

Heaven is Brighter Today

Written by Susan Hollingshead
Wednesday, 15 August 2007 01:58



Back in the early '80's I started a cleaning service in Ontario with zero knowledge and even less business experience. My naivety is probably the thing that actually worked well for me; that and the folks who I had the good fortune to hire. One of those folks taught me more about cleaning, life and integrity than any book ever could and she also became one of my dearest friends.

When she came for her interview she seemed so shy and unsure of herself yet there was something about her that shone through her insecurity and I hired her on the spot. In those days, I worked alongside my staff and often she and I would spend an entire day driving from job to job, cleaning and talking. When Jim and I bought Grandview her married life had become difficult and we offered her the job of dining room manager which also gave her a place to live when home was unbearable. Like every task she was given, she worked tirelessly and ran a "tight ship". One day, between her troubles at home and the loneliness she felt being away from her teenaged daughter, she decided to quit her job and stay home. I missed her terribly.

The next time I saw her, was on September 17, 1993, the day after Jim went missing on Sparrow Lake and we hugged and cried for what seemed like hours. She came back to work for me that fall, first just staying at the house and looking after me and my kids. She cooked, cleaned, and kept us nourished with food, her companionship and her unconditional love. When Rick came into my life she took to him like a bee to honey. In the summer she worked at the resort, this time as our baker, and in the winter she was our housekeeper/secretary at the house. When we sold the resort in 1999 she helped us run the farm and the bed & breakfast.

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She was there when my Dad died and she helped me to look after my Mom afterwards.

On September 11, 2001 when everyone was reeling from the attacks in New York , my dear friend, Joyce Genno, had a massive stroke. Her left side was permanently paralysed and she forever remained in a wheelchair and dependent on others. Much of her personality was altered but she knew us and we would talk about the pre-stroke days. She was full of regrets but also full of great memories and she often told me how much she missed us, the house and the animals. It was mutual... we missed her too.

She had more talent in her baby finger than most people have in their entire body. Joyce was a talented seamstress, she could upholster furniture professionally, she baked the finest pastries, she was a wonderful cook, she could tat lace, crochet, knit, play guitar, garden and no one before her or since can clean like she did. She was loyal, kind, stubborn, hard working and honest and many a time I wished she could be cloned. Joyce's life was not easy but she loved her children, Michael and Candace, and her grandchildren, more than anything in the world. She gave until there was nothing left.

I have missed her immensely in the past six years but I would see her whenever I was back in Orillia and Rick and I visited her when we were in Ontario this past May. Today Joyce passed on. She is no longer dependent on anyone. Candace and her children were there with her when she died and we all know at last she is at peace. We love you Joyce but we know that today heaven is a brighter place!

I have no photographs of Joyce so thanks to Google Images for this picture.