

Would you like to know what it's like to be diagnosed with stage 4 cancer, read on but be aware, it's not good! So, we're living a great life in Florida and decided to move from Marco Island to Inverness where we bought a 5-acre lot on a chain of lakes and had plans to build a house, but Florida was changing rapidly because of influx of people moving in from the north east and west coasts and driving up prices and time to build so we had a conversation and decided to move. I wanted to be closer to my fabulous family so we could drive to see them. So, after lots of debate we decided on Pagosa Springs, Colorado and found a house that needed some tlc and bought it, sight unseen. We sold the Inverness house and headed out. I hate what this diagnosis does to Deb and that she has to go through this but she's as tough as my children so she'll make it, and the support she is giving me is why I might make it through this.

We stopped to see Wayne and Jana in MS and I had been having stomach problems for a couple months but nothing serious until we got to Wayne and Jana's where all hell was unleashed on me with pain like I've never felt before and growing up on a farm we are

used to pain in many forms. We headed to the emergency room where I was vomiting and bent over with pain that almost made me pass out. And after a CT scan and exam the Doctor said you have growths in you colon and upper abdomen and my opinion it's stage 4 cancer. I admit it was at first a shock that shook my soul, but was good to know I had a soul, and we'll see what tomorrow brings.

We left for Colorado and, believe it or not, by the time we got to our new home, I was at peace with dying but had to figure out if I was going to tell anyone or just leave Deb and family to go away and die. This might seem strange to some of you but the thought goes through my mind that I get to see some of those that went before me like my son Jason, Barb, Harvey, Mom, Dad and my cousins and uncles! My first choice was not to let anyone know because I've been with people that had terminal cancer and it's very hard, as some of you know, so I didn't want to put my family through this journey. I decide first not to tell anyone and take some time to determine if I was going to see another Doctor and talk about treatment or not. I decided after a few days to at least

talk to another Doctor, so I called the Pagosa Springs cancer center, are you f!@king kidding me, they have a cancer center in a town of 2800 residents, what the hell, guess we picked the right place for me to have cancer! I decided to have a consultation with the Doctor and here we go, draw blood, get a CT scan, get a PET scan (even though we don't have a pet), have a colonoscopy, do a biopsy, have another colonoscopy and another biopsy. I do not like this at all but decided to take the advice of the pro's and start treatment with chemo infusions of a drug called FU5, are you kidding me, this makes sense because I can hardly put a sentence together without using f!@k or f!@king and other swear words.

Ok, so I've decided to start treatment and see what happens, but life's interruptions can be weird, and I get a text from my beautiful daughter Hiedi, and she said I'm coming to see you guys. Ah shit that's not in my plans so guess I have to tell her. She's so tough and took it well with a bunch of questions and frankly answered some concerns I had and after talking to her, it seemed so selfish to just go away or not tell

anyone so thank you Hiedi. I start chemo infusion 1 of 12 and it wasn't too bad except for the steroids they gave me to help handle the chemo effects and it made me a raving maniac for the week following the infusion! There was a guy that had the same schedule as me and his name is Gary and as we progressed through treatment, I saw Gary melting away because he was skinny when I first saw him and his hair was falling out and it looked like a f!@king straw bale, I hope he makes it. After about the third infusion, my hands and feet started getting numb, but they said that would happen, so we'll roll with it. As I got more infusions, the numbness got worse so I'm walking like a drunk Indian and my F!@king hands are completely useless from no feeling and my legs are now numb from my knees to the end of my toes and it literally feels like a bad burn and having thick coat of wax on my hands, feet, legs and mouth. By now I've lost my appetite and 35 pounds, but I still have some hair, oh wait that's falling out now and the hair on my arms and legs is gone so I look like one of those hairless cats, very smooth. Here it comes, after a bunch of infusions I had a complete f!#king melt down (it was crazy but I won't go into the

bad details) and once again wanted to quit treatment and go away but I love Deb and all my family so much and by this time I was getting a lot of support so I couldn't do this to them and will suffer through the rest of the infusions. So, I finished 12 chemo infusions and apparently fared better than most because I just had a laparoscopy and was approved to have surgery on 27th of February to remove part of my colon and two masses in my upper abdomen. This does sound promising even though the prognosis for my diagnoses is 18 percent chance of living 5 years so if you're coming for me, you better hurry the f!@k up because I'm 10 months in and I'll fight to the f!@king end!

So, everyone knows I'm doing better than most going through the same thing, but I believe what makes the difference is a positive attitude, accept what's happening and the calls, texts, emails along with the great visits from family. Our visit from Sarah and Jeffery (what a great guy) was the most notable because of who she became as a person after all her trials, she has become an incredible transformed person and the conversations we had were enlightening, deep and I learned a lot from

her and Jeffery, you'll see! The visit from Felicia, Jeff and Sam was so much fun and needed, it made me get my head on straight and really think about every one of our wonderful family and what they go through every day. I love Sam and his wonderful sense of humor, like he said, life is hard but it's even harder if you're stupid, laughed my ass off most of the time they were here, thank you! Wow, Hiedi, John, Jas, Reese, and Rayna also came to visit and once again I had some of the most interesting conversations ever with Jas (formerly known as Gretchen) about our current condition of our country, Indian communities, and social subjects. Wait until you see Reese, he looks like he stepped out of a magazine straight out of Cali and he's going to be a journalist. Rayna has a huge personality and has a lot of talent so watch for her on YouTube! Seth, Tatianna and their two great children (Jason and Taylor) also made the trip as you know a father and son relationship is different than with a daughter mostly because of sports, rough play and any subject is on the table. After spending time with their beautiful children, I would say watch these two because they seem over the top smart, like little geniuses.

I love Tatiana and hope everyone can get to know her because it's a treat to hear her story and learn about her cultures (Brazil and Japan) and anyone that speaks three languages is damn impressive to me. My daughters, Hiedi and Felicia, are fun to be around and make me think deep about things and Hiedi has a Master's Degree so it must be interesting for her to talk with one of the most dysfunctional people on earth and Felicia is very spiritual and loving, and I love the way she sees life and its twists and turns! I love our family so much and would literally do anything for my daughters, son, grandchildren, nieces, nephews, and all our extended family so if you need anything, don't wait, ask now!

Well guess that about wraps up the story of cancer boy and hope to see everyone in the Black Hills this summer, but I will give an update when I'm able. MK