

Suzy Spafford, Class of 1963

The Arts (Writer, Artist)

Suzy Spafford began drawing at the age of 3. Ted Geisel (“Dr. Seuss”) was someone she described as “one of my heroes.” Her parents enrolled her in painting and watercolor classes, and she later sold her watercolors at art fairs.

After her days at PLHS, Ms. Spafford entered SDSU, where she became a member of Kappa Delta Sorority. In 1968, while still an undergraduate, she launched her “Suzy’s Zoo” greeting card company.

Her first fully developed character was a whimsical cross between a duck and chicken, a cheerful extrovert named Suzy Ducken. Eventually, her collection of characters included over 200 animals such as birds, rabbits, turtles, snails and ostriches. All of the animals have a personality and life story and live in a fictional town called Duckport.

Her company became wildly popular around the world, and eventually included stickers, stationery, calendars and other products in addition to the original greeting cards.

In 1999, she added a line of products for babies and toddlers called Little Suzy’s Zoo.

Ms. Spafford has also written several dozen books for children, including the Tales From Duckport series.

Awards received by Ms. Spafford include the National Cartoonist Society's Greeting Card Award in 1996 and Kappa Delta's Woman of Achievement Award in 1997.

She is a founding member of the San Diego Watercolor Society and has sat on several boards of directors including the Rees-Stealy Research Foundation and the San Diego/Imperial Council of the Girl Scouts of the U.S.A., who honored her in 2003 with their annual "Cool Women" award as an outstanding role model for balancing work, family, friends and service.