



# Phyllis Simon: The Nature to Nurture

## // One of my mentors, John C. Walker, of Swan River, Manitoba, was a lawyer.

“His secretary taught me to always remember that behind every piece of legal paper is some aspect of a person’s life. Never lose sight of the people amid the paper.”

John died before Phyllis became a Notary Public but she is confident he would have approved of the way she has kept his instructions.

Herbert Nagler and his wife Resi were referred to Phyllis by a teller at their bank. Initially they attended her offices annually to complete a declaration that Herbert was alive, as was required for his German pension. Over the years they visited her office for various other services. “Their warm and friendly manner made the day better for their having been part of it,” says Phyllis.

“At one visit, Herbert was quieter than usual. I inquired if there were any clouds on his horizon. When he failed to answer right away, Resi informed me that Herbert had cancer and was undergoing treatment. During the next visit, I asked how the battle with cancer was going; Herbert told me he was part of a test group for a new cancer drug. When Resi left the office to obtain some papers from their truck, Herbert told me he didn’t think the new drug was working and asked me to ‘please take care of Resi if I die.’ ”

Phyllis tried to make light of the moment and fought to hold down the lump in her throat. She assured Herbert he was probably not dying but, if he was, she would be happy to take care of Resi.

A while later, Phyllis read the notice of Herbert’s death in the paper. She phoned Resi and sent a card expressing her condolences. As the weeks went on, she saw Resi often as she assisted her with various matters. During their conversations, Phyllis learned that many of their friends lived in other places and that their extended family was in Germany.

**Never lose sight of the people amid the paper.**

Their mutual dental hygienist Shelley Hawrys called Phyllis to ask if she thought it would be a good idea to invite Resi to a weekend Women’s Retreat. “We agreed to extend the invitation and rest with her decision. Resi went with us to the retreat and although she was often in tears due to her recent widowhood, she made new friendships that continue to grow.”

Phyllis no longer saw Resi as a client but as a very good friend. “My husband and I include her in dinner and movie invitations and she surprises me and my staff by dropping by with flowers or cookies or little treats to spoil us.” Best of all is when she stops by the office just before closing time with a picnic basket filled with supper—German potato salad, meat, veggies, and dessert.”

Much later, when reviewing some notes in their file, Phyllis was reminded of her agreement to “take care of Resi.”

“Taking care of Resi was a gift I gave myself; it has become a mutually wonderful treasure of shared experiences—enriched living, support, care, and love. Perhaps as women who are Notaries, we need to stop apologizing for how God made us and expand the expression of our nurturing nature.” ▲



*Resi Nagler delivering dinner to Phyllis’s office.  
Photo courtesy of Brenda Hala Photography in Vernon*