



Newsletter

The Gene Roman Family Foundation Newsletter
November 2004 Issue 1

IN LOVING MEMORY GENE ROMAN

April 23, 1947—May 18, 2004

As all of you know by now, our founder, Gene Roman, went home to be with the Lord on May 18, after a 14-month battle with cancer. The support we received from our family and friends, and the families and friends of our family and friends, during that 14 months was absolutely incredible. It is difficult for me to find words to thank everyone for the constant outpouring of love and prayers. I would like to reprint portions of an e-mail I sent to "The Gene Team" a few days after his death.

"...It was, of course, the most trying time of our lives, and I hope you realize how much you helped us get through it. Our love for each other, our faith in our God, and the incredible love and prayers from our family and friends made a horrendous situation tolerable. Thank you.

"Gene and I had the most incredible love for each other and we were so very blessed in so many ways. He was my husband, my lover, my best friend, my confidante, and most of all, my soul mate. I will miss him for the rest of my life.

"My comfort is that even though he is gone from our lives, he is done suffering and has gone home to be with the Lord. He did indeed suffer, especially at the end, and he was ready to go home...he told me that the day before he died. He died peacefully at home, surrounded by his family, and that was his final blessing on this earth.

"I don't need to tell any of you what a wonderful man he was...you wouldn't be on the Gene Team if he hadn't touched your life in some way. I will say, however, that he never ceased to amaze me...he was truly the most forgiving, kind, caring man I have ever known. During his illness, he never complained, questioned 'why me' or became short-tempered or crabby. He just accepted what God dealt him, fought that awful disease with all his will, and left this earth with grace...just as he lived his life. What a guy!

"When this raw hurt goes away, I will be blessed with an incredible store of wonderful memories...I am so proud to have been his wife.

"Thank you all again...it's been a long rough road, but Gene has received the reward he so richly deserves, and as Doug said at his funeral...we do not grieve for him, we grieve for ourselves because we have lost him. His suffering has ended and he is in paradise. (Gene always said he thought paradise had sunshine, beaches, and palm trees and looked a lot like Maui.)"

I am proud to continue working for "Gene's Legacy" - The Gene Roman Family Foundation—and dedicate this first issue of our newsletter to Gene's memory.

- Sandie Roman

**MARK YOUR CALENDAR NOW
THE THIRD ANNUAL
GENE ROMAN FAMILY FOUNDATION
FUNDRAISER DINNER
will be held on Friday,
April 22, 2005
Don't miss it!**

WHERE DO YOUR DONATIONS GO?

We're proud to announce that the Second Annual Fundraiser Dinner, held on April 23, 2004, was an astounding success. Over 150 people joined us for dinner and dancing on Gene's 57th birthday. It was an incredible evening—those who attended can attest to the feelings of love and support that filled the room that night. Here's what we've been doing with some of the funds raised:

A—We donated to help a man who is undergoing chemotherapy for lymphoma and also suffering from a heart problem. Even though he continues to work, his medical bills have become almost insurmountable. We received a note from his wife telling us that they were able to stop some of their bills from going to collection thanks to the contribution from the Foundation.

B—We donated to a 35-year old mother of three children who is unable to work because of surgeries and treatments for thyroid cancer. Her husband's income alone cannot cover their expenses and they were extremely grateful for our help.

C—We made a donation to help a family whose 52 year old father had Stage IV lung cancer. Although he, too, continued to work while undergoing chemo, the family was still unable to keep up with his medical expenses.

D—We donated to a benefit for a two-year-old boy with multiple medical problems requiring extensive surgeries and hospitalizations.

E—We helped a family whose 16-year old son was diagnosed with cancer seven years ago. Continuing treatments and surgeries forced this family to sell their home and move to a smaller one. We were able to help with a portion of their moving expenses.

