Complications Lead to Many Blessings

Many people have experienced unfortunate situations resulting in something unexpectedly good later on, referred to often as “a blessing in disguise.” For Bryan Lund, from Fulda, MN, his series of misfortunes led to the greatest blessing one can ever achieve, saving his life.

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Pictured: Bryan Lund and his two gardening partners for over six years, his grandsons, (left) Thaddeus (12), Vincent (10) and Hallelujah (puppy).

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A Message from the CEO

I am excited to announce that WAH is planning for a remodel of the emergency department. The anticipated start date is towards the end of October and the anticipated project completion is May of 2022. The remodel will include adding additional private treatment rooms, increasing the size of the treatment rooms, and increasing the size of the nursing and physician work area. We will continue to provide updates to the community as things progress.

Below is a rough sketch of the new emergency room layout. The biggest change will be to our trauma and patient bays two and three (which are the bays that are currently separated by a curtain). These rooms will all be private separate rooms. An additional change will be in our current waiting area. We will convert the current waiting room area into a triage area and add an additional patient room.

More information will be shared with the community as we get closer to the actual implementation date. Any updates will be shared via social media and Windom Area Health’s website.

Gut Healthy Luncheon Brings Lots of Interest

Everyone has had a ‘gut feeling,’ but not everyone thinks about how their gut is feeling! Since July, Liz Coleman, DNP, CNP, CWON, and Integrative Health provider at Windom Area Health (WAH), has put on three complimentary Go With Your Gut Lunch & Learns in the area and spoken to over 50 attendees on ways to keep your gut healthy and happy.

Liz shared basics of gut health with attendees before diving into specifics such as the importance of bacterial balance, causes of gut dysfunction, and ways to heal the gut and keep it flourishing. Attendees were also treated to a free lunch designed with gut health in mind by Abby Kipfer, Registered Dietitian at WAH. The sessions were held twice in Windom at the Cottonwood County Historical Society and once in Mt. Lake at Center Point Church. Thank you to both locations for helping to make these events a success!

A final free session has been added in Lakefield on September 30th from 12:00-1:00 p.m. at the American Legion. Space is limited, so please call 507-831-0620 to see if there are spaces open!

As the Integrative Health provider at Windom Area Health, Liz helps patients with a variety of concerns such as gut health, anxiety, headaches, sleep issues and more. Through the Integrative Health Clinic she incorporates holistic care and functional medicine to treat patients as a whole and assist them in meeting their health goals, consulting with primary care providers as needed. To set up an appointment with Liz, call 507-831-0670 today!
Complications Lead to Many Blessings -CONTINUED

Not Breathing Easy
As a chronic asthmatic, it was common for Bryan to deal with breathing problems and knowing when his lungs needed medication. In early August of 2020, Bryan started experiencing a different set of breathing problems; his usual prescription of prednisone (steroid) and Z-packs (Azithromycin, antibiotic) were not taking care of his breathing discomfort and illness like they had in the past. Suspicious of something more going on, Bryan's primary doctor referred him for advanced specialized care. “My doctor from the Fulda clinic referred me to a Pulmonologist in Sioux Falls. There I was placed in a full-body glass tube for breathing tests and then sent home with some new and very expensive inhalers,” Bryan chuckled. “Once home, I felt like they worked for the first day or maybe two, but as the weeks went on, I was finding no long-term help,” Bryan explained. Bryan’s Pulmonologist then suggested he see a Cardiologist.

The Heart of the Problem
Bryan met with a Cardiologist for testing on the function of his heart on August 25, 2020, Bryan’s 65th birthday. “Yep, turn 65, then meet your Cardiologist,” Bryan laughed.

The Cardiologist discovered Bryan’s aortic valve was nearly closed, allowing almost zero blood flow, and causing his lungs not to be fed and properly oxygenated. Bryan was in the early stages of heart valve failure.

As time progressed, he started slowly taking on water weight and was now dealing with an open wound on the same leg previously healed back in 2019.

“I started seeing Noami again at the Wound Center in Windom for my open leg wound,” Bryan shared. Noami Bach, CNP, CWON, is a wound care provider at the Wound and Hyperbaric Healing Center located at Windom Area Health (WAH). She specializes in non-healing wounds, Ostomy Care and OccMed services.

