Star Quality

December 1, 2006 By Sean Dwyer

I was awakened before dawn on October 4, 1996—the year that protease inhibitors (PIs) gave new life to many—by a change in Jeff's breathing. Even in the depths of my sleep, I was listening for this and knew what it meant. I called his sister, Deb, who came to the hospital, and we each held a hand while my beloved Jeff slipped the knot of his earthly embodiment.

The anti-retroviral revolution came too late to save his life, but Jeff's powerful presence continues to be felt years after his death. The myriad hearts that he touched and lives he inspired manifest his gifts in the present. I see the effect of similar legacies left by all the others AIDS stole from us. Michael, Ron, Betty, Stewart and Aiden come to mind, but there are so many more who also left the world a better place when they departed it. Each cultivated or fought for changes that survived them.

A panoply of treatment choices, an army of HIV medical specialists, a deeper understanding of the complicated psychosocial needs of people living with AIDS—none of these existed ten years ago. While many of those who made these things realities are no longer alive, their spirits live on in those of us who have managed to survive, embracing and carrying on their struggle for growth and positive change.

And for me, there is a singular, starry angel who continues to generously bless and inspire me with his love from beyond.

© 2026 Smart + Strong All Rights Reserved.
http://beta.docker.poz.com/article/Star-Quality-10883-3624