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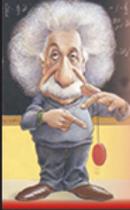
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Local photographer converts clients into friends

Submitted by Anonymous on Mon, 10/26/2009 - 02:00

By: Hannah Disch

Over the past eight years, Kathleen Martens has transformed a lifelong love of photography into a successful business.

As the owner of Treasured Moments Photography, her focus is on building relationships and capturing the moments that reflect people as they truly are.

Martens began her photographic career working for an experienced photographer who agreed to mentor her. She took (and continues to take) classes and joined several photography groups.

Once she started working on her own, she realized something about her clients: "What people really crave, I think, is the relationship that they have with somebody that they can trust."

And so she began to develop that relationship by offering complimentary engagement sessions to couples along with their wedding photos, and later by including maternity sessions with her wedding packages and newborn sessions with her maternity sessions. Through what Martens calls "a continual progression of relationship," she now has clients she can call friends.

Treasured Moments Photography is based out of Martens' home where she maintains an indoor studio for small group portraits. Her husband has also cultivated their yard as an outdoor studio with beautiful backdrop areas of flower gardens, pathways and the like. Not having a storefront enables Martens to do more for her clients with less money while maintaining fair market rates.

Although Martens appreciates her home studio, one of the things she most enjoys is taking photographs on location. She explained, "Life is not photography, going to a studio, sitting there and smiling. Real life is between the poses. I like to get those between the pose shots where people are really being who they are, interacting with each other. I do a lot of location shots because of that."

Martens especially appreciates opportunities to photograph family events such as weddings, anniversary celebrations,

family reunions, and family trips and vacations. These events in particular offer her chances to capture "treasured moments," moments that might not otherwise be remembered or even noticed in the chaos of the day.

For this reason, Martens describes herself as "very attuned to detail." She tells her wedding clients, "If you've paid for it, decorated it, made it and brought it here, whatever you've done, there's going to be a photo of it."

"I think that's what differentiates me," she added. "I had one client who came in and got her (wedding) photos and she sat here and cried. She said, 'I did not see you take these photos, I didn't know you were getting these photos. I cannot believe the detail that you've gotten.' I hear this over and over. That's what makes me different. I want to go the extra mile. I want to give them something they're not expecting."

The value that Martens places on relationships and going the extra mile is seen in her personal life as well as her business life. In 1987, she moved to Oregon from California with her husband and two children. Although they chose Oregon based solely on the school system, they've become deeply invested in the community over the years.

As a family, the Martens have always focused their business in Oregon, buying Tri-County appliances, shopping at Hometown Pharmacy, frequenting Oregon doctors, banking in Oregon. As a business owner, Martens believes that if people make the effort to support their local business owners it will go a long way to promoting a more prosperous community.

Throughout career changes and continuing education, Martens has been involved with her children's schools and extra-curricular activities, community childcare, her church and various nonprofit groups. Currently she works with a ministry that helps emotionally abused women and also volunteers for a group called Now I Lay Me Down To Sleep.

This foundation administers a network of almost 7,000 volunteer photographers in the United States and 25 other countries, offering their services to families who have lost or are in the process of losing a child. At a family's request, affiliated photographers come to their hospital or hospice location and conduct a private portrait session. The families are then provided with portrait albums and/or CDs or DVDs at no cost. Although Martens doesn't find this work easy, she explained, "This is something that I am privileged in doing and find an honor in doing for these families."

As far as the rest of her work goes, Martens said, "Sometimes I feel like, how can I get paid for something I love to do so much? This is just so amazing to me."

People who are interested in having their treasured moments captured in photographic form can contact Martens at her studio by calling 835-5996 or visit the Treasured Moments Web site www.treasured-moments-photography.com (<http://www.treasured-moments-photography.com>).

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