

# Christine's Church Garden



To: thebridge@kggvfm.org

I moved to Guerneville four months ago and am enjoying discovering KGGV amongst other Guerneville delights. I (think you heard this coming) used to be in radio and would be interested in seeing if I could be a fit for KGGV either on-air or otherwise. Could you let me know if there are any positions open, or if I could come to the station (perhaps a programmers meeting?) to introduce myself.  
Thanks Christine Lowry

This September, 2010, was the second memorial walk around the Church garden at KGGV. She only spent a brief year and a half with us, but her strong personality left an indelible imprint on the scores of people at our community radio station who came to know her. It began with the above e-mail, March 23rd, 2007. I always jumped at the chance to add real experienced DJs to the staff of the station.

Christine had recently "retired" and moved to Guerneville. She was in her fifties and had been a full-time legal secretary and part-time radio DJ in the Bay Area for many years. She was in the final stages of inoperable cancer. It had spread throughout her body. Her doctors had given up on her. They encouraged her to spend her time doing something she enjoyed. It was our good fortune that she loved being on the radio. She was devoted to Simon, her dog; and he to her. He was a valiant guard dog, and in the waning months it was often difficult to take him away from her, even for a needed exercise walk. In the earlier days, Simon would dutifully wait outside the studio door, listening to her broadcast, until the red light went out and he was allowed to rejoin her.

Christine was a physically powerful woman: tall and muscular. She had been an Olympic level swimmer and a solid tennis player. The strength and dedicated focus that goes along with sports served her well in her struggle with cancer. She had an endearing accent and was instantly recognizable on-air. It wasn't just the English accent; she was a professional and compared to our local volunteer staff of DJ talent, she was a God-sent, radio-adept on the air. She was quiet and humble - didn't want to get involved in management or committees or any other aspect of day-to-day operations at the station. She was willing to pitch in on anything, but truly loved her solo time on-air.

She took over the morning show, Mondays to Fridays, 7-9 a.m.: music, news, and talk. Christine had trouble sleeping so she was up early, every day. She lived by the library, only a few blocks from the radio station. Early mornings were a good opportunity for Christine to medicate and steel herself for the day. During this time, she maintained a blog mostly about her cancer. You can still view the blog at: <http://christinelowry.wordpress.com/>. The blog is her diary and a chronicle of her battles with pain, medications, doctors; and also her joyous moments with people, food, and the town.

She was quite vocal in her opinions and she continued in her search for a better prognosis. She couldn't abide drama queens, of either gender; kept to herself and didn't enter into any of the internecine radio station struggles. From her years of Bay Area DJ experience, she knew how radio stations were and/or should be run. Ours didn't fit well into any mold. We were an all volunteer, community station staffed by dozens upon dozens of amateur entertainers.

Her pain level became severe in the spring of 2008. A community amalgamation of KGGV, Church, and friends formed a "Share the Care" group to support Christine in a hospice program. She spent less time on-air, but continued to sit in and enjoy the Church garden at KGGV. The Church was in its second year of landscaping what was envisioned as an English contemplative garden: organic, considerably wild, bird and bug busy. There was a maze of pathways leading to nooks and crannies. She spent many hours in that English garden, Simon by her side, enjoying its declaration of life. I renamed it Christine's Church Garden in early 2008. Her father scattered her ashes throughout the garden that fall.