

My Sister, the Songwriter

My sister, Daphne Tetreault, is a songwriter and producer, and she just signed her first major contract! I'm writing about her this issue because I'm *really* proud of her. She's gifted musically, and she can write the words and the music, a combination of skills that I cannot fathom having. I can't imagine creating a new tune out of nothing, but that's what she does.

Daphne loves the piano, and is the most gifted person I know, musically or otherwise. She primarily writes pop music, and studies it the way I study photography. She's been writing songs since we were teenagers, and while her musical styling has evolved, her talent was evident even then.

After about seven years of writing professionally, and enjoying some small successes, she's getting some long-awaited and much-deserved credit. A new show premiering on TVLand in August 2007 has licensed seven of her songs, and she's negotiating the rights to one of her songs with an up-and-coming German artist.

The music industry is highly competitive, and success often depends more on persistence than talent. Fortunately, Daphne has both! You can listen to clips and full versions of her music on her website at www.songbeat.net.



One of my favorite images of Daphne

Natalie

410 WASHINGTON AVENUE SW
ROANOKE, VIRGINIA 24016
WWW.NATALIEARTISTICPORTRAITS.COM

A sometimes publication of
Natalie Artistic Portraits

Summer 2007

Cameos

Adventure Coast to Coast

Happy summer! Now that it's almost over, I know most of you have done some traveling. Where did you and your family travel to this year?

Over the last year, Tim and I have literally been from coast to coast. Of course, I've been home to Massachusetts a few times (where I'm writing from), and to the beach in South Carolina (one of my favorite places in the world). Over the holidays in 2006, we spent several days in Burlington, Vermont, with our good friends Lance and Chastity. We don't get to see them very often, but when we walked in the door we picked up right where we left off last time. I think we stayed up talking until at least 3 a.m. every night we were there! We went to the famous Stowe ski resort and, of course, to the Ben and Jerry's factory. As they say, "We came, we saw, we ate ice cream."

In April Tim went with me to an intense five-day photography workshop in College Station, Texas. It was exciting because it's the first time Tim took a workshop with me. We were there right after the Virginia Tech tragedy, and there were Tech flags flying up over the Aggie campus. A lot of the Aggie's themselves were wearing Tech shirts and hats, showing support for their football rivals. At the end of the week, we spent a couple of days in Austin, which we really enjoyed. We loved the campus of the University of Texas with its Spanish architecture.



L to R: Me with Chastity at the coffee shop



Orcas in British Columbia

But of all the places I've been in the last year, my favorite was British Columbia. I had a chance to take another workshop July 2006 in a small resort town outside of Victoria, the capital of British Columbia. The coast of Vancouver Island is absolutely breathtaking. I haven't seen anything like it; everything is big and open. The waterways are banked by the Olympic Mountains, which even in July are snow-capped, and the water itself just spreads out as far as you can see. But the best part is that the water is inhabited by families of orcas.

Tim and I went on a whale-watch to see these giant yet gentle creatures in their natural habitat. We zipped across the 65-foot deep water in an inflatable rescue craft, bundled in float suits as emergency protection against the 40 degree water (yikes!). We were out on the blue Pacific as the sun set behind the mountains, when a family of 26 orcas surfaced. We were close enough to see their faces and hear them breathing. One member of the pod was estimated to be about 75 years old! They jumped out of the water as if they were showing off for us, slapping their glistening fins against the water. Even the babies rolled out of the water so we could see them. At first I tried to take some pictures, but then I put the camera down so I could just watch. I have to say that it's one of those life experiences that a picture can't do justice to.

Featured Portrait

Mary Elyn McNichols



L to R: Sawyer, Mary Elyn, Oscar, and Simon

Meet Mary Elyn McNichols and her trio of grandsons: Sawyer Schneck, Simon Lauth, and Oscar Lauth. There isn't a grandmother anywhere who is more proud of her grandchildren than Mary Elyn.

Even though all three grandchildren live several hours away, you can see from this portrait how close they are to her. She sees them as often as she's able, and when they come to visit, everything is all about the boys! They definitely know how much they mean to their grandmother.

The day we did this portrait session, things were kind of wild at the studio! Laura and Kim, Mary Elyn's daughter and daughter-in-law, pulled out all their tricks to get everyone to stay in place for a few minutes at a time. But it worked, and we ended up with a lot of great images!

Puppetmaster

by Amy Saunders



Philip Hatter with his puppets

A pig with spectacles, a sheep in a tux, and a goat with a lute. You won't find these scenes in real life but you will find them among Philip Hatter's puppet family.

As the owner of Thistledown Puppets, Philip builds his own puppets, and with his brother Sean, writes the shows they appear in. He's performed at the Downtown's Dickens of a Christmas, and he develops and performs live puppet shows for children's events and parties. Natalie is getting to see how his shows come together as he develops a puppet show for her. He has fun with his art and is still a kid himself in some ways.

On August 23, you can see Philip's puppets in person at the Unknown Artist Show at the Jefferson Center in Roanoke, which benefits the Blue Ridge Autism Center. One of his puppets, built especially for this event, will be up for bidding during the silent auction. You can watch Philip building this special puppet on his YouTube page.

For a better look at Philip's puppet characters, and to see some of them in action, visit his website at www.thistledownpuppets.com. For details on the Unknown Artist Show, including the auction, visit www.unknownartistshow.com. Call Philip at 774-6757 to discuss developing a puppet show for your event!



A scene from one of Philip's performances

News & Notes

Nicole and Cliff Crain added to their family another girl! Anna May joined siblings Dylan, Grace, and Sarah on July 17. Congratulations to the whole family!

It's Client Appreciation time again! To celebrate, we're planning a big bash. The details are a secret, but suffice it to say that you should keep November 17, 2007 blocked off on your calendars. Your kids will not want to miss this!

Congratulations to Laura and Ron Schneck, who welcomed their second baby, Nathan O'Connor, July 27!

The childhood cancer survivors' project is still underway. I'm in the process of photographing the kids. I'm about two-thirds of the way through, and I think it'll be a great way to make people more aware of cancer survivorship among children and the effects this has on their lives.