Kelsey Russell spends between 30 minutes and two hours every day interacting with fans on the Bailey Flanigan Official Facebook page. Russell is the face of and inspiration behind Bailey, a character created by her mother, best-selling Vancouver Christian fiction author Karen Kingsbury.
Tuberculosis is caused by a bacterium called Mycobacterium tuberculosis. It can be cured with antibiotics, but a full course of treatment requires six to nine months to fully eradicate the microorganism. Many people do not finish the full treatment, which leads to the evolution of drug-resistant strains of the bacterium. According to the CDC, nearly 94 percent of those who began treatment in 2007 completed their regimen.

The survey of TB cases detected 113 cases of so-called multidrug-resistant TB, which is caused by a bacterium that resists at least two different antibiotics. The researchers found only one case of extensively drug-resistant TB, which is caused by a strain that is resistant to virtually all the antibiotics used to treat TB. Both forms of the disease are growing problems around the world because they are spreading rapidly and are extremely difficult to treat. The World Health Organization called Wednesday for more funds to research and treat drug-resistant TB.

Published study in the journal Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences.

Why? Are people simply reporting it more often, or has the disease mutated into a different, vaccine-resistant strain?

Researchers discovered that a third explanation was most likely: people have lost immunity, allowing the disease to re-emerge.

Unlike many vaccines, the pertussis vaccine doesn’t offer lifelong immunity. When whooping cough was more common, people tended to be exposed and re-exposed to it more frequently, so resistance was kept pretty high within the populace.

Once the vaccine was implemented, however, whooping cough became less common. The less prevalent it is, the less likely people are to get booster shots. And as time passes, the more the body forgets what to look out for. So when an epidemic arises years later, it can do some serious damage.

Moral of the story? Everyone should get the Tdap booster shot, physicians say.

Bailey:
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and readers followed her through the “Sunrise” and “Above the Line” series. In “Leaving” and the third Bailey Flanigan books to succeed it, the character takes center stage. Russell’s picture appears on the cover of “Leaving,” and will be on the covers of the third and fourth books, as well.

Russell relates to much about Bailey’s character, including her shared passion for musical theater. Russell grew up singing, dancing and acting, and participated in Christian Youth Theatre and Portland’s Northwest Children’s Theater and School. She hopes to pursue acting as a career.

The 2008 Skyview High School graduate studied at Clark College for two years before she, like Bailey, left home to pursue the arts. Russell spent a semester studying theater arts at Azusa Pacific University in California.

“I can relate to leaving everything you know and experiencing a new journey,” she said.

Russell decided Azusa Pacific wasn’t the right fit for her and transferred to the University of Portland in January.

The similarities between her and Bailey extend beyond career aspirations. Both Russell and Bailey are committed to their family, and both have five younger brothers.

“Bailey is super-close to her family, and best friends with her mom, and that’s how my mom and I are,” she said.

Their Christian faith is also central to both women.

“My faith in God helps me every day,” Russell said. “It’s a daily relationship. It’s something you have to pursue with your heart. Bailey does the same thing.”

Despite the similarities, the books are fiction. Bailey, for example, has a love interest named Cody Coleman who is a longtime family friend. Russell says there is no Cody in her life.

Cody does, however, have a Clark County connection beyond Kingsbury. Solomon Rexius, a 26-year-old Eugene, Ore., native now living in Camas while he attends Western Seminary in Portland, was selected to portray Cody. Rexius’ photo will be featured on the cover of the second book in the series, “Learning,” and he appears in a video on Kingsbury’s website introducing the character (http://karenkingsbury.com).

Russell also is featured in a video on the site that serves as a trailer for “Leaving.” The video can be found on YouTube and on the Bailey Flanigan Official Facebook page, as well.

Filming the trailer was exciting for Russell, who wants to move into television and film acting. Kingsbury said there’s talk of developing a television series featuring Bailey. If that comes about, Russell said, she’d like to audition for the part.

For now, though, Russell is enjoying her mentoring role as Bailey’s Facebook voice.

“I think it’s a gift if you get to be in the public eye, and that gift can only come from God, and it’s how you use that platform,” she said.

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