

Burgon can't really see much of anything. She has retinitis pigmentosa, a progressive loss of sight. And for a while Burgon couldn't hear much. She had only five percent hearing in one ear. She was even preparing for a nearly silent future by learning tactile sign language, in which the signing is done in her hand.

But Burgon Jensen of Midvale, Utah, even with these two obstacles, is a fun, well-read, creative person. She loves to read and write in Braille, and she especially likes to write poetry. She loves to sculpt (yes, sculpt—she feels an object and then recreates it in clay). These days, her future is full of sounds and music because she has had a cochlear implant to help improve her hearing. These are just the beginning of a long list of things that Burgon does.

By Janet Thomas
Church Magazines

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She goes hiking and rock climbing with her family. She skis by following a guide's instructions. She loves to go shopping, feeling pieces of clothing to determine if she wants to try it on. She is learning to cook and helps clean the house. But most of all, she has a funny sense of humor and a great attitude.

Burgon says, "I think attitude is such a big deal when you have challenges. You can be angry that you were given those challenges, or you can have a good attitude and say, like Nephi did, 'I will go and do' [Nephi 3:7], because I know that Heavenly Father is going to give me a way to do it."

Burgon has a special big brother, Garrett, who has helped her throughout her life. As he explains it, "Early on it was making sure she got on and off the bus, making sure she got to class, and making sure there were no bullies on the playground." Actually bullies were never really a problem. Garrett, who is four years older, has a group of friends that are also Burgon's protectors. Garrett says that sometimes the worst thing for Burgon was having people feel sorry for her. She wrote a poem about it:

Most Painful of All

By Burgon Jensen

*You never tried to hit me
With the shame of sticks and stones.
You never saw me bleeding;
You never broke my bones.*

*You never pushed or shoved me
Or called me hurtful names.*

*You never saw the tears that fell;
You never saw the pain.*

*But now I hope you hear me
For what I have to say.
You never did do any of these things,
But you did look the other way.
Don't look the other way.*

Now Burgon accepts speaking engagements in neighboring wards and stakes, where she hopes to help those who feel isolated or alone. When she is finished giving her speech, teens come up to her and tell her that they are going through some really hard times. They are struggling with their own burdens. And in Burgon they find someone who understands. **NE**

