

When we found out that Gerri had cancer over 4 years ago we were like so many others who felt a need to keep it quiet, not letting others know. But chemo takes its toll on the patient and it is soon difficult to hide.

Not long after Gerri, the kids and I decided we wanted to share what was going on in our life so that others would learn what to expect and hopefully deal with it a bit better themselves. Alexis wrote an article in the school paper and I started producing regular updates on our family website.

We were then, as we are today, overwhelmed by the outpouring of support and concern, from the SAS community. Flowers, 4 course meals, help with transportation, assistance around the house and most importantly sympathetic ears or strong shoulders to cry were offered and provided to all of us. Saying thank you just does not seem like enough.

I have been very fortunate and always known how lucky I was to have Gerri in my life. She made me a better man and implanted the best of her in our children JR & Alexis. I also believe she had a positive impact on all the children she has taught over the years. She had a passion for teaching, she loved working with the children and especially in the past year, her love of teaching drove Gerri to work through the pain of cancer and chemo. There were many times I tried to talk Gerri into staying home but she would not hear of it and said that if she stopped teaching she would be giving into cancer. Teaching and concentrating on the kids helped her keep the pain in check.

Alexis, JR and I will never forget the support we have been given by so many not only in recent days but also during the entire 4 year ordeal. We have always known how special Gerri is and it is gratifying to know so many other people feel the same way.

Finally, we want to remind everyone, particularly the women, to get regular check-ups. We have certainly learned that this is not something that just 'happens to everyone else'. Heart disease used to be the number one killer but through advancement of medicines and treatments it has slowed and now cancer is the number one killer. We need to support the various cancer societies so we can prevent others from the effects of this horrible disease.

Thank you