

## Living With ALS

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amazing given her circumstances. "I don't want pity," says Kofstad, "I want happiness. I want quality in my life."

In fact, talking about her family and grandchildren was the only time during our visit that Kofstad showed any sign that her battle might be taking a toll on her emotionally. "Being the caretaker type and watching my grandkids, that's the hardest..." was all Kofstad was able to say when asked about her biggest challenges, before she broke down into tears.



*Pam and daughter Kelly accepting the "Most Enthusiastic" award.*

"I don't feel like I'm going anywhere soon," said Kofstad at the end of our visit. "There is a lot that is coming, but I'm OK with it. We're all trying to be positive. I think that's the key to living with any terminal illness. That, and lots of hope every day."



*Pam with her husband Harvey.*

## Sharing some words...

*I love words. They take up space in my empty mind  
For some reason they often take the form of a rhyme  
They wake me up, these stories in verse  
Most times, they're not something I have rehearsed*

*Sometimes, I think it's the way my brain deals  
With things on my mind and how my heart feels  
I have a dear friend who is losing her words  
She's on my mind. I'm sure you have heard*

*Of this dreaded disease, this damn ALS  
I hate this thief! I gladly confess  
It's stealing her words, so she's putting them in the bank  
Amazing technology! We have to thank*

*One day, a machine will speak for her, in her own voice  
Right now, she's deciding, she's making a choice  
What words should she save? I'd want them all!  
I know I couldn't choose just a handful to recall*

*I know she'll choose wisely, the ones she likes best  
"I love you" will be at the top of her list  
"Thank you" and "Please," she'll save those too  
That's how she is, that's what she would do*

*But, she'll save some funny ones to pull out of her hat  
She's got a great attitude! She's awesome like that  
A beautiful smile and a wonderful laugh  
I find myself angry on her behalf*

*I'd be lost without words, if I couldn't say  
What's on my mind day after day  
It's her reality, so she's storing them up  
She's always so positive when she looks at life's cup*

*She sees her cup as half full, not draining away  
An example to us all, though I'm sure she would say  
She has family and friends, they'll get her through  
I don't know how I'd behave if I walked in her shoes*

*I'd offer to help, but then we'd all curse  
Everything that she said would come out in verse  
So, I'm sending her hugs and positive thoughts  
And these rhyming words, they're all that I've got*

*Pam, to everyone that you touch, you are a gift  
You are the one that gives our spirits a lift  
Store up those words, Pam, in your lovely voice  
Put in a few good ones as you make your choice*

*I'm sure you'll have us laughing as you always do  
This disease won't steal the best parts of you  
Your humor and love will keep shining on  
Because life is about how we choose to respond.*

*Written with love and positive thoughts by Kala Cota*

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