



Robert Bruce Allen

July 22, 1944 - April 6, 2008

On Mother's Day 2007 as we worked together to make preparations for a family dinner, Bruce experienced an unusual weakness on his left side. Diagnosis in the Emergency Room a few hours later found a mass in the left-brain area. Later that week, a biopsy confirmed the existence of a glioblastoma multiforme brain tumor.

Treatment began at Duke University Medical Center in Durham, NC with surgery followed by radiation and chemo. All seemed to be going well. Bruce continued to work and from that moment forward, we were truly "one". Because he could not drive (or fly) it became my task. If I went anywhere, Bruce went too, and if he needed to go, I drove.

Life was good and promising until Thanksgiving 2007. During a visit with his family in LaFayette, IN, Bruce experienced some seizure activity. A visit to Duke, followed by surgery December 27, 2007, revealed a small regrowth of the tumor which was promptly removed.

This simply meant a change in treatment.

Still encouraged, we returned to DUMC in January to begin a new chemo regimen. The night before the day we were to come home to Durham, Bruce experienced fever and chills. We

were immediately sent to the EMR at Duke where tests determined that he had developed a staph infection in his brain and spinal fluid. Further tests revealed the staph had grown under his scalp in the tumor cavity area; alas, most possibly contracted during the surgery the past December (always a risk factor in surgery). The infection was full-blown. In the neurological ICU Bruce was treated with many antibiotics and finally awoke after several weeks. Everyone thought he appeared to be on the road to recovery.

Two days later he was back in ICU. Was it pressure causing him to sleep? Seizure activity was also detected. Both were immediately addressed. Further tests and another surgery showed that the staph was clear. No more infection.

Occasionally Bruce would rouse and respond to questions and conversations. Why couldn't he wake up? The last thing he said to me was that he wanted to go home with me. His comment still brings tears to my eyes.

Bruce was in ICU at Duke January 27, 2008, thru March 7, 2008. We moved him to The Lutheran Home in Salisbury and finally to Kate B. Reynolds Hospice in Winston Salem, NC. He died in my arms April 6, 2008, about 12:15 am.

Bruce was a truly good person, a loving husband, a proud grandfather, a caring father, son, and brother. His family misses him.