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Thompson's Station

Young Franklin girl first Roderick Award recipient

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Maddie Adams of Franklin is only 10, but she is first to receive the Roderick Award of Courage. She was selected for performing the Heimlich maneuver on her grandmother, Jan Adams, and saving her life in September 2008.

Jan was babysitting Maddie, then 9, and her brother, Hayden, then 7. She was on the phone with the children's mother, Deanna, when she began to choke on a piece of chicken. Deanna called the neighbors before dialing 911.

Maddie wrapped her arms around Jan and squeezed, dislodging the chicken from her throat and allowing her to breathe.

"It feels really good," Maddie said, after receiving the award.

She was gracious and all smiles when she accepted the award.

The Roderick Award gets its name from the Civil War steed, Roderick, that is said to have galloped to its general after hearing his cries over the din of the battle, said Thompson's Station Mayor Leon Heron.

At the Roderick monument at Roderick Place in Thompson's Station, Maddie, a student at Johnson Elementary School, was presented with the award and a check for \$1,000, which she said would be put in a college fund.

Across the street from Roderick Place, the battle was fought in which Roderick the horse lost his life after suffering from four gunshot wounds on March

5, 1863.

It was created to commemorate the courage of Williamson County citizens, and will be presented annually on March 5, which was the day in 1863 when Roderick fell in battle.

Heron said recipients would be individuals who display "courage in the midst of adversity."

"It's fitting indeed that the first award be presented to a young girl who represents the future," Heron said.

The Roderick Founder's Committee selected Maddie to be the recipient. First Ward Alderman of Franklin Beverly Burger served as the co-chair of the committee. Other members of the committee include Heron, County Mayor Rogers Anderson, Historian Julian Bibb, Williamson County-Franklin Chamber of Commerce CEO/President Nancy Conway and County Commissioner Judy Hayes.

Her father, Craig, said, the family was thankful that the Lord spoke in her heart that "You can do this."

He is especially glad that his mother is still alive thanks to his daughter's quick-thinking.

When Craig walked into his home on Sept. 4, Maddie said, "High-five me, Dad. I just saved Grandma's life."

Jan explained to her son and daughter-in-law how the entire incident played out.

Right as the next-door neighbors arrived, Maddie, who was watching television in another room, rounded the corner to the kitchen where her grandmother



KIRI LANICE WALTON
Maddie Adams, 10, is pictured with her grandmother Jan Adams and Thompson's Station Mayor Leon Heron after receiving the inaugural Roderick Award of Courage on March 5. Maddie performed the Heimlich maneuver when her grandmother was choking after seeing the procedure on TV.

gasp for her life.

"Grandma, are you OK?" she asked. Then she wrapped her tiny arms around Jan and backed her 48-pound frame against the counter for support. She then squeezed until the chicken was dislodged and her grandmother coughed on the newfound air in her lungs.

Maddie said she learned how to perform the Heimlich from "The Suite Life of Zach and

Cody," a TV show on the Disney Channel.

Upon learning of the heroic actions Maddie took, Disney sent her a lot of goodies like bedding and toys from her favorite Disney shows.

Besides rewards and Disney loot, Jan said her granddaughter is her angel, and knowing that could be Maddie's greatest accolade.