Living life to its fullest is the mission of 57 year old Steve Beauchamp. The former Ch. 4 photojournalist is taking every opportunity to travel and make great memories with family and friends. He is grateful that Hospice Buffalo is enabling him to make the most of the time he has been given.

The upbeat father of two served 8 years in the military.

“I was a Vietnam era soldier and served all over the world,” recalled Steve. “I served in Korea and at NATO headquarters in Belgium. I did telecommunications for about four years and then became a military intelligence analyst where I was part of Operation Opposing Forces in California where we mimicked what the Soviet Union was doing at the time. We taught soldiers how to tell the difference between Soviet weapons and American weapons so that if they were ever in a situation, the soldier would know the sound and characteristics to identify the weapons, the helicopters, everything.”

Although Steve realizes the mass in his kidney will shorten his life span, he remains optimistic at setting goals to achieve. “Everyone has their bucket list. A bucket list doesn’t have a limit to it. It’s limitless. I have a trike that looks like the American flag and I want to do the Rolling Thunder event on Memorial Day in Washington, D.C. – it’s where a half million motorcyclists show up from all over the world and they pay homage to the POWs and MIAs that never came home from Vietnam, Korea, World War II and other wars. If I’m healthy enough, I’m going to do it. And guess what? Hospice will be right there with me to help me through whatever I need.

“It’s hard to explain how much that means to me.”

Steve is part of the Patriot Guard – “My road name was ‘Cornbread’ because who doesn’t like cornbread?” he laughs. Together with his comrades, the Patriot Guard Riders is a 100 percent volunteer non-profit organization which ensures the dignity and respect at memorial services honoring Fallen Military Heroes, First Responders and Honorably Discharged Veterans. “They show up with American flags and stand between the family and protestors to ensure all goes well with the service,” notes Steve. “They will play taps at the graveside, do a 21-gun salute and present the American flag to both of my children, that’s important to me.”

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While under the care of Hospice Buffalo at home, Steve has been able to remain strong enough to travel to Houston to visit friends, as well as have memorable trips with his children and best friends to see the Yankees play in Florida and take in entertainment in Las Vegas. He is a firm advocate of the care he has received. “Veterans need help with palliative care. There are so many veterans who die alone. I would love to have more veterans turn to Hospice because I think the care is exceptional.

“What’s that great saying? ‘I don’t want to go to heaven on a cloud. I want to go in sliding on my rear end going ‘What a ride!’ That’s the way I feel about it.”