

In Remembrance of Patricia Page

It was with the deepest sadness that we learned of the death of our dear friend, ally and colleague Patricia Page.

I first met Patti at the American Association of Ringside Physicians annual meeting in 2003, in Las Vegas. Like many doctors I sat and listened to her story, deeply moved by the simple message she had brought to us. Things had to change, and boxing had to realise it had a duty to provide basic care at ringside. This care had been sadly lacking in the case of her husband, Greg, the former heavyweight champion of the world. On that fateful night in Peels Palace, Erlanger, Kentucky.....Greg's life was to change forever, as was Patti's. Knocked down in the tenth round, the magnitude of his injury was not appreciated, as there was no-one experienced or suitably qualified at ringside. The lack of expertise was compounded by the lack of basic equipment including oxygen. The delays resulted in valuable time being lost, and irreversible damage was caused to Greg's brain. His devastating injuries left him completely dependent on others...and for much of that time Patricia was the sole carer, helped only by close members of her immediate family. The selfless commitment, care, love and compassion she showed for Greg was an inspiration. Patti, however, had only just started on her mission. The lack of action on the night her husband was injured ignited in her a burning desire to make sure no one else should ever suffer the same fate. She was realistic in her understanding of the dangers inherent in boxing, but she also became knowledgeable in the simple ways in which the head injured boxer could be cared for at ringside. She was a lady with a huge heart, and a simple vision.....to look after her husband, and to make things right, such that boxers were treated with the dignity and respect that anyone might expect in any other sport.

She took on those that she felt had let her and Greg down, and she won. She secured significant changes in her state, which will no doubt prevent another family having to endure the heartache that inspired her. As she cared for Greg, so she became aware of the many difficulties and obstacles in the way of those patients with disabilities due to brain injury. So the stage was set for the establishment of the "Greg Page Foundation", a charity which provides practical advice and support to patients and families that find themselves facing the struggles experienced by Greg and Patti. This charity was set up together with Greg's brother Dennis "LD" Page, and in 2008 at the Paris resort in Las Vegas, Dennis and Patti received the "Outstanding Contribution to Boxing" award from the AAPRP.

She was soon recognized internationally as someone who told it like it was, someone whose passion and vision allowed her to campaign without intimidation. She knew what was right, and that's all that mattered.

Her death is a tragic loss to her immediate family, and also to her "second family", her friends in boxing all over the world.

Patti and I exchanged e mails a few days before she died, in which she joked about the doctors in the Association of Ringside Physicians as being "Patty's crew".....and it is indeed an honour to be part of "the crew". Patricia Page started something, and we will keep it going. We will see to it that her simple vision of safety and dignity for all fighters becomes a reality.

Those that knew her have only the fondest of memories, those that never met her will have nothing but the greatest respect. She was a woman of great faith, and as I type this I get a sense that her and Greg are together, and heaven is about to get a new Boxing club!

Dr. Ray Monsell