

A Tribute to: Nick DeWolf

Nicholas DeWolf, a beloved Pathfinder patient, passed away on April 16th, 2006. He was a person described by family and friends as “extraordinary, a genius, unorthodox, brilliant, nerdy, eccentric, ahead of his time, optimist, dedicated, rebellious, and passionate”.

Daughter Nicole DeWolf, in an Aspen Times article dated July 14, 2006, said of her father, “He was one of the most forward looking people I’ve ever known. He never looked back if he could afford it.” To Pathfinders, he was a man who embraced life and who lived purposefully.

Born in Philadelphia on July 12, 1928, DeWolf graduated from MIT at 19. He worked as an engineer for GE in the late 40’s, and in the mid 50’s he left to become chief engineer at Transitron working on semiconductor prototypes. DeWolf saw the need to test electrical devices and co-founded Teradyne in 1960 with MIT classmate Alex D’Arbeloff above a hotdog stand in downtown Boston. During his time as CEO of Teradyne, De Wolf designed more than 300 testers, including the first computerized semiconductor test system, which is today found in all electronic products.

DeWolf and his family moved to Aspen, Colorado in 1971 and became immediately involved in the community. In 2006, both Nick and his wife Maggie were inducted into the Aspen Hall of Fame for their



Nick DeWolf, beloved Pathfinder patient

lasting contributions to the town, including helping to found the Aspen Center for Physics and the Aspen Filmfest as well as designing the symphonious dancing fountain on the Hyman Street Mall. Known for their dedication to making Aspen a better place, Nick and Maggie devoted time and energy to causes they believed in.

Being the scientist that Nick was, he was skeptical of the Pathfinders program at Aspen Valley Hospital, because it asked him entertain new ways of coping that drew on his mind-body-spirit techniques to deal with his cancer. The Pathfinders program helped Nick get in touch with just how meaningful the relationships in his life were. “He was an amazing spirit and loved people who had a passion”, says Pathfinders Founder, Tina Staley, “And he always wanted to give back and help others succeed in their dreams”.

Nick said to Pathfinder Tina Staley, “This program is amazing. It has given me an opportunity to reflect in a way I would not have otherwise.”

After having gone through the Pathfinders program for a year while receiving chemotherapy for Prostate Cancer, Nick spoke openly about his mortality and said to Pathfinder Staley that for the first time he wasn’t afraid to die. The Aspen Times quoted him as saying, “A lot of people die badly, they could have a lot better time of it”. (Aspen Times, Dec. 18, 2005).