

Reno businessman dies trying to save child in ocean off Mexico

By Jaclyn O'Malley • jomalley@rgj.com • July 1, 2010

A 44-year-old Reno father and medical clinic administrator died Tuesday afternoon in a drowning accident in Mexico after his family said he saved his son from a rip tide and went back to rescue another child struggling in the turbulent Pacific Ocean.

Family and friends said Gary A. Sorge is a hero for his bravery and life-saving efforts.

Sorge and his family were vacationing in Cabo San Lucas when he heard screams from his 12-year-old son, Trenton, who was caught in a rip tide, said Gary's brother Jeff Sorge of Sparks, who was not on the trip.

He said that after Gary Sorge saved Trenton, he and others went into the water to rescue a nearby child. The group returned to shore with the child, but Sorge never came back.

After his body was found, he was pronounced dead at a hospital.

Jeff Sorge said an autopsy was scheduled Wednesday. His mother, who was on the trip, called him Tuesday with preliminary information. The family was arranging his transport back to Reno.

Court Cardinal of Carson City, Gary Sorge's best friend of 26 years, said he can't imagine life without him. They as freshmen at the University of Nevada, Reno enjoyed adrenaline sports such as mountain climbing and race car driving. Recently, Gary Sorge got back into racing cars, winning his class in an event last year.

"The smile on his face when we would race cars, the look of joy drinking a great bottle of wine or sampling the perfect BBQ (with extra garlic or course), The joy his sons and his family brought him and the happiness that he imparted on all that were around him," Cardinal wrote in a post on RGJ.com. "This is but a mere glimpse into the life of a very remarkable man. To say Gary will be missed is a gross understatement, to say that the peoples lives

that Gary touched are for the better because of it would be the truth. To my best friend, I love you man! You left us as a Hero."

He had a passion for life and fun, was never down and was meticulous in researching new purchases or ideas.

Jeff Sorge said his brother was athletic, an avid mountain climber and biker. He said he doesn't understand how his brother could have died in the water, given his supreme fitness.

"He was a wonderful guy," Jeff Sorge said of his brother, who with his wife had taken many adventure trips outside the country. "He really had it all together (with his career and family). There's not one person you could find who would say a bad thing about him."

Gary Sorge was the administrator of Digestive Health Associates in Reno and previously worked as an administrator for Saint Mary's Regional Medical Center. He has a master's degree from UNR.

He is survived by his wife, Kelly; sons, Connor, 15, Trenton and Trevor, 1; and other family members.

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