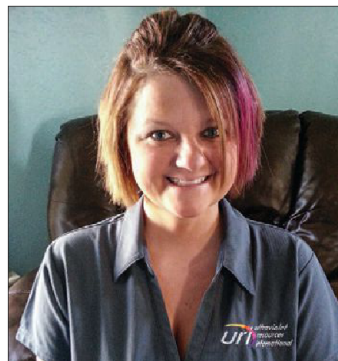


An Open Book

URI's Heidi Palmer

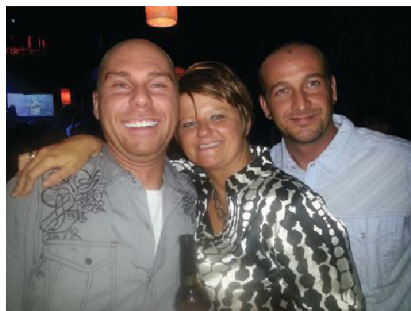
By John P. Ribner



As an Outside Sales Specialist at Ultraviolet Resources International, sunlamp sales are the name of the game for Heidi Palmer. Since March 2012, she's been calling and meeting with salon owners in New York, Ohio and Pennsylvania, offering them the wide selection of sunlamps and accessories for which the Ohio-based distribution company is known. Whether on the phone or in person, Heidi is always willing to speak with people in a frank and honest manner, and this sincerity is also reflected in her personal life. What makes Heidi such an open book? IST Magazine had to find out ...

Outgoing, honest and a bit impulsive, Heidi Palmer is the proverbial “breath of fresh air” that enlivens nearly any situation.

For many people, there comes a time when everything that's happened to them in life needs to be discussed. It's the only way to make sense of their experiences and how those things have affected their lives. Heidi Palmer has arrived at this stage of reflection in her life, and by looking back at her childhood, teenage years and “tumultuous 20s,” she's been able to



Heidi shares some down-time with MI salon clients Troy & Terry (L-R).

“I've known Heidi for a while and if you ask me to say something nice about her, I don't know where to begin! She's one of the most generous and outgoing people I know, and always willing to help her salon clients. Whenever I have a question about sunlamps, lotions or tanning equipment, she's willing to help me and if she can't, she puts me in touch with someone who can. People like her are hard to find these days.”

Troy Leece, Owner
Xclusive Tan – Livonia, MI

put all of her experiences into perspective. In many ways, she has to, if only to better prepare her for the challenges that will come as she continues to raise her daughter. By all accounts, Heidi is doing a wonderful job of being a loving and understanding mother.

Life's Lessons Early

Heidi Ann Palmer was born July 5, 1977 to Judy and Garry Palmer of Westfield, NY. While her mother worked as an office manager at a local doctor's office, her father was the foreman for one of the largest vineyards in Chautauqua County, and this meant plenty of hard work ... for her two older brothers, Brian and Scot. “When I was eight, my dad had me mow the lawn with this old tractor that could only make left turns,” recalled Heidi. “Somewhere along the way, I forgot about this and tried to make a right turn and crashed into the wheel well of my dad's brand new car. After that day, he forbade me from doing any manual labor.” While Heidi says the crash happened purely by accident, it's not inconceivable that she did it to get out of doing chores, if only on a subconscious level.

While Heidi says she was her father's “princess,” her relationship with her mother was a bit more complex. Although

the two were close, Judy Palmer was the disciplinarian of the household, and Heidi says one of her mother's decisions resulted in a disagreement that remained a sore spot between them for many years. “I had taken gymnastics and dance lessons since I was little and I was offered a scholarship to study dance at a private school in Buffalo,” she said. “My mother wouldn't let me go and I always regretted this because it was my dream to study dance in college, land some roles in Broadway productions and eventually teach dance therapy to special-needs children. Although my mom says she just wanted me to have a normal high school experience, she now says she regrets not letting me pursue that opportunity, and hearing her say that means a lot to me.”

