

In Memory of Peter Neuendorff (1956 - 2018)

Peter Erik Neuendorff, an Aquarius, was born February 18, 1956 in Taby, Stockholm, Sweden. He moved into his own apartment at age 14, working part-time after school to pay rent. At age 17, he left Sweden to attend college in Montreal and Chicago. In 1978, Peter came to San Francisco because he liked Scott McKenzie's, "*...If you're going to San Francisco, be sure to wear some flowers in your hair...*". Unemployed, he lived in the Tenderloin on buttermilk and bread. He got his first real job when Mama Inga, the charismatic Swedish restaurant owner on O'Farrell Street, took him under her wing. He helped her in the kitchen, greeted customers and set up the buffet. In 1980 Peter met an Indonesian tour guide, moved to Jakarta, and for the next year travelled to Japan, Hong Kong, Thailand, Taiwan and other parts of Asia, where he developed his love of Asian food, especially spicy Indonesian food.

Back in San Francisco in 1981, Peter was hired by Guenter Kaussen Properties as an Apartment Manager and found his niche in property management, wearing apager 24/7. The 1980's were Peter's favorite time in San Francisco. He loved the club scene, the music, fashion and art of that decade. He became popular and famous for, among other things, the artistic and stylish interior design in his rental apartments.

Peter was hired as a Property Manager by Caritas Management Corporation (CMC) in 1986, in its third year of operation with just two or three apartment buildings and a handful of employees. Within 4 years, Peter was promoted to "Director" (title later changed to "President"), reporting directly to CMC's founding Board of Directors. He went on to lead the Company for the rest of his career, until his retirement in 2016. By then, Caritas had grown to more than 110 employees and was managing over 50 affordable rental properties in San Francisco.

Those are just a few impressive examples of Peter's track record with CMC, and his list of credits could go on and on, but dates and facts alone don't explain why an entire era in our company's history is virtually defined by his leadership. Uncanny business instincts, off-the-wall originality, random strokes of genius, sheer guts and a touch of class - that's how Peter will be remembered by anyone who ever saw him in action. But for Peter, Caritas was more than just a showplace for his talents: we were his second family, a family he tenderly "raised" into adulthood and truly loved with all his heart.

Of course, Peter the Aquarian also truly loved art, music, dancing, books, film, TV, gourmet cooking, pets, swimming, World Cup soccer, travel, home-making, entertaining, shopping and cutting-edge entrepreneurial ventures! In 1990, he founded Konst Gallery and promoted then-partner, Larry Yung's work in the Sausalito Art festival, the New York, Los Angeles and Chicago Art Expos and the famous Seattle Art Fair, propelling Larry's career to international fame and success. For their crowning achievement, Peter and Larry remodeled and converted a small, historic Berkeley Victorian into an artistic masterpiece that won Grand Prize in the 1998 Metropolitan Magazine House-of-the-Year Award: a Mitsubishi Spider sports car. (No car, even the Spider, would ever be seen in the President's stall in CMC's parking lot, however; he always rode BART.)

In her 1968 best-selling guide to analyzing people's behaviors and traits according to the Zodiac, *Sun Signs*, Astrologer Linda Goodman's insight into the Aquarian personality really hits the mark: "Lots of people like rainbows", she writes, "Children make wishes on them, artists paint them, dreamers chase them, but the Aquarian is ahead of everybody. He lives on one. What's more, he's taken it apart and examined it, piece by piece, color by color, and he still believes in it. It isn't easy to believe in something after you know what it's really like, but the Aquarian is essentially a realist, even though his address is tomorrow, with a wild-blue-yonder zip code...He'll wander through affluent society and slums alike with his symbolic jar, gathering the waters of knowledge and pouring them out again..."

The deep currents of Peter Neuendorff's "waters of knowledge" changed Caritas' course forever. And even as we sail beyond the turbulent wake of his passing into calmer seas, guided by his eternal spirit and his Aquarian vision of "electric blue clarity into the future", we can still feel the ripples of so many classic Neuendorff "droplets", like: "Expect the unexpected", "Nip it at the butt", "Deliver the product", "Never go to bed angry", and "Have a nice day!" So, in honor of his amazing life and in gratitude for his enduring legacy to Caritas, we lovingly dedicate our best and last laugh to Peter:

"HO HO HO!"

