



# PARKINSON'S WARRIORS VIGNETTE



## KATHY HOBART

Written By: Kathy Hobart

**Kathy Hobart has been a member of Pacing for Parkinson's and has served on the organizing committee since 2014.**

My husband, Jim Hobart (affectionately known as Hobie), was diagnosed with Parkinson's in the fall of 2013. He was 64 at the time. For years, one would not realize he was affected by this movement disorder. As a couple, and later on with our children, we were always very active, athletic, and sports-oriented. Little did we know what a blessing that would be. I retired from teaching the following spring (2014) and for the next 6 years we continued to ride our bicycles, play tennis and pickleball, and that fall became involved with Pacing for Parkinson's.

For years I had participated in the Baltimore Running Festival and that year I spotted a P4P t-shirt. When I inquired, I was quickly welcomed into the P4P community, which became a second blessing. We became quite active in the community surrounded by knowledgeable doctors, support staff, educational opportunities, and support groups. My role in the world of Parkinson's was one of caregiving. It was not easy - this is the phrase that comes to mind when dealing with the challenges of Parkinson's. BUT, the good news is that there are many, many resources available to guide, to lend a hand, to offer suggestions and WANT to help. Let them. Love them. Say thank you. There will be plenty of opportunities to pay the gifts forward.

Throughout our journey with Parkinson's, Hobie and I maintained a sense of humor. It was actually he who taught me to accept help. If someone wanted to help him zip his jacket, he said, "Sure, thank you!" Many times he would say, "I'll accept all of the help I can get." Time passed and activities and abilities slowly slipped away. Here's where the caregiving starts for real. It's all on you: medications, errands, budget, transportation, appointments, and on and on. The day-to-day became daunting at times, but the good news is that I found many angels who crossed our path and helped with feeding, keeping track of bathing, and making sure Hobie was safe. Keeping in close contact with our doctors is essential. Doses of meds seemed to change on a daily basis. Fortunately, Hobie's passing came quickly and mercifully. But until the very end, we laughed, danced, talked, and held hands. I wouldn't have changed a thing.

One more thing: strongly believe that working with the P4P community and the Michael J. Fox Foundation by raising dollars for research is imperative. There are so many positive findings in clinical trials that one day, there will be a cure. Until then, there are new finds, new meds to help PD patients; there is always hope.



*Above: Kathy and Hobie*

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