During her teen years, Heidi had a brief but significant battle with Anorexia Nervosa when her former cheerleading coach told her to lose weight or say goodbye to her spot on the squad. “Being involved in dance and gymnastics had made me muscular, but my coach only saw me as overweight,” Heidi said. “I went on a diet and started running every day but the weight wouldn't come off. I eventually quit eating and I got down to 88 pounds during my senior year; I thought everything would work out until one day at school, I passed out in the hall near →

my locker and was taken to the hospital.” A sobering reality check, that experience made Heidi realize that starving herself could end up killing her. The incident also exposed her coach’s training methods to Heidi’s parents, school officials and the community, and the woman was eventually relieved of her position.



“I love my dog Buster,” says Heidi. “He is my protector.”



Her five-year-old daughter Bianca is a budding dancer & cheerleader. “She’s a ‘mini me’ who has changed me in many ways,” Heidi says. The two frequently pack up & take last-minute adventures together.

Growing Up

After graduating from high school in 1995, Heidi majored in Criminal Justice at Edinboro University in Edinboro, PA. “When my dream of dancing professionally didn’t work out, I wanted to be a police officer,” Heidi said. “I think it had something to do with my desire to help people.” Although Heidi graduated in 2000 with a degree in criminal justice, she didn’t become a police officer. “When I was in college, I married someone I grew up with and moved to Florida,” she said. “When he asked me to marry him, I said ‘yes’, not seeing who he really was until much later. As our marriage began to have troubles, I took a job with a manufacturing company my aunt put me in touch with and I packed up my car and moved to Warren, PA. Not long after that, I filed for divorce and haven’t seen my ex-husband since.”

While living and working in Warren, Heidi began a friendship with a man she worked with, and that evolved into something more. About eight months into their relationship, she became pregnant and on August 11, 2007 gave birth to her daughter Bianca Reese. “Bianca is the best thing that ever happened to me!” Heidi exclaimed. “She is a five-year-old mini me – she enjoys dancing and is starting cheerleading this year – and she’s changed me in many ways. She shows me the good in people because she helps everyone in school and our family. She even helps give my dad his insulin when we’re visiting my parents and she says she wants to be a doctor when she grows up.”

Things to Do ...

Whether she’s taking Bianca to dance class or heading off with her daughter to Virginia Beach, Heidi says she’s always on the go these days. “I can be a little impulsive and I like to take a trip with Bianca at a moment’s notice,” she said. “My mother has always been like that and I probably get it from her. It’s good though, because whenever Bianca and I want to do something fun, we just pack up the car and go.” For something a bit more planned, Heidi will be taking golf lessons this year in order to participate in the many outings she gets invited to, as well as spending more time at the gym.

Although she’s been at URI for less than a year, Heidi says she has big plans for her career at the tanning distribution company. “Working at URI has provided me with many exciting challenges and I want to do the best I can for them,” she said. “I want to do more traveling, talk to more salon owners and ultimately gain as many new clients as I can. I know that making \$1 million in sales is a huge goal to set for myself, but if I could do that, I’d feel like I really accomplished something.”

These days, it seems that more people “don’t want to talk about it,” whatever their “it” might be. That’s a shame, since very little good comes from bottling up one’s emotions. That’s why it’s so refreshing that Heidi Palmer is someone willing to “put it all out on the table,” so to speak. She’s at peace with her past and proud of the person she’s become, which allows her to shift the focus from herself to someone infinitely more important: her daughter, Bianca. And that’s the best outlook on life that anyone could have. ■

What’s Up with Heidi?

Current TV Faves: “Real Housewives” (all of them!), “The Killing”, “Law & Order SVU”, “The Fosters”

Listening to: Poison, AC/DC, Def Leppard

Favorite Foods: Homemade pasta & sushi

“Pet Peeve”: People who need to plan everything

Weekend Stuff: Laying by the pool, hanging with friends & family, camping

“Dream Vacation”: A one-month European cruise