

# MoRobinBarryStories

## A GIBB FRIEND WHO LIFTS ME UP....

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**Welcome to morobinbarrystories.com! Please join me on twitter @morobinbarry.** This site is for Bee Gee fans everywhere who would like to read and share stories of hope, joy, love and inspiration for Barry, Robin and Maurice Gibb. (Andy is not forgotten and is included at times). If you'd like to share a story, please email it to me at morobinbarrystories@gmail.com. Stories will be posted often, some from my collected tales and some from the new ones as they come in. Others I will save for my book, which is in progress. At times, I will write about events that relate to the Gibbs that I hope fans will enjoy.

February 26, 2015



Barry Gibb with Gary Kleiman at Love and Hope Ball, 2015

My involvement with the Diabetes Research Institute began because I was curious about why the Gibb family supported this charity. Most fans didn't even know the details and neither did I, so I set out over a year ago to get the facts and share it with Bee Gee lovers on every continent. I did that, and anyone can read the stories on this blog and on the GSI international website. I like to think that fans now understand why Barry and Linda and all the Gibbs help the DRI and why they have supported this Foundation for decades. I also pray that fans will take action and follow suit, extending the reach of awareness and fundraising that is needed.

What I didn't know was that I would be personally and dramatically touched by a man who so graciously admitted a slightly manic writer into his DRI world without hesitation. Gary Kleiman has been a friend of the Gibb brothers since the 70's. He spent many special times with all the brothers, and speaks of them with love and gentleness. (Read the story in Walkway of Hope Pt III). Gary happens to be the Senior Director of Medical Development at the DRI. He spends most of his time translating complicated science into lay terms and fundraising, and he works with the scientists presenting their findings. He also happens to be a Type I diabetic, and he has battled the disease for most of his life. Diagnosed at the age of six, Gary has suffered serious complications over the years but thankfully, is still standing strong. Amazingly, his initial involvement with the DRI began in 1973..

He arranged for me to once again disrupt the daily routine and spend time with the scientists who work to cure Type I diabetes. As I sat in his office, several of the researchers came by to talk with me, and Gary didn't mind that I took over his office to speak with them. When we were alone, I asked him a few questions, and he was candid with his responses. I had to take a deep breath now and again as I read the emotion on his face, and I was swallowing hard as I wrote in my little notebook.

I asked Gary how his personal battle with diabetes affects him in the workplace and this is what he said, "I compartmentalize. I accept the responsibility. I deny the reality because of wanting to focus on the future. If I accept the reality, it's too close to resignation". I didn't expect an answer like that, an answer that was too raw and real for me. Gary spoke of being given "expiration dates" and the frustration of that mentality. After all, the focus at the DRI is purely about the mission, moving forward while working within.

When I asked him what it meant to have a high profile family like the Gibbs support the DRI, he threw me for a loop again with his answer. He was contemplative and told me, "It directly keeps alive my relationship with my father." Gary's father died many years ago, and he was close friends with Linda Gibb's father. Gary sincerely expresses his gratitude to the Gibb family for their friendship and shows me a long, narrow framed print on the wall of his office that holds great value for him. It is the eulogy that Barry Gibb wrote and delivered at the funeral service for Gary's father. At the bottom in simple script is Barry's signature. It is a beautiful eulogy, poetic and lovely, filled with pathos and affection. This bond of friendship is deep and true.

On a lighter note, I also asked him about the Gibb boys, playing a word association game. When I said "Andy Gibb", Gary responded with "vulnerable". "Robin Gibb?" The answer was "complicated". "What about Maurice Gibb?" He smiled and said "approachable and welcoming". So what about Barry? The smile grew broader and Gary said, "Barry's filter is different from the rest of the world." We just left it at that.

What it comes down to is that the DRI has a staff of the best doctors in the world working to cure diabetes, but it also has people like Gary Kleiman. He is a humanitarian whose compassionate nature is inspiring. I think he scans the world searching for positivity as opposed to negativity. I don't think for a moment that he would spend more time ruminating over an insult than he would a gorgeous sunset on the beach. I think he notices and appreciates the world around him. He lifts others up with his wacky sense of humor and positively reframes negative situations. I have

learned lessons of life from this man that I treasure. The DRI is blessed to have him as part of their team, and I am blessed to know him. Thanks, Gary.