

Felicia's Story

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Everyone has a story. This story is mine.

When I was young, and by the time I could hold a pencil, I started drawing. I told my mother I was going to be an artist. She said, "Yes dear, that's nice." I wanted my mother to purchase art supplies for me. She purchased basic pens, pencils and paper. However, she wasn't so quick to invest the money beyond the basics given my young age. I wanted and insisted upon oil paints and brushes. At the onset, she wasn't readily yielding to my requests. Consequently; knowing that my mother adored and nurtured her indoor plants, I drew her trailing Heartleaf Philodendron plant hoping to prevail by emotive induction. Well, that did the trick. She purchased oil paints and brushes for me. I didn't understand I needed gesso'ed canvas, so I used paper and my mother didn't say anything. In retrospect, I suspect she initially remained a bit apprehensive about my big aspirations.

When I was about the age of nine, I decided I also wanted to become a commercial artist. (It was because I watched Darrin Stephens on the television show named, "Betwitched" that ran during the years of 1964-1972. Darrin was a commercial artist.) So, I designed and constructed my own ten page magazine. The name of my magazine was, "The Million Dollar Magazine." My parents owned a typewriter, and I asked my mother to show me how to use it. Today, my favorite ad I created in my "Million Dollar Magazine" is on page 5. The heading reads,...

THE MILLION DOLLAR MAGAZINE PRESENTS THE PANCAKE

B I S Q U I C K An idea whose time has come again.

USE B I S Q U I C K It Is Delicious !



At the age of ten, my mother purchased a camera for me. I then became a shutter-bug. I recall taking photos of giant Amoebas (amoeboid protists) in grade-school science class under the microscope. Frankly, I still have those photographs. When I lived at home with my parents, my mother faithfully paid for and developed every single roll of film for me. Over the years, I've probably taken multiple thousands of photos by several different cameras. As an adult, I have professionally performed some of my own photo-shoots and have used my own stock photography multiple times in client advertisements and promotional pieces. However; for high-end work such as like for Decore-ative Specialties kitchens (see my 'commercial & illustrations portfolio'), I hired a professional photographer who specialized in indoor photography and controlled the lighting with specialized equipment.

My father worked for a large and prominent surveying and engineering company when I was young. This said company performed work all over the United States to my best recollection. They specialized in electrical engineering, but they also provided all the types of surveying services. My father liked talking about his work. When I was young, I recall a few times when he had to survey parcels of land, I went along. One day he surveyed the farm & ranch my grandparents owned. I recall running and jumping around while I was with him, finding the pins or the monuments, and I held some survey equipment for him... or it could have been just the shovel at the time. (*Chuckle.* My memory is fading.) In so doing, my father needed to establish or reestablish some of the monuments that are part of the Public Land Survey System. About eight monument *records* were recorded in the County for these said monuments the day I was with my father on my grandparents' farm & ranch during the 1970's. These said records possess my father's LS number, and they remain there to this day. I've climbed a few fences and jumped some cow-patties in my time. Later in life when I was an adult, I also went along on some field surveys and helped out a bit. Making a long story short here, I grew-up in the surveying and engineering trade.

My father was the chief onsite project manager for the Electrical Transmission line that ran somewhat along the Alaskan Oil Pipeline. During the 1970's, my father spent several years working in Alaska, and I had the opportunity to travel all around the state. One day, my father drove me next to the large Alaskan pipeline. He wanted to be sure I was able to snap a photo of it with the camera my mother had purchased for me some years beforehand. My father told me what the structures are that are adjacent to the pipeline and explained the function they serve. *To my best recollection*, they are "Heat Pipes" that regulate the temperature swings in Alaska around the oil pipeline. He said the "Heat Pipes" prevent the contraction and expansion of the pipe.

The following are additional photos, but of the Electrical Transmission line my father was the project-chief of.



Some of the transmission lines were brought to location by helicopter.



