



Debbie Beasley – Classmate Extroardinre

Below is a personal letter to me. Debbie is allowing me to publish it (barely) but that is NOT why she wrote it. I was soooo amazed by her accomplishments and determination that I just had to find out more information after reading the Warren Beatty book in which she is mentioned many, many times. To me she is the personification of *"Local Girl Makes Good"* as they used to say in the old movies. Highly motivated and determined best describes Debbie. She was well respected. A confidant of movie star **Warren Beatty**. One of few ladies that Warren respected by not pursuing her because she was dating the producer of the "Dobie Gillis" TV show in which he had a role. *Read on – most interesting.*

Fred

I printed out your letter so I can answer all your questions. First of all, as I'm sure you know, success isn't knowing movie stars or having your name in print. To me, it's about setting goals and accomplishing them. Or at least try your hardest to accomplish them. Sometimes things just aren't meant to be. My goals in high school were to write books and see the world. I also had ideas of acting, but that was a just something I thought would be fun. To that end, I worked at summer jobs and was a gift wrapper at Brown Duncan at Christmastime. I also asked for cash in lieu of graduation gifts. I left Tulsa the day after I graduated from high school. Bought my own plane ticket and had approx. \$1,000 in my purse. The last thing my mother said to me was "You'll be sorry you didn't go to college and join a sorority!" I think both my parents thought I would return and do the usual things. How did I manage as a 17-year-old in the big, bad city? In those days there were "Women's Residences" in big cities, sort of like dorms, where they only let men in as far as the ground floor. I moved into one run by the Volunteers of America. I immediately went job hunting and got hired in the mail room at Colgate Palmolive. I pushed a little cart around and put mail on people's desks. Although, no one in Tulsa thought I was much to look at, various people in New York told me I could be a model, so I had photos taken and started making the rounds of photographers and agents on my lunch hour. I started getting a few jobs, left Colgate and took a night job as a hat check girl. I remember

that as great fun. I once checked Frank Sinatra's hat, and he tipped me \$20. I was writing in whatever spare time I had, and would send unsolicited manuscripts to magazines and they would come back and I would put them in another envelope and send them out again. I started taking acting lessons and there was some encouragement there, so I decided to try my luck in Hollywood. That's where I started doing the "extra" (background) work and where I met Warren. The first article I ever sold was called "*Warren, I Knew You When.*" After that, I had a writing credit and things got a little easier. And after about a year in California I moved back to New York and pretty much established myself writing for fan magazines. And I began working on my second goal which was to see the world. I had a fascination with Russia (don't know why), so I studied Russian at NYU at night and when I felt I was ready, went to what was then the USSR. I went alone, but in those days you had to have an In tourist guide with you all the time. But because I could speak some Russian, I would sneak out of my hotel and mingle with the people, particularly the young people who congregated in Red Square and were very curious about America. The result of that trip was my first book, "*A Redhead In Red Square,*" which had a very good publication. I was asked to go on lectures, and traveled all over the US speaking to Women's groups about my experiences in Russia. After that, things started to snowball, and I eventually got a job writing for television which made it necessary for me to move back to L.A. But it was in very different circumstances. I had a nice apartment in LA and a beach house in Laguna. And then I met Tony. Although I had my share of boyfriends from the time I left Tulsa, I always felt that a career as intense as mine would not make for a happy marriage, but Tony didn't believe that and he proposed to me in a fortune cookie one New Year's Eve. And I took to marriage like a duck to water! I loved being married, being a part of a team. I did drop the TV work, but wrote books, mostly romance novels, and Tony loved that and acted as my agent. Did I miss anything by leaving home so early? I don't think so. I took a lot of classes at NYU, not only language classes, but writing classes and other classes that interested me. As far as my other goal, travel, I did quite a bit before Tony, and then he and I took some really exotic trips to places like the Amazon jungle. We felt that since we were alive in this world, we wanted to see as much of it as possible. At the time of his death, we had purchased a condo on a cruise ship called "The World." We planned to live on it full time, wake up one day in Venice and another day in Shanghai. But I didn't want to isolate myself like that after he died, so I sold it and made the decision to return to NYC and indulge myself in my third passion, the opera. Meeting Dave was another miracle, he is a great guy and we are perfectly suited. He had never been to the opera in his life before he met me, and now he has a subscription. So, Fred, that's how it all happened. I really did accomplish my goals, but then I knew from the beginning that would be the result. And sometimes I still feel I am at the top of my game. Any more questions?