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## **COMMUNITY CAN HELP LOCAL LEGEND KEEP GIVING BACK**

### **Living with PPS, Devoted Trinity Volunteer Needs a Wheelchair Van**

**TRINITY, Fla.**—At 71 years old, William “Scott” Baggett has faced decades of challenges and triumphs living with a paralyzing polio diagnosis. A local legend for his life-changing work training therapy dogs and volunteering with kids, Scott is now in need of a little help himself. He’s started fundraising with the nonprofit Help Hope Live for a wheelchair accessible van, which insurance will not cover.

In 1958, 4-year-old Scott fell asleep and woke up paralyzed in both his legs and arms. He spent 6 months in Tampa General Hospital and was diagnosed with polio. He left the hospital able to walk again but with a difficult fight still ahead.

“What many do not know is that decades after polio comes Post Polio Syndrome or PPS,” Scott explained. Over the years, he began losing strength. He had to retire from his career at Verizon after more than 26 years. He could no longer walk more than a mile a day, he had to stop golfing, and his beloved gardening efforts growing roses and orchids had to come to a halt.

In 2004, Scott and his wife felt moved to begin visiting kids in hospitals. They began training a golden retriever, and from that year until 2019, Scott served as the Pet Therapy Chairman of St. Joseph Hospital.

“I logged over 6,000 volunteer hours visiting kids throughout Tampa Bay,” he explained. “I love people, kids, and dogs. We’ve volunteered on sexual abuse cases, taught in schools, helped with autism and special needs programs, and become instructors for other therapy dog training programs.”

In 2011, Scott even participated in the first-ever study on the impact of therapy dogs on outcomes for pediatric cancer patients:

[https://youtu.be/QybLUoRnpgI?si=0W8BnxOsmNmX\\_u3x](https://youtu.be/QybLUoRnpgI?si=0W8BnxOsmNmX_u3x)

After decades of diligent community service, Scott is now in need of help himself: insurance won't help with the cost of a wheelchair accessible van, despite its medical and personal necessity.

That's why he started fundraising with the trusted national nonprofit Help Hope Live. Donations are tax deductible at: <https://helphopelive.org/campaign/21012/>

"I never expected to be in this position," explained Scott. "PPS will progress, but that does not mean I want to stop helping others."

Unlike a GoFundMe campaign, donations to Help Hope Live are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law, and all funds raised will be administered by the nonprofit to cover verified medical and related expenses. Help Hope Live verifies medical and financial need for every patient.

Help Hope Live is a national nonprofit that specializes in engaging communities in secure, tax-deductible fundraising campaigns for people who need a transplant or are affected by a catastrophic injury or illness. Since 1983, campaigns organized by Help Hope Live have raised over \$193 million to pay patient expenses, assisting more than 25,000 patient families.

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