



Living The Dream

by Suzanne Tonaire



Faith: the confident belief or trust in the truth or trustworthiness of a person, idea, or thing. Throughout my life, faith has been a driving force in its journey.

I was blessed with parents who nurtured my musical abilities. From the age of five and through middle school, days were spent singing and playing the accordion. In high school, it took on a more serious note and I began professional vocal training.

In college, Music Education seemed the logical choice, giving me the chance to study voice with some very talented teachers, including renowned Boston Opera singer Eunice Alberts. Little did I know then that the discipline learned with classical training would be the foundation I needed that would lead me down the road in pursuit of my dreams.



Let's flashback to the year 1980.

My college roommate had a brother who studied rock/jazz guitar at the Berklee College of Music, in Boston, and was looking for a new lead singer in his band. Something ignited: I wanted this gig! So I auditioned and became the new lead singer for the band Elusive Butterfly, a Rhode Island nightclub act that was well established in the area.

Life was good. I was young, single, living on my own and making good money. The local celebrity status wasn't too bad either. Now I was "living the dream!"

A few years later, I got into a bad accident and broke both ankles. It left me on crutches for quite a few months. The band broke up and so did my life. It was around that same time that my Dad lost his battle with leukemia. I had little money. Things couldn't get any worse. But faith kept me going. I recuperated in time to enter a talent and beauty contest for the title of "Miss Northern Rhode Island" which, much to my surprise, I won. With that scholarship money in hand, I decided to go back to college. This is where the radio bug bit me.

Stepping foot into the Dean College radio station, WGAO, I felt right at home and was convinced that my beloved deceased Father sent me there. I actually remember getting a chill when it all hit me! You see, during World War II, Dad was a Navel radio operator on the USS Helena, a fighter ship. He

had indeed guided me to this pursue this profession.

After graduation, I moved to Cape Cod and immediately began working as a disc jockey (DJ) at WKPE.

Soon after, I caught wind of a new radio station ready to launch an exciting new format to Cape Cod listeners.

In January of 1987, WPXC-Pixy 103 began broadcasting classic hits and classic rock with me, radio personality Suzanne Tonaire, at the helm from 10 a.m. – 3 p.m.

For over 20 years, I've enjoyed talking to and playing music to thousands of listeners. The biggest joy has been the ability to bring them along with me to concerts to meet and greet rock stars, like Aerosmith, Elton John, Nickelback, Rush, Van Halen, and so many more. Talk about living the dream! Some additional accomplishments include creating and producing "Homegrown," the very first local music show to air on Cape Cod radio, which received an award from the Massachusetts Association of Broadcasters for excellence in programming.

The Homegrown show was originally created to give the local music scene a chance for their music to be heard on the radio, including my own original rock band Radio Silence.



Radio Silence has been writing and producing music and videos for over 20 years. Currently our new CD, 3/4 Score, is in production and should be released by Summer 2011. You can hear two of the completed tracks and view numerous videos at www.radiosilencerocks.com, or on Facebook <http://www.facebook.com/home.php#!/profile.php?id=100000918945135> and My Space <http://www.myspace.com/radiosilencerocks>. Through these illustrious years in broadcasting, I've tried hard to use my powerful and influential voice to help dozens of local charitable organizations raise money and awareness.

These include The Cape & Islands Special Olympics, The Muscular Dystrophy Association, The Family Food Pantry of Cape Cod, The Noah Shelter and Housing Authority Corporation, The Champ Homes, Cape Cod Cares for The Troops, The Independence House, and The American Red Cross just to name a few who, in 2009, recognized me with the Consumer Educator Hero Award.

This past March 2010, I was cut loose from PIXY 103. Although the writing was on the wall with the state of the economy, I was still in shock.



Suzanne in the studio recording Get a Gun

My live radio show was replaced by automation, a current trend in corporate radio.

But everything happens for a reason so again; I kept the faith and took this past summer off to see what would happen when the dust settled. It didn't take long before I got a call from Dunes 102.3FM, the fastest growing radio station on Cape Cod to join their team to help them grow.

Around the same time, The Cape Media TV Center in South Yarmouth approached me with the idea of continuing my passion for the local music scene. They offered me a chance to produce a local TV/Internet show. "Behind the Band" has now officially launched online at www.behindthebandtv.com.



My personal website, www.suzannetonaire.com, is currently under construction, and will include audio samples of my voice-over work and choice links to the projects I'm involved in.

Never stop believing that you can achieve your goals, no matter how old you are or what curve ball life may throw you. Always keep the faith and keep praying. It certainly has helped me get through many hard times.

So far, it's been one heck of a ride – and it's not over yet!

Publisher's Note: If you are Living Your Dream, or you know a Cape Woman who is, please email me at Nicola@capewomenonline.com