

Mary Scott Community Comment: Mike Goldsby December 6, 2012

This is my last Community Comment of 2012. And, if the doomsday predictions of the Mayan Calendar are correct, it could be the last one ever. Guess I better do a good job, if this is the one I'm remembered by. It is sobering to stop and think that your most recent interaction with someone could be your last.

A couple of months ago we had a farewell party for a co-worker. We all gathered in our conference room. Everybody had their chance to express their fondness for her, describe memories and tell her how much they cared for her and how much they would miss her.

We all gathered again in the same room again yesterday, except to observe her death. Mary Scott was a Public Health Nurse and the coordinator of Maternal, Child and Adolescent Health. She drowned at Big Lagoon, with her son Geddy and husband Howard. She is survived by her daughter Olivia, a student at College of the Redwoods.

I first met Mary years ago when we both worked at St Joseph Hospital. She has also worked at Senior Resource Center, The Breast Health Project and most recently was an instructor in the College of the Redwoods Nursing program.

Mary Scott was an unforgettable character; Smart, pretty, creative, funny, talented. But most of all she was open to people. She was engaging, accessible, friendly and caring. I describe her as a little bit Dr Quinn, Medicine Woman, Xena, Warrior Princess, Julia Childs and Rosie the Riveter.

She was a cook and gardener, a nurse with a full time job who raised a family and a mini farm, including two yaks. She would bring a basket of oatcakes to work in the morning. Not for a special occasion, just to support people and to let us know she cared.

She loved to hike and would walk from her house in Freshwater to Bridgeville or take a hike to Costco.

Mary was a cartoonist and you can see her work in a children's book, *The Number Yard*, written by Alan Cook. I believe Pierson's carries it. The Senior Resource Center apparently has a whole book of cartoons drawn by Mary to illustrate the Senior daily activities.

She cared deeply about people and, after her death, I've met a number of people who were touched by her presence and caring. Mary was herself a breast cancer survivor and she would spend time with strangers, helping them cope with their diagnosis. She would write letters to complete strangers, sharing her hope and courage.

She was an advocate for pregnant women and she worked hard to remove the stigma of post partum depression.

She had a wicked sense of humor. She invited everyone at work down to the break room for cake and let us discover to our horror that she had frosted a cereal box. April Fools. She was the only one laughing. The Mary stories go on and on. The rest of the family must have been as remarkable and her daughter deserves our community's support.

Donations to assist the family can be made at any Coast Central Credit Union branch. The account number is 182671.

A memorial will be held this Sunday in Arcata.

She left a positive impression, on me and on many other people. She was an example of how to really live life, each day.

This is Mike Goldsby for Community Comment.