

# SILHOUETTES

BY TIFFANY RAZZANO

G. Scott Maiden recalls the first time he met his future wife about 15 years ago.

Glenda Maiden was interviewing for a position at Tampa Bay Arts & Education Network and Scott, then in a management role, was called in by his boss to meet her and share his thoughts.

"I quizzed her a little bit and I quickly realized she had some skills, and she had an eye for videography," he said. "And she was better than anybody we had doing the job recently, so I thought, 'Okay, this is great. We're gonna be able to do some good stuff now.'"

Years later, they've accomplished a lot together, rising through the ranks at the network and guiding its growth. Scott, celebrating his 25th anniversary in August, is now executive director, while Glenda is director of programming and production.

Both had similar trajectories and early interests that led them to the network.

Neither are originally from the Tampa Bay area, but both moved here at an age where they still spent a significant part of their youth in the area and stayed into adulthood.

Glenda's family was from Trinidad, moving first to Rhode Island, then to Tampa when she was 11 years old. "My mom was, you know, seeking for us kids to have more of an advantage and to pursue the American dream," she said.

As a child, she always loved looking at photographs – especially older images of her family – and eventually transitioned into taking the photos herself. During her teenage years, she moved on to a small video camera and began filming short videos. "I loved capturing the moment and remembering things and preserving history," she said.

She graduated one year early from Leto High School. It took her a couple of years, but she set her sights on a commercial art and video production program at a technical college. She worked, for a time, as a graphic and web designer, before moving on to video production and working for a corporate engineering company.

Much of Glenda's work focused on creating 3D animations that simulated the leveling of forests, houses and other buildings to make way for the construction of roads and bridges. She was intrigued when she interviewed for an opening at TBAE but was nervous about taking such a large pay cut.

She eventually interviewed a second time with the network and this time accepted the role. "I chose to feel good about what I was producing," she said.

Originally from Colonial Williamsburg, Scott's family moved to Tampa in about 1984 because his grandfa-

ther, who worked for Publix and Kraft, lived here. Both areas had a big influence on him. "I grew up in a colonial district. That's one of the reasons I have history in my blood and have reverence for things related to history," he

back to computerized playback, he said. "The role of the old television engineer was kind of sunseting or at least modifying and merging with IT, at the time."

With a background in computers, he thrived, and one of his first big jobs for the network was transcoding about 5,000 hours of video tape to a digital format and adding a video playback system for the station. "That became my forte with the place. It became such an essential part of what we were doing that as the organization kind of change focus I just kept more and more responsibility and being able to develop that and leverage more of that technology background to push us in a direction," he said.

Around 1999, Scott also pushed the network to start streaming its programming. "Back when it was a postage stamp. Everybody kind of laughed at me, 'No one's gonna watch that,'" he recalled. "And now that's one of our biggest demands is what we do streaming and our web presence. Obviously, cable has diminished somewhat."

Now, he and his wife continue to focus on the growth

of TBAE and its place in the Tampa Bay community.

It hasn't always been easy, Glenda said, especially when it comes to funding. "We went from a \$1 million operation and as time went it streamed down because of the demand for cable."

She credits her husband with keeping it going, she added. "But Scott with his ingenuity of staff, he's managed to keep us along."

He said, "It's great to stay alive."

He said the station has had a number of great partners in the community. Creating these relationships was one of his goals when he became executive director in 2016.

Around this time the network was moving to downtown Tampa, which "put us in a position where we were really going to be able to go out and meet people and interact with the community a lot better," he said.

And of course, the technology continued to evolve, which required the network to adapt. "We had to reintroduce ourselves to the community and then, you know, we're always kind of looking to maintain that relevancy and find our role in the community," Scott said. "Initially, that was to provide television for access to the arts and education community, but as we modify that and we've grown, it's more now of incorporating the internet as well, with streaming and Facebook. It's not just cable anymore."

TBAE works with many local nonprofits, such as the NAACP and the Tiger Bay Club, to produce and air their content. The network also runs the cable station for Hillsborough County Public Schools, which airs everything from school board meetings to annual high school graduations.

Now, after adapting during the COVID-19 pandemic in order to continue broadcasting its community content without interruption. And it relies more than ever on so-

cial media for getting the word out about its diverse programming.

And while the network's shows are still available on cable – specifically Frontier and Spectrum – it focuses on improving its streaming services and offers its programming through the website watch.tbae.net. "Six or seven years ago as we tried to figure out what's next, we gravitated more towards Netflix-style broadcasting than YouTube," Scott said. "We were more interested in more of a curated, kind of, holdings of programming, so that's what I tried to mimic. That's been very successful."

Now, they continue to shift further from linear programming, they hope to create an app version of this website so viewers can access it easier on their mobile devices. "To take that next step is the financial step," he added.

"Which we don't have," Glenda said.

But they have their eyes on several opportunities that can help them achieve this goal, and, of course, supporters can always donate directly to the network. "We have a few things, a few funding opportunities we're looking for," Scott said. "But that's what we're really going to be charged with over the next year here – to really figure out how to evolve that into a true app, which would really give us that international appeal, 'cause we would be in all the stores."

It's an important move for the future of TBAE, as the way people view its programming has evolved so much. "Putting things on a schedule – people don't really watch, consume content like that anymore," Scott said. "People want to watch it when they want to watch it. We still stream it 24/7 on our websites, but we're really focused more, now, on that on-demand offerings...and we want to give viewers the content they want in a way where they can go from one series to the next."

## Scott and Glenda Maiden



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said.

He added, "I thought I was living in the 18th century for the first few years of my life because my elementary school was in the colonial district. Everybody surrounding that is wearing the period dress and I went to school at a historical theme park. It wasn't until I saw my dad at work (NASA) that I realized not everybody rode an ok to work."

It was a photography class at Pinellas Park High School that fueled Scott's passion for the medium. He went above and beyond, spending multiple periods each day in the classroom and eventually helping teach the class and running the photography lab. And as technology evolved, his teacher introduced him to computers, including the Mac SE running Photoshop 1.0. This is how he shifted his focus to videography.

He went on to study digital imagery and audio engineering at the University of South Florida. At a younger age he thought he might go into advertising. A musician, himself, though, he focused on band and concert photography.

At 25, he was working at a local record shop when his father "had a come-to-Jesus moment" with him. He recalls his father telling him, "You've got to do something else with your life. You know, you can't just play music and work in a record store."

The next day, Scott found a newspaper ad for a job at what was then called the Education Channel. "It was entry-level and television," he said. "At the time we used the work 'McJob' and I was like, will this ought to satisfy my father."

He accepted the job as a master control operator working the midnight shift. "Lowest position on the totem pole," he said.

Scott added, "So, in that 25 years, I went from the very bottom to the very top of the organization."

When he first joined the network, the industry was transitioning from tape play-



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