

A Tribute to Jim Schubert

Jim Schubert was the most open person I have ever known. He could, and would, talk about anything. At a recent dinner of Coterie spouses, Ben asked Jim how he was doing and he told us in great detail what it was like to have multiple myeloma. What you saw is what you got with Jim. He was a REAL person.

As further evidence of his openness, I site what he wrote about himself when I was doing a Rotary program about military veterans in our Kent Club. While most of us were writing about our promotions, medals and where we served, Jim wrote this about himself.... I was the PX Officer for two years (1956-1957) at the England Air Force Base, Alexandria, Louisiana.

During this period I was under investigation, but exonerated, because our Bachelor Officers' Quarters burned down. The fire was started when an unauthorized oven I had in my room caught fire. The oven was later found in a nearby river. I asked Jim if he was sure that this was the statement he wanted included in the Rotary Military Story and he said, "That says it all about my military service!"

For the past four or five years, Jim and I practiced golf every Monday afternoon, weather permitting, after he had finished serving meals at Kent Social Services. We would go to the practice holes at The Kent State Golf Course and hit several hundred balls, before playing nine holes. The first few times we practiced golf and Jim tried to quit double hitting chip

shots...he double hit so many chip shots we stopped counting penalty strokes and just assumed he had mastered that part of his game. We got better... and Jim got much better as it became obvious that he had beaten his prostate cancer. More importantly, the practice sessions turned into therapy sessions as the multiple myeloma surfaced. Not just therapy sessions for Jim, but for both of us. For those of you who don't play golf, you have to understand that golf is the excuse men have to get psychotherapy when they are too tough to go to an office to seek help. Jim and I discussed everything...the easy stuff...KSU and NEOUCOM and Politics and the Economy....AND, the hard stuff...Abortion, Euthanasia, Religion, God, Death, Kids, and Grandkids.

I listened to him and he listened to me. I learned more than he did. One day, I told him, that because of some troubles we were having at our church, that it was just the excuse I needed quit going to church. He emailed the next day and said, "I was talking to God this morning, something I do a lot nowadays as I know there is no turning back from this multiple myeloma thing, and I asked him about you giving up on Church, and He said 'Tell Glenn to get off his ass and do more things for others and stop whining about the little things!'"

Well, after what was to be our last golf practice in October, Jim said let's play several holes. He would drop his ball about 100 yards from a hole and play in from there. On the 15th hole, a par 3 hole at Kent State, he wanted to hit from the tee, and because he had lost so much strength, used his three wood to negotiate the 160 yards. When he hit his shot

onto the green, he decided to hit another shot and hit that one onto the green too. After two putting both balls for pars, he said, "That is it for me for this season." It was then that I sort of knew we would never play golf again.

Last week, Jim asked me to take him to the hospital for some tests. He was in so much pain, he couldn't take his pants or shirt or shoes off. He said, "I'm so weak," while I was thinking how strong he would have to be to go through what he was experiencing. I told him I thought he was really strong. He patted me on the head. After the tests, the nurse said, "Where are you from?" and Jim said that we were from Kent. The nurse said, "My daughter goes to Kent State." I said, "Tell your daughter that you helped a member of the Board of Trustees at Kent State and Chairman of the Board of Trustees at the College of Medicine today." She said, "Mr. Schubert, I could tell by how nice you treated us that you are someone really important." Jim said, "Don't tell your daughter I was such a wimp during the MRI!"

When we finally got to the car Jim said, "Do you know how I get through those tests?" I said "no." He said, "I just pray to God to give me strength...and I say it over and over and over until it works." As he sat there gritting his teeth in pain, and laboring to get enough air to breathe, I was just praying that some day I might be half the man he had become.

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