

"My survivor's tale began 64 years ago at St. Mary's Infirmary in downtown St. Louis. From my very first breaths, I was a fighter and survivor. It was a difficult twin birth; and my sister Carol didn't survive the subsequent transfer to another hospital and emergency surgery. I did. Game on. I survived the next five tumultuous years of my parents' marriage and inevitable divorce – and the animosity they had for each other for the rest of their lives. With my love as their battleground.

I survived leaving our beautiful Hawaiian home (dad was transferred from Scott AFB in IL to Hickham AFB in Honolulu when I was four months old) when dad retired to St. Louis four years later.

I survived my very Catholic (and racist) education –elementary, high school and two Jesuit universities. I barely survived my fast-paced youth; hurling through friendships and relationships and unfulfilling jobs. I survived the death of my older sister and the impact losing another child had on my mother.

I survived what began as a promising career in government service only to watch it be destroyed by politics, game-playing and my own inexperience.

I have survived the deaths of dear, dear friends and, more recently, the death of my mother. My best friend ever. Period. Life will not, cannot be the same without her. Yet, I survive. Because mother always told me where there's life there's hope. Never give up hope.

I survived to embrace the artist in my soul; returning to the stage for the first time in decades to perform in "The Life and Times of "Ol Alfred" at Shadow Theatre at the tender age of 55. Later that year I survived returning to St. Louis to care for my mother for eight years. But I continue performing every year – somehow, somewhere – the artist in my soul demands it.

I survived to write and workshop "Suicide Lies" and am currently writing a play about caregivers (super ripe artistic fruit), have a script treatment for a musical drama, and am writing a teleplay based on my experiences in the love/hate world of nonprofit service.

All interspersed with a little poetry for my sanity."