As adults, we tend to put the needs of others before our own. We believe there will always be time later to do the things we want to do, to see the things we want to see, and visit the places we want to go. We know that there will be time to pursue our interests after the kids graduate, when we achieve that management position, or when there is more money. Life has a way sometimes of sending us a reminder that things don't always go as planned, and we may not have infinite tomorrows for pursing our interests and following our dreams. The time to do these things is now.

The ladies who won this year's Dever award for best group/duet at the Autumn Antics ice skating competition have both had such reminders. Kelly Bender is a kidney transplant recipient, who had always wanted to learn to skate. One side effect of her transplant is that she is unable to regulate her body temperature, and she has to be very careful not to overheat. Her doctors recommended that she only exercise in cool, climate controlled places. This gave her the perfect chance to pursue her lifelong interest in figure skating. Kelly enjoys her time training with her coach Lisa Rast and has found a renewed sense of herself on the ice.

Tawnya Geisbush is a 3 time breast cancer survivor, who was at one time given a 2% chance of 5 year survival, and 2 years later given 6months -2 years to live (that was 8 years ago). She started skating while she was still doing chemotherapy, in a search to find activities she enjoyed doing, so she wouldn't feel guilty about failing to force herself into tedious "exercise". On the ice she found a much needed escape from the world of cancer, a love for the sport of figure skating, lifelong friends, and a whole new family.

It can be challenging to learn new skills as an adult, especially skills like figure skating that are much easier learned in youth. Our bodies aren't as limber, we have further to fall, we need a 15 point break down of every single move. It takes us much longer to learn every single thing than it would if we were 8, but our sense of accomplishment at learning it is great. Because of these things, adult figure skating competitions aren't about beating this person or that person. Competitions are a very supportive environment, where we all recognize the great accomplishments we have all made in just being here, everyone is supportive of each other, and we want everyone to succeed. Our success is measured in how we feel when we leave the ice, did we skate well, did we do our best, did we have fun, did we finally do a good spin. The placement by the judges is much less important in determining the success of our efforts.

Kelly and Tawnya often compete against each other, but this year they decided to also try a duet skating together. In a true team effort, Kelly sewed the costumes, Tawnya designed the props, and Tawnya's coach Terri Moellenburg provided a fun and entertaining choreography. Then on a Sunday in early November, they brought to life the story of Maizey and Gerturde, the birds from the Seussical the musical. They were surprised and delighted to be the first ever adult winners of the Dever award. Even with that honor, both would agree the real prize was the fun of the event, the crowd's reaction to the program, and the satisfaction of performing a clean skate.

Life threatening illnesses ultimately brought both Kelly and Tawnya to the Polar Ice skating rink in Chandler, and their love for the sport, and the people they share it with has kept them there. They lead by example when they show us that the time to pursue our interests and follow our dreams is now, because we don't know how many tomorrows we will have.