Bryan was a traveling man. He continued to treat his open leg wound in Windom while traveling to Sioux Falls for multiple heart tests with his Cardiologist. During the TEE test (transesophageal echocardiogram), he ended up having a severe life-threatening allergic reaction. Bryan was in the hospital for three days, and when released on day four, he was diagnosed with COVID-19. Bryan was finding himself in a consistent back step, including additional allergy tests and CT scans.

“My wife says I have never been the easy child; she still calls me one of her kids, especially when she is mad at me,” Bryan laughs.
Complications Lead to Many Blessings—CONTINUED

More Bumps Along the Way
Bryan recovered from his allergic reaction and COVID-19 but now was dealing with his insurance denying him a heart valve placement due to the amount of fluid he was retaining. Bryan had developed severe edema. His legs had expanded like tree trunks, retaining around 70 pounds of fluid. Bryan’s primary care provider sent him to Sioux Falls on November 17, 2020, in hopes of removing some of the fluid so he could be cleared for surgery.

“It was the afternoon of November 19, 2020. I was sitting on the edge of the bed around 3:00 p.m. The nurse had just checked my vitals and weight. I remember thinking, ‘Something does not feel right, I am not feeling good at all right now,’” Bryan recalled.

Bryan’s body was starting to fail. By 4:00 p.m., his heart rate was down to 20 bpm; he was tubed and rushed into surgery. Waking up three days later, Bryan had two temporary pacemakers installed and a permanent one placed three days later. On December 1, 2020, Bryan finally received his valve replacement. During the removal of one of the temporary pacemakers, however, an artery ripped, causing Bryan to need three units of blood. Bryan was now stable and ready to start his recovery.

“My situation didn’t start as an emergency but ended up being an emergency,” Bryan states. “What normally is an in and out valve placement procedure for most people become so much more complicated for me. When I arrived at Windom Area Health, I was very tender and needing healing care.”

On the Uphill Climb—
Arrival at Windom Area Health
Finally on an uphill climb, Bryan was now in search of hospital facilities that offered swing bed programs. Swing bed programs are a service that provides short-term care to patients who no longer need acute hospital care but still require daily skilled nursing or rehabilitation services before returning home.

Bryan explored swing bed options with the Sanford Heart Hospital social worker and requested to be placed in Windom. Bryan was still dealing with a leg wound and enjoyed his patient/provider relationship with Naomi Bach in the Wound & Hyperbaric Health Center at WAH. In addition, at that time, WAH’s COVID-19 restrictions allowed one visitor per swing bed patient, while other facilities did not. Bryan’s wife was able to visit him every day.

When Bryan first arrived at WAH, he could only take two steps away from the bed and two steps back with a walker. He was in high need of focused and consistent care to help him continue to heal.

During this time, Dr. Steven Hartberg was Bryan’s transitional care provider. “Yes, that darn Dr. Hartberg stopped in to see me every day! I recall one day being in the restroom and holding a full conversation with him. It didn’t seem to bother him or me,” Bryan chuckled. “That was a great find just getting to meet and know him.”

Bryan also recalled his first Physical Therapy appointment with Ike Pohlman. During his first six-minute walk, Bryan made a distance of 200 feet with Ike. “I thought he was trying to kill me,” Bryan laughed. “Joking aside, I know he was trying to make me better and did by challenging me every day!”

In reviewing Bryan’s case and monitoring his breathing pattern, Dr. Hartberg set up a check-in with WAH’s Respiratory Care Coordinator, Rhonda Wahl, RRT. While visiting and analyzing Bryan, Rhonda confirmed he would be a great candidate for her Pulmonary Rehabilitation Program.

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Foot Care Clinic
Treatments include but are not limited to:
- Diabetic Foot Care
- Ingrown Toenails
- Thickened Toenails
- Cracked Heels
- Corn Treatment
- Callous Treatment
- Toenail Clipping
- Hard Skin Removal

For more information call 831-2400
2150 Hospital Dr | Windom, MN 56101 | 507-831-2400

NOW OPEN!
Complications Lead to Many Blessings - CONTINUED

Pulmonary Rehabilitation
On February 12, 2021, Bryan started the Pulmonary Rehabilitation Program, allowing him to learn more in-depth ways to manage his breathing by learning new techniques and exercises. “Rhonda taught me a couple of breathing techniques that I found I was kind of already doing, but now I am doing even better because she explained them. One of the things as an asthmatic is you compensate for different things. Rhonda has helped me figure out my breathing processes and how to proceed in different scenarios and environments. We also talked about my sleeping disorder and reviewed my c-pap machine use. I still have asthma attacks, but Rhonda has taught me to pull myself down faster,” Bryan shared.
Bryan graduated from the program on March 29, 2021.

