



Q & A...In step with...DEE WALLACE

by Bob Evans

This is the first of a series of features about local KC Metro talent that has moved on to other cities and more opportunities. The article is interactive and readers are encouraged to comment and post responses. I encourage readers to help with suggestions for other talented persons to pursue for a profile. Please let me know if you like this new feature series. And, I further encourage all my friends to LIKE and SHARE the articles to help my website grow and prosper. Thank you so much.



Dee Wallace

Many actors and actresses relocate in New York and/or Los Angeles, only to return to their hometowns or other cities. The path to success must be more difficult than anticipated. How did you manage to establish and maintain your acting

career?

I think it has to do with joy, and knowing that acting gave me that joy. I always asked, "How can I?" instead of "What if I don't?" I went for fulfillment, not fame.

I see a lot of finished projects posted on IMDB. What other projects are underway or upcoming?

Bob Evans



Currently, I am filming season two of *Just Add Magic* for Amazon Prime. I have three films in the can for release in 2017.

KC Applauds focuses on the KC Metro Performing Arts and Artists. Were you ever involved in live theater in Kansas City or elsewhere? If so, can you remind us of your performances? A local playwright remembers you in "Annie Get Your Gun" at Starlight. Were there other KC live performances?

My first "professional" performance was at The Jewish Community Center in "Who's Afraid of Virginia Woolf?."
Awesome experience. "Annie Get Your Gun" was one of the highlights in my entire career. And, I performed "Hayfever" at The Johnson County Community College.

Bob Evans



Education and teaching are part of your history. You taught high school drama at Washington High School. Did you participate in drama at Wyandotte High School? Do you still have your acting school in Los Angeles?

I did participate at Wyandotte. My very first “stage performance” was “Tammy Tell Me True.” I even had to sing!. I had my wonderful acting studio for 16 years in L.A. and closed it down a few years ago.

How and when did the acting bug bite you? How did you feed your need to perform?

My first memory was when I was eight years old and watched my mother perform her half hour dramatic reading at our church. People from four states came to watch her perform. I looked around, and even grown men were so moved they were in tears. I remember thinking, “I want to do this. I want to move people like my mommy does.” But even before that, my mother had me performing around town giving readings at events.

Dee Wallace



Who influenced your acting career and how did he/she help you grow as an actress?

Guess I already covered my first influence! And then there was Uta Hagen, with whom I studied with in New York. I would have to say my greatest teacher and mentor was Charles Conrad, my film acting teacher in Los Angeles. His technique matched my instinctual way of working perfectly. As far as actors, the moment, I saw Anthony Hopkins in "The Elephant Man," I was completely taken. He is still the one actor I would truly like to work with.

You lost your father while very young. Your mother raised you and your brothers as a single mother during the 1960s. Similarly, you lost your husband at an early age and had a daughter to raise as a single parent. What challenges did you face as a single mother in Los Angeles in the 80s? How similar or different were yours and your mother's situations?

Well, I had the good fortune of being raised by many smart, intelligent, strong and determined women. I come from very good stock. In the end, it is all about the same thing: love. How much unconditional love can you give them while allowing them to be who they are AND directing them in ways that they can be the very best of who they are. It wasn't hard for me to

do that with Gabrielle: I had a very good teacher.

Dee Wallace



You have amassed quite a lengthy list of appearances. You have movies, TV series, guest appearances, national commercials, live stage performances, soap operas and more. What mediums are your favorites?

Film. Hands down. Give me the creative freedom of film and I'm happy.

What role(s) roles are you most proud of in your body of work?

***Cujo* would have to top the list. I feel I went as far as I could go in a real and grounded way. Of course I love *E.T.* and everything it has done for our world. And then there is a little movie of the week called *Love's Deadly Triangle: The Texas Cadet Murders*. Some of my best work!**



Dee Wallace

You have worked with so many famous and talented people in your career. Did any have a major effect on you? Is there anyone you hoped to work with and never had the opportunity?

Again, I would love to work with Anthony Hopkins. And Meryl Streep because she is brilliant but also because she is a beautiful person). Claire Danes (whom I think is one of the best actresses on the planet), Ryan Gosling (ditto). I adored working with Dudley Moore. He was a true gentleman and a brilliant actor.

Did you ever turn down a part that you later regretted?

Not that I turned down, but I couldn't do "Adam" because I was shooting something else.

Dee Wallace



What was your big break?

The episode of *Lou Grant* entitled "The Hooker." That got the attention of Blake Edwards and I ended up with that little diamond in *Ten*!

In your early movies you were a "scream queen." How did you escape being typecast?

I'm laughing! I AM a screen queen. But I am lucky to do everything else, also!

How have you evolved as an actress? I am presuming the Dee Wallace of 2017 varies greatly from Dee Wallace of the early 1970s.

Dee Wallace



Not much, really. I try very hard to stay true to my technique and not waver much. If it ain't broke, don't fix it! However, the business has changed a lot, and we are all struggling to adapt.

Your mother was a great advocate of Cancer Action in Kansas City, KS. I know that you have returned to advocate for Cancer Action over the years. Are you still a strong advocate for that group? What other groups or charities draw your time and attention?

I would do anything for that organization, on behalf of both it and my mother. I also support the SPCA and other animal protection services, The Heifer Organization, The Tree People and Save The Children.

How often and why do you return to Kansas City, KS? Do you still have family connections here?

I make it about twice a year. My younger brother and his wife still live there.

Dee Wallace



I read that problems arose over billing with *Cujo* and Stephen Spielberg. How did you overcome obstacles in your career as a result?

No problems with the billing on *Cujo*. Mr. Spielberg wanted to try some new, innovative billing, but SAG disagreed.

You have a beautiful daughter. Is she pursuing a career in the performing arts?

Oh Yes! She has several movies under her belt.

You have penned an autobiographical book. Will there be other major writings forthcoming?

Actually, I have five published books, all available on Amazon.

You are credited with saying, "I hope I never see a Pinto again in my life." Has that happened? Are there other words of wisdom you wish to impart to your KC fan base?

Dee Wallace



Hehe. I wouldn't call those words of wisdom! The most important things I can impart to my friends and fans is to love who they are. Start appreciating who you are and accepting that you are special. It is important for the world to put more love out, and that begins with self-love.