Dr. Suresh Kulkarni – Rocket Scientist

Born in Hyderabad, India Suresh came to the USA in 1967 to get a Ph.D. in Engineering Mechanics at the University of Denver. He returned to India in 1970. Not finding suitable employment he returned to the USA in 1972 and joined Thiokol Corporation (now Northrup Grumann) as a junior engineer. He retired from there in 2003 as Vice President of Systems Engineering Overall Strategic and Tactical Programs. From 1989 to 1997 he was Vice President of Space Engineering overseeing the design, fabrication, testing and launch of the solid rocket motors for the Space Shuttle program. He was the ultimate authority for the final "GO" for the space shuttle boosters for 55 Space Shuttle Flights at the Kennedy Space Center, Florida.

Suresh and his wife Diane reside in Perry City, Utah. They have two married daughters and two grandchildren. He spends his time doing volunteer work in the local community as well as gardening. He has received accolades as the "Citizen of the Year" in 2009 from the mayor of the city and "Trustee of the Year" in 2009 from the Utah Hospital and Health Systems Association.

Dr. Kulkarni’s insights gained while taking care of his elderly mother:

My mother lived with us for 20 years from 1992 to 2002 when she passed away at the age of 96. She was in excellent health till the end. Care giving for her, therefore, was a little easier for us. However, it gradually increased in several areas as time progressed. I am going to write about what she needed in that time frame and how we provided it in detail. For example, in the area of mobility, she walked a lot when we brought her from India. But over time walks were restricted to what she could do at home with the aid of railings, then cane, then walker, then wheelchair. We planned ahead for this and made sure our home was ADA (American Disability Association) compatible.

The major areas of needs involved:

1. Mobility

2. Personal care (going to bathroom, ability to turn TV on and off and navigating through channels, etc.)

3.Self medication

4. Companionship

5. Entertainment

6. Ability to operate equipment