Reoccurring Appointments
Bryan continues to work healing and bettering his health. “I have come a long way and continue my wound care and Physical Therapy appointments. I look forward to coming here because I know I am going to have a great visit and great care,” Bryan smiled. “I get to see Dr. Hartberg in passing as well. He still stops and talks to me, treating me as if I was still one of his patients. But honestly, that is all the staff at WAH, still caring and checking in on me.

When I got here, I quickly found out what a great facility WAH was, holy cow. I could not ask for a better place to be. Sanford Heart Sioux Falls got me going in the right direction again, and when I arrived at Windom, the staff didn’t skip a beat, helping me continue my healing journey! Same great quality as Sioux Falls. I recommend Windom Area Health to anybody!”

Looking Forward to a Blossoming Future
Bryan has been a native of the Fulda area for many years. You might recognize him from when he was a cook/assistant manager at The Hub in Slayton for 22 years. Or possibly from his coaching days with the Fulda school football team for 25 years. Maybe you remember hearing about his family hosting 17 exchange students over the years. Or how about teaching English as a second language to newcomers at the Adult Center in Worthington. Or maybe you have received or purchased gorgeous gladiolas from his garden sold by his grandsons.
Bryan Lund might have a mechanically complicated heart, but it is always full of love and compassion.

Update on Bryan
Since the interview back in April, Bryan has officially graduated from WAH. “Pulmonary Therapy Physical Therapy, and Wound Care, I even got to ring the bell,” Bryan shares. “I really am thankful for everyone at WAH!”
Let’s Give Them Something to Talk About…and Watch

Visitors and patients at Windom Area Health (WAH) may have noticed some new entertainment in the lobbies this summer. Two large TV monitors, or digital signage, were installed in the hospital in May; one in the main lobby, and one in Outreach lobby. The monitors feature a custom layout featuring WAH events, services, and announcements, along with weather and news information, and a live feed from our Facebook page.

The digital signage was a part of an internal Foundation grant process called the “Ask for Anything” grant. Department managers wrote proposals for funding needs that were outside of their approved budgets. Brenda Muller, Outreach Clinic Director, decided to request the monitors based on patient and staff feedback of needing something to watch, listen to, and pass the time while waiting for appointments. “COVID really increased this need, since we had to eliminate all shared reading materials and magazines from our lobbies,” Brenda noted. The Foundation selected the proposal and hospital staff began researching services used to create, manage and air digital content.

Recently, another monitor was added to the Rehabilitation Lobby. However, the Foundation purchased this monitor for a specific purpose. Kim Armstrong, Foundation Director, noted, “We needed to update our donor wall, which is currently in the Rehabilitation Lobby. In researching options, we found that a ‘digital donor wall’ will allow us to do more frequent updates, along with promote other initiatives and events our Foundation has.” Currently, donors are listed, along with information about past projects made possible through donations.
Auxiliary Happenings
By: Mary Klosterbuer,
Windom Area Hospital Auxiliary President

Windom Area Hospital Auxiliary is grateful...
- For your understanding that we were not present at the fair with our Chamber Raffle tickets again this year.
- To welcome new members and to be able to meet in person again.
- To the Windom community for your continued support of the Auxiliary and Windom Area Health (WAH).
- To the WAH Incident Command Team that carefully considers the health and safety of everyone when deciding which of our events we can safely hold.

Ho-Ho-Ho Holiday Bake Sale on July 25
The Auxiliary partnered with the WAH Giving Tree Committee to raise money for their Giving Tree project where they provide holiday gifts to children in the community. The profit was split between the Giving Tree and the Auxiliary. Our portion will be donated towards our fundraising project for 2021-2022 which is to replace a cataract surgery chair for the Surgery Department.

