

Vol. 1, 2011

# HER

magazine

Five minutes  
with Carol Sloan

Day Trip: Bristol

Carol Fair:  
Witness to  
airline history

# Kitty Juul

Flirting with disaster

Johnson City Press





The disastrous, sunny world  
of Kitty Juul





Juul tries out an EPA Level A suit, which is worn when workers need the greatest level of skin, respiratory and eye protection.



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Story by Pat Everheart  
Photos by Mike Murphy & Contributed

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**K**itty Juul is connected to two of the worst chapters of the 20th century, so it makes sense that she spends her days preparing the world for disaster. And with a resume that begins with “hospice worker” and is peppered with words like “pandemic,” “hurricane,” “bioterrorism,” “emergency” and “disaster,” it would be understandable if she were a dour, overly serious pessimist. But she’s far from it.

Juul is a sunny, self-effacing blue-eyed-blond free spirit who has to be persuaded that she’s interesting enough to be the subject of a magazine profile. Only after months of conversations during afternoon dog walks are you likely to hear about some of the things that make Juul’s experiences extraordinary. It’s in her Norwegian DNA. Her father’s people live by a precept called Jante Law, which teaches humility and egalitarianism above all. Don’t stand out. Don’t think you’re special.

The small, faded scar on her throat? That? That’s from thyroid surgery. After Chernobyl.

*Chernobyl, Chernobyl?* Yep, that one. She takes it in stride.

Her direct connection to news that shook the world came in the form of a radiation veil that enshrouded northern Europe following the 1986 nuclear disaster in Ukraine. Juul was young, and by her own account, fairly clueless, traveling around Scandinavia.

Partly because she was out of touch, partly because public health officials were caught unawares, Juul didn’t get the iodine tablets that would have warded off the ill effects of radiation exposure. A few years later Juul was at the Mayo Clinic having her precancerous thyroid removed.

Just one degree of separation connects Juul to another enormous component of the 20th century gestalt — Hitler’s dark dominion over Europe. Juul’s father was a 16-year-old student when the Nazis invaded Norway in 1940. His uncle and cousin, both educators, were sent to a concentration camp as part of the reviled intelligentsia. Juul’s father joined the Resistance and was smuggled to freedom hidden under nets on a fishing boat while the SS patrolled the docks.

You might hear about that if you mention that you’re reading about the German occupation of Norway and if you probe for details.





## GASTROENTEROLOGY ASSOCIATES



**Dr. Rathi Narayan**

### **Encourages**

**Women to be Screened  
for Colon Cancer**

Dr. Rathi Narayan, a board certified gastroenterologist who trained at Harvard and Yale, reminds women age 50 and older of the importance of Colon Cancer Screenings. Colorectal Cancer is the second leading cause of cancer-related deaths in the United States.

The Good News is regular colon cancer screenings can, in most cases, prevent colon cancer altogether. Early detection is the key to success so don't wait.

Together we can defeat this disease.

Call 423-246-6777 to schedule an appointment.



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Be glad that Juul is more walk than talk because some day she might just save your life. For now, it likely will be with a couple of degrees of separation.

As curriculum design manager for the Rural Domestic Preparedness Consortium, she may write the protocol that guides firefighters who contain the toxic chemical spill at a train derailment near your house. Or she may be the link between the CDC and the public health officials who quarantine your infected co-worker during a deadly flu outbreak.

That's for now. Down the road, if, as she hopes, she adds a medical degree to her bachelor's and master's, Juul might be the only doctor for miles when you injure your back hiking on a remote trail. That's her dream. (Not that you'll be injured, that she'd be there to help if you are.)

"My plan has always been to go to med school later in life — I didn't think it would be this late," said Juul, who's 43 and a pre-med student at East Tennessee State University.

"I was taught at a young age that we have a responsibility to serve those who are less fortunate and to do what we can to make the world a better place," Juul said, crediting her parents' philanthropic perspective on life. "My parents are two of the kindest people I've ever met."

*"One of the most exciting things I've ever done was here in Johnson City," Juul said of her stint with the Fire Department's Citizen's Fire Academy. "We learned everything from the history of the fire department to how to make a harness and bail out of a second story window. It was the most fun I've had in a long time, and I met some really great people."*

*- Kitty Juul*



Photos by Lt. Robert Johnson, JCFD





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Co-host of Daytime Tri Cities on WJHL Weekdays at 10 a.m.

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That philosophy has led her from her parents' home in southern Illinois to working with Indian youth on reservations in South Dakota, Montana, Colorado and New Mexico ... to caring for the elderly and the dying ... to running an emergency shelter ... to developing renewable energy resources for remote, off-grid regions of the Southwest ... to finding her home in East Tennessee. "I feel like this is where I'm supposed to be," she said. "I did from the minute I got here."

She found her way here in 2009 when she accepted a job with the the consortium, which is made up of ETSU and five academic partners. Each college and university contributes specific expertise to Homeland Security/FEMA training materials for first responders and medical and public health professionals in rural areas, where geography, communication and access to equipment and supplies make getting the job done extra challenging. ETSU provides the health care component.

"From my work in the West, I saw firsthand how important such training is," she said.

That kind of training came in handy last summer for the Hickory Tree Volunteer Fire Department. Just a few days after the firefighters taped a training video on a fire at a meth lab, they were called to a fire at a real meth lab.

The video is part of an eight-hour class on CBRNE — chemical, biological, radioactive, nuclear and explosive — situations. Once the class is certified, it will be offered nationwide by an instructor to rural first responders.

Fortunately, the other two scenarios shot last summer — an IED detonation at the Appalachian Fairgrounds and a botulism outbreak at a kids' day camp — didn't follow the meth lab example.

If the worst *does* happen, we'll be better off because Katherine Marie Juul found her home here. Actually, we're already better off. Just don't expect her to agree.