F—We made a donation to Lina's Cancer Closet at Little Company of Mary Hospital, which is run by volunteers and provides non-prescription medical supplies and nutritional supplements to cancer patients who cannot afford to buy them.

G—We made a small donation to Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Research in memory of Gene.

F—We donated twenty-five \$20 Jewel Gift Cards to Together We Cope, a local agency that helps limited income families and families with catastrophic illnesses.

F—And we continue to support The Cancer Support Center in Homewood, Illinois, which offers a myriad of services, programs, seminars, etc. to cancer patients and their families at no charge.

All of these things are possible due to your continued support. **THANK YOU!!!** Please plan to join us at the Third Annual Fundraiser Dinner on April 22, 2005. We promise it will be a wonderful evening!

IN MEMORY...IN HONOR

Remember, if you would like to make a gift to The Gene Roman Family Foundation in memory of someone, or in honor of an occasion, such as a wedding, birthday, anniversary, graduation, etc., please send your contribution to:

The Gene Roman Family Foundation
18201 Glen Swilly Circle
Tinley Park, IL 60477

Be sure to indicate in whose memory/honor you are donating, and the occasion if appropriate. Let us know to whom we should send a card, letting them know a gift has been made. We'll take care of the rest—and we'll put the gift to good use. Thanks!

REFERRALS WELCOME

Just a reminder—if you know of someone who is struggling financially due to cancer or some other life-threatening illness, and you think the Foundation might be able to help them, please let us know. E-mail Sandie at sandie@generoman.org or call at 708-532-4454. Many of the people we have helped have been referred to us by our supporters.

OUR MAILING LIST

If you would prefer to receive future newsletters via e-mail, please send an e-mail to sandie@generoman.org and indicate you would like to be on the e-mail mailing list.

If you would like to be removed from the mailing list, you can send your request to the same e-mail address, or write to us at 18201 Glen Swilly Circle, Tinley Park, IL 60477.

THE FOUNDATION STORY— ONE MAN'S DREAM

In March of 2003, Gene Roman was diagnosed with a rare form of cancer. Although his prognosis was grim, his attitude was positive and he was determined to fight his disease. Shortly after beginning his chemotherapy treatments, he realized what a financial burden a life-threatening illness could be on persons and families with limited incomes. In keeping with the kind of person he was, he decided that there had to be a way to provide some kind of help directly to these people.

As his birthday, April 23, approached, he gave the project serious consideration. He said to his wife, Sandie, "I think I will throw a big birthday party for myself and instead of presents, we can ask people to bring donations to help other people." Thus began Gene's dream and his final legacy—The Gene Roman Family Foundation. The Foundation was officially incorporated on April 25, 2003. The First Annual Birthday Fundraiser Dinner was held belatedly in June, but was a huge success, especially considering it was put together in less than 30 days!

We immediately found people who needed our help. The very first person we assisted was a young man with testicular cancer who had an eight week old baby. He was unable to work during his three-month chemotherapy treatment, and the Foundation provided diapers, formula, baby clothes, and other essential until he was back to work.

We also donated to a 50-year-old man who needed eye surgery to save his sight and did not have insurance to cover his costs, to a fund established for the young children of a 38 year old man who died of cancer and left staggering medical bills, to a woman who had a breast removed due to cancer, then had a stroke, and needed help with medical expenses and money for food, and a missionary woman with breast cancer whose medicals bills, even after her insurance company paid its share, were still several thousand dollars.

In 2003 we supported The Cancer Support Center in Homewood, Illinois, and Together We Cope and Tinley Wish in Tinley Park. We purchased several copies of two specific books we found helpful and distribute those to anyone we hear of with a new cancer diagnosis, and we donated Teddy Bears to The New Day Foundation, who distributes them to pediatric cancer patients at The University of Chicago.

At the Second Annual Fundraiser Dinner, on April 23, 2004, Gene's 57th birthday, the ravages of Gene's disease were obvious, yet he was there, greeting his family and friends and promoting his beloved Foundation. He was determined to attend that dinner to celebrate his birthday and personally thank the Foundation's supporters.

