



Terry Dufek is shown doing some of what he loved: Peering through a telescope and sharing his knowledge of astronomy.

Q-C astronomy club remembers colleague

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The Popular Astronomy Club lost one of its most active and popular members March 11, when Terry Dufek died after a long and courageous struggle with brain cancer.

Terry will be sorely missed by both club members and many others who knew him. I cannot claim to have known Terry very well or to have spent much time with him, but I can say that he impressed me as a kind, decent and honest individual with a friendly attitude and good sense of humor. I've heard nothing about Terry that contradicts the impression I had of him, and I only wish that I'd gotten to know him better.

Almost to the end, Terry remained active in club activities and continued to contribute his time and energy to PAC. While the cancer took an awful toll on his body, it could not and did not damage his spirit.

While Terry's long and painful illness and death were very sad, they showed me something about PAC, and about the human spirit, that should give us all hope.

From the time Terry received his diagnosis to the time he passed away, PAC members reached out to him

and helped him in so many ways. They built a ramp to the entrance of his house and made other adaptations that enabled him to remain in his home. They accompanied him to medical appointments, took him to other places, brought him food and perhaps did other favors that I'm not aware of. They visited him, sat with him and let him know that whatever he was facing, he was not facing it alone.

PAC members did all of this while expecting and asking nothing in return. But, in fact, we did get something in return, something of great and enduring value. For we now know for sure that this club is about more than just stargazing.

In other pages of this newspaper and on this website, you can read about war and poverty and crime and illness and political strife and all the other woes that plague humanity. I do not fault the media for reporting "bad news" because we cannot solve our problems if we don't learn about them and confront them.

Amid all this, though, we should not lose sight of all the good that gets done, and that all too often goes unnoticed and unreported.

We rallied around Terry in his time of need, and this is a story that should be told because there are many similar stories that could also be told.

There is still plenty of caring and compassion in this world, and there are plenty of people who are very willing to give of themselves for the sake of others. We lost one of those people when Terry Dufek died, but many more remain, including those of you who can proudly call yourself PAC members.

On behalf of Terry and myself, thank you for proving to be true friends, and for keeping his spirit alive, a spirit that now shines among the stars we gaze at — shedding light against the darkness.

Memorial contributions in memory of Terry Dufek can be made to the Popular Astronomy Club or to your local Humane Society.

PAC invites the public to its next observing session at Niabi Zoo, on April 16 at sunset and on the third Saturday of every month through November. To learn more, visit the PAC website at <https://www.popularastronomyclub.org/> or search for the club on Facebook.