

International Ventilator Users Network's mission is to enhance the lives and independence of home mechanical ventilator users and polio survivors through education, advocacy, research and networking.

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Special thanks ...

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How to contact IVUN

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Ave atque Vale!

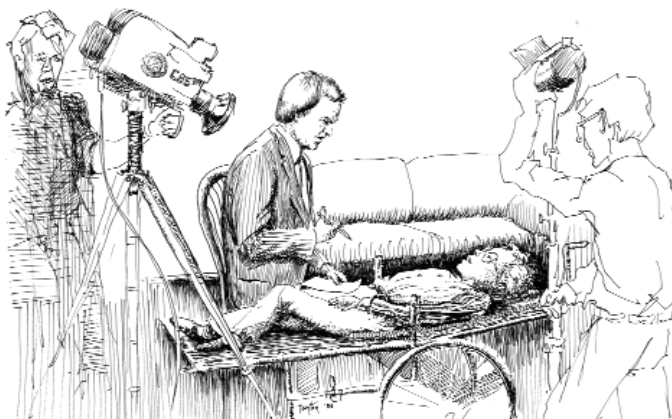
Remembering Susan Ambrecht, 1939-2009

Susan Ambrecht, one of our founder Gini Laurie's most fierce admirers, and supporters, died on August 19 at MetroHealth Hospital, Cleveland, Ohio, from a stubborn pneumonia.

Susan first met Gini in the 1950s when Gini volunteered at Cleveland's respiratory polio ward. Susan slept every night in an iron lung. In the mid-1990s, she reported, "Last night at the restaurant, I had to choose between breathing and eating," and added mouthpiece ventilation during the day.

Susan lived in her own apartment with a team of attendants whom she hired, fired and trained. "It has never occurred to me not to be in charge of my life."

At the 1983 post-polio conference in St. Louis, Susan, interviewed on national television (see sketch below by Bob Tanton), said, "I am just a normal person who happens to be lying down. That is how I feel. Even though my physical form is a little different, my life doesn't have to be."



Gini Laurie died 20 years ago this past June 28, but never would have doubted Susan's capacity to live fully and independently for all those additional years.

Gini was the organizing force behind International Ventilator Users Network and Post-Polio Health International. We salute her vision and brilliance, knowing that she would be immensely proud that the organization has continued, that its reach has expanded and its influence has grown, and that it continues the mission of education, networking, advocacy and research that she envisioned.

Hail and farewell to two immeasurably intelligent, creative, joyful, and independent spirits.

– Judith R. Fischer and Joan L. Headley