



**Anthony W. Ficcaglia
1943-2015**

He Will Be Missed



Dear Friend,

We have lost a dear friend - of mine and also of our organization's - and I have written this to express some of my feelings. You may share your thoughts or memories on a tribute wall provided by Christy's Funeral Service; an obituary appears below my text with further details.

Sincerely,
Jane

My Guru

We each have different relationships with the people we encounter and each of us knows others through our own interactions with them. Different people's experiences with a person will at times share similarities but nevertheless there will be differences too. So I would like to tell you about the Tony Ficcaglia I knew. Yet because Tony had so many gifts and interests your experience will likely be different than mine.

When I think of Tony what comes to mind is his calm demeanor, coupled with his zeal and declarative nature. Now that might seem like a contradictory statement unless you knew Tony as I did. Tony would gently pull you aside, never raising his voice but rather speaking in a soft tone. It was not as if he were sharing a revelation, but his perspective would give you new insights. Tony was both an observer and participant, and his wisdom was immeasurable. He did not go around behaving as if he held the secrets of some great master or a guru; in fact often his first question might be, "So what are you thinking?" In the end you would ultimately learn a lot more from him. And I don't believe he offered many unsolicited viewpoints. But since I normally asked his opinion I can't say for sure.

Tony taught me about zoning and planning.

Over the years I guess these were our little sessions, one new perspective after another. For such a bright man Tony normally made things very basic and simple. And even when he was emphatic he rarely raised his voice. I would be struggling against some destructive new proposal for the landscape of Southern NJ and Tony would boil it down to a few players' bad intentions, saying something like "He's simply a liar." It is not as if he didn't have wise advice to offer, but the real meat of the matter was that someone else's values simply weren't aligned with our hopes for the river's health.

He showed me how to pluck a wild turkey Tony-style.

We showed each other how NOT to transport an osprey-platform crew as we watched Leslie's small boat slowly sink into the Manumuskin across from their dock on a chilly March day. The look of shock on their daughter, Linnet's, face was memorable. Yet in spite of it all we survived and had fun. And we learned.

He shared his wines and wine making. He would put a bottle to the side if he came to a party, and whisper, "Tell me what you think of it." But normally after trying one of his wines I had to confess that I couldn't tell anyone what I thought about anything. Gee, that was strong stuff.

Of all that Tony taught me, most were things that I observed. He modeled a work ethic. At home Tony was rarely still about the yard. He moved purposefully and steadily about his tasks - chickens, fences, studio repairs, splitting wood, hammering, planting, pond tinkering, you name it.

He was a super dad and granddad. He had a great deal of patience and showed his children everything he could. And he modeled his love for his wife, Leslie. In fact Leslie and Tony were truly one. So now I will have them in my thoughts each day for a long, long time.

On the screened-in porch he would sit for a spell and sort of stroke his beard and make his Tony one-eyed face, as he pondered the topic of the hour. And he had a marvelous laugh, more of a chuckle or shake as he revealed his basic truths.

On the last day I saw Tony I said, "You know how you always told me that that politician was no good?" And he said, "Not often enough." And his chuckle rocked the hospital bed.

And on that day, the second to last day he spoke, he asked me, "So what do you think?" And I said, "Be sure to tell 'em what you need to say." He said, "I have; we've talked."

And what he didn't say he simply demonstrated.

Goodbye, good friend, and God's speed.

- Jane

You can read more about Tony below.

The Trustees and Staff or Citizens United to Protect the Maurice River and Its Tributaries, Inc. send their condolences to the Leslie and her family.

Anthony W. Ficcaglia, age 71, died peacefully at his home in Port Elizabeth, NJ, on Thursday morning, March 19, 2015, surrounded by his loving family, after a lengthy illness. A beloved husband, father, and grandfather, he is deeply mourned by his wife of 46 years, Leslie (Pastor); his son, Jeremy, of Millville; and his daughter, Linnet, of Vineland; his grandchildren, Jilliane Sara Ficcaglia, Anthony Michael Ficcaglia, and especially Rosalena Maria Ficcaglia, who was like a second daughter to him. He was predeceased by his brother, Robert, in 1942.

