# Defense lawyer Koch loses fight against cancer

Ron Koch, a successful Albuquerque defense attorney, has lost his nearly yearlong battle with cancer.

He was 49.

Koch, who died Tuesday, had built a prominent reputation for himself in nearly 25 years of practicing law in Albuquerque. He defended high-profile members of the community, such as the Rev. Sabine Griego and former priest Jason Sigler, both accused of molesting children.

He also acted as defense lawyer in high-profile homicide cases, including those of Linda Lee Daniels and, more recently, Girly Hossencofft.

Koch also managed the career of former world champion boxer, Danny Romero.

Although it was unusual for a lawyer to become a sports promoter, Koch did it because he was a close friend of the family and because he was able to rise to any occasion, Dan Romero Sr., the boxer's father, said this morning.

"We were real close to him. He was one of a kind for us, a very straightforward guy," Romero said. "He took on the task of taking care of my son and his career. It wasn't his specialty, but he made it his specialty.

"The best thing I can describe, on Ron, is that I don't know anybody who ever said anything bad about him."

Koch was diagnosed with non-Hodgkin's lymphoma several months ago. A course of chemotherapy treatments last spring failed, and in August he moved to an apartment in Tucson, where doctors attempted a blood transplant. His entire blood supply was replaced with blood from his sister, Debbie Manchester.

But the transplant didn't take, and Koch returned to Albuquerque last month to spend his final weeks with his wife, Yvonne, and three children.

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