

The Steven G. Romiza Memorial Golf Tournament,
September 11th, at the Falmouth Country Club on Cape Cod, MA

I lost my brother to this dreadful disease on March 18th, 2008 (only 3 1/2 months after diagnosis). My brother's name is, Steven G. Romiza, and he was 48 years young. I have decided to champion a cause on his behalf, so his death will not be in vain. My mission, to personally help in the fight against Pancreatic Cancer by raising money for research in early detection and prevention of this very deadly disease and hope that in some small way my efforts will prevent other families from being shattered by the callousness of this cancer.

My name is Judith Young; here is my story:

My brother Steven was very brave. To be faced with such a terrible death, he never complained, he was and is an exceptional man and brother. There were times in his life that he would get down, but he always walked with a smile and held his head high.

Steven was an avid golfer. Oh, how he loved to golf! He was creative in a unique sense. He played music by ear on his guitar and keyboard. Watching and listening to him play his guitar was a highlight for me as I saw the simplicity of his very being. Steven's life was simple and he would find meaning in the simplest questions and find the answers to complex questions. I would call Steven a renaissance man, seeing in him the essential nature of life and the wholeness of his very soul. He was colorful in his personality to the point of him being entertaining.

I cannot begin to tell you about the nature of this disease. There is no cure for this disease and everyone that it touches, is touched on an individual basis. Like a short but complicated movie, those three and a half months with Steven will be forever imprinted in the depths of my mind and will stay with everyone that had helped with his care.

Steven was initially admitted to the hospital for severe stomach pain, vomiting and gray stools. Unfortunately, after a few test, it was discovered that what my brother suffered from was far worse than a bad case of the flu. My mother called me from South Carolina to tell me that my brother was told that his pancreas had a lesion and that he had spent the night in the hospital. That was just the beginning of our nightmare.

The news continued to get worse with every visit to the doctor. The PET scan and laparoscopy later showed that the cancer was in stage 4 and had made its way into the blood stream, and lymph node system. Those words, "Stage 4" cut through my family like a double edge blade. I remember walking with my mother to the recovery room and as we walked around the corner, there was Steven sitting with his hand on his chin, elbow on the chair staring out the window with a blank stare. He noticed my mother and me walking towards him. With one breath and shaking his head, he said, "I am in the fourth stage" - a sentence that there would be an ending to. Steven's already frail body wrapped in the warmth of the hospital blankets just sat and absorbed all that had been dealt to him.

On the way home the silence was all but too chilling and a feeling of hopelessness had absorbed us all; we knew that there would not be many months or weeks if not days before we would loose him. We arrived home and hospice was implemented to help Steven with the management of his pain and the emotion of his diagnosis

Two weeks went by and the pain in his stomach became increasingly worse. The silent killer was silently stalking every organ with-in Steven's body. That coming weekend was the beginning of the end as the cancer metastasized to his appendix causing it to rupture and wrap around his intestines. This fact was not discovered, as other than pancreas pain, until

one of the doctors ordered an ultrasound, several days after the rupture. Surgery was then scheduled for the next day, January 18th. During this time, Steven was becoming increasingly septic and the infection was setting in and without surgery he would surely die that coming week. The next day, Steven awoke from his surgery in horrific pain. He cried that morning, begging for his life to end. Holding Steven's hand I asked him to try and give it a chance.

After a month in the hospital, Steven was doing well – actually gained two pounds. His spirits were up, and his wound was healing. A day that is etched in my mind most of all, is the day he was released from the hospital. I entered the hospital room to find my brother fully dressed, doing a jig like dance with a little boy smile on his face, singing, “I am going home!”. I saw the brother that I remember as a child. I was happy for him, but yet I was scared for him. Unfortunately this happy moment ended sadly as the nurse preparing him for release broke the drainage tube from his stomach, which required surgery for repair. At that, Steven had decided he had had enough.

We left for my aunt's house where he would receive care from family, and visit with loved ones and close friends. He stayed there almost a month before he became toxic to the morphine that they were using to manage his pain. We arrived at the hospital and he was admitted under the care of hospice. He told my mother and me that he felt the safest he felt in the past three weeks. Steven then had a closed door meeting with his physician and hospice. Then the next day they started him on dilaudid, which would ultimately force him into a coma. As Steven slowly slipped into the coma, we sang to him, played his favorite music, read to him, and prayed with him and for him.

Steven, eventually left us on March 18th, 2008 at 5:30 PM, with our dad sitting at his side.

Pancreatic Cancer is very painful physically and emotionally for the individual involved and emotionally scaring to the loved ones that are left behind. Steven was diagnosed with it on Nov 26th and he left this world on March 18th. He had a young heart and a young mind (he was 48) and the transition to enlightenment was very difficult for him. Who wants to die at 48? I could feel his reverence for life. Yet, I could feel how broken he was by the sentence he was handed. He wanted to live and love life until the very end, living with his eyes wide open.

So, to honor Steven, to be his voice against this cancer, I am marching forward to champion a cause to fight this disease that robbed my family and I of my brother.

So, how can you help?

Please join us on, Thursday, September the 11th, Steven's birthday, for [The Steven G. Romiza Memorial Golf Tournament](#), at the Falmouth Country Club on Cape Cod, MA. All proceeds will benefit Pancreatic Cancer Research. If you are unable to attend, but would still like to help in our fight against pancreatic cancer, please make a tax-deductible donation to: The JCM Foundation for Pancreatic Cancer Research.

Please, contact me at SeafJewlz@aim.com for further details on our event, or if you would like to help in other ways, in the fight against Pancreatic Cancer.

Blessings,

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Steven, is survived by two beautiful children, Stevie-Lee Kelley, (17) and Matthew Tyler Romiza, (14). In addition, Steven has two gorgeous grandchildren Evan (2) and Cameron (18 months). Steven's memory will live on for his children and grandchildren as we honor him and keep him alive in our hearts. He was taken too young to create his own memories with his grandchildren, but they will know him through his family and friends, as we will not forget his brave and courageous soul. Steven, is also survived by his loving father George P. Romiza, and loving mother Rosalie A. Leblanc; two sister's Lori A. Celantano and Judith L. Young and one brother Scott M. Romiza.