

Cecil's Health Update

For months I have bored you readers by complaining about my declining energy and concentration. They declined steadily through 2006. About Christmas time I seemed to have caught a stomach "bug" which I tried to ignore for weeks but I continued to have variable fever. Finally, I surrendered and went to our doctor who gave me antibiotics for the supposed infection.

Her initial tests, however, revealed microscopic amounts of blood in my urine and severe anemia. I was sent to various specialists to trace out the problem. In treating my anemia, the hematologist ordered iron infusions, not to heal the cause but to give me added strength in my fight. I underwent four sessions of 4-hours each receiving infusions of iron.

The urologist also thought my severe lack of testosterone was a cause of my problem. The antibiotics which went into a third renewal seemed to interfere, never bring the fever down, and caused extreme night sweats. When my urine showed no infection, it became evident that something else was the problem.

I had been X-rayed many times, but last week they gave me the stomach and intestine X-rays using barium. This was along with a colonoscopy and a CT scan. That revealed a growth just below my belly-button. Biopsies were made, and I received the report of their findings this morning. It was not good news!

The doctor described it as a malignant spindle cell tumor (a soft tissue sarcoma). No treatment is recommended for a person of my age and because of the size. Some medication is available which retards the growth somewhat but offers nothing toward a cure. I had already discussed with family that we would accept no procedure that only promised to extend the problem without hope of cure. No extreme efforts to extend my life or breathing will be allowed. The doctor does not predict whether I may live another few weeks or several months.

Mira has attended to my every need and will continue to do so as long as possible with the aid of Hospice. Hospice only seeks to keep the patient from suffering but offers no curative treatment. Of course, Mira has help from the rest of the family and many local friends have been quick to offer their help. I am superbly blessed.

In my living with Paul and Mira, Tom and Joey, I have done much of my own cooking, grocery buying, laundry, and ironing due to my own desire to be somewhat independent rather than any expectation from them. I have continued to drive and walk about and I may continue to do such things as I have better days. I

have been truly blessed in my aging years to have no persistent pain. Through these last weeks I have had no pain but only discomforts.

Even though I may soon be unable to write, my family intends to keep my web site in operation indefinitely. Your notes, whether by email or snail mail, will be welcomed and read but I cannot promise to be able to respond to them. I cannot carry on lengthy correspondence with you or read lengthy discourses, as much as I usually enjoy those things.

Knowing that you will be thinking of me and praying for me will be of great comfort.

No doubt, I have failed to mention pertinent details in this hurried note. I hope to keep you up to date as things develop.

With my love for all you on this subscription list and others.

Cecil Hook

May 1, 2007.