



SAINTS *Alive!*

Miracles happen because of *you.*



SUMMER 2023

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life-saving care!

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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. Clare Foundation at P.O. Box 11706, Green Bay, WI 54307-1706

Left or right?

YOUR SUPPORT PROVIDES LIFE-SAVING CARE!

Most decisions don't have much impact on your life, let alone save it all together, but Denise Nau had to make a decision that would ultimately save her life! **Left or right?**

It was a few hours after midnight on February 11, 2023, and Denise was woken up by severe tooth pain. "It felt like I had a tooth pulled out," said Denise. Denise went to her medicine cabinet and took some aspirin to help alleviate the pain, she began to feel better. Shortly thereafter, the pain returned.

Her tooth pain, in addition to chest pain, persisted for another 25 minutes

and Denise decided to wake up her husband. "I woke up Guy and told him 'I think we should go to the hospital; I think I may be having a heart attack or stroke!'" said Denise. They got into their car and there was no question where they were headed. They were on their way to Green Bay.

As they approached Hwy 41, Guy pushed the brake pedal and turned on his right turn signal to begin the 45-minute trip to Green Bay. But something in that moment told Denise to change plans and turn left, she looked at him and said, "Honey, I think we better go to Oconto Falls."

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Almost Home

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Minutes later they arrived at HSHS St. Clare Memorial Hospital. When Denise arrived, she told the registration specialist that she was having a heart attack. A security guard overheard her comment and put her in a wheelchair and rushed her back to the ER. Within minutes of her arrival Denise's heart stopped. **"As soon as I got to the ER, they were putting me up on the table, and I coded,"** said Denise.

The ER providers shocked her heart several times, but she **continued to fade**. When Denise finally came to, she saw the concerned look of those who were caring for her. "I remember waking up and saying, 'Holy smokes, I didn't know there were this many people in Oconto Falls,'" said Denise, as she had the whole room laughing and smiling. Her doctor explained to her that her heart went into a bad rhythm known as v-tach. The heart usually corrects itself after a few seconds, but hers lasted so long it caused sudden cardiac arrest.

After she was stabilized by the physicians and staff at HSHS St. Clare Memorial Hospital, Denise was transferred to HSHS St. Vincent Hospital's Heart Center. She knew she would be okay on the ambulance ride down to Green Bay when she learned the EMT shared a name with her son, Travis. At HSHS St. Vincent Hospital she underwent further assessment and received a pacemaker implantation. Her decision to go to St. Clare will stick with her forever. "I am alive because of the care I received at HSHS St. Clare Memorial Hospital; they are the reason I am still here today!" exclaimed Denise.

"I died on February 11th and St. Clare brought me back to life!"

Denise recalls feeling the compassion and care that her nurse, Mary, gave during her stay at St. Clare. "I just kept remembering Mary; she was such a bright light in a time of darkness for me," said Denise.

After her procedures in Green Bay were completed and she was discharged from St. Vincent's Hospital, Denise visited HSHS St. Clare Memorial Hospital to visit Mary. "I met her in the waiting room. As soon as she saw me, she began to cry and was genuinely happy to see me alive!" she said.

Thanks to donors like **YOU**, our hospital was prepared with expert medical professionals and the equipment needed to save Denise's life. Your support of HSHS St. Clare Memorial Hospital helps educate our colleagues on the newest medical advances, and provide equipment needed to practice those methods. Thank You!



Nurse's Nook lives on

Both HSHS St. Clare Memorial Hospital and the HSHS St. Clare Foundation are delighted to share with you again that the Nurse's Nook has become its own, independent nonprofit organization! We wanted you to know how grateful we are for your commitment to the children in Oconto County and encourage you to follow Nurse's Nook on its next chapter as an independent nonprofit organization. We wish them nothing but success because we know when Nurse's Nook succeeds, so does our community.

Nurse's Nook was established in 2014 by school nurse Nuala Nowicki, RN, to assist students and their families in the Gillett School District in need of food, clothing, basic hygiene supplies, medical supplies and more. As the need for additional assistance across the county was discovered, the program became an official program of HSHS St. Clare Memorial Hospital in 2017, supported by the HSHS St. Clare Foundation.

Designed to address the unique challenges faced by rural children, the Nurse's Nook expanded from Gillet to Suring to Oconto Falls to Lena and beyond. As a rural health care provider, HSHS St. Clare Memorial Hospital recognizes that Oconto County students are not just local children, they are our patients, too. Through our commitment to serving our community, St. Clare provided our youth with increased opportunities to learn and succeed in school and contributed to their growth, health, and overall development through our support of the Nurse's Nook.

On average, approximately 400 students per day benefit from the Nurse's Nook program; over 50,000 items are distributed to children and families annually; and the weekend food program provides more than 200 households with weekly access to nutritious, delicious food for the whole family.

None of this could have happened without the commitment of donors and community members both within and outside of Oconto County.

We thank you for being a part of this journey and look forward to continuing our commitment to Oconto County for years to come.



Share your story

We in philanthropy want you to know how important your generosity is to our patients, their families, and our caregivers. *Saints Alive!* is a quarterly publication designed to highlight the meaningful impact **YOU** make on our hospital, and how you make miracles happen every day.

The HSHS St. Clare Foundation raises much-needed funds to support the future care provided at HSHS St. Clare Memorial Hospital.

Do you have a story to share? Do you know someone who had a great experience at our hospital?

Let us know at wi-foundations@hshs.org and it could be featured in a future publication!



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