

To Everyone at Cancer Angels,

My name is Randy Ericson and I was diagnosed with stage IV non small cell lung cancer on July 22, 2009. I had previously been misdiagnosed and treated for pneumonia 3 times in the previous 6 months. Then my insurance company cut off my insurance allegedly because I failed to check a box when I got the insurance at work that I had a previous condition of bronchitis in 1981. During those 6 months I became increasingly ill and was being treated at a mobile clinic for extreme pain in my collar bone and shoulder. Finally I went to UCSD Hillcrest emergency room and was diagnosed 2 days later with my cancer. I had lost both my jobs, completely broke, and became homeless.

In August 2009 I was able to start receiving state disability checks. I was able to get help paying a deposit and some rent assistance. Food was still a huge problem. I'm a big guy and before my cancer I had weighed 250-265 working two very active jobs, I'm also allergic to quite a few items that are extremely dangerous to me like apples. I was at the point of going to food banks and waiting for hours with hundreds of homeless people for a few dented cans of food some old bread and some fruit. Half of what they gave me I really can't eat. One cup of apple sauce put me in the hospital when I was 5 for a week. I'm not knocking the homeless either as they have their own issues, mental issues, addictions. My point is that I was taking 6 or 8 vicodine to survive the pain of standing in line at 2 or 3 food banks a day for a few dented cans of yams and a few apples.

A social worker at Moores told me about Cancer Angels and I received some help to get the form to Cancer Angels. I have to say when I got that first Albertsons card it was brutal walking to Albertsons. On the other hand I felt like I had won the lottery. For 9 months my life had gone from bad to worse to indescribable. I'm 54 and until now I had never gotten so much as an unemployment check or any assistance in my life. I was honestly ashamed and felt I had done everything right.

I was down to 190 pounds from 250 pounds a year before. I started to gain weight increases my payments November 1st to \$900 a month.

My weight had returned to about 230 and my treatments went well for quite a while. I was able to keep walking to Alberstons and it has helped me allot just that few blocks of walking a couple times a week. This summer my cancer started to grow again and my weight started to fall again. I went from size 40 waist down to size 32 in 90 days. I was down to 175 pounds. Suddenly my clothes don't fit anymore. Allot of that was nausea from my radiation and new more aggressive chemotherapy. Cancer growth causes weight loss even when you do eat allots. I got a food card from Cancer Angels in August and my weight has increased from 175 back to 195.

I'm currently in month 15 since diagnoses with every expectation of living another year. I think Cancer Angels has had a huge role in my being able to do that. Their assistance has been invaluable. I can't thank you all enough. I'm playing kick the can to see if I can survive 5 years until they do find a cure for my cancer.

Something as simple as an Albertsons card has given me a little bit of control over what I eat essential needs to shower, or take care of myself. Your help has made this bearable. The slice of prime rib last Thanksgiving was great also. I hope you can do that again. I can't go stand in long lines at the

Thanksgiving events around town offering turkey dinner. So that was a wonderful surprise.

Best Regard
Randy Ericson