

giving back

Written by Waterfront Resident **Nancy Lohman**



STRAIGHT UP SolGier

Victoria McGuirk and Barbara Sandberg met in 1998 teaming up on the tennis courts. Today, they team up for Straight Up SolGier, a nonprofit 501c3 organization in memory of Victoria and Mike's son Matt "Magou" McGuirk (1980 - 2011) and the legacy he left behind.

Matt was the original Straight Up SolGier. When he was a child, he was the victim of a child molester who threatened to kill his family if he told them. Bravely at ten years old, Matt came forward and testified against his predator who was sentenced to 155 years in prison. Matt received a life sentence of suffering and died of an accidental overdose at age 31. Matt is not alone. According to FloridaCHARTS.com, data statistics provided by the FL Dept. of Health, Div. of Public Health Statistics and Professional Management, there were 1,296 reported cases of child abuse in Volusia County in 2013-2015 (49,836 state-wide).

Matt had dreamed of helping save the lives of others who were victims of child abuse. He wanted to write a book, create a website and start an organization so other victims did not turn to drug abuse



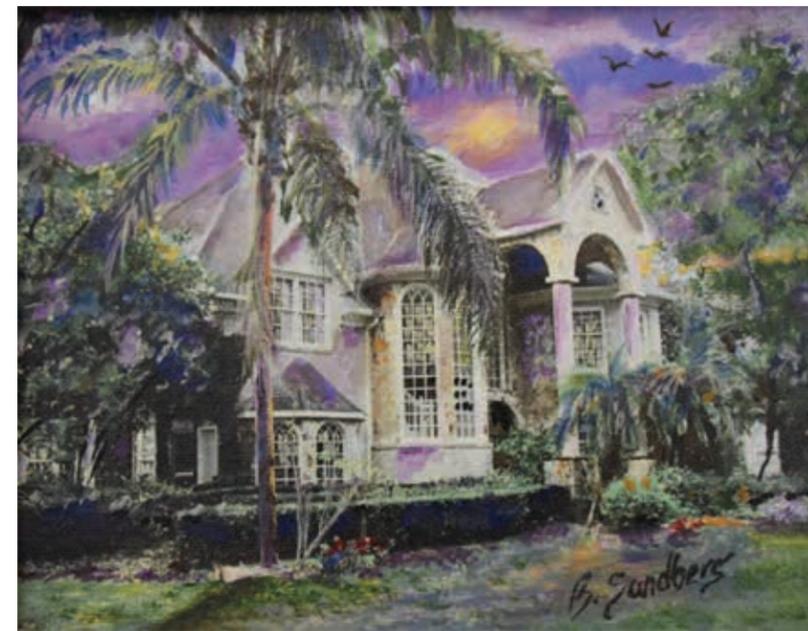
Barbara & Victoria

like he did. It was Matt who created the name Straight Up SolGier, designed the logo and created the dream of an organization which his mother has brought to fruition. Straight Up SolGier, purposely changing the spelling to include a G for God, is a reflection of Matt's spirituality and incredible soul. "The meaning of the straight up arrow is symbolic and represents the victims' standing up and facing their predators to keep them from hurting others," Victoria shared.

The mission of Straight Up SolGier is to work with the local State Attorney offices and other agencies who are advocates for children involved in sexual abuse. "Those organizations help us identify adults and/or children that may need counseling. We provide highly recommended, licensed counseling



A table painted by talented Barb



Barbara's talent



Barbara Sandberg

services for adults and children at no cost. Some of these children do not get counseling because they cannot afford it, or because they have little or no health insurance to cover the costs." Often referred to from Victim's Advocacy, nearly 100% of the funds are used for counseling. There is virtually no money that is used for the organization's infrastructure; the time and the resources needed to run the organization are all donated by Victoria, Barbara and others involved.

The custodians of Matt's legacy are his family, friends and community participants who carry out the fundraising, support, and coordination of resources within the Straight Up SolGier organization. Victoria's close friend and our neighbor, Barbara Sandberg, is one of them.

Barbara, a former teacher, is a talented, local artist and real estate agent who came to this area in 1945 from Fernandina Beach, FL. She learned the value of volunteerism early in life from her mother, Ethel Waite, whom she watched giving back to her community every day. The city of Holly Hill dedicated a riverfront park in Mrs. Waite's name for her tireless service to the community. Barbara is presently serving a second term as Goodwill Ambassador for the City of Ormond Beach, an appointed position. She is involved in three local organizations. She serves on the board of the Unitarian Universalist Congregation of Ormond Beach and on the board of Community Partnerships for Children who provide safe havens for abused or neglected children, foster children and help secure permanent, loving families and homes for them. She is also founding board member, volunteer, and fundraiser for Straight up SolGier - the focus of this month's Waterfront Life - Giving Back.

In 1994, Barbara returned with her family to Ormond Beach, which she affectionately refers to as paradise, and they purchased their waterfront dream home on charming Riverside Drive. Jon is a popular local tennis player who organizes and captains teams within the tennis community. They have enjoyed a 52-year marriage and a beautiful family. They have two children, daughter Luanne Quiggle and son-in-law Dan Quiggle, son Jonson Sandberg and daughter-in-law Kim, and four grandchildren. Recently their oldest grandson Justin

Quiggle, continuing the family tradition of volunteerism, was appointed by Gov. Rick Scott to serve as Commissioner of Community Service and Volunteerism for Volusia, Flagler and Duval Counties.

After graduating from Mainland HS, Barbara studied at the Boston University School of Fine Arts then transferred to Florida State University. After graduation, she earned her master's degree from University of Florida. Her 32-year teaching career in Maryland includes being recognized as Teacher of the Year in 1993 and Coach of the Bethesda-Chevy Chase Men's Soccer Team! Barbara is also a licensed real estate agent. Her career in Virginia, Maryland and in Florida focused on serving diverse, international families. Many know Barbara as the host of her own radio show called the BS Hour (But Seriously, a positive talk show) which aired on WELE. The show focused on serious issues with a positive twist.

Now Barbara's primary focus is her art and her support of Straight Up SolGier. What started as gifts to the buyers and sellers of her real estate transactions, Barbara now paints exclusively for Straight Up SolGier. She creates beautifully painted furniture, and her new collection will be auctioned and sold at the upcoming fundraiser in November.

Victoria and Barbara make a great team, as they do with their husbands as well. Victoria and Mike have been married 42 years and moved here shortly thereafter. Mike retired from the cape after 31 years in the aerospace industry. He now volunteers his time as an assistant football coach for Fr. Lopez High School. They have a daughter, Kristine Reed; son-in-law, Jon Reed, and two granddaughters, Mia and Clyde.

Now you can become a part of the team and be a SolGier. Please mark your calendar and join us Saturday, Nov. 5, 2016, 6-10pm at Down The Hatch for the Straight Up SolGier annual dinner and auction. \$25 per person includes dinner. Music by The Jam. \$22,000 (in Value) on Silent Auction and over 60 raffle prizes!

For more information and opportunities to give back by participating, contact Victoria or Barbara at www.straightupsolgier.org.



Nancy Lohman is the *Waterfront Life* writer for "Giving Back" each month and exploring all the great organizations and causes important to Waterfront residents. If you as an individual, family or your business is involved in a cause, let us know. Email: OBwaterfrontStory@gmail.com