

CHRIS BUSA:
A WELCOMING FRIEND

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CHRIS BUSA BECAME A FRIEND. At my first Mailer conference in Provincetown in 2004 when I knew very few attendees personally, I was sitting at a table with friendly strangers when Chris came over to introduce himself. I could see from the start he was a most welcoming person. From then on, we always connected at Society conferences and then when I taught workshops at the Mailer Center in Norman's former house. In fact, whenever I was in Provincetown, we made a point to get together privately, have a few drinks and dinner, and talk about our plans and projects—and of course about Mailer. We also began to share manuscripts of whatever we might be working on and managed to stay honest with each other during that process—a difficult line to walk with a friend. Chris and I were the same age. One of the things that shocked me about his sudden death was that he had been quite an athlete, a superb tennis player and a strong swimmer in Cape Cod Bay. We'll all miss his unique presence at future conferences. As with some of our other colleagues who have passed over the last several years, there is now a gap in the Mailer Society that can't be filled.