Fresh pecans for sale!!
- The Auxiliary will again be selling fresh pecans and pecan caramel clusters.
- The profit from these sales will go towards a cataract surgery chair.
- Prices will be set in October once we learn our cost.
- Pecans and caramel clusters will arrive in November.
- Watch the Windom Area Hospital Auxiliary Facebook page for an announcement when we are taking orders.
- You will be contacted if you have previously purchased from the Auxiliary, or you can place an order by calling: Marlene Smith 507-830-1393
- Thanks in advance for your support of this fundraiser.

Want to join the Auxiliary?
- Meetings are on the second Monday of the month at 6:00 p.m. and are held in the Large Conference Room at Windom Area Health.
- All members receive a weekly email of the Volunteer Times Review with WAH news.
- This is a great organization to meet new people and to serve the community.
- Call Mary Klosterbuer (831-3142) for more information about joining.

Like us on Facebook
Windom Area Hospital Auxiliary!!!

Crafting for a Cause with Rachael Marie Designs & More

October 2 | 10:00 a.m. | Cost: $40
October 6 | 5:00 p.m. | Cost: $40
Location: Windom Area Health Large Conference Room
Five door hanger projects to choose from. Appetizers and refreshments provided.
Survivors register for free!
To register, visit rachaelmariedesigns.com

Join us for food truck Fridays in October!
Join our Imaging Department for Food Truck Fridays in October at WAH and schedule your yearly mammogram! Watch for vendor schedule!

Kids Cooking Class
October 21 | Little Goblins Cooking Class
Time: 3:30-4:30 p.m. | Cost: $5 per child
Location: Windom Area Health Large Conference Room
For children 3-5 years of age. Must be accompanied by an adult.
To learn more or to register, contact Anna at 507-831-0671 or Anna.Snyder@WindomAreaHealth.org

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Check Out Our Star!

Windom Area Health recognizes employees through the Caught You Caring program for their superior care and above and beyond efforts. Each month, employees with submissions from peers, patients or the public are recognized through our employee newsletter and are given a gift.

Quarterly, a panel meets to determine which employee has stood out over the past three months. We want to celebrate Bev Boike, who was selected as our Employee of the Quarter for the last quarter.

Bev Boike
Employee of the 2nd Quarter 2021

Bev Boike, a Patient Access Representative, has been named Windom Area Health’s Employee of the Quarter! Bev has been an asset to Windom Area Health since May of 2009. Bev has dedicated so much time and hard work here at Windom Area Health and it is obvious patients enjoy interacting with her. To quote a few:

“Bev is always so professional and treats me with respect. I always look forward to checking in with her. She does a great job and is an asset to Windom Area Health. Bev always has time for me!”

“Bev is always happy to help, I appreciate her efficiency when checking in for my appointment”

Not only do WAH patients appreciate Bev but WAH employees have recognized her and all of the hard work she demonstrates.

“Bev and the registration staff went out of their way to assist me with prior authorizations tasks. It is greatly appreciated!”

“Bev stayed after her regular shift to help registration in the ER, demonstrating teamwork.

Thank you Bev, we appreciate your help!!”

We are lucky to have an employee like Bev at our organization. Thanks for all you do, Bev!

A Message from the Wellness Center

In June, our Wellness Center Coordinator, Lindsey Englar, obtained a certification from the American Council on Exercise (ACE) as an Orthopedic Exercise Specialist. She currently holds a certification as a personal trainer from ACE, but with the expansion of the Bridge the Gap program, this additional education allows her to better care for our post-rehab clientele. To date, the Bridge the Gap program has had 10 clients, nine of which have since finished with one current participant. The goal is to have most, if not all, total joint patients coming out of physical therapy join this program, which allows them to continue their post-rehab journey with the support of a guided exercise program.

In addition to the Bridge the Gap and personal training clients she sees, Lindsey leads a free Walk With Ease class. This evidence-based health management program is geared toward those with arthritis, fibromyalgia, and chronic pain. However, for some in the class, it was a way to get them motivated and back into the routine of walking regularly. While the current walking sessions are held outdoors, we are grateful for the ability to move indoors if needed. We started with a small class of five for our first session, but hope to increase our numbers for the new upcoming session starting October 4th. To learn more about the class, call Lindsey at 831-0673 or register at yourjuniper.org/Classes/Register/2653.

Pictured: (From left) Pat Lenz, Sharron Tibodeau, and Lindsey Englar, Wellness Center Coordinator, enjoying a sunny stroll during their Walk with Ease session.