Guest Spotlight

Ron

Age: 74
Transplant: Single-Lung
Hospital: Houston Methodist
Hometown: New Orleans, LA

In 2016, during a routine appointment, the doctor heard something amiss while listening to my lungs and I was referred to a pulmonologist. After a whirlwind of scans and tests, I was initially diagnosed with Idiopathic Pulmonary Fibrosis (IPF) and given a shocking life expectancy of 3-5 years. My wife Margaret and I held each other and cried. After 47 years of marriage, we had expected to spend much more time together in retirement, visiting with our daughter Becca and her partner Calvin, and enjoying our hobbies.

After a second opinion, I was diagnosed with Hypersensitivity Pneumonitis, and we tried various treatments over the next few years to slow the progression of fibrosis in my lungs. All the while I began to need more and more oxygen each day. The 30 feet of oxygen tubing was cumbersome and inhibited my spontaneous way of life. Eventually, a lung transplant became my last option.

By the end of 2022, I was referred to a transplant center in Houston to determine my eligibility to receive a new lung. After days of testing, we were initially told "no". We were crushed. My records were then sent to Houston Methodist, with hope that they might have a different answer. There, I was admitted at my appointment with the transplant pulmonologist, and after two weeks of additional tests, I received news that my application for a transplant was approved. After 18 days in the hospital with quickly deteriorating health, a nurse walked into my room at 1:14 AM with bags full of vials and the news that a lung was ready for me. Now, we are learning how to manage and care for that lung and it's complicated. I have written a guide to my journey entitled "*The Quest for A Lung*" to help demystify the transplant experience for others.

What was the first thing you did after receiving your transplant?
As soon as we could, we ordered out from an Italian restaurant—real food! I had ravioli and tiramisu. In the future, we're looking forward to visiting Becca and Calvin in California and taking a trip north to see the autumn leaves.

What do you enjoy most about Nora's Home? Nora's Home provides so much more than just a place to stay during this process. The home fosters a sense of community and valuable education and support. I first arrived in a wheelchair, waiting for a lung. Now, I can walk through the halls all on my own. In a sense, it feels like graduating. Over the course of my stay, other guests have provided insight into the next stages and helped to clarify the process. Nora's Home is a place to find understanding—other guests are aware of your situation without needing any explanation. There's comfort in hearing "oh, I had that too"!

NORA'S HOME

What would you want to say to your donor?
It's simple—thank you. Your gift has allowed me to plan for life, rather than planning to die. I recognize that receiving this lung comes with both joy and loss, and I think of your family often. I am focusing on living life for two and planning for joy.