

Around Christmas of 2002 my great friend and long-time golf bud, Steve Johnson, started complaining of excessive heartburn. Being the person I am, I quickly diagnosed it as old age (Steve had just turned 40).

Well, it kept getting worse. It was now time to see a specialist and seek some more extensive screening. It was only after a thorough MRI that I received the call. The results, while not "official," showed signs of advanced pancreatic cancer that had also spread to other surrounding organs. Steve told me the look on the technicians' faces pretty much told the story.

After a rainy-day trip to his appointment with an Oncologist, everyone's worst fears were confirmed. Steve was officially diagnosed with Pancreatic Cancer. While there was no mention of how long he had to live, the doctor suggested that Steve would be wise to do whatever it is he really wanted to do as quickly as he could. That was another call I didn't want to get...."We're going to Pebble Beach." Normally this type of news would send me through the roof with excitement, but I now knew that this was very different.

The trip to Pebble beach with Steve, Dan and Margie (Steve's Brother/Sister-In-Law) and Pam (Steve's Sister) was probably one of the best memories that I'll have. I won't go into the great details here, but as the saying goes, "What happens at Pebble, stays at Pebble," or something like that.

After the trip things really started to go downhill fast for Steve, and a few months later on July 11th, I got the last call I ever wanted to get, but the one I knew was coming. Steve had passed away. Like I mentioned previously...Steve was only 40.

One of the more ironic things was that Steve Makousky happened to be over for dinner on the 11th of July. Not the best "what a coincidence" story, but certainly you start to see the parallels of our stories and understand why we came together for this cause. I certainly hope this helps shed a little light on my story with the event.

As for the entire story of Steven R. Johnson...bring your memories to the golf tournament, and we'll exchange stories the way Steve would expect..."Following a great round of golf and over a couple of cocktails!!!"

Cheers,
Mike Coghlan