

BECAUSE
EVERYONE
DESERVES
QUALITY CARE



VNA
& HOSPICE FOUNDATION

ANNUAL *fund* 2022



ELEVATING THE STANDARD FOR QUALITY CARE

August Kellermann has always been a hard worker - and a true New Yorker. He grew up the son of a butcher in the South Bronx and worked as a kid at Yankee Stadium selling hot dogs, chewing gum and scorecards. "He always sold the most items," says his son Bartt, who was regaled with his father's childhood stories growing up.

Highly intelligent, 96-year-old August was recruited as a teenager for the U.S. Navy's war time V-12 program geared toward increasing the number of technically trained commissioned officers during the Second World War, and got a bachelor's degree in chemical engineering from Worcester Polytechnic Institute in Massachusetts. The day before Second Lieutenant Kellermann was to be shipped off to Japan, the war ended. "He dodged a bullet," says Bartt.

August went on to have a highly successful business career, traveled extensively and enjoyed the good life, everything from private sailboats to country clubs. But when he settled in Vero Beach full-time four years ago, his favorite pastime was simpler, sitting on the balcony in his condo on the Barrier Island with a bird's eye view of the Atlantic. Unfortunately, a year ago the former Vice President of Chemicals Group at Conoco fell ill with pneumonia and ended up in the hospital. The doctors said he only had a few weeks to live and was admitted to VNA Hospice service. He and Bartt thought his death was imminent, but what they didn't know is that often patients will improve on hospice. That's because when pain and symptoms are well-managed, it leads to less stress on the body, which can frequently improve healing. Thankfully, that was what transpired with August.

VNA Hospice is a unique form of care that elevates the standard of end-of-life care by focusing on the physical, spiritual and emotional support of patients. Improving quality of life is the central philosophy behind hospice, and this is accomplished by offering services through the hospice team made up of nurses, home health aides, counselors and chaplains. Most patients receive this care at home, but if a patient's needs can no longer be managed at home (or in an assisted living facility), they can move to VNA Hospice House, which provides care 24/7 in a home-like environment.

Sometimes, patients get so much better that they no longer need hospice and begin receiving regular home healthcare. Since VNA Hospice is the only hospice provider in Indian River County, it is the only agency that can offer a continuum of care like this. When a disease process changes, VNA can alter the plan while continuing to meet the needs and health

goals of the patient. While this wasn't the case with August, his time on hospice continues to be positive, not only thanks to VNA, but his son.

Based in Manhattan, Bartt still makes a point of flying to Vero Beach every month to visit his father, who now lives in a local assisted living facility on the mainland and is wheelchair-bound. A few months ago, despondent that it had been a long time since his dad had enjoyed one of his favorite simple pleasures, Bartt decided to get his dad back to the beach. "I said to my dad, 'do you want to go to the beach and look at the ocean?'," recalls Bartt. "And he said, 'I'd love to.'"

"I think it's amazing for someone like me to have something special done for a person who is challenged to make his own decisions, and experience life the way he once did and be able to afford him that opportunity, and make it easy for the caretaker."

But Bartt knew that with his father being wheelchair-bound, he would need extra help to get him there. "I spoke with VNA, and they said, 'yeah, we can make that happen,'" says Bartt.

And indeed, the next time Bartt visited his father, VNA did make it happen through Project Wish, a new program that grants wishes to VNA Hospice patients. "They brought a big crew of people who...lifted (my dad) into the wheelchair in his room, then wheeled him into a van, strapped him down for

safety, and then drove him to Humiston Park where they wheeled him out,” says Bartt, clearly in awe of the VNA team that made it happen.

The ultimate destination was the end of Humiston’s boardwalk overlooking the beach and ocean. “We hung out with him...and we could see people walking on the beach and waves crashing, and we had a hat for him, and sunglasses and he sat there for a half hour,” says Bartt. “The next day my dad said the visit to the beach was ‘absolutely fantastic.’”

And his father wasn’t the only one who benefitted from the simple gift. “I think it’s amazing for someone like me to have something special done for a person who is challenged to make his own decisions, and experience life the way he once did and be able to afford him that opportunity, and make it easy for the caretaker,” says Bartt. “I’m his son, but for somebody like me who has a job and working, to have that extra service means a lot for me. It probably means more for me than him because I feel badly he’s stuck and doesn’t have the ability to pursue life the way he used to. But to have someone facilitate something like this is a big help.”

If you’d like to make someone else’s end-of-life wish come true, please support VNA & Hospice Foundation which sponsors Project Wish. Your financial contribution also helps VNA, the only non-profit home health agency in Indian River County, to continue its mission to aiding under and uninsured patients in the community with their health needs. In addition, VNA & Hospice Foundation supports resources like the VNA Hospice House for those who cannot receive hospice care at home. Contributing to the 2022 Annual Fund means that all residents in our community, regardless of finances, can receive the quality care everyone deserves.

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We have made diligent efforts to ensure the accuracy of the list of 2021 Annual Fund Leadership Donors. We sincerely apologize for any errors or omissions. Please contact Rebecca Rodriguez at rodriguez@vnatc.com or 772.978.5573 with any questions.



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