

## March Madness

Written by Sarah Love

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So, February was a blast! The Arizona Foothills Magazine presented me with three tickets to bring my friends to the Phoenix Open! This is definitely one of my favorite events to come up to Phoenix for, and I was so excited they offered them.

Every year is an adventure, sometimes I make it, and sometimes I don't, but all day in the sun with all of my University of Arizona buddies was great, and I ended up with some major color, it was such a nice day. My Valentine's Day also turned out wonderful with a wonderful dinner with friends, and of course receiving those epic red roses and chocolates yum! Birthday celebrations were also amazing filled with birthday festivities shared with friends, who showed they care by making it crucial to make me happy the entire weekend. For that, I thank them because it makes my birthdays oh so special, and the cookie cake of course.

Coming up this month, I will attend "The Best of Our Valley Finale Party", and I'm very excited to meet all of the successful people who have inspired each and every one of us in their field. This always fascinates me because I feel as though we all need mentors, and guidance to be the person we want to be, and live the life we've imagined, but not be afraid to ask for advice. I will certainly be harassing everyone for his or her success secrets! I am also excited to discuss my reign as Face of Foothills thus far with my January magazine that my wonderful mom had framed!

Another thing about March is a wonderful success story that I thought I would share. It has been a long time coming, filled with many disastrous and negative thoughts reflected over the years, but my beautiful mother will receive a second life! She will be receiving a kidney transplant from my very own Polycystic Kidney Disease-free brother. A.) I'm so glad he does not have PKD! B.) My mother will be able to be healthy once again after having less than 15% of her kidneys functioning. C.) I feel very fortunate for the luck, and pride I have for my family, and love that I am able to freely know my mother will be all right.

If anyone should know grief in their life, they know there are two feelings that emerge over time. One, is the obvious "why me", or the immense feeling of distance, or need for a break. The other is strange to me. I felt a sense of gratefulness that I could feel something higher than the mediocrity or superficiality that young people can feel or be associated with often. I felt like any situation that I could go through could never be that bad, so nothing ever bothered me. No petty drama, or loss of a necklace could ever compare to the possibility of the loss of someone you love. My priorities have been cleared. For years, my family had no idea what would come from my mother's PKD, and we've all slowly watched my mother decline in her health, although she hides it very well. Now, our minds are at peace with the fact she will be alive for years to come. The fact my mother has been sick most of my adult life has never fazed me, and it has never complicated my life since I've never identified with it, or thought of it as a reality in her life, and subsequently our lives. I've chosen to ignore its presences, but now I can officially do so; however, I would like to bring awareness to the disease. I've received many careless comments about my mother being an alcoholic, because they confused the kidneys with the liver. Polycystic Kidney Disease is hereditary. Her father had it, and several of her family members do as well. It can progress rapidly, and develops later in one's life, for my mother, in her 40s. It is a disease that causes high blood pressure, and can spread to other organs causing them not to function anymore. The kidneys also flush out good minerals instead of bad ones, and general don't function anymore, so the blood cannot clear itself out. This is where dialysis comes in, and causes one to be a slave to their machine, which clears their blood for them. Not ideal. Famous celebrities like George Lopez suffered from the disease, but let's not mention the fact he got a transplant from his wife, and cheated on her... okay so I mentioned it. So there is my brief synopsis of the disease.

In conclusion, no matter what is going on in your life that's stressing you out, take a moment to remember there are always people who are worse off. More important than a late homework assignment, or missing a deadline is one's health, and one's family's health. This is something people around the world could only dream of, daily. This month's goal is to try and recognize negative and earthly emotions, and try to rise above by taking a moment and absorbing yourself in what's beautiful about your life and those around you.

Love always,

The Face of Foothills 2012