

Deb Studebaker

Hi! My name is Deb and I'm a writer, writing teacher and a Brain Gym® consultant. Kathy is my dear friend and colleague, and I met Laird through Kathy.

Kathy and I first met about 18 years ago, when I was starting my Brain Gym journey, and I was a student in one of her courses. My immediate thought was, "I have to learn from this woman!" Kathy's presentation of the material was illuminating to me, and her teaching style was clear and precise. Even though I live in Los Angeles, I repeatedly flew to Phoenix and took as many classes with her as I could.

Since Kathy offered these classes in her home office, I eventually met Laird. He was quietly present in the background, helping out wherever he was needed—the epitome of supportive husband. By the time I received my Brain Gym license, Kathy and I had become close friends. When she was writing her book, *Educate Your Brain*, I worked as her editor, and we spent countless hours together. That's when I began to see a fuller picture of Laird—one that included his career as a photographer.

Laird took all the pictures for Kathy's book—literally thousands of photos in scores of photo shoots—to get just the right images. I was often present as he planned and set up a shot. I saw the care he took to achieve an overall look, his persistent attention to detail, and the endless support he gave to Kathy on this important project (and many others).

Laird was so proud of his work! He and I would often stand in their kitchen and talk about his photo shoots for the Northland Pioneer Community College magazine. When I commented on certain pictures, he would explain the challenge he faced and his strategy for addressing it. Laird glowed when he spoke about his process.

Over the years, I came to know Laird not only as a dedicated husband and a talented photographer; I also discovered that Laird was *funny!* He had a wry sense of humor, and there was a lot of laughter in their house.

When I think of Laird now, I flash back to those kitchen conversations... the moments when he seemed on fire with the creative process! I will remember his impish smile when he told a joke. And the laughter. I will remember the laughter.