

Having It Their Way: For Some, Where They Make a Living is as

Important as “How”

By Valerie Young

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By,
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What if you could do work you really loved AND do it in your own kind of paradise?

Here from the pages of Entrepreneur and Minnesota Monthly are the stories of two enterprising people who did just that. People who had the courage to go after a livelihood that spoke to their spirit -- in a place that fed their souls.

On an Island

Think warm sea breezes, swaying palm trees, white sand and clear blue waters. That's what Vicki Phelps, a homemaker who had been working part-time in her husband Chet's computer software business pictured when she decided to move from Virginia Beach, VA to the U.S. Virgin Islands to bake cookies.

After numerous vacations to the Caribbean, Vicki noticed how few gift products were actually made on the islands. Seeing an opportunity to relocate herself and her family to paradise, Vicki decided to make good use of the island's own fruits and spices by launching The Original Caribbean Cookie Company. The cookies were an immediate hit with tourists -- so much so that after only seven months, Chet was able to close his business and join his wife full time.

Vicki's story just goes to show, you can have your cookies -- and enjoy where you eat them too!

In the Country

When Tom Scheib left the Marines in the early seventies, he and his wife Elli knew they wanted to live in the country. They wanted the kind of life, Tom says, "where people say hello to you when you're walking down the street." They found it on a pond-dotted piece of land in Finland, Minnesota. With the "where" part settled, it was time to complete the "what" part of the equation.

While in the military, Tom was stationed in Europe. There he got to see reindeer on the northern Norwegian tundra. Today, Tom is one of only a handful of reindeer ranchers in the United States.

Working the holiday festival circuit brings in several hundred dollars a day, but the real money comes from lending his reindeer to commercials and big-time shows (rental fee to the Bronx Zoo -- \$10,000). One of his reindeer even appeared in the remake of the movie *Miracle on 34th Street*.

Although reindeer ranching is a year-round labor of love, its seasonal nature is not making Tom rich -- at least not yet. But for Tom, money isn't the most important thing in life. What he most loves about his work is living close to the land. To be able to see a flock of geese rise up in the sky and to be his own boss is for Tom, what successful living is all about.

If you've been dreaming of working and living with passion, start by asking yourself a few questions:

- What constitutes the ideal living environment for you?
- If you could live and work anywhere in the world, where would it be?
- Are you interested in living in one location year-round or multiple locations based on seasonal or other factors?

What Vicki and Tom do for a living -- and where they do it -- couldn't be more different. Yet, they share a two-step approach to successful living. One, they share a belief that dreams can come true. Two they had the determination -- and the wisdom -- to act on their beliefs. One day at a time, you too can create the life you really want.

Right livelihood consultant, Valerie Young (mailto:vyoung@changingcourse.com) is the Dreamer in Residence at <http://www.changingcourse.com>, an on-line resource for people who want to discover their life mission and live it. Her career change tips have been cited in such publications as *The Wall Street Journal*, *USA Today Weekend*, *The Guardian* (London), *The Edmonton Sun*, *The Chicago Sun Times*, *The Dallas Morning News*, *The Boston Globe*, *Redbook*, *Reader's Digest*, and *Entrepreneur's Business Start-Ups*. She is an internationally known speaker and workshop leader. Over 20,000 have attended her program on *Overcoming the Impostor Syndrome* (<http://www.impostorsyndrome.com>).

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