

Bio

Steve Stout

I was born in Evansville, IN and have spent much of my adult life here. Before and during school I also lived in Ft. Wayne, IN, Danville, IL, St Charles, MO, and Ft. Worth, TX. We lived in Washington, IN for grades 7 - 12, where I graduated as salutatorian of my high school class. Then I spent 7 wonderful years at Indiana University in Bloomington, my favorite town in the state. I graduated from IU with a BS in biology and a Doctor of Optometry. I've spent most of my adult life providing eye care in Evansville. Funny the way the tides and currents of life move us, and hold us.

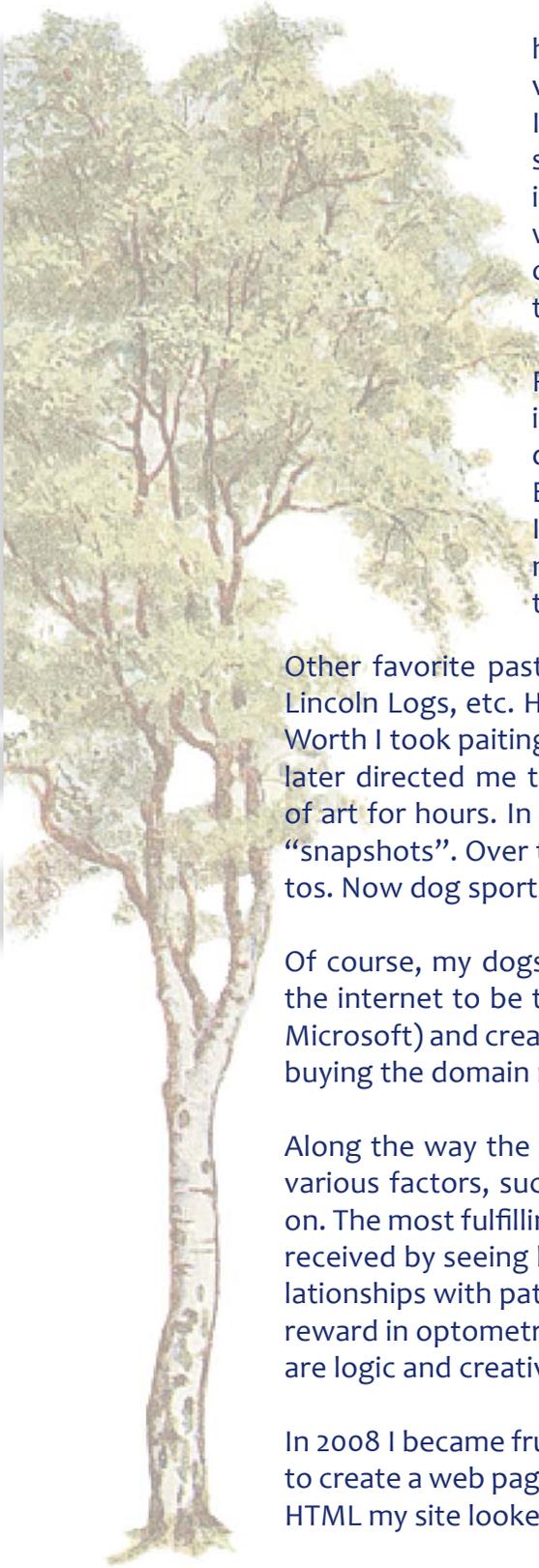
From childhood I've been interested in nature and animals, spending much time on my grandparent's farm. We had a few family dogs over the years but I got my first dog when I was living in Bloomington. Since that time I have owned and bred Dobermans. I began training in earnest in the mid 1990's and now I teach beginners obedience with the Evansville Obedience Club. I also manage their website and re-designed it in August 2012.

Other favorite pastimes from childhood include building stuff with blocks, Legos, Lincoln Logs, etc. Horseback riding and swimming were my favorite activities. In Ft. Worth I took painting lessons and decided that I wanted to be an artist. Other factors later directed me to science, but I've always been content to look through books of art for hours. In my early twenties I got a Minolta XG-1 camera and began taking "snapshots". Over time I developed interest in shooting landscapes and nature photos. Now dog sports offer more opportunities.

Of course, my dogs became subjects for portraits and when I had puppies I found the internet to be the best way of finding homes. In 2002, I bought Front Page (by Microsoft) and created my first website to advertise my dogs. I did everything except buying the domain name and hosting, which a friend did for me.

Along the way the fun and excitement of optometry has waxed and waned due to various factors, such as, dealing with insurance companies, the paperwork, and so on. The most fulfilling aspect of optometry has always been the pleasure my patients received by seeing better, by healing their eye infections, and so on. Developing relationships with patients that I have seen for 20 years or more has been the greatest reward in optometry. Elements of satisfaction which optometry has generally lacked are logic and creativity; two things which are basic elements of web design.

In 2008 I became frustrated by the limitations of Front Page and decided to learn how to create a web page and all functions of the site by writing code. After two courses in HTML my site looked better than it ever did with Front Page.



The logic of coding and the creativity of making pages from nothing provided a measure of satisfaction for my artistic desires.

By the summer of 2009 I was taking other courses in computer programming. Learning replaced all my spare time between patients that previously was spent on reading suspense novels or playing games. I'd found the roots of my new life and I enjoyed learning more than I ever had.

In the fall of 2009 I resolved to create a new career that would be for my pleasure as well as employment. It would be a career with no insurance companies and without the general public. It would be both challenging and rewarding, and it would allow me to work anywhere in the world rather than confined to an exam room. So I entered the Art Institute of Pittsburg Online division in their program to earn a Diploma in Web Design. I had some trepidation especially since I had not done any type of design work, well, except for designing my house, my web site, and my forms that I used in my optometry practice. I could buy forms but I liked to make them to my own specifications.

My first course was the fundamentals of design. I saw classmates work that was much better than mine. Had I made a mistake entering this program? Well, my grandfather taught me to ride a horse and he taught me that when one is thrown off, one must get back on. That has always stuck with me.

By the end of my first course I knew that I had not made a mistake. My instructors encouraged me

to keep practicing as the only way to get better. During my 18 months at the Art Institute I worked my butt off, spending many nights working until 3am to meet the submission deadline. I truly earned my degree and the 98.9% GPA with which I graduated. I am still grateful to many of the instructors at AI who gave more of themselves than required. They did so because they cared and they saw that I was serious about doing my best.

Anyone in the business knows that Web Design and Interactive Media is an ongoing learning event, and it is constantly evolving. When I see how far the internet has advanced over the past 10 years, I'm excited by the potential of what the future holds. I keep learning languages to hone my development skills.

In the fall of 2012 I enjoyed a trip to Colorado where I spent time photographing Old Town Ft Collins and the Rocky Mountain National Park. I also attended an AIGA event in Indianapolis where Von Glitchka gave an inspirational presentation on the importance of drawing in design. As one might expect, Von emphasized the importance of drawing on a regular basis regardless of one's abilities. Certainly, with practice, we all get better and it is a fundamental way to connect with our inner creativity.

A portfolio is always a work in progress and so I'm constantly refining and adding to mine. I look forward to the day that I will be so busy with design and development that I won't have time for optometry. Yes I will miss optometry, but not as much as I love design, development, and photography.



Steve
1-27-13

Scenes from my life

