



Robert C. Yow
Eglin AFB Fire Department
15 July 1951 – 19 January 2006

Date Started: 01 May 1975
Last Shift worked: 18 October 2005

DOD Fire Post:

It is with heavy heart that Eglin AFB Fire Department announces the passing of Lead Firefighter Robert (Bobby) Carlton Yow. Bobby passed away suddenly after a short but courageous battle with cancer. He was a well respected member of the fire protection ranks and passed on his strong work ethic and sense of compassion to all. After serving in Vietnam he started his career at Eglin AFB in May of 1975. He was currently assigned to Fire Station 5 at Camp Rudder. Words cannot express the void that will be left by his passing. He leaves behind his wife Molly and two children, Audra & Steve. Funeral arrangements are currently pending.

Eglin OPREP-3

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MSGID/OPREP-3H/EGLIN COMMAND POST/007/JAN//
REF/A/MSGID: TEL/EGLIN COMMAND POST/201724ZJAN2006/007//
AMPN/REF A IS THE INITIAL VOICE REPORT.//
FLAGWORD/HOMELINE/-//
TIMELOC/192200ZJAN2006/HOUSTON, TEXAS/FINAL//
GENTEXT/INCIDENT IDENTIFICATION AND DETAILS/THE 96 AIR BASE WING
VICE COMMANDER RELEASED THE VOICE REPORT AT 1715Z. THE EGLIN
COMMAND POST WAS NOTIFIED AT 1700Z BY THE CIVILIAN PERSONNEL
CENTER THAT A 54-YEAR-OLD CIVILIAN MALE OF THE 96TH CIVIL
ENGINEERING SQUADRON PASSED AWAY ON JANUARY 19, 2006. HE WAS
AT THE MD ANDERSON CANCER HOSPITAL IN HOUSTON, TEXAS WHEN HE
PASSED AWAY IN HIS SLEEP. THE CAUSE OF DEATH WAS ACUTE
LYMPHOCYTIC LEUKEMIA. THE INDIVIDUAL WAS A GS8 AND WAS MARRIED
WITH TWO CHILDREN. THIS IS A COMMAND POST FINAL REPORT.//
RMKS/RULE NUMBER 2R APPLIES.//

Email

1/17/06

Hello everybody,

I talked to Mollie today and she told me that Bobby was running a fever and retaining fluids on Sunday. He was having difficulty walking because the fluid retention caused so much swelling. His blood pressure was low also and they could not give him a diuretic as that will bring the pressure down even more. His doctor said the diuretic would pull fluid from his blood and not tissue where the build up is. Molly also said Bobby has been miserable since Sunday and on top of everything else had a rash all over his back. The doctor hopes to start Bobby on a stronger chemo on Wednesday and because it can cause renal complications they are preparing him for dialysis. They will be monitoring his renal function very close and at the first sign of problems they will do the dialysis. This will be necessary because this new chemo can damage the kidneys very rapidly so would have to remove the chemo from his kidneys as fast as possible.

So that's all I have for now, let's keep those e-mails to bobby & molly going in. They do make his bad days better!

Thank You

John Piccuito

1/16/05

I talked to bobby on Thursday; he told me that he was going back into the hospital for his next round of chemo. Apparently during his daily test the doctor found something in his test results. He said the doctor described it as something chronic and they have to identify it. So, his system was close enough to normal levels she decided to start the next round of chemo and worry about the other thing later. They planned 3-4 treatments so he should be back at the apartment later this week. Bobby's attitude about all of this is really good mostly because of our response, so keep writing to him even if it's a short letter. As soon as I hear from him I'll let you know how he's handling this round of treatments.

John Piccuito

1/7/06

Well, I talked to Bobby & Molly today He's feeling great right now. On Wednesday afternoon Bobby was released from the hospital while he is between chemo treatments. They have rented an apartment near the hospital and Bobby has to return to the outpatient clinic daily. The chemo treatments have destroyed most of the white blood cells in his body so now they have to build them back up to normal limits again. In about 3 weeks he will begin the chemo again and the objective is to kill all of the white blood cells again, this process will repeat itself until he has completed about 6 or 7 treatments. They repeat this process in the hope that no trace of the cancer remains in his system. Bobby has good and bad days, when he has a bad day he says he thinks about all your letters he has received. He & Molly are so grateful for your support so keep writing because when he has a bad day thought of your letters make it a good day no matter how his body feels. Remember, Bobby can not receive flowers or fruit baskets both can lead to complications.

