



**HSHS
St. Vincent
St. Mary's
Foundation**

SAINTS *Alive!*

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SUMMER 2023

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Saints Alive! is a quarterly publication, edited by Shane Starr. If you would like to opt out of receiving future fundraising requests, write the HSHS St. Vincent/St. Mary's Foundation at P.O. Box 11706, Green Bay, WI 54307-1706

Shot out of the rough

NEW KNOWLEDGE OF CANCER TREATMENTS SHAPING THE FUTURE!

In October of 2021, Trudy Kohlwey thought she was having a heart attack, as she began experiencing pain in the left side of her chest. "I knew I had a good heart, so I was confused on what was happening," said Trudy. She called her local tribal health office to schedule an appointment, and that is when they told her to go to the emergency room.

Trudy arrived at HSHS St. Mary's Hospital Medical Center emergency department where they took her blood pressure, which was 200 over 100. Chest x-rays were ordered and showed exactly what she had thought, her heart was in great condition. She was not having a heart attack; the

pain was coming from something else. Trudy was not expecting the news she would hear next. The x-ray showed a dark mass on her lung.

In November she was scheduled to have a biopsy to diagnose the mass. The results came back, and Trudy was told that she had non-small cell lung cancer. "I remember Dr. Groteluschen sitting down with me, my son and my sister, and telling me I had stage three lung cancer," she added, "He was awesome. He sat down with my son and daughter and explained everything."

Trudy was in disbelief, "How can I have

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that?" I told myself." Trudy's doctors explained that a surgical procedure could not remove the mass, due to its location on the right side of her lung. As part of her treatment plan, she received additional body scans to check other organs to ensure they were treating ALL the cancer. During the scan doctors noticed a small spot on her thyroid. At the time it was not a concern due to the size.

In December, Dr. Groteluschen and his team put together a personalized treatment plan for her to undergo chemotherapy and radiation. A port was put in to administer her treatments. "I was uneasy at first, I didn't know anything about it," said Trudy.

Shortly thereafter, Trudy was referred to the HSHS Wisconsin Clinical Research Institute (CRI) to take part in a research study. The primary goal of the study was to improve overall survival by adding immunotherapy to the standard treatment regimen for stage three cancer. A secondary goal of the study was to make sure a lower level of toxicity is added in the process.

Trudy agreed to take part in the study, even though it was not known how her body would respond. "You never know how it will work, and especially when you are in your 70s, you just don't know how it will affect your body," Trudy said, "But if I can help people in the future, I will."

Trudy loves playing golf and had a vacation to Maui planned prior to her diagnosis. She was afraid her plans would have to change, but she did not let that hold her back! Trudy remembered, "I did not want to lose strength in my arms or not be able to go on my planned vacation."

Six treatments later and a lot of time spent with the cancer center staff, Trudy was ready for her final scan. Her scan showed that the chemotherapy paired with the

immunotherapy had worked and there was no sign of cancer in her lung. In March of 2023 she had her thyroid removed to treat that cancer. Trudy credits the chemo and immunotherapy research trial for her thyroid not getting worse. "Maybe, just maybe the immunotherapy study put my thyroid cancer in remission unknowingly," she said.

"This research study helped save my life. I heard all the horror stories of chemotherapy; I didn't have one. I credit the Clinical Research Institute for that, the study was a blessing in disguise."

Trudy said this was such an amazing journey for her. "Life hasn't changed for me; it's all about living," she said. Her blood pressure is under control. Her hair is back, and she is back to full strength and recently hit a drive nearly 180 yards!

"Cancer was just a stopover; now I'm moving on with life."

With your support of the HSHS St. Vincent/St. Mary's Foundation, YOU are helping the HSHS Wisconsin Clinical Research Institute advance the knowledge of cancer treatments for the future right here in our community. Because of YOU, Trudy was able to take part in this clinical trial, and now she can get back to living her life to the fullest!



40 years of helping cancer patients

CLINICAL RESEARCH INSTITUTE SHAPING THE FUTURE OF CANCER TREATMENT

For four decades the HSHS St. Vincent Hospital Cancer Centers and the HSHS Wisconsin Clinical Research Institute (CRI) have been making a difference in the lives of former, current, and future cancer patients. Clinical trials and research studies have been offered to cancer patients, providing them access to emerging therapies and treatments while also advancing the science to improve cancer care and patient survival rates. Studies and trials that are typically seen in academic medical centers are available right here in **YOUR** community.

