

OLYA WORONA

Yesterday morning May 3rd 2007, the employees of Lava received shocking news of the unexpected passing away of our Human Resources Manager Olya Worona, known to some as Alanna Worona.

Olya was 54 years old and in the prime of her life. She left Lava Monday evening to pick up her car. There were no indications of anything being wrong. A few short hours later she passed away.

It is an untimely passing. Shocking to all, and reminds us all of our fragility and temporariness on this earth.

In the tradition of most cultures, when a person passes away, people tend to pull out all the good things about that person and their life. The sharper details of a persons' personality are by-passed. This is a method of remembrance, a method of self-preservation.

I intend to do no such thing.

Olya Worona was an employee of mine for two and a half years. As Human Resources Manager she drove me crazy. She drove me crazy by doing her job meticulously, perfectly; always siding with the employees, presenting their point of view, indicating to me why I should be patient and understanding in a given situation. This was her function as Human Resources Manager and she was outstanding at it.

Yes, Olya was the antithesis of my personality. Where I was rough, she was gentle, where I jumped she would advise reflection, where I advised reflection, she would indicate why immediate action was necessary. She would document and analyse all the things that I had no patience for.

Every morning I would receive at least three emails advising me of the status of all employees - who was in, who would be away, who was away on vacation, who had called in to say they would be late. Olya was usually the first person to arrive in the morning and the last to leave. In the evening she would meticulously walk through the whole plant ensuring that all machines were turned off, that all cabinets had been closed, that all lights were off for the night. Not once during her tenure at Lava did I worry about the alarm system not being turned on, or the building not being secured properly - Olya was on the job. On Saturdays and Sundays she would take time to come by and inspect the building, pick up the newspaper if it was lying by the door so that it would not remain conspicuously obvious that the building was empty.

When I went away on business or pleasure I knew that Olya was there, tending to Lava with more love than even I myself would show.

Olya always organised little things - from employee birthday cakes and cards, to Halloween pumpkins that she painted with bright faces, to little gifts at Christmas, Easter, or for no reason at all.

Having organised Human Resources to the point where she had extra time, she started doing sales and answering the phone. Her method of answering the phone "This is Lava, how may I direct your call" drove me bonkers; and yet, everyone I spoke to told me she was

excellent, friendly and extremely efficient. Having extra time, she started taking care of general office duties - ensuring that supplies were abundant, that coffee was available, that the office was clean, that the sales people had comfortable telephone headsets; even so far as assuring that the fish in our little aquarium were fed.

If something needed tending to, Olya was there, no prodding required.

Early on in her tenure at Lava, Olya realised that for me to do my job, I had to be sheltered from telephone calls from the outside world. The interruptions of these persistent phone calls interrupted my day and caused havoc in my schedule. As some of you may know, Olya effectively built a wall around me; getting through it was next to impossible. At the same time, the people that she knew had to speak to me got through without any problems. Her efficiency in message taking is legendary. Although people did not personally talk to me, they were left with the understanding that Olya had advised me of their call and message. Not once did I speak to someone who attempting to get through to me would in anger or frustration belittle her or her tactics. She became known as "the Berlin Wall" around me.

I knew Olya also from a personal side - from church, from the Ukrainian community of which we were both a part. I guess I new her also as a human being. One who respected me, and whom I respected.

Olya, it may be very selfish of me, but I will miss your presence at Lava and in my life immensely. As a man of faith, I will not shed a tear for you, as I believe you are now in a better place than this earth with all its troubles and sorrows, but last night driving home from Lava, I shed more than a tear - I broke down and cried, not for you but for me and all who new you.

Thank you for enriching our lives. We will miss you immensely.

Vichna tobi pamjat` (may the memory of you go on forever).

Roman (Moko) Wynnyckyj
President
Lava Computer MFG. Inc.

SUNDAY

Visitation: Sunday May 6th, 2007 - 5:00 pm to 9:00 pm
Turner and Porter Funeral Home
2357 Bloor St W at Windermere near Jane

Panachyda (service): Sunday 7:30 pm

MONDAY

Funeral Services starting at 10:00 am at Turner and Porter Funeral Home, continuing on to St Nicholas Ukrainian Catholic Church (4 Bellwoods Avenue at Queen Street), and interment at the St Volodymyr Ukrainian Cemetery in Oakville.

Lava Computer MFG. Inc. will be closed all day Monday to allow employees who wish to attend the funeral rites to do so.

Olya's voice will remain on our telephone system during non-office hours advising callers that we are closed and that they should call back or leave a message.