



Podiatry Associates of Erie, Inc.

FOOT & ANKLE

C E N T E R

Richard D. DiBacco, D.P.M., F.A.C.F.A.S.

Board Certified: ABPS, ABQAUAP

**THE MOST
EXPERIENCED
OFFICE IN THE
TRI-STATE
AREA**

Erie, PA

4420 Peach St. • (814) 864-4874

Meadville, PA

105 Mead Ave. • (814) 337-0404

Conneaut, OH

167-B W. Main St. • (440) 593-6476

www.eriefootdoctors.com

**WE'RE
HIRING!**

**PRESS OPERATORS
& FIBERGLASS FINISHERS**

Positions are available in
Conneaut and North Kingsville.

These are full time, temp-to-hire
positions on 2nd or 3rd shift.

Pay rate is \$13.25-15.50/hr
depending on location.

Weekly Pay, Direct Deposit,
Benefits and Referral Bonuses.

**Contact us:**

(814) 774-3842

Erie@TRNstaffing.com

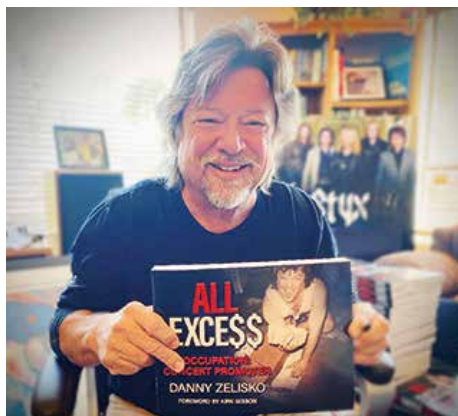
Virtual interviews available.

OR APPLY ONLINE: www.TRNstaffing.com

V now WE'RE TALKIN

By Helen Marketti

A chat with Concert Promoter Danny Zelisko



Danny with new book

Danny Zelisko's career as a concert promoter has spanned 47 years with an abundance of stories and experiences in between. One thing he has learned when working with famous rock stars and celebrities is that they are people just like us with the difference being their incredible talent that fans pay money to see.

That's where his job comes in as a concert promoter to connect the fans with their idols.

Danny's book, "All Exce\$\$, Occupation: Concert Promoter" (Danny Zelisko, 2020) is a fascinating and fun read for any music fan who is interested in how their favorite concerts came to fruition. Danny's early beginning started while growing up in Chicago. As a young boy, he and his brother Jimmy would hang out at Wrigley Field and get autographs from the Chicago Cubs and the Chicago Bears. Danny was 11 years old when he started going to Wrigley Field by himself. "I took the bus and my parents never knew it," he laughs. "Back then, players would park across the street from Wrigley Field by the fire station. There would be a group of us standing together as the players would walk into the stadium for either practice or game day. On many occasions, players would walk us into the ball park on game day. We didn't have a ticket so we went in as their guest. Even then I knew it was a thrill."

Over time, Danny became friendly with many of the ball players. He was already accessing backstage in a sense with getting to know these professional athletes and spending time with them. "I was working at being a little more endearing so I would be something more than a grubby little kid trying to get autographs. It was an honor when these guys noticed and

acknowledged you. It made it so much more special."

A special friendship that developed during that time was getting to know the late Chicago Bear's running back, Brian Piccolo. Danny and Brian got to know each other and formed a friendship, so much so that Brian would drive Danny home after practice or game day. Many will remember Brian Piccolo's story from the movie, Brian's Song (1971) that detailed the friendship between he and Gale Sayers that followed Brian's cancer diagnosis. After Brian Piccolo passed away, Danny never felt the same about going to Wrigley Field to see the Bears and eventually stopped attending. One of his early idol concert promoters was the legendary Bill Graham. Bill promoted concerts at The Fillmore (San Francisco) with legendary acts at the time such as Jefferson Airplane, Janis Joplin (Big Brother & The Holding Company), The Grateful Dead among many others. Danny was able to work with Bill for a short time and learned a lot from him.

Many artists that Danny has booked over the years appear in his book with backstage stories and personal insight as he takes the reader on an incredible journey. He has worked with Alice Cooper, Paul McCartney, Jeff Beck, James Brown, Barbara Streisand, Stevie Wonder and the list is an exciting and endless trail of names. However, attached to those names is Danny who works hard behind the scenes to get the artist booked and the fans to attend. "Some artists you get to know better than others depending how often you get them booked at your venue. People are paying money to see them. They are not coming to see me. I'm just the guy in the middle trying to make it happen. That in itself is a tricky arrangement. Every show is different. Every artist is different. Everyone has a different personality. You can never predict what is going to happen. You don't know their life or what happened to them before they arrived at your venue. They don't know what is going on in your life either. Anything can happen. And yes, sometimes not-so-great-things happen but it shouldn't be your lasting impression of an artist. You have to handle it right. You are always thinking on your feet. I have been doing this for 47 years. You don't get there by accident."

Over the years, Danny has saved enough memorabilia to secure a storage unit. "I was never sure what I was going to do with all of the stuff. You see an item and remember a story that goes along with it. I had the book idea in



Shep, Danny, Steven Tyler, Alice Cooper

mind for at least ten years. I think it fills in a lot of the blanks regarding concerts and all that goes into it. Years ago, concerts were for weirdos and freaks and now just about everyone enjoys the concert experience. People attend because they want to feel the vibe."

"I have come across promoters who like being in the business. They seem to like the managers and other promoters. They embrace the business side of things but not the stage part whereas I was interested in all of it. Some promoters do not seem interested in the musicians or their music. I know the words to most of the songs for the groups I promote. I sing along like everyone else. There are very few promoters who are friends with the artists or they never go to the front of the venue and see how an audience is responding. If you don't, how do you know what you are really doing if you're not checking to see how an audience is reacting," said Danny.

The pandemic this past year has thrown a monkey wrench into the lives and schedules of nearly everyone and concert promoters are feeling the pain. "I have had to cancel shows this past year which has been one of the hardest things to do. Right before the pandemic hit, I had booked John Fogerty and his band and then everything was called off. None of us had any road map to follow to navigate through this. I think shows will get booked again when the time is right. This is the first time we have had to deal with COVID-19. It's been like the movie, Ground Hog Day, it never ends. It's like the first time you have sex or being a first-time parent, no one really knows what they are doing but you get through it and live to talk about it." (laughs)

He continues, "I wanted readers to feel like they knew some of the artists I worked with as if they were there, too. It is a pleasure to share my stories and experiences with others. It is a fascinating profession that you would never learn about in a classroom or a text book. You can do whatever you want in life but you're not going to get there overnight."

www.dannyzeliskopresents.com