



# New Hampshire Veterans Home

139 Winter St.  
Tilton, NH 03276



## Donald "Don" Baldinelli *Resident Spotlight*

Donald Anthony Baldinelli has been a fixture in New Hampshire Veterans Home's Tarr South neighborhood since his arrival in 2017. His first arrival, however, was in Boston's famed North End neighborhood in 1939. He was a middle child with two older siblings and a younger brother completing the nest. Don was nicknamed "Baldi" so early in life, he can't recall who tagged him, but it's been his moniker to this day. Fond North End memories include watching Italians playing bocce ball and he insists he can still envision the Commercial Street Beach double pier on a clear day. At times Baldi found a little mischief, particularly in the streets behind Brinks Security Co., that makes for good conversation and puts a twinkle in his eye. The Baldinelli family relocated to Mass General's west side where he earned his diploma from William Blackstone High School.

After high school, Don enlisted in the US Army in 1958 and got his feet wet in Basic Training at Fort Dix, New Jersey. He recalls, with pride, the introduction to



weaponry ranging from bazookas, hand grenades and of course, the M-1, which he could sight in from 500 ft. After sighting this, Superiors utilized him as a Scout in a Tank Unit, eventually becoming one of the first beret recipients of that era. Following his Army service in 1961, Baldi doubled down by flying into the Air Force. Though small in stature, he had huge aspirations, mastering big Heavy Equipment of all kinds. One fond memory found Don trouble-shooting a Roller that had rolled over. Ouch! He leveraged it from the side by winching it with a truck. Don was on an "isolated tour of duty". He filled in admirably, meeting the needs of a Children's Orphanage during that time.



Forced Air technology was the next tool in Don's bucket, breathing into him a love for all things Scuba Diving, a skill and passion he pursued for many years to come in various regions of the world. Don received his discharge papers in July of 1966, having obtained the rank of Staff Sergeant.

Ratheon welcomed Don as an electrician right out of the service and only five years later, he had work on his own - a real self-starter. The Town of Greenville and surrounding towns saw his versatility, employing him as Building Inspector. Don also inspected passersby working Security details at Basketball games and other venues. Scuba Diving eventually took center stage and buoyed his income. He achieved PADI Certification status and over the years, he operated two schools as well as frequented several oceans, islands, and coral reefs.

Somehow, Baldi found the time to catch the Blue Club Shriner's elevating to Shriner status. Service could have been Don's middle name, as evidenced by his leadership as Commander/Treasurer for AMVETS, an organization providing services to Veterans in Fitchburg, Massachusetts.

Don's arrival here at NHVH was a seamless one, easily making friends with all he met, leading to his election as Vice-President of Resident Council and later serving as President. Over time, his favorite pastimes at our Home are cribbage, Military Meal Trips and being a listening ear with an encouraging word when needed. Don's positive piece of advice to fellow residents is, "Watch what you say and pay attention."

*NHVH is pleased and proud to give Don our full attention today, finding him in our May 2022 Resident Spotlight.*

