

To the members of the casting community:

I am saddened to report the passing of my uncle, Richard Y Fujita this past week. As many of you are aware, the past year and a half or so was pretty tough for Dick.

Problems with his lungs, kidney issues, and congestive heart failure were all challenges he faced, and he coped with them as best as he was able. Last Spring found Dick hospitalized with general weakness and complications from his conditions, followed by about three weeks in a skilled nursing facility. Dick found the experience to be "like being in prison", and worked hard at the various therapies to strengthen himself to return home. He complained of the therapy as "not being designed for an athlete" and amazed the nursing staff by asking if the large grassy area outside the facility could be used for fly casting as part of his therapy. I brought him equipment, and together with oxygen bottle, walker, and therapy staff, spent about a half hour casting. (photo below) It was remarkable to see him in his weakened state handle the rod with ease, and hit his selected "targets" with great precision.



Dick returned home shortly after, and with oxygen hose in tow, went about his business as best he could. He was frustrated by his slow progress, but worked at strengthening himself each day. He resumed his routine of walking or driving to get breakfast and dinner away from home. My observation was that he was indeed progressing, and very gradually becoming stronger. He was relieved I think, when my twice a day check up calls went to once a day, and then recently to every few days.

While our family is saddened, we are also relieved that he was able to be at home, and independent until his passing. We are in the process of making final arrangements for Dick. Dick's circle of friends in the Cleveland area is small. I will be contacting the Cincinnati Casting Club to discuss the possibility of a brief memorial service during this year's National Casting Tournament.

Our family is very grateful to the casting community for the many years of friendship, companionship, and competition that was so important to Dick. It's really not enough to say the casting community was "like family" to Dick, it would be more accurate to recognize that all of you are Dick's family, and that he thought of each of you as brothers and sisters.

Robert Henry Fujita