

Cherie Manning: 1950-2018

## Remembering Cherie

Every Wednesday morning for three years, Cherie Manning helped a table of Street Roots vendors express their voices through creative writing. In 2013, when she applied to volunteer at Street Roots,



Cherie wanted to be a copy editor. But soon after we learned about her extensive editorial experience and witnessed the gentle, compassionate way she interacted with our vendors, we knew we wanted her to lead the weekly vendor

creative writing group.

From the beginning Cherie's calm, kind demeanor was an inspiration to the vendors - some who had written for years, others who were exploring creative writing for the first time. Each week she came with a new poem or short piece of fiction to set the theme for the group. Through it she introduced the vendors to new authors and new styles of writing. She inspired all of us to read.

Sadly, Cherie passed away Feb. 25.

Cherie was a teacher, but ultimately she was as willing to learn from her students as she was to teach. She was an introspective listener who helped people experiencing the trauma of homelessness and poverty to feel

welcomed, heard and worthy. She held a deep respect for the vendors and their abilities - writing and otherwise. Cherie was observant. She not only knew the perfect edit to make a vendor's poem sound better, but also knew when a vendor was having a bad day and she would give extra care and attention to them as they processed it through writing.

Over the years Cherie and I developed a close friendship. Both writers at heart, we exchanged voluminous emails with suggestions for books, writing prompts and Netflix offerings, and simple check-ins on how the day's workshops had gone. I miss those emails, and I miss Cherie dearly.

It's an understatement to say that Street Roots' vendor writing would not be where it is without Cherie. She spent more than three years encouraging dozens of vendors to find their inner muse. She was an integral force in helping us publish our first four vendor zines. Even after she became sick and moved away from Portland, Cherie was dispensing writing advice as I sent her packets every week.

Cherie was gentle and soft spoken but her impact on this corner of the world was mighty, as the vendors' reflections on this page demonstrate.

Thank you, Cherie. You are so missed.

- Cole Merkel

## My Dear Cherie

by Aileen McPherson

How will I immortalize you?

By remembering, telling a snippet of a story, with heartfelt words sincere.

I was entreated by Cole, Wednesday Creative Writing 9 a.m., what do you think, check it out, something like that, an OK think about it. I met Cherie one Wednesday at Street Roots, and creative writing was almost over when I arrived, it had been a bad morning.

Cole made introductions and left us there, she was quiet and pleasant, she made me feel at ease, and I would learn that her thoughts and strength were anything but meek or mild.

She taught me how to look through windows, then express what I saw inside, she saw how truths were shared in riddles and rhymes, and prompted with creative thoughts, while asking to reach deep inside and write outside the box.

Reminding always, your only limitations lie within, and this is a safe space to create and share openly if you choose friends.

This is the Cherie I remember, kind and compassionate, teaching respect for others and the space, sometimes you could see she wasn't quite feeling well, yet she smiled.

It was a sad day when she had to leave, her health was more important all agreed, missing her prompting thoughts and smiling heart, we would write on inspired by our teacher with whom we must part. Now the time has come for while her body be deceased, her spirit lives on inspiring others, through every heart touched as she taught.

## My Friend Cherie

by Duane Wagner

My friend Cherie

As I hear of your passing I feel sad and lonely  
You were a true friend  
gone before your time

As you move into a new realm  
always remember

that you are truly missed here on Earth

At Street Roots we thought you were a true gem

Thank you for applying your knowledge of poetry with us.

May you rest in peace

## Cherie's Dream

by Daniel Cox

It may have been 10 free papers

That inspired me to write

Cherie was like a guide

That steered me into

A poet.

## Cherie Manning Carried a Sense of Calm for All of Us

by Lori Lematta

I looked forward to our Wednesday writing group  
Because I knew Cherie would be bringing her calming voice  
And always a little bit extra.

She would come prepared with some piece of professional writing  
And help us explore the wisdom we could learn from it  
As she proceeded to encourage our own expression.

Her entire demeanor emanated respect for those around her.  
I have missed her.

## 4-3-18

by Marlon Crump

A.K.A. "Mad Man Marlon"

Cherie Manning was very instrumental and demonstrated in her facilitation during creative writing classes which Street Roots has provided for vendors for a very long time. Finding the creativity and the passion within ourselves to provide to the world that reality regardless of how the world perceives us as people!

I personally felt so much energetic love by Cherie, whose aura and demeanor reminded me of a quiet, humble version of Michelle Pfeiffer in the movie "Dangerous Minds."

I have not been to every creative writing workshop session for a long time, but from here on out I feel that Cherie's spirit in the space of writing remains within us even though she is no longer with us! I salute her soul!

## Cherie Manning (1950-2018)

by Ron Sanford

She was so mild mannered and kind  
She was always in search of questions  
Not presuming she had the answers  
Though she was well-versed in the classics

Cherie gave us a trove of poetry  
I can recall her diligent looks  
Like the school librarian  
Donned with the stylish horn-rimmed glasses

Cherie spoke much about social justice  
And she was always eager to help  
Handing out pens and supplying treats  
What a joy she was to be around

She left an example of service  
She will be missed dearly by us all

RIP, Cherie, and may God bless your soul!

## My Inspiration

by Doug Marcks

*We lost our inspiration at creative writing  
This is my thank you to her.*

Cherie, you were the light that focused  
the darkness of the streets  
I never missed a Wednesday  
You inspired us  
I came out of that 90 minutes  
Feeling good about myself  
Because no matter what I wrote  
You never criticized it  
In fact, you praised it.  
Cherie, you will be missed greatly.  
Godspeed, Angel.