By the time I was in high school, I was a well known artist in multiple schools. I was oiling painting on canvas when I was thirteen years of age. My mother was very supportive of my talent by this time and managed to arrange for me to take portrait painting classes from an extremely talented artist who had the last name of Raphael. I don't know if Ms. Raphael was a descendant from Raffaello Sanzio da Urbino (aka Raphael) or not. I didn't think to ask her at the time when I was only fourteen years of age. Nonetheless; I do know for a fact, Ms. Raphael performed her studies at the Louvre in Paris, France and was an Italian. I will never forget this time in my life. I was in the class with a bunch of elderly ladies who had a jolly of a time sitting next to a fourteen year old girl painting live models with them.

I was a part of the advanced art program in high school and was officially recorded in one of the high school yearbooks in addition to the newspaper. A photograph was taken of me presenting a drawing of an ancient Greek architectural temple to the school's Doctorate of Education. The drawing was a framed original on parchment to give the appearance of age. The caption was a Latin translation of an aphorism coming originally from Greek. "Ars longa, vita brevis." The English rendering is, "Art is long, Life is Short". It's a partial quote from the Greek physician Hippocrates. The assignment was to serve "the enhancement of the school."

During my senior year of high school, I entered a poster drawing contest that was sponsored by the Portland Advertising Federation through their "High School Advertising Competition Department." The theme was (if my memory serves me correctly) "The City of Roses." I won first place and received a Half-Term Exploratory Course Scholarship to an art college located in downtown Portland, Oregon. SHOWN ON THE RIGHT is the initial sketch of the poster. I sent the finished original into the department through my high school. (I'm surprised I didn't take a photo!) The original was not returned to me, nor did I receive a copy of the printed piece. I'm unclear what happened. Nonetheless, the initial sketch on the right is the only visual I have of the poster.



Later in time, I attended the Colorado Institute of Art where I received a degree in visual communications / commercial art. At that time, I believed I needed more schooling to learn pre-press and printing. I was told by professionals in the trade, a lot of pre-press knowledge was essential. So, I attended another college where I learned pre-press stripping and ran a printing press. During this same time, I also took college classes in personal communication and psychology. Many people may not readily think about it, but psychology is associated with advertising. Ads may sell products and services through moods, allurements and so-forth. There is a qualitative methodology called, “psychographics”, and it is used in life-style research in marketing and advertising. However, it is also applied to cognitive attributes such as activities, interests and opinions. I felt I needed to understand psychographics so I could “grab my audience” in advertisements or graphics I would create for clients.

During my college years, I drew some illustrations and provided some graphic services for a couple companies. (See my “Humble Beginnings” within the School Portfolio.) I needed to obtain “the experience” that I was told I needed to have in order to get my foot into the door of an advertising agency or upper-scale graphic company. (I had no desire to start my career in a production sweatshop. I heard disconcerting stories, so the very thought was daunting.)

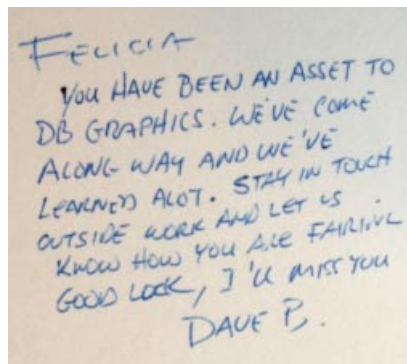
I had a waiting period. I applied for many graphic jobs when I finished college. It was difficult finding an entry level position. I endured a series of rejections. So, I went to work for my father who – at that time - owned his own business and had a large contract with the Western Area Power Administration (aka WAPA) that spanned several states. (My father was licensed in nine states.) He contracted to design, survey stake and inspect new KV Power-lines and a couple of Electrical Power Stations. I was officially now on payroll. I worked in the office, and my father and I drove to the various states. We met with some high-level officials from WAPA at one of the new electrical power stations. We put our safety hard-hats on, walked around the structures and performed an inspection before the meeting.



