



DIVEHEART FOUNDER AND PRESIDENT JIM ELLIOTT (LEFT) AND BILL KAY (RIGHT), OWNER, BILL KAY AUTO GROUP

Power of partnership

"We're always so proud of and excited about the support that we receive in very different ways from area businesses," said Jim Elliott, founder and president of Diveheart in Downers Grove. "Case in point is local automobile dealership owner Bill Kay. For more than 20 years, Bill's generosity and expertise have helped Diveheart achieve our mission."

A non-profit organization, Diveheart provides scuba-diving instruction and opportunities for children and adults with disabilities and wounded veterans. Diveheart's office is located in Downers Grove, and the organization has chapters around the world. Diveheart's participants include individuals with almost any level of cognitive, physical or emotional disability.

Bill Kay, a Naperville resident, owns area Chevrolet, Honda, Nissan, Buick, GMC

and Ford dealerships. Kay first learned about Diveheart in 1999.

"I was planning a trip to Hawaii for the new millennium and wanted to get certified for scuba-diving," he said. "My cousin recommended Jim, who is an outstanding scuba instructor. Jim worked with me, and I was certified in time for my trip."

Elliott subsequently helped Kay to become a certified rescue diver.

Kay said that from the start, he has been impressed by Elliott's passion.

"I can't say enough good things about Jim and his dedication to Diveheart," he said. "Running the organization as a full-time volunteer, he sacrifices so much to help people with disabilities experience something that they otherwise would not be able to do. I started by donating a vehicle to Diveheart many years ago. My

family's foundation has also made financial contributions to Diveheart throughout the years."

Kay's generosity extends to him sharing his expertise.

"I guess I'm the go-to guy that keeps Jim on the road," he said. "Jim does a tremendous amount of traveling, supporting the Diveheart cause. I make sure his vehicles are maintained, and on occasion, I will arrange the sale of a donated vehicle for him. I also am on the board of directors of the Angelfish Foundation, which supports Diveheart."

"Reliable transportation is so important to our ability to provide our services," Elliott said. "Bill's generosity is essential to that. We are grateful to him for everything he does for our organization." ■