

For Ella, from Jennifer [larsenj@telus.net] 604-277-7288'

Frances was still the owner of, and operating, Hi Hope Kennels on #5 road when she and I first discovered we shared similar thoughts about a number of things that needed to be happening and/or be available, locally, but weren't.

At the time, if my not so good any more memory tells me true, Francis was also on....and later appointed Chair of.... **United Way's Richmond Division**. At that time, and at the invitation of the then Mayor and Council, the Richmond Division was also officially functioning as the then Township of Richmond's social services department. Its small staff consisted of a United Way Social Planner, Bas Robinson, and his secretary, Anne Murray. *To put you more in the larger picture of those days, #3 Road at that time was one lane in either direction, with ditches on either side large enough to almost cover the Volkswagon beetle that ended up in it one morning.*

Some of the years since then allowed collusion at other tables that allow me to say with 1st hand knowledge and admiration that Frances, often single-handedly, not only put disability on Richmond community's social services map...*from which she made sure it was never going to be dislodged...*but also breathed life and compassion into the term's meaning that I, for one, cannot recall it ever having had before.

I shall always remember 2 meetings of the Richmond Community Services Council [*the RCSAC's name before the City Council sent Bob McMath to talk it into becoming an official advisory committee to them*] at which Frances made it clear she was not a good person to tangle with .

The first was when she ^{once} decided it was high time the Committee had a set place on its agenda to discuss issues of import ^{ance} to those living and/or struggling with a disability of some hampering kind that the community at large knew between little and zilch about....but whom, she told the gathering, "forms 10% of our population".

The 2nd meeting was when she advised many of the same people that 1] she was **not** joining the rest resigning from the sub-group working on getting a Caring Place built, and 2] that as long as she remained in her appointed place and using the time for more research on its benefits, it was not....and could not be considered.... a permanently... or temporarily... dead project. As so often happened, she was proven right and in an unusually short time!

In all those years I cannot remember Frances ever being tripped up by anyone attempting to challenge her supporting and impressive research on whatever she was laying out as reasons for government [local, provincial and/or federal] action on whatever she was focussed on

getting its movement on. I can remember those attempts becoming less and less, and eventually stopping, though.

It is not over the top, to say that her death has left a huge hole in our community's social services tapestry that may be impossible to satisfactorily fill.

It is my experience that people like Frances, with that kind of determination and drive to see it through, come along...if lucky...once in a lifetime. What having her in ours, however, has fortuitously left us with quite a few following faithfully in her footsteps and strengthened by the knowledge that what may seem impossible for self and/or community at first glance, is never necessarily so.

My thanks to whomever is reading this for me, and regret that I am not able to join you in celebrating her life and lifetime accomplishments, in mourning our loss, or in hearing the memories of others there.

I did however luck into hearing Malcolm's long and glowing tribute to her at City Council's April 27 meeting; it helped the sadness, shock and sense of loss upon hearing what his "important announcement" was about.

Thank you Frances,

Jennifer [Larsen] May 1st, 2015.