

Remembering Frank Petrosino, 1968–2013

His wife, Heidi Smith, writes:

I started to write an obituary for the newsletter and it seemed so dry. I want to share with you the Eulogy I gave for him. I think this speaks more to who Frank was and how we are carrying him in our hearts. The church was packed with over 400 people and they gave me a long, standing ovation. It was such a powerful experience! I want to share it with CEASE folks - life should be celebrated



and death is a natural part of life that comes to us all. I also believe that we in the West do not handle death well - too many people are afraid of talking about it. It is a real gift that we shared the whole experience with the boys. Now that would be a good article. Someday I would like to write about that.

Here are excerpts from Heidi's Eulogy: (The whole piece is on our website, www.peaceeducators.org)

A few weeks ago I asked him if there was anything he wanted me to tell all of you, he smiled and said, "No Blubbering!" We will do our best to honor his wish but I gave him no guarantees.

Frank's comment about No Blubbering is a great example of how Frank lived and how he was choosing to die. He danced and sang his way through life, carrying all of us with him. He saw death as the next great adventure.

His energy was endless - at weddings I would dance with him for a bit and then needed others to come and take over because I couldn't keep going. One of the great things about having kids was that there was always someone to play with Frank. During our annual marshmallow roasts Frank would be running around with the kids while the rest of the grown-ups were sitting around the fire. Kid's from the neighborhood would knock on the door and ask if Frank could come out to play and he always took the opportunity to go.

Frank found life exciting and helped others to enjoy it too. This did not end when we got the devastating news that he had ALS - The next day he bought the Mini Cooper convertible and started planning our amazing trip to Italy.

We all know Frank was so much more than ALS but this illness had a significant impact on our lives. Yes there are the obvious terrible changes to Frank's physical body, yet there were also many blessings that came our way. The love that has surrounded us has been incredible. There are so many people that have come into our lives that wouldn't have and it helped all of us appreciate our precious gift of life even more.

People have been saying to me, "Let me know if there is anything I can do for you." I'm going to tell you two things that you can do for us.

The first is the Spartan Racers to Conquer ALS - we would love to have you join our team because it's really fun but if crawling through the mud is not your thing you can make a donation in honor of Frank.* He believed so strongly in doing everything he could to find a cure for this disease that he participated in a drug trial and a nutrition study knowing he wouldn't get the benefit but others would. And his final act was to rally enough to sit up and be part of the interview with the WCAX Channel Three reporter. He was having a terrible day so I asked him if he wanted to stay in bed - he said no. He wanted to be a part of it because we have to find a cure for this horrific disease so other families don't have to go through this.

The second thing that you can do for us, for Frank is to think of something that you always wanted to do but never did because you didn't make the time or it cost too much or you were afraid. Think of it and go do it. Do it because you can and there are so many people like Frank who can't. As Frank used to tell us go out and "Embrace your lust for life!"

Since the memorial, so many people have come up to me to say, "I finally did this because of what you said at Frank's funeral." Or "I thought of Frank when I did this really fun thing."

* To see what the Spartan Race is all about go to "Spartan Racers to conquer ALS 2013" on YouTube. Heidi and Frank made this video with partial support from a CEASE mini-grant.

Heidi and her team will be doing the Spartan Race again this year. You can make a donation in Frank's honor to the ALS Association of Northern New England. Send a check to ALSANNE, attn. Amy Coyn and note that it is to go to their Spartan Fund Raising effort. ALSANNE, 10 Ferry St. Concord NH 03301