Tony was born in Vineland, the son of Anthony Joseph and Lena (Sammartino) Ficcaglia, and graduated as salutatorian of the Vineland High School class of 1961. A National Merit Scholarship winner, he was accepted at Harvard, Princeton, Annapolis and West Point, and chose to attend the University of Pennsylvania on a full scholarship. There he majored in psychology, graduating in 1965, and pursued his studies with a Master's degree in the same area at Temple University. He worked in that field at Holmsburg Prison, at The Training School at Vineland, and for the major portion of his career as a school psychologist in the City of Vineland, retiring in 2002.

Active in his county and in his community, among his involvements Tony was a member of the county mental health board and also was the president of the local school board for ten years. He served with dedication for over

twenty years as vice-chair and then chairman of the Maurice River Township Zoning Board. He held a Black Belt in Goju Ryu karate and also practiced Aikido and Tai Chi, disciplines in which he both studied and taught.

Tony was a true Renaissance man. In high school and in college he played gigs with a small group of fellow musicians, usually piano or bass although he was also proficient on recorder and guitar. He had an encyclopedic knowledge of musical icons, classical as well as jazz and folk. At Penn he hosted a jazz show and a folk show on WXPB, the university station, and he could be seen at the back of the dias at The Second Fret and other folk venues, as well as at the Philadelphia Folk Festivals, with his reel-to-reel tape recorder, collecting folk songs by famous people, with their willing permission, for posterity. Tony was widely read and was especially fascinated by history and politics, but he also loved authors like Patrick O'Brien and James Lee Burke. At his home on Minnamuska Creek Farm he maintained an active lifestyle, growing and harvesting wood products and at various times raising sheep, goats, and chickens, as well as keeping horses for his children. Another important facet was a huge organic garden that he and his wife maintained each summer; the freezer was always full of food grown on site. He kept several ancient tractors running and was able to fix anything that was broken on the farm and in the house. In addition Tony was a creative vintner, producing both red wines such as Sangiovese as well as some notable whites.

A dedicated environmentalist, Tony assisted in obtaining recognition of our river systems as Wild and Scenic; studied birds, botany, and animals; and was engaged in a longitudinal analysis of the threatened Sensitive Joint Vetch in the upper reaches of the Manumuskin River. For many years he conducted water sampling on the Manumuskin for the Delaware Riverkeeper and Citizens United to Protect the Maurice River and its Tributaries.

Additionally, under the auspices of NJ Conserve Wildlife he was an observer for a local eagles' nest, monitored spring frog populations, and acted as a shorebird steward during the horseshoe crab spawning season. An avid hunter, he also enjoyed clamming in nearby bays, crabbing from his dock, boating on the Maurice River, and sailing on Union Lake. When they could spare time from their farm, river, family and friends, he and his wife liked to travel to the South of France to enjoy the culinary and scenic delights of that area.

A memorial service will begin at 2 p.m. on Monday, March 23, 2015 in the Christy Funeral Home, 11 W. Broad Street, Millville. Family and friends will

be received on Monday from 12:30 to 2 p.m. in the funeral home. Burial in Sacred Heart Cemetery, Vineland will be at a later date at the convenience of the family.

The family requests memorial contributions to Citizens United to Protect the Maurice River and its Tributaries, PO Box 474, Millville, NJ 08332.

Memories and expressions of sympathy for Anthony Ficcaglia may be shared on the Obituary Tribute Wall at:

<http://www.christyfuneralservice.com/obituaries/Anthony-Ficcaglia/#!/TributeWall>



Tony with wife Leslie and pup Chouette (*Leslie is a CU Trustee*)

CU on the River!

<http://www.cumauriceriver.org>

Jane Morton Galetto
President
forrivers@comcast.net

Doreen Homan
Membership, Events and Office Manager
doreen.homan@cumauriceriver.org

Celia Rodrigues
Program Manager
celia.rodrigues@cumauriceriver.org



[JOIN OUR MAILING LIST!](#)

Citizens United to Protect the Maurice River and Its Tributaries, Inc.,
P.O. Box 474, Millville, NJ 08332

[SafeUnsubscribe™ {recipient's email}](#)

[Forward email](#) | [Update Profile](#) | [About our service provider](#)

Sent by forrivers@comcast.net in collaboration with

Constant Contact 

Try it free today