## A short tribute to Aya Fesseha Habte. An exemplary family man in our DMV community.

It has been over a week since we Eritreans and especially the DMV area community lost an Eritrean patriot, father, husband and a person who cared so much about his community. He was an elegant and articulate man who also used his wisdom to share knowledge among people who did not agree with each other. He stood his ground when it came to Eritrea and was one of its staunchest supporters. He was one of the early participants of our Dehai Eritrean forum. He encouraged many of us younger activists and gave us many insights from his year of experience as a UN peace keeper. He wrote well and made sure that his message was clear for everyone to see. Aya Fisseha was an accomplished and peaceful man who enjoyed and respected the values of our society. He was kind and giving but even more a fair individual. I had a chance to visit him this summer after a long time and he was so positive about his full recovery from his illness and gave me so much hope that he would be with us even longer. I was shocked and couldn’t comprehend when I heard of his passing. Almost 80 years after he was born, the man upstairs decided to call him.

But nonetheless he gives inspiration to people like me as we have been blessed to learn about his great deeds and his contributions to our Eritrean community. He is a classic example of a good man. I encourage young men to learn from his respectful way of life. He was blessed as a father of eight and as a role model to his entire family and community. He loved and cherished his wife Selamawit and treated her with the utmost love and respect. What we can learn from Aya Fesseha’s healthy relationship at home is that loving your family can go a long way with the rest of the world. His children are all successful and are contributing members of our society. In speaking to a close member of his family, one of the things he told everyone of his children before he said good bye is to continue his legacy by unconditionally loving Eritrea, its people and its culture. I also want to share that on many occasions, I was blessed to work with him in community activities. He encouraged and always gave me a thumbs up on many topics that we discussed during the early days of Dehai. In some cases he would intervene and share wisdom amongst our group discussions. Thank you Aya Fesseha, you will be missed. You may be gone but your spirit will forever remain with us.

Rest in Peace and Awet n’ hafash.

Mike Seium