



Eye Pro's

Brenda Fishbaugh

Dream Big, Live Bigger!

By John P. Ribner

As President of disposable eye protection-maker Eye Pro, Inc., Brenda Fishbaugh is already well known in indoor tanning. What some tanning professionals might not be aware of is just how unique and independent Brenda truly is. From an early age, she challenged the beliefs about what women could, and should do, in a motivational way – by living an adventurous life and always staying true to her dreams. So, how did this charming and seemingly unassuming woman become such a trailblazer? ist Magazine had to find out!

With intuition a guide and courage her co-pilot, Brenda Fishbaugh charted her life's course to be exactly what she wanted ... and enjoyed plenty of excitement along the way!

At the tender age of seven, Brenda Pease (Fishbaugh) told her teachers that someday, people would pay her to travel around the world, and she would pet tigers. Such independence was a challenge to the status quo of the 1960s, and her somewhat unconventional statement was met with resistance from teachers and other adults. Brenda remained undeterred, however; she "just knew" that these things would come to pass. In the end, she'd have the last laugh by growing up to be a unique, independent person who did exactly what she said she'd do ... and so much more!

Independence Day

Brenda was born December 12, 1957 in West Hartford, CT to Clem and Rina Pease, two unique, independent and accomplished individuals. "My dad was an inventor and an engineer, and was a leader in creating recyclable plastic bottles and squeeze-soap bottles," said Brenda. "My mom travelled all over the world working for a company that built

plastics factories, in a position that was almost unheard of for a woman during that time." Brenda describes her parents as being very intelligent and cultured as opposed to strict, and they encouraged her and her siblings to follow their dreams and gain life experiences.

Animal Magnetism

Much of the indoor tanning community is aware of Brenda's affection for animals, particularly exotic and endangered big cats. This affinity for the

furry, four-legged kind started at a very early age. "When I was growing up, adults recommended jobs to young women such as nursing, teaching and secretarial work; but, I always wanted something different," she said. "I remember telling my teachers that one day, people were going to pay me to travel and I would get to pet tigers. I just knew that I would do that, someday." Brenda describes her mother as a woman with a strong intuition and a natural gift for predicting future events. Trusting in her own intuition, Brenda surrounded



Brenda, the animal lover!

herself with animals her entire life, first as a young volunteer in the Natural History area of the West Hartford Children's Museum, and later as an assistant horse trainer during her early teens.

Time to Fly

By the time she reached high school, Brenda longed to soar to new heights, literally. She took a job fueling crop-dusting planes at the local airport, using her earnings to finance flying lessons. By the time she was 18, she was licensed to pilot commercial gliders, and living in a loft apartment at the airport. "One of my earliest flights almost ended in disaster," she said. "I was flying a glider behind a tow plane when the tow-rope snapped. Since my altitude was already so low, I had no choice but to make an emergency landing." After narrowly avoiding some high-tension wires, Brenda put the craft down in a wheat field, thankful that she was able to walk away from the experience. "The local media swarmed to the scene to get the story on the 17-year-old who narrowly escaped death," she laughed.

Spending so much time at the airport also helped Brenda's love life. "As I pulled into the parking lot one morning, I saw a handsome young man pulling out, and I thought, 'I'm going to marry him,'" she said. "I was shocked by what I thought because that just wasn't like me – while most of my friends got married after high school, I was planning to go to college." Deciding to follow her intuition, Brenda "relentlessly pursued" the young man

until they began dating. Ms. Pease became Mrs. Fishbaugh on February 6, 1985. "Steve and I decided to get married while vacationing in Cancun long before destination weddings became a thing," she added.

The Dream Continues

Today, Brenda Fishbaugh is living the life she's always wanted – she travels far and wide to promote the importance of eye protection while also tirelessly working for several organizations that protect endangered animals. Her personal life is equally interesting, which should come as no surprise. "This year, my 55th birthday falls on 12/12/12, so I've rented the Natural History Museum in Ft. Wayne for a party, and we'll have a numerologist and Tarot card reader there for our guests," she said. "It's not that I necessarily believe in those things; but, since everyone is predicting December 21, 2012 as the end of the world, I figured, 'Why not?' On a more serious note, because we believe in giving back, we'll ask that in lieu of gifts, our party guests bring clothing and food for donation to the local women's shelter."

Brenda & Steve Fishbaugh (1976) *Then* →



Now →

*If we've learned anything from Brenda Fishbaugh's life story, it's that dreams can come true, especially when the dreamer never gives up. From the beginning, Brenda had no doubts as to who she was and what she wanted to be ... and stayed true to that. We need people like her in the world because they show others that our dreams – no matter how big or how bold – can and will come true. Bravo, Brenda! **ist***

What's up with Brenda?

Current TV Fave: "The Good Wife"

Listening to: Audiobooks: Autobiographies of Sarah Ferguson + Condoleezza Rice

Favorite Foods: Pizza, linguine with clam sauce, Fritos + dip

"Pet Peeves": Messy people, "talking head" political shows

Weekend Stuff: traveling, the art museum, photography, gardening, kayaking, yoga

"Dream Vacation": African safaris - I've been on four + would go again tomorrow!



In June, Brenda participated in a 5K VisionWalk in Ft. Wayne, IN to help raise funds for sight-saving research. The "Golden Girls" of Eye Pro are involved in many charity efforts & on hand at industry events to educate salon pros about eye protection.

