

The latest on Dad...



I hope this finds all of you guys well. As most of you know my Dad, Hugh, was diagnosed with ALS on January 29th, 2020. It has been a very tough road for him and for us too. Early in 2019 his “guys” on Gold shift began calling me about differences in his speech. Over the next several months, he experienced multiple medical issues. By the time he was ready to retire on June 7th 2019, we were all able to identify that something was wrong. Throughout the summer, Dad was having trouble with increased weakness in his voice, difficulty in controlling his emotions, and eventually some significant pain and weakness in his feet and ankles.

By the time the Fall came around, we were making trips to neurologists to try and get a handle on some sort of “degenerative neurologic disorder”. Rounds of testing would pass and we were no closer to finding a real answer. Thanksgiving came and went, and by Christmas Dad was having difficulty walking. I think it was SO tough for him to admit that something was wrong, that he tried to ignore parts of it. Christmas also marked the start of his difficulties in swallowing. By then, he was aspirating liquids on a regular basis. We were still weeks away from an appointment with his new specialist.

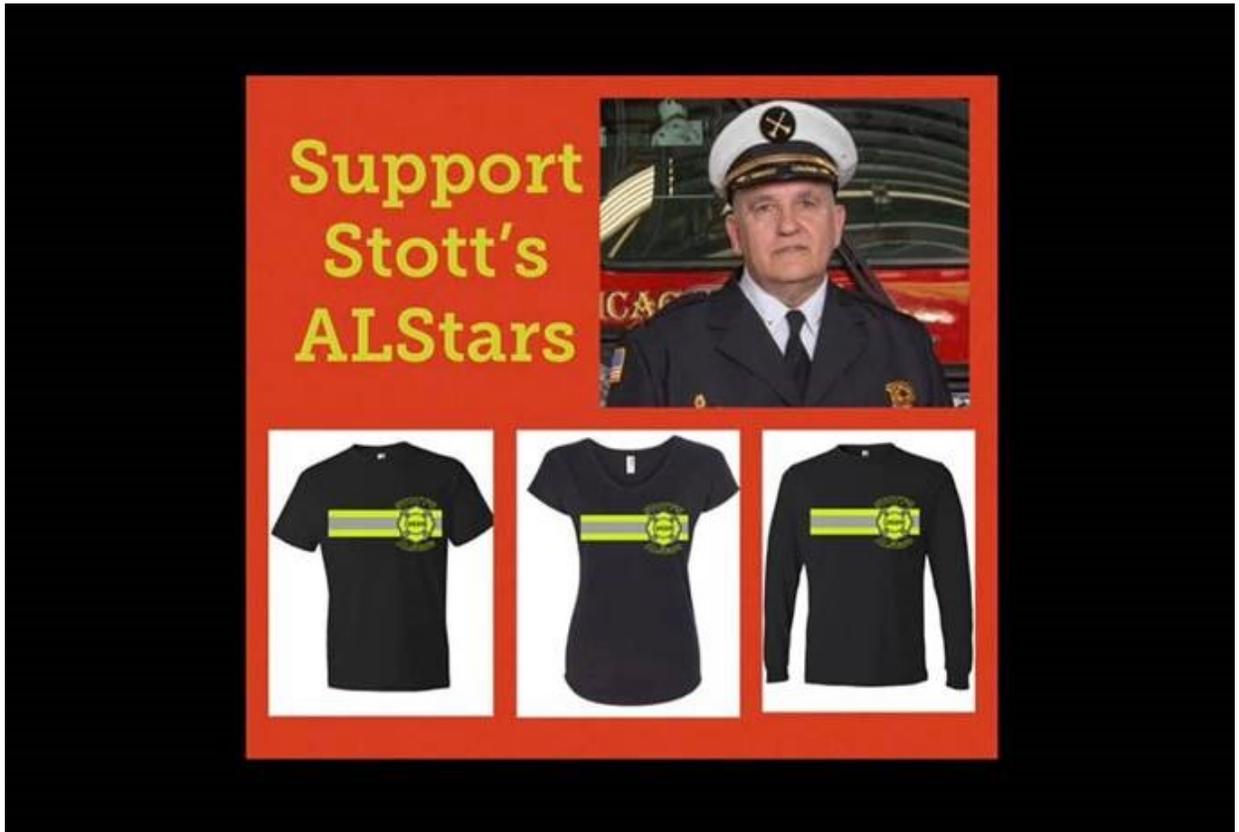
January 29th we took the trip to downtown Chicago to see a neurology specialist at Northwestern Medicine. Dad was put through another round of EMG and PET scan testing. More negative findings had finally led the doctor to the diagnosis of ALS. Hearing those words were truly devastating to us all, but we needed to gather ourselves and move on immediately.

Since the diagnosis, life has changed dramatically. As I type this on April 18th, Dad’s disease has progressed to the point that he will no longer be able to walk, sooner rather than later. His voice is recognizable in the mornings, but by midday he is usually too weak to speak clearly. His appetite is nearly nonexistent, and when he does eat he has difficulty swallowing effectively. Most days his physical strength is nearly gone by the time he and Mom have gotten him dressed. This past week, we’ve had a ceiling lift system installed on the first floor of their home to assist in moving him from his chair and/or bed to his wheelchair.

I wish that I could send this note out with better news, but it has been difficult to try and find positivity in each day. My Dad was always my hero, but this disease has wrecked absolute havoc on him physically and mentally. He speaks with me regularly about the problems he has comparing what he knows “in his head” with what he feels “in his heart”. He struggles mightily with the idea that he is “burdening” us with the help he needs, even though we have all told him how willing we are to be there for him. We were told early on by his doctor that we need to attempt to keep his life as “normal” as possible. It is a struggle for him to speak to anyone on the phone, so if you try and call him please don’t be offended if he isn’t able to answer. COVID has made travel very difficult, but I cannot stress it enough that if any of you want to see him while he is able to effectively communicate, it may not be able to wait too long. Please keep him and our family in your thoughts or prayers. Mom, Kristen, and I appreciate the help that we’ve received already, and please let me thank you in advance for help you may provide in the future.

Kevin Stott

(Information on fundraiser below)



You can support the fundraiser set up with the Les Turner ALS Foundation in Hugh Stott's name at

<https://stottsalstars20.itemorder.com/sale>