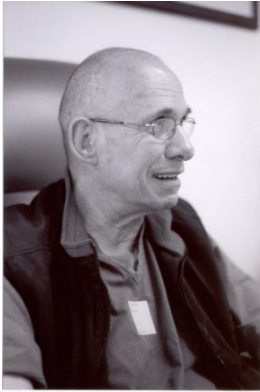


The Topic of Cancer 2



The title of this installment was going to be "The Topic Of Capricorn" but after staring at it for a few seconds without thinking of a single clever pun that would include that Capricorn word, I decided to make this a sequence to the last article. Hence, the "(Part 2)" thing.

Regarding my ailment, two more dates came to gain some importance in my life. October 30th saw me baring my chest for a rib-cage and a lung X-Ray. Both came up negative, meaning that the mass that had caused all this trouble starting August 27th had disappeared - lucky me -- and that it had not metastasized to any part of my rib-cage; again, lucky me. That week-end, I ventured all the way to UTSA for that "D and Under Tournament" and was able to guide (with Neil's help, of course) Chase, Atileo and Edward to a first-second-third place finish, in that order. There were only 17 competitors, meaning that it would be a "D" tournament rather than a "C" had the participants numbered 25 or more. You can't win them all, but Chase won that one and he is now a "D '03".

And that should prove that one can enjoy at least 2 pieces of good news in a row.

That next Thursday, Doctor Kapoor prescribed a booster shot for energy (he still can't believe I haven't stopped giving lessons) and the long-awaited Cat-Scan that would confirm the X-Ray findings of October 30th for Friday 14th. So, full of hope and good cheer I go early on that morning for my Scan, only to be delayed a whole hour in the waiting-room. I didn't know then whether I should take this wait as an omen, good or bad (waiting has never been my favorite thing) and so I opted for "good" as I figured someone was making me pay for some good news, in advance, sort of...

By 11am I was out of there, after I got to view (thank you, Dr. Stoll) the results of my Scan. Again, lucky me; the mass that had blocked my bronchus and thereby closed my left hilum (the upper lobe of the lung situated over the main bronchus) had totally disappeared and the small mass that had flowered on my left adrenal gland (that's what it looks like, a bouquet) was still there but was no longer drawing blood, meaning it was in the process of shrinking. That was November 14th, and it was a GOOD day. Again, lucky me.

Next day, it was on to Houston for the Katy Blades SW Circuit Open where Kat took 6th in the Women's Epee, and Neil and Chase took 10th and 16th respectively in the Mixed Epee Open ultimately won by Tommy Herme. That lad is going places... There I was happy to give some of my friends the good news regarding my health and they made me feel like a star, lining up to ask how I was doing only to congratulate me on my prompt recovery. Little do they know how little I did to recover; I just decided to continue living and working the way I always had and left the rest to my many many friends who prayed and rooted for me and to Dianna and our little family who pretended not to notice it when I would get slightly green around the gills from the Chemo...

My hair has not grown back yet - there was never that much in the first place - but I can see the light, the real light at the end of the proverbial tunnel. Four more 3-day sessions of Chemo (3 weeks apart) and I am out of there (I hope) except for some regular check-ups... Just to make sure that weed doesn't come back and spoil my lucky record.