

Bon Voyage, Bill



My darling Bill went on to his next adventure last Wednesday morning at 1:20 AM.

It has been a roller coaster ever since. There have been buckets of tears and loads of laughter as we tell stories and remember this amazing man. What has been more healing than anything has been the presence of my two daughters, Bill's grandchildren Bella, Walker and Kiara (ages 9 and under) and his sister Anne's dog Willa. There is just something about children and dogs that remind you that life is to be enjoyed.

I have been surrounded by love, despite my deep sadness and the gaping hole he has left in my life. It has been amazing to hear from so many people around the globe who feel the same way--that life will never be the same knowing that Bill Jurika is no longer walking the planet. It is overstating it to say it's as if Superman died but Bill did sometimes seem to have super-human powers. If you say, "He survived for 28 months with pancreatic cancer," that is admirable enough. But to say that, during that time he kayaked the Napali Coast in Kauai, he kayak surfed, he skied, he river-boarded and he swam like a dolphin, that paints a compelling picture. And to know that, even at 130# he continued to exercise, and, when he could he kayaked the lake at the state park where we were "glamping" (as Monica calls it) and he exercised despite pain and profound weakness.



"The ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in moments of comfort and convenience but where he stands at times of challenge."

-- Martin Luther King Jr.

He never stopped fighting. He was in treatment the Friday before he transitioned. But he knew his time was drawing near. A week before he left, he was lying on the floor in the living room of our condo because it helped with his back pain. I was on the couch. He said, "Come sit in the chair so I can see you (he always wanted to be able to see me). I complied and he said, fighting tears, "I want to memorize your face

in case I don't make it."

And so, at the very end, I was lying next to him, stroking his chest and arms. I got up to hug Steve and Monica who were leaving to go back to their hotel when Monica said, "His eyes are open!" I put my face above his, looked into his beautiful blue/gray eyes and said, "I love you Bill.' He struggled to reply but was too weak, took a few shallow breaths and left us. I like to think he died seeing my face full of love for him.

I hope sharing all this doesn't make you uncomfortable. My Dad always said that I wear my heart on my sleeve. But you have been with me since this began and I thought you would want to know.

Love (so much love),

Silver