

Loomis's 'redhead of the foothills' opens new forum with streaming media show

By Judie Wilson
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Dubbed 'the redhead of the foothills' by the many participants of her former online newsletter for Streetmail.com, Rosemary Roberts, or 'Rosie' as she is fondly known by her listeners, had lively discussions over local issues through email. That was in the late 1990's. Today, new technology has allowed her a new format to discuss issues regarding one of her passions, healthcare and the patients right to information about it. Roberts streaming media show on the internet, 'The Patient's Voice', produced from her Girl On Point Creative Services business is emerging as one of the most popular nationwide shows available in the streaming format. Roberts has partnered with nationally recognized publishers of print media, recently finishing a three-month series with senior editors of Prevention Magazine. "Now when big things happen, like the recent recall of the drug, Vioxx, Prevention editors call me to do a show," exclaimed Roberts delighted.

"As a business, online radio is quickly earning itself a respectable market share," says Roberts. "According to recent surveys by RradioNetwork, on average, online listeners participate over three hours per day, possess a bachelor's degree or higher education and earn over \$50k in annual income, all of which make for an attractive audience to advertisers," explains Roberts. "While the show's topic is healthcare, our audience is open to a wide variety of advertising, including the service, automobile and financial industries. Keeping shows in our archives for nine months also provides an extended period of exposure for advertisers." Helping to drive important traffic to her site, the Patient's Voice is the only healthcare talk show featured on Windows Media Radio Tuner, an online channel-guide giant.

"The show's purpose is an important one, Roberts says, "I've been able to blend my style of 'straight-up' talk with the consumer's need to have a voice; some place where their needs are what matter the most, not the pharmaceutical companies or the medical community's. The show is content driven by and for consumers and we'll tackle what they write in and say is important to them."

Roberts, who has been a resident of Loomis for eighteen years is the single mother of one son, Sean Stanfield who graduated from Del Oro High School and is now residing in Southern California. She has been an advocate for teens, animals and residents of her community for a long time, including a run for a seat on the Town Council in 1996. Roberts says her background is one in which she was raised on marketing and business solutions from the age of seven when she worked alongside her father in his distributorship after school and every weekend. "My dad was the first to bring pantyhose to northern California and was driven by an integrity that was measured, at the end of the day, by consumers," she said. When her father became ill in 1974, she was issued a "hardship" driver's license and serviced his 72 accounts from Monterey to the Reno/Tahoe basin into her junior year in high school.

Her roots in healthcare began in 1976 as a medical assistant at a Del Paso Heights clinic. "In the Heights at that time," Roberts recalls, "social rules were very different than say, in Foothill Farms, and you had to leave your judgments at the door if you were going

to able to understand your patients, and more importantly, earn their trust and respect. I was in training for what would become the most valuable part of what I do, not only today, but my work with patients over the last twenty-four years.” Roberts was recognized as having a unique connection with the patients and a willingness to learn and was thus afforded training in areas of OB/GYN, Pediatrics, Urology, Orthopedics, Surgery and Family Practice. Moving on to a private OB/GYN practice in south Sacramento she landed a clinical manager position where education became her forte, helping to organize a new program for Asian refugee women.

Soon her ‘tell it like it is’ style was garnering her speaking engagements with high-risk high school students. “It was prep work for when my own son and his friends needed some straight talk of their own years later. By then I had a lot of practice,” she said with a laugh.

The intimacy of patient care afforded within the private medical practice setting is something Roberts worked hard to incorporate into her more recent fifteen years within the emergency departments at Mercy San Juan, Mercy Folsom and currently, part-time at Kaiser Roseville.

First published in 1993 by Mercy Healthcare of Sacramento, Roberts has now published two books, “10-minute Celtic Spirituality,” and “10-minute Zen” and was a contributing writer to the book “The Miracle of Sons, Celebrating the Boys in our Lives.” She has also written for national healthcare publications on issues of domestic violence and the nursing shortage, and continues to freelance in multiple industries.

In August 2003, an acquaintance familiar with streaming media suggested she consider an online radio program. By November of that year, following a steep learning curve into technology that she previously knew nothing about, the Patient’s Voice was debuted. With the help of Tom Siglin, co-founder of Transitions, Inc. (Kingsport Tennessee), a digital expert in streaming media, Roberts put together her weekly show that plays as easily for dial-up consumers as for those who have DSL or Cable.

Jeff Elliott, a father and firefighter in Normal, Illinois, whose story was first seen on the PAX TV hit “It’s A Miracle” in 2000 regarding his son Eric’s miracle surgery from an orange-sized brain tumor, is a fan of The Patient’s Voice. “My goal is to inspire people through the muck and mire that everyday life can bring,” said Elliott, who has recently completed his own story in his book “Rebounding From Death’s Door.” “The Patient’s Voice has facilitated that goal. Rosemary Roberts’ true professionalism and caring nature puts her at the top of the list for radio show host.”

Donald Gazzaniga, from Newcastle, author of “The No-Salt, Lowest Sodium” cookbook also sees the value of the show. “This is important work Rosemary is doing to get the word out about the latest information patients can have to help themselves gain knowledge about their own health care.”

Doug Elmetts of Elmetts Communication in Sacramento, a spokesperson for several gaming tribes including the United Auburn Indians, was pleased with the feature surrounding Indian gaming that Roberts used to launch her new show, The Patient’s Voice-California. “What Rosemary brings to consumers via her online program, is a media platform that opens the door to responsible discussions with the consumer’s best interest in mind, a perspective that traditionally isn’t provided for in length or content,” said Elmetts. “Her show on the relationship between Indian gaming and healthcare for

Californians provides a unique view into an issue that the public has rarely been exposed to.”

Upcoming editions will target important issues, such as hunger featuring the HOPE Awards given by the Sacramento Hunger Commission. “You can’t discuss better access to healthcare and leave out something that’s vital to health, like access to better nutrition,” said Roberts. “By keeping all of these issues separate, we continue to miss the big picture. These people are putting that picture right again.”

The Patient’s Voice and The Patient’s Voice California can be accessed online at <http://www.thepatientsvoice.com> and <http://www.thepatientsvoiceca.com> Encoded to play within Windows Media Player format (standard software on most computers including Mac’s) both websites feature a free, downloadable link to update computers, if needed, with current WM Player series 9 software within minutes. Both websites also feature links to previous interviews, making archived shows available for an average of nine months. Girl on Point Creative Services can be reached at 652-5309.