Right now they don't really need anything that they can think of, their apartment is near by a supermarket and when they are at the hospital the facility feeds them. From everything they tell me everybody at MD Anderson treats them & his family like gold. Bobby receives blood platelets while out of the hospital and the Huston FD has helped by giving blood donations in his name. Bobby is looking into having a blood drive sponsored by the Northwest Florida Blood Bank, he will let me know if that's going to happen. Any blood that would be donated by us would go to MD Anderson in his name and any blood product not used for Bobby will go to help others fight their illnesses.

I have listed bobby's personnel e-mail address below, they will have a computer set up in the apartment soon and will be able to respond back. Thanks again for your support !!

robertyow@cox.net

John Piccuito, DAF
District Chief
Eglin Fire Protection Flight, Station 6

12/29/05

Talked to Bobby and his wife Molly today. Bobby seems to be doing well with the Chemotherapy treatments. Since starting the treatments his white blood cell count has dropped from 81,000 to 4,000. This is important because the Leukemia causes an increase in the production of white blood cells which in turn creates less red blood cells. This causes a lot of problems because the red blood cells are so important. Molly told me that right now they are looking at being there at least six months; this all depends on how well Bobby reacts to the Chemotherapy. We have to remember that the care Bobby is receiving is very intensive and occurs around the clock. The chemotherapy treatments make his immune system very weak and make him vulnerable to complications. Visitations must be kept to a minimum because of this, so before we plan a visit we must make sure he is between treatments and his immune system strong.

Bobby and Molly asked that we not call Bobby's hospital room. Bobby has been receiving a lot of calls and many times he has nurses or other hospital staff at his bed side. The phone ringing disturbs this and bobby while he's trying to rest. If you need to talk to Bobby, please call me first and I will contact Molly to find out when it's a good time to call. You can e-mail Bobby at the MD Anderson web address below; the hospital staff will deliver all messages. I will e-mail the mailing address as soon as i get it.

Again, Bobby and his family want me thank all of you for your support! Your thoughts and prayers mean the world to them and has helped them cope during this most difficult time.

John Piccuito, GS-09
District Chief
883-7784

12/27/05

As some of you already know Mr. Robert Yow was diagnosed with an Acute Lymphocytic Leukemia (A.L.L., T-cell type) this past Friday. Bobby was admitted to Ft. Walton Beach Medical Center earlier in the week after not feeling well. Friday evening the bone marrow tests results identified his illness as a very aggressive and rare Asian type Leukemia that required treatment which could not be given locally. It was immediately decided to send him to one of the nations top cancer treatment centers located in Houston, Texas. Bobby was flown to The University of Texas M.D. Anderson Cancer treatment Center early Saturday afternoon. He was greeted at Eglin base ops by on and off duty Eglin firefighters.

I just got off the phone with Bobby, his spirits are high and he knows he is at the best hospital in the world and is very optimistic. He will finish his first round of chemo this Thursday and already he has seen some drop in his white cell count. They found this morning he has pneumonia and are treating this as well. He will continue to receive rounds of chemo, he just does not know how many at this point.

He wants me to let everybody that saw him off on Saturday know how important it was to have you all there. It meant so much to himself and his family to know so many of you care so much! They can't tell you how much they appreciate you thoughts and prayers. He passes on special thanks to Mr. Suddarth for the firefighter bible, he is so grateful and loves it so much! To Mr. Dan Wood and family, Thanks so much for what you have done! Your brother-in-law came by and gave him a Huston county fire tee shirt and has offered to help in so many ways. He says that the brotherhood of firefighters goes far beyond the Okaloosa County boundaries we are used to. He is so proud to be a Firefighter.

I would like to thank all of you for your support, I have received so many calls of support its overwhelming! THANKS !!

John Piccuito, GS-09
District Chief
883-7784