Three short weeks later, Gene left this life for eternal life. Despite an original prognosis of possibly less than three months, he lived fourteen months after his diagnosis. Observing his work with the Foundation in spite of his own personal battles with a continually more debilitating disease, someone close to him commented, "Gene sets the standard for how to behave with a life-threatening illness" and one of his doctors said "Gene is an impeccable, incredible example of what a human being should be."

Gene's dream for the Foundation is that the Annual Fundraiser Dinner would continue to grow each year, with attendees returning with their families and friends. Such growth would allow us to continue the work Gene started, and which was so dear to his heart.

Please plan to join us on April 22, 2005 for the Third Annual Gene Roman Family Foundation Fundraiser Dinner. This year, we will celebrate the memory of the man who was able to see his dream become a reality, and we will work to continue that dream in his honor.

INTERESTED IN HOSTING A FUNDRAISER? WE CAN HELP!

Although The Gene Roman Family Foundation officially sponsors only one fundraising event each year, the Annual Fundraiser/Birthday Celebration Dinner held in April, we are always happy to assist others who may want to host an event which donates its proceeds to our foundation.

One group of friends hosted a Friends of Gene Roman Golf Outing. A great time was had by all and they made a substantial donation to the Foundation.

Another group of friends hosted a Candlelight Bowl. Again, it was a fun evening and the profits were donated to the Foundation.

Yet another friend hosted a Home Party, and by working with the party demonstrator used her "hostess rewards" as a cash donation to the Foundation.

By holding a fundraiser and donating your proceeds to the foundation, you help us to expand our donors base, which allows us to help even more people.

If you have an idea for a fundraiser to be held with your friends, don't hesitate to contact us if we can help. We are always happy to receive donations!



The Gene Roman Family
Foundation Newsletter
November 2004 Issue 1

The Gene Roman Family
Foundation
18201 Glen Swilly Circle
Tinley Park, IL 60477

Phone: 708-532-4454

Fax: 708-532-5469

Email: sandie@generoman.org

Welcome to The Premier Issue of Our Newsletter

This is the first issue of our new semi-annual publication, The Gene Roman Family Foundation Newsletter. We hope you find it interesting and informative. Our goal will be to keep you up to date on what's happening with the Foundation—what we're doing, who we're helping, and upcoming events. Your comments and suggestions are welcome at any time.

The Gene Roman Family Foundation is a charitable non-profit corporation founded by Gene and Sandie Roman in 2003, shortly after Gene was diagnosed with cancer. Our goal is to raise money to directly help *people* without deducting the large salaries and administrative expenses that are sometimes involved in larger organizations. We support organizations that offer services and support to cancer patients and their families at no cost and are supported by donations. We have discretionary funds available to help individuals. Often, these individuals are referred to us by supporters of the Foundation. We also take referrals from health care professionals or organizations we support. While our primary focus is on cancer patients, we do support other organizations

and individuals on a case-by-case basis. We are staffed entirely by volunteers. No portion of any donation is used for salaries, nor has any portion ever been used for Gene's expenses or treatments. Your gift to The Gene Roman Family Foundation, a 501(3)(c) corporation, is tax deductible and will allow us to continue with our goals.

Our logo was designed by Kevin Kapala. The Roman column symbolizes Gene's strong character and strength in his battle with cancer and represents the support one can find from family and friends. The bright sun symbolizes the hope that is within all of us. It also reminds us that a life threatening illness makes one appreciate everything more; the sun shines brighter; the grass is greener, etc. The rays coming off the sun symbolize the family's outreach to others.

We at the Gene Roman Family Foundation are extremely proud of the work that Gene began and that we carry on, and we are especially grateful for all of our wonderful family and friends who have so generously contributed to our goals. We thank you from the bottom of our hearts.
