

A Tribute to Suzan Labine, by Marc Mullo;

With her place surely cemented in Thunder Bay's past, I offer this short story of a defined acquaintance of mine, as we worked together at the local United Way. I was a part-time, office volunteer between the years of 2005 and 2009, as Suzan served with the agency's "Leaders of the Way", of which I'm proud to say that I've also donated monetarily to this organization as a "Leader", among other notable financial contributions that I've made to this dedicated and hard-working establishment, firmly based in this community since 1964, and continuing to thrive half a century later. Besides being fully devoted to the United Way, family and friends were also very important to Suzan. She was heavily involved in the community on a number of other levels; serving on the Lakehead School Board as a valued trustee, serving as a member of St. Joseph's Care Group, and she was even very interested in federal and provincial politics, a subject that is not always a popular choice among the general public as a whole. Suzan was married to a local lawyer, Gilbert, for 36 years, with her children always at her side as well. She was very proud of their accomplishments, and she adored children in general, having spent time with one of the local school boards, where she gained much respect and praise for her efforts. A co-worker at the Lakehead Public School Board during Suzan's six year stint, Mrs. Linda Rydholm, fully recognized Suzan's passion and commitment towards all children. In dedication of Suzan's compassionate leadership and proud community involvement, she was given a truly deserving honour by City Council a couple of years ago, when the neighbourhood playground on Junot Avenue, not far from her residence, was renamed as a token of appreciation for her many years of service, friendship and impressive professionalism. With the support of many other neighbourhood residents as well, there was no doubt in anyone's mind that Suzan had forever left her mark, and so richly deserved this worthwhile distinction within the neighbourhood park and meeting place. In closing, I was also happy to know Suzan during her distinguished life, which unfortunately ended so abruptly back in December 2010, as she was only 58 years old with her sudden passing; however, along with countless other local citizens, I won't soon forget her, with that soulful character, as a caring and talented human being, with a smile and laugh that would brighten anyone's day, and liven up any room that she appeared in.

May she forever rest in peace, and I'm certain that she's still looking down fondly on all of us!

Submitted By:

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