

Stella's Gift

Pete Fasciano, a/k/a "The New Guy" 8/31/2012

In my never-ending frenzy to make some of that progress I talked about last week I've been running in all directions at once - the new guy, tackling a too long to-do list. There are days when "The List"(echo) is gaining on me, but I fight back.

On The List - meet every person that produces programs on Franklin TV. Some were easy. They just step into our teeny temporary studio space and there we are. I sit only 8 feet from the door; I have nowhere to hide, (Not that I want to). 'Oh, hello.' We introduce ourselves and get on with making TV happen.

Stella Jeon does her *Senior Circle* program at the Franklin Senior Center. We spoke several times on the phone. Stella was recording a program on Medicare and Medicaid fraud. I opted to go along; help the TV crew and meet Stella. She is very engaging. She notes many details of our phone discussions. She has a reporter's inquisitive mind. I then managed the microphones during Stella's thirty-minute interview that had something important, yet lacking in many other programs.

Flow.

It had that easy flow of conversation that comes when the interviewer fully engages and genuinely connects with the topic and guest. You've seen interviews where the "asker" just knocks off a series of disjointed questions from a clip board, even when the guest is making great comments that need more exposition. Are they really listening to their guests? Are they engaged? Engaging? No.

Stella is adept at the real art of engaging conversation, and her guests respond to that. You know that she is listening very intently. She is living in the moment and taking it all in. She has flow. She's moving crisply, but not rushing. She is asking all the follow-on questions that the audience wants to ask.

Next thing I knew, it was over. I was fully engaged because she was fully engaged.

Note to self:

Follow Stella's lead. As you flow through this life, be fully engaged. Take it all in.

Even in the midst of my frenzy for progress, I am taking it all in.

And, thanks for watching!

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Stella is So Smooth

by Pete Fasciano, Executive Director 10/27/2013

Stella Jeon called me to schedule a recording session for her interview program at the Senior Center. I hadn't seen her in a while. I was also interested in refining our production techniques for using multiple cameras on location. (That's a story for another time.) With two good reasons to spend time out of the office, off I went. While we were setting up microphones, lights and cameras in the Senior Center's library Stella sat with her two guests to discuss the program they were about to do. The guests were nervous about being on TV, about saying the wrong thing, and a handful of other apprehensions. But, Stella is a pro. Stella is in charge.

Stella is smooth.



Smooth means that you have a natural ability to put folks at ease because you are at ease and totally engaged, all while engaging those around you.

Stella is always engaged.

Stella makes ease contagious.

Stella is a carrier.

Well before we began recording, Stella worked her subtle magic. Her two guests settled in. They focused on her and the conversation that rolled by effortlessly. They were focused on Stella simply because she was totally focused on them. That's what Stella does. All the time.

Then - it was over.

“Really? That's it? We're already done? - That wasn't so bad.”

Score another one for Stella. For her - just another day at the office.

And for me (thanks to Stella), it wasn't just another day at the office.

And, thanks for watching!

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In Memoriam, Stella Jeon

by Pete Fasciano, Executive Director 6/1/2014

As host extraordinaire of our Senior Circle TV Program, Stella Jeon interviewed just about anyone and everyone; 117 episodes over the years. She captured many memories; many lives well lived; many now gone.

Our president Ken Norman, The Senior Center's Karen Alves, Ralph Masi, our TV crew and I gathered at Stella's House. A few weeks earlier we learned that Stella had been diagnosed with pancreatic cancer, and we were there to do something long overdue yet entirely necessary. We were there to interview Stella herself. Privately, each of us also knew we were there to say good-bye.

Not an easy good-bye.

With cameras running, Ken turned to Stella with his first (and only) question. Without hesitation over the next hour a life poured forth. All of it. Stella relived her life and times, her personal journey, offered her very spirit - beginning to end. Clearly, Stella wanted to be heard, remembered, appreciated. She deserved no less.

This was the gift of listening - just listening with genuine interest and caring. This was the gift that Stella so often brought in abundance to her many interviews.

She wrapped up every show with a quote by Abe Lincoln.

"In the end, it's not the years in your life that count. It's the life in your years."

Ever positive, never down, she lived. Stella also knew that the life in your years flows from the happiness in your life, and happiness is a choice - a willful act.

Loss finds us all. Old friends and loves long gone; vision gone, Stella chose happy.

Time to go. She hugged us; told each of us that she loved us.
A parting gift.
She made sure I got a nice slice of spanikopita to take home.

Not an easy good-bye. Not one to be missed for anything.

Thank you, Stella.

And, we thank you for watching!

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Stella, A Life in Pictures

by Pete Fasciano, Executive Director 6/15/2014

We've had many calls during the last two weeks regarding the interview we did with Stella Jeon. I'm pleased to report that we will begin showing this very special program starting June 22nd. Check next week's schedule for times. Our thanks to her daughter Diana for her tremendous help in making this possible. I believe that these pictures of Stella's life deserve more than a few fleeting moments on TV.



Jimmie's Inc., Franklin's popular Clark Square package store which also sold tobacco and confections and owned by the Kehayas family since 1925, changed hands this week and will be renamed Franklin Liquors. Here James Kehayas and his daughter Stella Jeon stand in front of the store which has held many family memories. (Daily News photo by Eileen Vigilante)

And, we thank you for watching!

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STELLA JEON WAY
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