

## **Gerry Geer's tribute to Sali**

I have the honor and good fortune today to represent two eras of Sali's life: first, her earliest days as a TM teacher, and second, her greatly expanded role as a key member of the Institute of Science, Technology, and Public Policy and the Natural Law Party here in Fairfield.

I think I met Sali in 1969 or 1970, before I even started meditating, when I used to stop by the Cambridge TM Center because I was interested in what was going on there. But I started meditating in August 1970, and in 1971 and 1972 Sali was chairperson of the Cambridge Center. It's very hard to describe the impact she had on all of us then, when we were basically just meditators in short pants, stumbling around, trying to find our way. She embodied all the values we were hoping that someday we could rise to in our own lives. She had such a penetrating intelligence; she was so refined, on every level; she was so clear, both in her awareness and in her ability to communicate with all of us and to give expression to Maharishi's knowledge; she was so generous, warm, loving, and welcoming—never any airs—just always making us feel that we had always been intimate members of her own family; and she was so efficient in organizing all aspects of the Center's functioning. Honestly, watching her move around the Center, taking care of this and this and talking to this person and that person, you felt like you were watching a cosmic process, like planets moving around the sun—she seemed to be part of a higher order of things, and you wanted very much to be a part of that too. We all adored her; we all were in awe of her; we all looked up to her and wanted to be like her. She was certainly instrumental in encouraging me to become first a TM lecturer and checker and then a TM teacher as well. But she created this influence in the most natural and easygoing way, with exquisite grace and good humor too.

As an example: in 1972 Sali organized the Science of Creative Intelligence symposium at Massachusetts Institute of Technology in Cambridge. I don't know how she managed to convince so many luminaries in their fields, so many leaders of society, to attend, but they all came and participated in a fantastic week-long exchange of knowledge with Maharishi, who was there in person the whole time. I was an usher at that conference, and I specifically remember one meeting, where I was sitting in that darkened hall, listening to Maharishi speak. And I became aware of this flow of love and energy, extending upward and to

the left from Maharishi—so strong it was almost like a beam of light. But it wasn't a spotlight—I checked. And I followed that flow upward, and at the other end I found Sali, sitting in the front row of the balcony, gazing down on Maharishi. And that flow of love and energy and understanding between them was so powerful that it was almost palpable, almost visible. And I thought, “Wow—here's a relationship that's really unfathomable in its depth and significance.” And that, of course, was another wave of inspiration for me to find a way to participate in that too.

After that MIT symposium, Sali essentially disappeared from Cambridge. Maharishi plucked her up and took her with him to Switzerland, where she worked hand in glove with him for many years to help shape and package the knowledge that he wanted to bring out to the world. And I didn't really see much of Sali after that—until I came here to MUM in 1991 and joined faculty, where I've been ever since. And after a couple of years I also started working with the Institute of Science, Technology and Public Policy and Natural Law Party, with Dr. John Hagelin, who was the Party's presidential nominee and the Institute's founder. And there was Sali again, who had come back to the U.S. from Switzerland and was now busy helping with both these major enterprises.

Raja Hagelin would have liked so much to be here today, but he is in New Jersey taking care of his mom, who also has some health issues, and he asked me to speak on his behalf. But the key thing is that John Hagelin adored Sali and treasured her. He so deeply appreciated not only all the contributions she made to the Institute and its growth and development but also who she was as a person—and all the ways she helped take care of him and his expanding responsibilities.

Those were busy times for the Natural Law Party and the Institute: the first presidential campaign had just ended, but John was still traveling around the country, meeting with dignitaries, participating in conferences, going on radio and television talk shows, and continuing to promote all the platform points he had espoused during the campaign. And all of this had to be organized. So Sali, with her usual limitless grace and competence, plunged in to help organize it. She set up meetings with dignitaries and booked rooms; she sent in abstracts and CVs and got John registered at conferences; she helped book hotels and travel; and she also took care of the home front—paying bills, making sure there

was something in the refrigerator when John came home and that the house hadn't fallen down. She and Julia Busch, who also worked tirelessly on all these organizational fronts, made an invincible team. And together their activities freed John from all the concerns of day-to-day existence so that he could focus on continuing to bring this knowledge to society, which was just what Maharishi wanted him to do.

But Sali, as everyone knows, was also a real force for knowledge—and in this way she was instrumental to the Institute too. The real purpose of the Institute was to take all the platform planks of the Natural Law Party and convert them into public policy statements and white papers and initiatives that could be presented to academics, scientists, and government leaders, freed of political overtones, so that this knowledge could continue to influence society after the campaign was over. Creating this transformation required a lot of skill, and Sali was a fantastic writer; she was able to infuse these policy papers with the right tone and subtlety to make them digestible by academics, and she guided the work and output of the Institute policy team and helped shape the final products. In this way she continued to bring this knowledge out into the world. And really, that was what Sali always did. She kept bringing out this beautiful knowledge—and always with infinite grace, effectiveness, vision, and good humor throughout the entire process.

So, Sali: We all adore you. We are all so grateful to you for all the gifts of love, knowledge, kindness, and inspiration you have bestowed on us and on the whole world. Your legacy will reach down the generations to the millions of people who will come to Maharishi's knowledge in the future, and who will be able to access it more easily because of all the ways you helped to shape it and make it available. We will miss you, but we're happy that now you can enjoy your own true divine nature in an unfettered way, as you always did. And since there's really no time and space on that level, we know that you're still with us here and now, and that we will continue to enjoy your blessings, both now and long into the limitless future. Thank you, Sali—and Jai Guru Dev.