

## **September 2018 Caregiver of the Month: Vickie Failor!**



### **A Caregivers Passion**

Four years ago, at the age of 76, Francis Failor moved in with his son, Larry, and his wife, Vickie, as he became too ill to care for himself. Francis suffered from Congestive Heart Failure, A-Fib, COPD, Parkinson's and Dementia. Because of Vickie's 30 year CNA background of working in home health, hospice, nursing homes and rehabilitation centers, it only made sense for her to become Francis' caregiver. Prior to Francis moving in with Larry and Vickie, she was already taking him to his doctor's appointments because she wanted to make sure things were done right. Francis knew he was in good hands with Vickie and didn't want anyone else taking care of him. He often referred to her as "the boss" and talked about how good her cooking was. Francis had a sense of humor. Though he didn't laugh often, he always made others laugh with his jokes. Francis liked women too, especially Vanna White. "He was a mess but in a good way," Vickie laughed.

As time went on, Francis' mobility declined. He was wheelchair bound and oxygen dependent. As his dementia progressed, Francis was often up at night and confused. He became more difficult to care for as he became stubborn and combative at times. Yet Vickie was tireless in her care and was determined to keep Francis at home. "If someone can be taken care of at home, that's where they should be," says Vickie.

"Being a caregiver is tiring but rewarding. It can be stressful so you have to go into it prepared and with the right mindset and because it becomes your life 24/7. It consumes you, yet you are given so much in return," says Vickie.

Francis' condition continued to decline and he depended on Vickie for all of his care the last several months of his life. He entered hospice in February this year. Hospice offered respite to Vickie; however, she would not accept it. Francis passed away in April, just two weeks short of his 80<sup>th</sup> birthday. Vickie was by his side.