

MEMORIAL

Robert Gaylord-Ross 1945–1990

It was the Thursday before Christmas last year when I picked up the phone from Shep Siegel. As usual, my brain was running in 16 different directions, so when I first got the news, it didn't register. We had just lost Robert; in the middle of his prime, he was struck down with a totally unexpected brain aneurysm.

When I began to recover from my shock, days, no weeks, later, these questions kept coming back to me, over and over. The first was the most common, I'm sure. Why? What are those forces which cause such a highly productive, totally giving, and caring person to leave us at this relatively early age? The second question, however, is perhaps more revealing of the man: How many people can look back at age 45 and feel he or she has made such a terrific impact on the lives of others, especially those with disabilities? Robert was one of those incredibly gifted and blessed persons who before he was 40 could answer affirmatively to the impact question.

Robert was bigger than life. He filled up a room with his presence, he was a colleague who never said no, he was a friend you could count on. I always will remember Robert for the words of encouragement he gave me for my work and that of my colleagues. I will remember him for the devotion that those who worked with him felt toward him. I will remember him for the love and enthusiasm and affection and pride he showed for his dear wife, Cory.

There have been a number of memorials written for Robert, most of which chronicled his achievements in a much better fashion. I applaud those achievements, but feel that the man's personality and passion for helping others are his legacy. These are the traits that I will remember.

Paul Wehman