

A Message from the ~~Executive~~ Director . . .

Art

A Rumination on What's Important

It is my honor and privilege to write what to me has always been one of the most important parts of the monthly Sketches - the message from the Executive Director who we all know is Sus. For those of you that aren't regular visitors or volunteers at the Arts Center, you may not know that Sus' mom Nell was in a serious car accident several weeks ago. Since that time Sus has been in Detroit providing the type of moral, physical and spiritual support that only Sus can to both Nell and his family. The Arts Center has felt his absence keenly, but has also felt his spirit and love for this place surrounding it every day, and been reminded of just how important Sus is both personally to all of us that are blessed to work with him and to Gualala Arts as an organization.



Nell "Meadowmoon" Susalla and Ugene

These last several weeks without Sus as a daily part of my life has reminded me of what is truly important, and that is the family that surrounds us. It is said that you can choose your friends, but you can't choose your family. As I reflect on my friends and family I realize that isn't true - the friends that you choose become your family, in some cases closer and more important than the ones you share blood with. That is true in my life, where the friends I have today are as much my fathers, mothers, brothers, sisters, cousins, aunts and uncles as the family I grew up with - in many cases even closer. I cherish the "older brother" that I came to have by working at the Arts Center - the wonderful, charming, always positive and incredibly artistic Jim Grenwelge. My office "Aunt," Susan King, makes each day at work a pleasure, as does my "cousin" Scott Chieffo. I feel surrounded by the most diverse, supportive and loving family every time I am here for work or an event. Sharon, Doric, Jane, Harriet, Sara, Gary, JoAnn, Fred, Cate, Ben, P.D., Don, Kristen, Ling-Yen, John, Irma and everyone else that supports this amazing organization put smiles on my face, give hugs of support when I need them and make up the best family I could ever hope for.

And then there is Sus, the younger brother I never had but do now. I can't begin to put into words what he means to me, so I will simply say that I love him with all my heart and thank the universe for making him part of my family. I think of him every day and send my positive thoughts and energy eastward to him as he spends his days and nights giving his family the same type of love and support he has shown to all of us at Gualala Arts. No matter what your beliefs are, I would ask that you all take moment to do whatever feels right for you and give Sus your support - prayers, positive thoughts, petitions to the universe, appeals to the Powers That Be, lighting candles, asking your guardian angel to sit on Sus' shoulder, whatever. He will feel it and it will nourish his spirit, and by extension will do the same for his family - his mom Nell, brother Scott and wife Harmony.

And take a moment to hug your "family" and tell them how much they mean to you . . .

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