

Resident Assistance Fund to the Rescue



George Trotter lived a life of service – first to his country, and then to the church. After college, he served in the Army during the Korean Conflict, then discovered his calling as a Baptist missionary. He and his bride, Martha, said good-bye to family and friends and moved to Indonesia and later Macau. There, they raised their three children while serving the impoverished Indonesian refugee community in this Portuguese territory.

“The people in our community in Macau lived in shantytowns made entirely of tin huts and worked for the equivalent of \$1 a day,” recalls their son, Joel. “My parents spent their entire work lives trying to help these refugees by giving them whatever support they could.”

After retirement, George and Martha moved back to Richmond, Virginia. George developed early onset Parkinson’s Disease, and after he died in 2006, Martha was on her own. “Mom was living alone in her house, and this

was far from ideal,” says Joel. “Her memory was failing, she was increasingly unable to care for herself, and my brother and I were getting concerned.” Then three years ago she had a really bad fall.

“One evening, I called to check on her and she said she was fine, but I was concerned with how she sounded. So I drove down early the next morning, and found her on the floor, where she’d been all night,” Joel recalls. She was taken to the hospital and had surgery immediately for a subdural hematoma.

It was clear to Joel and his brother, who both live in Washington, D.C., that the time had come to find a safe place closer by for their mother to live, and that’s when they found The Sylvestery at Vinson Hall Retirement Community. “The Sylvestery really stood out. It’s just so nice – it’s a really well managed facility with great staff – and the location was ideal.”

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The problem was that Martha’s resources would only last a few years, given their limited income as missionaries. “My parents had carefully saved for retirement, and my mother lived very modestly,” says Joel. “Had these circumstances not befallen my mother, she would have been perfectly set up for a very manageable and indefinite retirement.”

In 2019, Martha moved into The Sylvestery, and it was everything Joel had hoped it would be. “Mom has been so happy here, and the staff adores her,” he says. “She just always has a smile and such a gentle and loving spirit.” This year, as Martha’s resources neared depletion, the Navy Marine Coast Guard Residence Foundation stepped in to offer help through the Resident Assistance Fund, ensuring that Martha could stay in her home.

“When the Resident Assistance Fund came through for my mom, we were dancing a jig!” he says. “We knew it would not be great for her to be moved somewhere else. The Sylvestery was always our first choice, and this was an amazing outcome.”

At 87, Martha is still thriving. “I feel like every day is a gift to have her still around,” says Joel. “We are certainly very grateful to the Fund.”

