

OBITUARY

# Peter Neufeld was Mr. Igoma

BY SANDRA BOLAN  
Staff Writer

Compassionate, great family man, a free spirit, and an asset to the community. That is how those who knew Peter Neufeld describe him.

Mr. Neufeld died Monday at his home in Ballantrae, after fighting a courageous battle with liver cancer. He was 71.

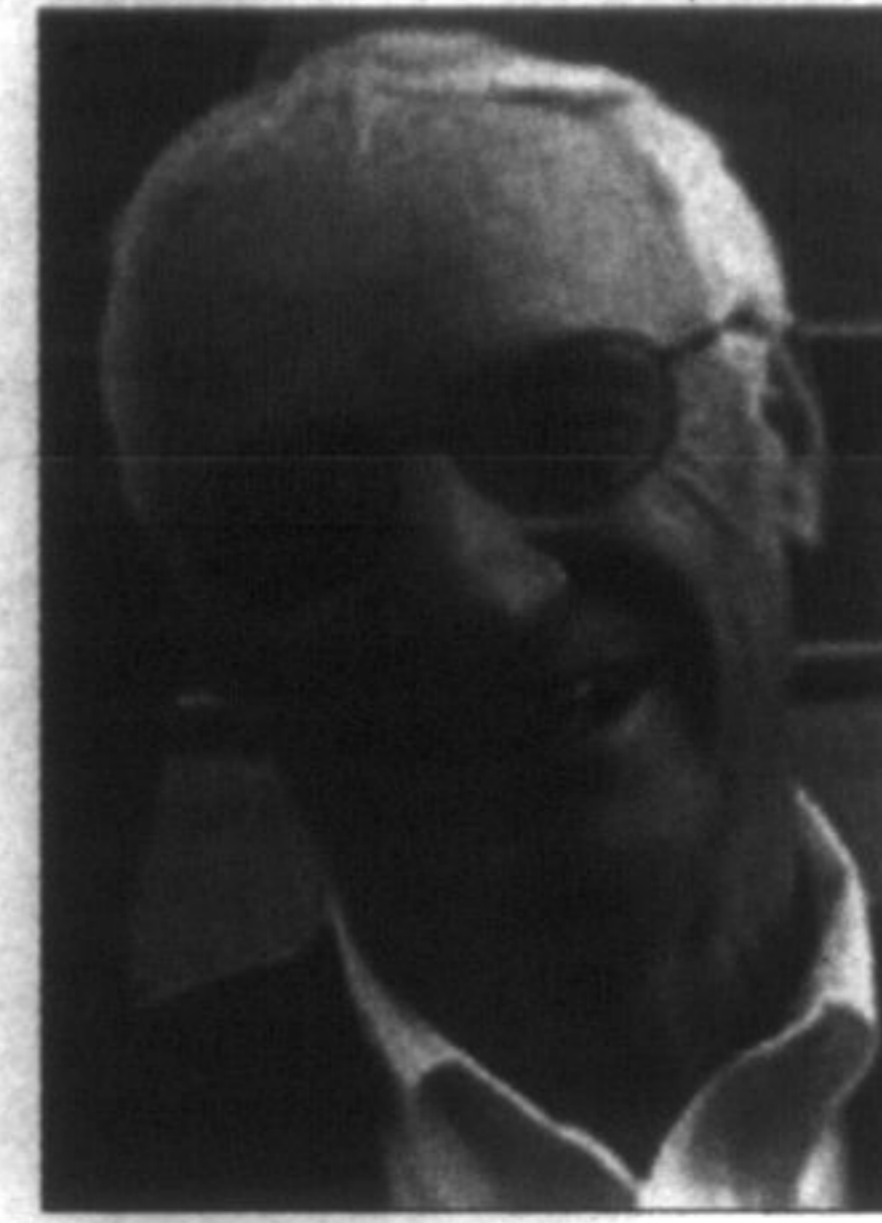
"Whatever comes, I'm fine," Lou Geense, lead pastor of East Ridge Evangelical Church said of Mr. Neufeld's reaction to his November 2008 diagnosis. Last January, Mr. Neufeld was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer, which he beat.

Mr. Geense and Mr. Neufeld met six years ago, "but I feel like I've known him my whole life." Shortly thereafter, Mr. Neufeld accompanied Mr. Geense on one of his African trips. That trip, according to Mr. Geense "just changed him completely".

When the two men were in Tanzania, Mr. Neufeld's business sense kicked in, which is how the Stouffville Igoma Partnership was created.

Before he retired in 1993, Mr. Neufeld was the vice-president of sales at the H.J. Heinz Company.

"He had a soft spot for people and a business mind and somehow made those things work together," Mr.



**PETER NEUFELD:** Former vice-president of sales at Heinz active in Stouffville's African project.

So well loved is Mr. Neufeld, the church received hundreds of e-mails of condolence from across North America and Tanzania. One, from someone who met Mr. Neufeld last year, read: "Never have I loved anyone so deeply, so quickly."

The church from which Igoma's work is administered — the Tanzania Missionary Revival Church — will have three days of mourning and conduct its own memorial service.

"He has a fairly wide influence on people; more than we realized," Mr. Geense said.

Mr. Neufeld leaves behind his wife of 50 years, Anne Neufeld. He is also the father of Lorraine and husband Gordon Gilbert, Judy and husband Joe Pali, and Peter and wife Terri Neufeld. He leaves seven grandchildren: Kristin, Gabrielle, Dane, Jared, Georgia, Chloe and Marcus.

Friends and family are invited to a visitation today from 2 to 4 and 7 to 9 p.m. at Chapel Ridge Funeral Home, 8911 Woodbine Ave. in Markham. A funeral will be held Friday at 11 a.m. at EastRidge Evangelical Church, 12485 Tenth Line, Stouffville.

In lieu of flowers, donations to the Stouffville-Igoma Partnership would be appreciated.

For more information, go to [www.sipartnership.org](http://www.sipartnership.org).

END ZONE

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