

# Thankful Memories of All the Love Lotus Gave

by Linda Lemaster

I had not seen Lotus P. Maynor for three years, about since she began struggling with Parkinson's. She died this summer on July 22.

Before then, we had been so connected in our community activities that folks who should have known better thought we were sisters. Our talents complemented each other. That energy made the line between work and play seem to dissolve.

Lotus had been my youngest child's first outside caregiver when I had tried to go back to college prematurely. I was hopeful, yet in denial about being a disabled person. The more broken down I got, the harder I pushed myself for my family. When I found Lotus' home day-care business, "Teddy's Garden," was in my neighborhood, my baby's needs could be met and I rediscovered an old friend.

Not just day care for the poor: a chance at right living.

So then I became a welfare warrior, since it was obvious (from being in it) that the alleged "safety net" system wasn't really capable of helping families get a new toehold into the mainstream, unless they really didn't need one.

Lotus was there to help in so many ways, for twenty years.

Here's one recollection: Her family kept my kids long after a Halloween night agreement because I'd found myself in a hellhole jail in San Francisco, and could not get anyone to give me the time of day, let alone any idea of how long they intended to hold us. It was early afternoon and we'd been jammed into vans, driven round and round the City in circles, and finally — over an hour later — the cops poured us into the worst bottleneck of a jail I've ever seen.

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Linda Lemaster (left) and Lotus Maynor outside Santa Cruz County Courthouse after protesters were arrested for squatting vacant land.

Alene Smith  
photo



Robert Norse photo

Lotus Maynor at the phone on behalf of the Welfare Parents Support Group.

**Her willingness to let people into her heart and her home, when she had one, was an example of living by trusting the Great Spirit. Lotus often took in homeless and other people. Fed them. Hugged them. Listened to them late into the night. Earned her nickname, "Lotta Love Lotus."**