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Opinion

Oswego man's generosity, legacy will not be forgotten

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To the editor:

On Thursday, the Oswego community and the Oswego YMCA lost a treasure of a man. A person who has given much of himself unselfishly for many years to our community and many other places in this world. Of course, I'm speaking of our beloved friend Kevin Gilman. Although members of the YMCA, Jen Mulcahey, John Burger and Chris Walker worked valiantly to revive Kevin, it was to no avail.

My earliest recollections of Kevin were when he was employed at Barbera's IGA store while attending SUNY Oswego. Kevin met his partner in life, Irene, a cracker jack bartender at the Cameo Bar, who was also a student at SUNY Oswego. Their union would become a lifetime commitment to each other. They became our power couple, but not in the typical sense of financial wealth. They became a power couple because of their genuine concern and generosity for everyone around them. Their "longest-day-of-the-year" parties have been epic in proportion.

A few years ago, my wife and I were privileged enough to travel with Kevin and Irene to their second home in Puerto Escondido, Mexico. There we witnessed their generosity first hand. For two weeks people from the area came to see them. Kevin and Irene brought gifts for the children, shared meals and refreshments for all who came to visit. We could see there was great love and affection for this couple. Irene and Kevin were also sponsors for a young man of the community to go to college.

Kevin's sense of humor and his anecdotes always kept us on our toes. I was always amazed by his ceaseless sense of optimism and his ability to pick you up when you were having a particularly bad day.

His death came as a shock to all of us. Kevin's workout ethic and boundless energy prevented us from thinking that someone like him could possibly be sick. I just cannot get my head around it.

How fortunate and blessed we have been that these two wonderful people decided to make Oswego their home. For many of us it seems like the bright lights of our holiday season seem a little dimmer this year, but Kevin's light shines brighter than ever.

Although he has gone from us all too young, he will always be alive in our hearts and minds.

Mike Segretto

Oswego YMCA

Board member

Oswego

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