

# Janice Funk: Laughter, Tears and Triumph

## Profile on a Graduate of the Class of 1986

By John Ward

You may at one time or another have heard the most unusual laugh echoing through the halls of Vardell or L.A. Yes, THAT laugh—the one that sounds like a giant squeeze toy with the hiccups. The laugh is not unlike the lady who projects it—vibrant, energetic, and full of life. Both this laugh and a voice that must be heard to be believed belong to one intelligent, sensitive, and bubbly music major—Janice Lynn Funk.

Janice is a native Californian, born in Anaheim to Kenneth and Ralphina Jahnke. At an early age Janice started entertaining guests by singing, and dancing, usually on the fireplace mantle.

"And then I did the 'hoola' by the pool...In California, EVERYONE has a pool—it's like having a T.V. set."

Being so musically inclined, Janice was always eager to learn to play piano. She started lessons by the fourth grade, and by the sixth grade she was actively involved in school choirs. The combined practice time for these activities usually exceeded four hours a day.

"Music was my love, and I will always be thankful for it. It became a release and an escape, and it kept me from getting mixed up in what my brother and sister did. Their methods of escape were not so healthy as mine."

In 1971, Janice entered Cypress Junior College in Cypress, California. She continued with voice and piano, but eventually she was advised to continue only one, for the time and devotion required for just one is tremendous. Forced with a decision, Janice chose voice.

"My instructor for piano was Raymond Jones, a graduate of Juilliard," says Janice. "When I told him my decision, he was so mad! I thought he would never speak to me again. He just walked out of the room. I thought he'd never forgive me."

Janice continued voice lessons under Mahlon Schanzenbach, her first and one of her very best instructors. But strangely enough, during her enrollment at Cypress, Janice had intentions of becoming an airline stewardess.

"Yes, coffee, tea, or me!", she says with a giggle. A career in the friendly skies is a step away from a career in music, but Janice says she has always enjoyed meeting people and traveling. However, after graduation these plans were put on hold when Janice met a young man named Greg Funk, whom she married. Soon after the wedding, Greg completed military training, and he and Janice moved to a military base in Montabaur, Germany. The military tour lasted 3½ years and turned out to be a wonderful opportunity and growth experience in her musical studies.

While in Germany, Janice studied with Mariko Takahashi, a Japanese voice instructor who was married to a German singer; Frau (Mrs.) Takahashi was a respected singer and instructor at the Cologne Conservatorium of Music. Janice also studied with Frau Ingrid Bobra in Kaiserslautern. During her stay, Janice gave many Art Song recitals and enjoyed playing the "Witch" in a performance of Hansel and Gretel.

After the tour in Germany, Greg's military training brought them to Lawton, Oklahoma, for a brief stay.

"Yes, it's just like the musical," says Janice. "The wind does go 'sweeping through the plains,' and it sweeps everything along with it! It never did any good to fix your hair, because if you stepped outside—even for a second—forget it! And it also 'rained' dirt—my favorite part! I guess Lawton, Oklahoma, wasn't the end of the world—but you could see it from there."

In June, 1983, Greg's military career brought the couple to Fayetteville, where Janice (currently) resides. For the following year, Janice taught music for kindergarten through eighth grade at Eutaw Heights Christian School. Also during this time, she established a valuable and lasting friendship with Harlan Duenow, director of the Fayetteville Symphony and Civic Chorus. Janice became a member of the Civic Chorus and performed as the only soloist in the 1984 Fourth of July Concert. She was also a soloist in the 1984 performance of the "Messiah."

Janice decided that it was time to finish her degree, and she felt St. Andrews was her best choice. The campus is within commuting distance of her apartment in Water's Edge, and Janice got a "really good feeling" from the college. She says she was impressed with Rob Engelson and saw that the music department was growing under his direction.



On April 20, Janice gave her senior recital in a dress that she made. (Jonathan Maisonpierre, accompanist.)



"Apres en Reve," (After a Dream): Janice sings and plays at her apartment in Water's Edge.

