

Obituary

Photographer loses battle with cancer



A Western Tiger Swallowtail Butterfly mingles with the flowers at Brand Library in June 2008.



Photos by TAMMY ABBOTT

BY KELLY CORRIGAN
kelly.corrigan@latimes.com

Tammy Abbott, a former photographer for the Glendale News-Press and Burbank Leader, lost her 20-year battle with cancer on Saturday. She was 54.



Tammy Abbott

From Springville, near Sequoia National Park, Abbott spent much of her life in Los Angeles pursuing her artistic ambitions. Before becoming a photojournalist, Abbott worked in the music indus-

try and painted.

While studying photojournalism at Los Angeles Valley College, Abbott befriended Rick Meyer, a former Los Angeles Times photographer who became her mentor after she asked him to look at her portfolio at a conference, he said.

"She had the ability to sum up the who, what, when, where and why in one picture. That's essential in a community paper," Meyer said. "We would meet every four or five months. We would always talk about photography, our portfolio, and most of the time, our families."

Meyer admired the way Abbott never complained as she continued to cover assignments, toting heavy

Phoenix Collins pets Caruso, a Friesian owned by Heather Tsumpes, while his mom Tiombe Collins looks on during the Los Angeles Equestrian Center's annual Fiesta of the Spanish Horse in 2009.



Artist Peter Graziano stands strong with his painting in 2009.

photo gear while battling her illness.

David Blumenkrantz, a friend and professor at Cal State Northridge, echoed that sentiment.

Abbott pursued a degree there in 2004, the same year she began working for the News-Press and Leader.

Blumenkrantz said anything Abbott did, "she threw all of her heart and soul into that."

He said some took her lightly, unaware of "what a dynamic, beautiful person she was. Very loving, very delicate, and tough as nails at the same time."

Visual artist and friend J. Michael Walker described Abbott as spunky and scrappy.

"She had this wonderful mixture of being able to recognize that her chances

of survival were slim, but self-confident and strong enough in the face of it all," he said.

In 2009, her health worsened and Abbott stopped working, although she continued to update her blogs with photos and art. On one of them, she described photojournalism as her passion.

"It's an amazing way to see and experience the world," Abbott wrote.

"I've seen and felt firsthand how important it is to approach the subject of my lens with kindness, respect and honesty."

Abbott is survived by her 24-year-old daughter, Rachel Sardi.

As of Tuesday afternoon, details on memorial services had not been announced.



ABOVE: Michael Lee bats during a throwing competition at the Civitan Baseball Jamboree in 2008.

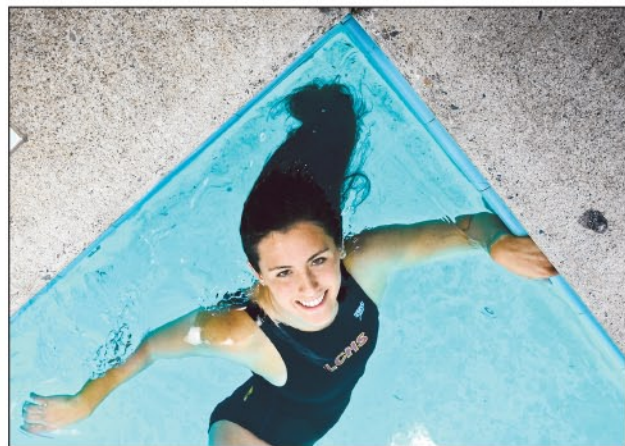
RIGHT: La Cañada High's Berit Kaesler, the 2009 All-Area Girls Water Polo of the Year.



Barack Obama gives a radio interview with Eddie "Piolin" Sotello of KSCA, La Nueva, 101.9 FM in 2007.



A fire at an abandoned storage facility in May 2007 spread to a holding area for new cars, destroying thousands of dollars' worth of stock belonging to Star Chrysler and Jeep.



St. Francis High players celebrate winning the CIF Division II Southern California Regional Championships in 2009.

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