The HSHS St. Vincent Hospital Cancer Centers and the CRI offer cancer care and clinical research trials in Green Bay, Oconto Falls, Sheboygan, and Sturgeon Bay. These locations allow the trials and studies to be extended across Northeast Wisconsin and the Lakeshore region, closer to patients' homes.

As of 2023, more than 1,200 types of clinical cancer trials have been provided, enrolling more than 6,300 patients in Northeast Wisconsin.

"By offering these trials locally, many of our patients have benefitted from new treatment advancements, long before they became the standard of care for patients treated elsewhere," said Sally Luehring, Director, HSHS WI Clinical Research Institute.

Because of the success of the CRI and the thousands of patients who enrolled in trials over the years, groundbreaking changes in many areas of cancer care have been discovered. The CRI's vast experience in cancer research also opened the door to partnerships with Western Wisconsin and the Upper Peninsula of Michigan, bringing cancer clinical trials to patients in those local communities as well.



Giving tomorrow starts today

LEAVE YOUR LEGACY THROUGH PLANNED GIVING

Planned gifts, or legacy gifts, offer a great opportunity for both HSHS St. Vincent/St. Mary's Foundation and you as a donor. These gift arrangements are a way to reflect **YOUR** values, leave a legacy of giving, and make a significant impact on patients seeking our care. Planned gifts can be directed to a particular fund or for a particular use. Ways to make a planned gift include:

- Will/bequests.
- Charitable trusts.
- Life insurance.
- Stocks and securities.
- Retirement plans.
- Real estate.

If you have a question about planned giving, consult your attorney, accountant, or financial planner.

For more information, please contact the HSHS St. Vincent/St. Mary's Foundation at wi-foundations@hshs.org.

Shining the light: Donor spotlight

MEET JILL AND AARON SCHULTZ

Tell us a little about yourselves: Aaron and I have been married for 17 years. We have four children, Hannah (16), Ellen (would be 14), Levi (12), and Hope (10). We moved to Green Bay eight years ago from Iowa. Aaron is a pastor in the Wisconsin Evangelical Synod, and I own FiveThumbsUp Bakery located at the Cannery in Green Bay. Our family enjoys going to church, having campfires, taking vacations, and playing sports.

What inspired you to be involved with the HSHS St. Vincent/St. Mary's Foundation:

Our inspiration came from our daughter Ellen. Ellen died shortly after birth from a neural tube defect called anencephaly. Her short life inspired us to start a nonprofit, Shining Light Raising Hope, to raise money for programs that support grieving families after the loss of an infant. Our other inspiration was our local Children's Hospital in Iowa. They took care of us the day Ellen was born, and they did such a great job that it inspired us to want to give back.

Is there a certain program close to your hearts? We support the Share Program because we lost our second child shortly after birth, and our care back in Iowa was exceptional, so we wanted to support a similar program here in Green Bay. Our biggest passion is Shining Light Raising Hope and helping other families while honoring the life of our daughter Ellen. We host an annual event to raise money for the Share Program, to help families like ours go through what could be the most difficult time of their lives.



WATCHMAN™ implant procedure saving lives

NEW PROCEDURE HELPS REDUCE AFIB STROKE RISK

The average person with atrial fibrillation (AFib) is **five** times more likely to have a stroke than someone with a regular heartbeat. One of the ways to reduce AFib stroke risk is through blood thinners, which also have their own risks like excessive or internal bleeding, a scary prospect. “The problem we regularly encounter is that many of our patients do not tolerate anticoagulation well and suffer major bleeding side effects, making them unsuitable for long-term anticoagulation,” said Dr. Anas Sarhan, Interventional Cardiologist, Prevea Health.

A **NEW** implant procedure is available for patients with AFib and stroke risk as an alternative to blood thinners. The WATCHMAN Implant is a one-time, minimally invasive procedure for people with AFib, not caused by a heart valve problem. The implant is about the size of the quarter and is directly placed into the heart. The doctor makes a small cut

into the patient's upper leg and inserts a narrow tube, where then the WATCHMAN is guided into the heart. “Of all our patients who have received a WATCHMAN device implant, we have had a 100% success rate in getting them off of their blood thinner at the six-week post-implant mark so far,” said Dr. Sarhan

“We are thankful for the support we have received from the HSHS Foundation that has set us up for success right from the start,” added Dr. Sarhan. Because of YOUR support, patients at HSHS St. Vincent and St. Mary's Hospitals have access to an alternative cutting-edge treatment allowing them to reduce their risk of stroke from AFib.