Finally, I got my break. By recommendation through a couple of people, one being my younger sister who gave me the lead, I obtained a job with a professional graphic-shop. Making a long story short here, I drove to California, met with the proprietor, Dave. I obtained the graphic job on the spot. I started in an entry level position and worked six days a week and long hours. I wasn't required to work the extra hours, but I knew I was slow. I was determined to do well. It was after several years, I moved up some ladder rungs when I proved my worth and ability to design and layout successful ads in a timely manner. The biggest turning point for me was when Dave left for vacation. Dave's graphic business had a contract to put together a basic layout every two weeks for a family run & operated two store business. We all knew this ad wasn't the best it could be, but I was told the owner of the business couldn't afford a redesign. The moment I was handed the information to layout another ad, I made the unilateral decision to redesign the ad because my conscience couldn't bear sending out another lousy looking four-page ad for a family business who were just trying to make a living. I also decided I was working off-the-clock so I wouldn't ruffle Dave. After the ad ran and was mailed, Dave arrived at the office after his vacation. The very moment he opened the entry double glass doors, he stood there in the middle of them and looked around the room at his employees. He then asked, “Who did the (name withheld) Ad?” My thoughts were racing. How did he know? Am I fired? I slowly and meekly raised my hand and said, “I did.” Dave stared at me for a few moments which seemed like minutes. I stood a few feet away thinking my career had just ended. Looking a bit bewildered, Dave then said, “You just saved that man's business.” I said, “WHAT! Come again? What happened? Fill me in!” Dave said he was driving to work and was thinking about the client. The client was about to take bankruptcy. Rather than driving straight to work, Dave stopped by the main store first. He said he could not find a parking space in the parking lot, but was forced to park several blocks away. Dave made his way through the crowds of people when the owner spotted him. The owner walked swiftly over to Dave with tears in his eyes, gave Dave a bear hug and said, “Thank you for redesigning my ad. You just saved my business.” Dave said, “I played along and pretended I knew about it.” What I have just described, an event that occurred many years ago, is absolutely the truth. Additionally, it also demonstrates how powerful advertising can be.

Dave's graphic business eventually evolved into a fully-fledged advertising agency. During this said evolution, we moved the office to a new location. Dave gave me one of the two front-end offices with a window. He handed me an office furniture catalog and told me to pick-out any desk-set in the catalog that I wanted, he was paying. I officially became the Senior Art and Creative Director. I also wore both hats of office manager and project manager. Dave sent me to management classes and paid for it. I honestly enjoyed the classes. I learned a few things that were quite helpful. After ten years of working for Dave, I eventually branched out on my own. This is when I created, "ADVERTISING BY DESIGN."

Over the many years, I have had the privilege of working for and with some amazing and very talented people. Some of these said people I will never forget. Dave is one out of many. He was extremely talented, a gifted cartoonist and *extremely* funny. It was because of my parents, Dave, my younger sister who gave me the lead and "היה נס" (Sng 2:4), I was able to launch my art and advertising career. My work has literally been all over the United States, including Hawaii. *Very sadly*, Dave passed away in the year 2011 of cancer.



I eventually came full circle and began working for my father again during his ailing health years. Although, there was an intermediate time period when I worked for him when he was exploring the idea of handing the reigns of his business to my brother and me. I declined for personal reasons. Nonetheless, I helped my father during the last year and a half of his life. Dad had a contract with the state of Kansas redesigning their electrical infrastructure and there was miles and miles of line staking & surveying. Some of the time, I drove him out to the field for local jobs, but I was mainly in the office. The business was sold-off after his death. Afterward, I had the opportunity to work with my brother, who was also a licensed land surveyor. We had some fun moments and times that are now great memories.

I've spent about thirty plus years in my art career and about ten years in land surveying, on the clock. I welcome you to look through my portfolios to view a snippet of my work if you have not already done so, and read more interesting stories. Thank you for visiting my website and taking the time to read my story.

I honestly hope you enjoy your visit.

Very kindly,
Felicia.

November 25, 2018