

The working day of:

EyePro's Brenda Fishbaugh

Brenda Fishbaugh is well-known in the international tanning industry. The president of Eye Pro Inc. from the USA has been in the market for years and years offering eye-protection for tanners. She travels all over the world to give trainings and is known for her dedication to animal welfare. In this extended version of 'working day' we learn a bit more about this interesting lady.

Can you refresh our memory? How did you started in the tanning market?

"A friend invented Wink-Ease and patented it in 1985. He had a tough time getting the market started. He asked me to take over in 1991 and I became an owner in 1992. I've been running the

company ever since. It was very small in 1991 and I was working out of my house. We had no international business at all. I got on a plane and came to Europe—only my second trip—and used a Eurorail pass to go to almost every Western Europe country and meet with potential distributors for a month. I was very inexperienced, but it worked out very well. Now, at least half of Wink-Ease are sold outside the US and Canada."

How many people work at EyePro nowadays?

"We run with a very small staff, I really like to feel it's a small family. We have an office manager that has been with me 9 years, and two trainers that travel the US training distributors and salons. I handle the international travel. Our products are actually manufactured by our sister company, and they have 16 people, but they make other products in addition to Wink-Ease."

How many people do you train a year?

"In the US, training is huge. We attend about 25 distributor shows a year, which can have between 100-1000 salon attendees each. We'll speak on eye damage and show 40 gory slides from ophthalmologists showing damage from UV overexposure. We also



Brenda started out her day early at the animal sanctuary, checking on the leopards, tigers, bears, holding a lizard that had lost his feet to frostbite and Brenda petting a Moluccan Cockatoo at Black Pine Animal Park. Many birds are donated as people don't realize the amount of attention and special diet tropical birds require. And they live sixty years! Over 200 animals are at the animal park.

A male leopard, called 'China', that Eye Pro rescued from the pet trade in 2002 when he was cub, he resides at Black Pine Animal Park, one of four animal sanctuaries where Eye Pro is a platinum sponsor



Brenda quick changes and heads to the airport for a flight to Toronto, Canada. She heads to nearby Silver Solarium Distributors. A quick meeting with Tenille Soper, Liz Telo and Ann Scлизisizzi, here in the picture with Brenda carrying their Eye Pro safari bags for taking Eye Pro's educational eye damage training.

Brenda's is off to Uvalux, where she presents the Eye Pro Eye protection training to 12 Uvalux employees. Salon staff around the world can take the same training online for free 24/7 at the Eye pro's website.



travel to salon chains and customize our training for their salon chain. We see thousands of salon employees this way. We have online training now, its available any time and from any where in the world if you have high speed connection and its free. It only takes 15 minutes. This year we had hundreds of salon staff take that training, as we offered some free Norvell Bling Bling body glitter, and that created a big buzz!"

What can you say about the trends on eye protection for tanning beds in the last couple of years?

"We are the only company training salon staff and providing educational materials to educate the tanners on how they can damage their eyes. I want to make the point that I want tanners to wear eye protection. If they like goggles better than Wink-Ease, I'm just glad that they are wearing it. One of the biggest goggle manufacturers told me I was their best sales rep, as people would buy goggles after I spoke at a training! A few years ago, Island Sun Times (a US tanning magazine) asked me to write a column on eye protection, and I've written over 100 articles for them now... and not repeated myself! Our website features all of the articles I've written, and salon owners and tanners can access them to get educated. We are really seeing the message get through now, and its fun to have salon employees tell me they now wear their eye protection and they didn't before we trained them."

What do you expect for the future for the eye protection market?

"Worldwide, far less than half the tanners are wearing eye protection when they tan indoors. So there is a huge growth market available if we reach the people that are too stubborn to take a simple precaution."

What is the biggest difference between the US and European market in your opinion?

"The European market is very different from itself! The British almost always wear eye protection—Wink-Ease or goggles—but none of the Germans do. They tell me there is no need for it, but they won't listen to a training or take an eyewear test to actually learn if they have damaged their eyes. In the US market, our tanning salons are 'trained' to want trainings. They love to get the free lotions and free eyewear when the reps from the various US companies come to their area. The US tanning manufacturers haven't been able to build the European salons to want to learn how to make money on accessories like lotions, eyewear and other accessory sales."

"Half of our sales are outside the US and Canada. Great Britain is a great market, and most of Europe buys a lot of our products. We have interest in almost every country, but Great Britain really loves our products. We've brought out a new version of Wink-

Brenda checks whether the Wink-Ease are being worn correctly during the training



Brenda's next stop is her hotel to quick-change for the Fifth Annual Palm Beach Mega Tan Model Search, where she is a judge. Palm Beach Mega Tan is a Canadian tanning salon franchise owned by Marie and Harry Jones. "This was my third year of judging and my fourth year of attending," said Fishbaugh. "The girls competing were all very cute and the judges all had a tough time deciding. We even had a tie!" But there was also time to socialize.. on the picture you see Brenda chatting with Mandy Jones, owner of 3 PBMT salons.