



The Surviving Spirit Newsletter – Healing the Heart Through the Creative Arts -

Out of suffering have emerged the strongest souls; the most massive characters are seared with scars. - Kahlil Gibran

Hello Folks,

I hope all is well for everyone, things are okay here. It's been busy, but no complaints. I've always felt it was better to complain about being busy than the flip side of having nothing to do.

This time of the year has a very special meaning for me, especially on this day, September 25th. I'm at that age where I can go into a room to get something and many times I forget what I went in there for. But on this day, I can remember vividly what I was doing thirty four years ago in 1976. I was flying back to the States from England and while I was somewhere over the Atlantic Ocean my oldest daughter Alisa was born. I had tried my best to time the break between touring to be back here in time for her birth. But she set her own time table and came a few days early. I was twenty two years old, a good guy, but also, one you would consider to be a pretty wild rock and roll drummer. Given the horrific experiences of my childhood years I had no self-worth and my sense of shame permeated every part of me – I was on a self-destruct course to nowhere. Music helped to fill a void in me, but I was still quite empty inside. That all changed with the birth of my daughter. Seeing her and holding her for the first time truly did change my life for the better. I still had a long rode to hoe in my growth as a human being, but she [and her sisters] truly was a major catalyst for helping me to become the man I am today.

In her first year of college, my daughter's class was asked to write about a hero and give an example of one, please take a few minutes to see who she wrote about -

<http://mskinnermusic.com/advocacy.html#hero> Words can't describe what this essay means to me.

What events or people have helped to guide you on your own path of healing and helping others? I would love to know....

Fall is definitely upon us...the leaves are turning and some of the colors are spectacular. I enjoyed a beautiful ride to and from the Catskills of NY for the recently held NYAPRS Conference [<http://www.nyaprs.org>]. The ride from NH, through the Berkshires of MA and into New York is breathtaking. This conference is also life changing for so many. I've been fortunate to be asked to perform and host the Open Mic events since 2001. Not only do I get to see and hear some incredible talented individuals, but I get to know so many truly courageous people who have defied the odds and are out there in life, helping themselves and helping others in the process. I was also very excited to see some

wonderful folks who I know and think highly of, receiving some well deserved awards for their respective advocacy efforts. Lauren Tenney received the “Brendan Nugent Leadership Award” as a peer leader in promoting and advocating for the empowerment of people with psychiatric disabilities. Tina Swatkowski and Lorraine McMullin have worked tirelessly in advocating for the rights of parents with trauma, abuse and mental health concerns. Both were honored for their hard work in this very difficult advocacy endeavor - Tina received the “Frances Olivero Advocacy Award” and Lorraine received the “Partners With Families Award”. Well done!!!

Next week I will be flying off to CA for the Alternatives Conference – “Promoting Wellness Through Social Justice” - <http://www.power2u.org/alternatives2010/index.html> for some performing and helping to co-present a workshop [Developing Your Art Practice into a Self-Supporting Business to Promote Social Justice] with some friends of mine. This will be a lot of fun and quite informative working with these talented individuals. Corinna West is a prolific poet and photographer, please visit The Altered States of the Arts website link to learn more about Corinna’s unique talents and gifts at - http://www.alteredstatesofthearts.com/index_files/Page1282.htm Ed Pazicky has been helping creative artists for many years [I’m one of them]. You can see some of this work by visiting the above mentioned website - he built the site and maintains it. And last but not least, Gayle Bluebird will also be a part of this collaborative workshop; her information is at - www.bluebirdconsultants.com

I am so excited to share this news about Gayle Bluebird. Gayle will soon be receiving a VOICE Award – “Honoring Those Who Make a Difference for Mental Health” - <http://www.whatadifference.samhsa.gov/voiceawards/> She has been in the forefront and in the trenches for so long in helping others through the use of the creative arts. She has been a friend, mentor and inspiration for so many [myself included], it’s an honor to know her as a friend and all I can say is – “it’s about time!!” She truly exemplifies what this award is all about.

Sue Ingebretson has written a very helpful and informative short article “Five Ways to Achieve Lifestyle Balance” for this newsletter [thanks Sue!!] which will be attached to this e-mail. You can learn more about Sue at *FibroWHYalgia* www.rebuildingwellness.com

If you have something to write and share, please let me know.

Candyce Brokaw of the Survivors Art Foundation has recently sent out her Fall Newsletter The Survivor, if you’d like a copy, please write to her at safe@survivorsartfoundation.org <http://www.survivorsartfoundation.org/>

Candyce has also “been in the trenches” a long time in promoting the creative works of others – good for her and good for the world.

From Bill MacPhee of Schizophrenia Magazine: “Do you write poetry or know someone who does? Send SZ Magazine your poems and we will include them in the poetry section of our new website coming out later this month.”

Email poems to bmacphee@magpiemags.com
http://www.szmagazine.com/e107_plugins/content/content.php?content.14

Please keep the Surviving Spirit in mind for your next event when you need a talented and inspirational keynote or workshop presenter. Please visit our Speakers' Bureau for all of your needs - http://survivingspirit.com/Speakers_Bureau.html

Finally, you can help the Surviving Spirit in its Mission to help others with your Time, Treasure or Talent. To learn more please visit - <http://survivingspirit.com/donate.html>

Take care, Mike

ps. Please share this with your friends & if you have received this in error, please let me know.

*Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter.
~Martin Luther King, Jr.*

A diagnosis is not a destiny.

www.survivingspirit.com – Healing the Heart Through the Creative Arts

Speakers' Bureau - http://survivingspirit.com/Speakers_Bureau.html

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"BE the change you want to see in the world." Mohandas Gandhi