**Every Body Has a Story Transcript**

**Host:** Shaleena Barker

**Guest:** Hannah Gadlage

Transcript

 Hello, my name is Shaleena Barker and this is everybody has a story, a historical archive for the Vigo County Public Library. The archive is a program for the NEA. Big read, in collaboration with the National Endowment for the Arts and Partnership with Arts Midwest. To start things off today. I want to tell you a little bit about the NEA Big read. It's an initiative that aims to get the entire community reading the same book at the same time. This year's pick is called sitting pretty. The view from my ordinary resilient disabled body by Rebecca Tall. Like it's a memoir that chronicles Toxic's life in a wheelchair. It explores themes of diversity and compassion, and encourages everyone to help rewrite the narrative on what it means to live in a disabled body. Today, I'm here with Hannah Gadge. She's here to talk with us about her experience with Williams syndrome. Good morning, Hannah. Thank you so much for being here.

How are you? I am good. Good morning, listeners. Welcome to the podcast. My name is Hannah Catledge, and I'm originally from Louisville, KY. I was born and raised down there in 1995 on January 20th.

And how did you come to be in? Who?

My dad was a a preacher, and so he been moving around to a lot of churches and I'm trying to reach out to the gospel for the people to hear.

So what do you like to do for fun?

I do a lot of reading. I'm learning. About music and wanting to be a music teacher in the near future. Hopefully, and I I also have a podcast on Spotify. I interview family and friends and we. Go with the flow and talk about life, yeah.

We are here today to talk about peoples just different experiences living in their own bodies and I know that you have Williams syndrome. Can you? Tell me a little bit about that.

Yes, Williams syndrome is a rare genetic disorder. Some people different experience. A lot of different things with Williams syndrome and.

So Cleveland Clinic says Williams syndrome is characterized by a variety of different symptoms, like you said, including unique physical features, some cognitive challenges and cardiovascular abnormalities. It also includes symptoms that are often associated with other syndromes, which can often make diagnosing Lyme syndrome pretty hard. Which of the symptoms of William Syndrome impacted you the most?

You have sensitive hearing. Like if you hear something loud, then you have to cover your ears or something. Umm I experience heart issue and then I also experienced a lower back issue so I had to have. Surgery to fix those two things. I had a really good heart, doctor. His name was Doctor Boone, and he lived in Louisville, KY, and I would go like once or twice a month to go see him. And he would check on my heart and. Just make sure it's pump and.

Can you describe? Like a normal day in your life with William syndrome. And tell me a little bit just about that.

No. I start my day around 8:00 or 9:00 in the morning during the week, and I get my favorite cereals out and have milk with it. I I'm a coffee. Drinker so I like. I like to have a little Starbucks every once in a while. And that really kicks up my day. And then in the afternoon, I do chores before I go to work and Hussie and the coyotes is my taco's favorite place because I know a lot of the workers there and they're really nice people and and especially meeting new managers at Texas Roadhouse. And just getting to know everybody, it just really makes. Makes a big difference in our community and then I go to pulse at the district. Uh, every every Saturday. I and I go there from 10:30 till 11:30 and it really pumps my heart and just really gets me into the mood for what's gonna happen the rest of the day. You know, my parents have moved on to Avon IN. So I'm currently. Learning to be independent and and to live on my own.

Can you tell me what that transition was like from going from having the help of your family to living that more independent life and?

So the day of my parents and I, we got together and we we all sat down at the dinner table and. And my parents were like Hannah. We know that you love the community of Terre Haute, and we want you to have the opportunity of living independently. And they were. And they also said, do you want to live with us or do you want to live independently on your own with Jess and Jenna and Matt? And I said, I want to stay at the friendship House because I belong there and they're really nice people. And and my dad had tears running. Because of how how proud he was of me making that choice. And UM, it was a good decision.

So to give everyone a little bit of context, you are currently living at the Terre Haute Friendship House, which is an organization dedicated to helping people with disabilities live independently with the help of other people with disabilities and community members. Jess burial is the executive director of the Friendship House, which is how we connect. Did what's your experience with the house been like?

They help me cook dinners and uh, we cook dinners for each other sometimes. I recently just celebrated my 30th birthday. Happy birthday. Thank you. Late. So yeah, my birthday's on January the 20th every year. So people give me cards and gifts and we have a big party and. Just have a good time playing games and cake and ice cream and all the fun stuff. And I was glad to be surrounded by people whom I love and appreciate, and that is always important. When when you have a life to go through, you know and and it's just a good opportunity. Like I've always said, every day is a new opportunity.

Outside of the Terre Haute Friendship House, are there any other tools that you use that help you navigate your day-to-day life?

I use a calendar or a reminders to help me like. Dishes. I always try to remember to do them so, you know, set yourself some time to, you know, set up the calendar what you want to do from day-to-day and then just go through the day, you know, just keep smiling just. Enjoy life. While you have time.

Thank you so much Hannah, for being here today and giving us all a peek inside your life. Is there anything that I didn't ask you that you want to add?

Do want to talk about? What I did this past weekend? So I went to go, uh, go to see the play Annie and uh. Yes. Was at Butler University and they put on the show cause I got it for Christmas and uh thanks to my parents for taking me there. I really love the musicals because I I love to sing a lot so. If you never seen Annie before, find tickets or you can watch it online. Because that's what I do. I I watch my favorite scenes like online and so. Just just have a good experience of what you. Of and what you enjoy and what you experience.