

**Nancy Burks Worcester
2007 Opal Durant
Granbury Woman of the Year Award Recipient**

In 1976, Nancy Burks Worcester came to Granbury as a member of the Granbury Opera House Company. Today, Nancy is a professional ventriloquist. She has been self-employed for 17 years and is the owner of Nancy's Hands, Inc. She uses her craft to teach the gospel, drug and alcohol resistance, self-respect and other life lessons to children and adults. She is extremely active in her church and donates her time, money and talents to many worthy organizations, such as the Stepping Stones ministry, which teaches life skills to women in need, and the Healthy Kids summer lunch program.

She has an amazing knack for calling people to action and organizing their gifts and talents. She originated the Red Hot Concert, which raised more than \$10,000 for the Jim Burks Firefighter's Memorial Park. During the recent flood in Hood County, Nancy made the call that opened her church, Granbury First United Methodist, as a Red Cross shelter for flood victims; she stayed there most of the night to lend a hand. In the weeks following the flooding, Nancy continued to serve flood victims, organizing meals to be delivered to them and arranging temporary housing. Most important, she listened to them, comforted them and gave them hugs.

Nancy offers her ventriloquism talents free of charge to Camp Impact for children housed in homeless shelters, Royal Kids' Camp for foster children, FUMC's Journey to Bethlehem and Vacation Bible School, the Hood County Library summer reading program and the Masonic Home for Children.

Nancy's family sees her as a pillar of strength. As a young adult, she faced the death of her mother. The untimely death of her first husband left her with two children to support, children she worked to put through college. Despite obstacles, Nancy remains steadfast in her belief in Christ and her kindness toward others. Her job requires constant travel, but she looks at it as an opportunity to help others—lifting a bag, offering a seat, assisting the elderly or giving a hand to parents with small children.

Nancy's unique gift of ventriloquism allows her to both entertain and educate. She is a role model for her family and friends, a mentor for fellow entertainers and an example of how one can live the gospel and serve others.