

Susan Scolastico's tribute to Ron Scolastico, given at his "Celebration of Life" Ceremony on November 6, 2013

Thank you for being here. For those of you who don't know, we held our annual Retreat here every November for 28 years. Little did we know that this would be our 29th and possibly our last. I am so grateful for all the people who made this possible today, Kelsey Collins for officiating, Serra Retreat for giving us the space here, the many Retreat participants who have worked so hard to make this day as special and meaningful to all of us as Ron would have wanted.

We all thought Ron was immortal and were not prepared for his very quick exit from this life. But for him, the manner of his death was a blessing. I wrote about that on caringbridge.org. Love and loss unite us all, and we are here united in our love of this beloved man, and in the sadness that we feel for the loss of his physical presence. So we take this time today to celebrate the life of a magnificent human being, who was cherished and loved by many.

Ron and I met in 1984. I had a Reading with him. I was in between husbands and enjoying my freedom, dating a few people. I was also afraid that if I got involved with Ron and we broke up that I wouldn't have access to the Readings that I found so profound. But Ron had other ideas. He told me he didn't want to share me with anyone. So we made an agreement that we would take one month, dedicated to loving each other exclusively, to not worry about any potential complications, but just dedicate ourselves to love. If after that one month we felt that it wasn't right or doable, we'd go our separate ways. The rest is history. I remember going to Disneyland the next day. I was standing in line at that Michael Jackson thing they had, feeling like I was on cloud nine. Every cell was tingling. I was in love and knew then that commitment to one month of love would result in a soul mate for a lifetime.

Ron did things with dedication and precision – he wanted to perfect everything that he did, not for any acclaim or public show, but for his own satisfaction. When we had a pool table in our garage, before the painting studio, he would practice long hours all by himself just for the joy of hitting a perfect shot. He would practice the saxophone for hours just to learn something new. He would play the

same piece over and over on the guitar trying to perfect that. Fortunately he was kind enough to do this with his office door shut. He would swim several times a week at the gym – he had been swimming almost all of his life, still working to perfect his stroke. He never drank or smoke once he started doing the Readings over 35 years ago because he wanted his head to be as clear a possible in service to his clients. I always had a dedicated driver. He always had a project of some kind going—his books, paintings, miniature buildings.

He was academically educated, with an amazing memory for the things he had studied. In the late 50's he had joined the Air Force with the intention of being an Air Force Pilot. For 5 years he tried to enter flight school. He would take their required tests, get the highest score, be on the list for the next position. This happened 5 times, and each time, something would happen that would postpone his being sent to flight school, something as simple as his dental work being postponed because they had to treat a group of soldiers who were being sent overseas, so he had to wait. Each time, he had to take the test anew, each time he scored a little higher, and something would happen that would block his way. Finally, in 1963 when the GI bill was introduced and he was allowed to go off post to take some classes at the local College, he realized there was another world out there besides the military. He gained a thirst for knowledge, left the military and went on to be educated at UC Berkeley, One of his most profound memories of UC Berkeley was sitting at the feet of Martin Luther King who was giving a talk at Sproul Hall.

He spent a year abroad studying in France, and then the University of Iowa where he earned his Masters Degree and Ph.D. If he had stayed in the military, he probably would have been dropping bombs on Vietnam and an entirely different life would have ensued.

Ron was the most nonjudgmental, non-critical person I have ever met. He truly lived his teachings which boil down to kindness, compassion and love. I don't remember him ever once criticizing me. He might suggest a different action, but never with judgment or malice. In fact, he never said a mean word to or about anyone. He was the anchor for my growth and healing and by his love, facilitated

my blossoming as a human being. It was an honor to serve him, grow with him and be his partner for nearly 30 years. We spoke often of how lucky we were and how every moment together mattered. We did everything together, it didn't matter what it was, we just loved each other's company. We truly packed 60 years into 30.

Every year of our life together was marked by our annual Retreat here at Serra Retreat. So it is appropriate that Ron should be remembered here. Father Warren will be installing a Plaque on a bench over by the office with a view across the valley and to the ocean. It is not ready yet, but should be installed by December. This plaque loving Gift from Ron's son, Luke:

**In loving memory of an extraordinary man
who lived a life of kindness, compassion and love.**

Ron Scolastico, Ph.D.

1938-2013.

Ron had one recurring dream throughout his life. We would talk about it every time it occurred. In the dream, he was always going somewhere and then couldn't find his way home. When he was diagnosed and knew he was going to die, we remembered that dream and talked about it, how he was now going home and would never again feel lost.— Donna Thomas, with her angelic voice, is going to sing "Amazing Grace." She will be accompanied by Sandy Owen who is an extraordinary recording artist, composer and pianist with 11 CD's to his credit. Donna and Sandy have been longtime friends and I am honored, and I know that Ron is too, that they were willing to perform this song for us.

1. Amazing grace! How sweet the sound
that saved and set me free!
I once was lost, but now am found;
was blind, but now I see.