

THE EXTRA POINT

BY JERRY ROBERTS



795 A Gift Every Child Can Benefit From — For a Lifetime

Today, a story of a mother's dedication to give her child the gift of understanding the world around her. The story is even better because it's about people who live right here in Guam. That's next on The Extra Point.

Last week, Ray told the story of a local artist, Shauna Fujikawa Stickles, aka Tattoo Shauna, who had created an NFT — Non-Fungible Token — and put it up for sale. NFTs have been in the news for the past few months, as the whole concept of ownership of art is changing.

As I'm interested in this new digital revolution, I contacted her to find out more. What I learned went much deeper, and is more important than a mere NFT.

Shauna first decided to start creating her drawings when her daughter Vaya was born, and the two had a week's stay in a hospital when the baby became sick. Shauna said, "I was worried and sad, so I tried to be positive and grateful for all the good things and started drawing in my sketchbook." As I tell the story, Ray will flip through a few of the sketches Shauna has created.

Shauna's hope was that Vaya would one day see them all, and she wanted her daughter to "come to know that the world can be sad or negative, but it's still a wonderful and loving place to live in."

Vaya is now eight years old. Shauna has created a drawing for nearly every day of her life. The gift of art has passed from mother to child, and sometimes Vaya's drawings are incorporated into what Shauna creates.

Shauna even immortalized the first dollar Vaya made, when she did a doodle and one of Shauna's clients bought it. As you view them, know that these are images of Vaya. I asked Shauna how Vaya feels to be a part of these

drawings. Vaya responded, "Amazing, and it feels like a portrait of art, love, and kindness." This is a special story on so many levels.

It's not just an incredible collection of drawings, it's a window into her mother's heart and soul, as well as what Shauna wanted her to understand through the drawings.

When my son was born, I wondered what I could give him that would appreciate in value over time, and also benefit his future children. Sure, I'd like to give him a financial head start if possible, but I came to the conclusion that the best gift I could provide is a clear understanding of what I felt was important in this life, the principles I try to live by, and what that means for him. As Shauna has done for Vaya, I want my boy to be able to interpret the world through those ideas.

Kids grow, and they're gone from the nest in a heartbeat. I swear it was yesterday that I held him at the hospital, and now he's planning his future beyond high school. If you're a parent, you understand what I'm feeling.

We all want to give our kids what they desire and need, but how far do we go beyond the material things? What will be left when those things have faded away? Could there be something of even greater value?

Maybe you're not an artist like Shauna. Okay, it doesn't have to be about art. You find your own vehicle, something you're comfortable with. Whatever you come up with, that will be just fine in the eyes of your child. If you think it's important, they probably will, too.

Last night I was thinking how graduating seniors in Guam are preparing to enter the workforce, and I also thought about today's topic.

(Con't.)

If you have a kid who's getting ready to start a career and you've been working for 20 years or longer, think of all you could teach your child about the world of work and how to get ahead. If you're searching for an entry point into what you believe in and practical uses for that information, maybe that's a place to begin.

While it might not have been part of her initial motivation, Shauna's gift to Vaya also serves as an example of intimate and meaningful communication between parent and child, the kind that can be life altering.

Those drawings and journals will become family treasures, to be passed from generation to generation, and could very well inspire future generations of the family. It's the same with your contributions, whatever they may be.

So, what's important to you, that your children and grandchildren should know about, and that can make a difference in their lives? Think about it. Then, make it happen. You'll be glad you did, and so will they, as well as those future generations.

That's The Extra Point. Be responsible and make something good happen today. For 93.3 and the Ray Gibson Show, I'm Jerry Roberts.

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