with two sons serving in the Army. She could have chosen to hole up with her worry, knowing people around her just couldn’t understand. Instead, she joined the local chapter of Blue Star Mothers of America to surround herself with mothers just like her. And while the fears don’t go away, the support she receives—and gives—can’t be measured. See p. 30 to meet her and other moms who took it upon themselves to create a community of patriotic support, and learn how you can join.

Laugh: Our staff took a “laughter yoga” session (see p. 18), and we discovered for ourselves that the body cannot differentiate between real and fake laughter. We wore silly hats. We made goofy faces. We decided there’s not enough laughter in our daily lives and that an inner-body workout is just as beneficial as an outer-body routine.

Love: You’ll meet another mother in Tough Love (p. 26). Ann Pittenger describes the challenges of raising her now-adult son, and how her unconditional love prevailed through years of his mental health diagnoses and difficult behavior.

We are proud to share these and many other stories and successes in the following pages. Don’t hesitate to share your stories of life, laughter and love with us on Facebook.

Ellington

May/June issue corrections: Sandie Shores, who owns Herb’s Herbs and was featured in the article, “How Does Your Garden Grow?,” sells herbs from her farm only and by appointment only for the remainder of the season. Find her at freshcuttherbs.com or 507-753-3081. In the article “In Defense,” we incorrectly spelled Christina Moriarty’s name. We apologize. In the home article, “New Views, Old Charm,” interior photos were done by Karen Melvin.

We want to hear from you! Send comments, suggestions, ideas or original recipes to: Rochester Women Editor, P.O. Box 5986, Rochester, MN 55903-5986 or e-mail: editor@RWmagazine.com.