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AUBURN COMMUNITY RALLYING TO HELP PARALYZED HUSBAND

Wife Says "He Is A Miracle...He Taught Me Unconditional Love."

AUBURN, Calif.—April 22, 2024 started out as a positive day for 40-year-old Jason Ellefson and his wife, Shawna. In the middle of a set with his rock band, Jason collapsed. He experienced 4 cardiac arrests, brain damage, and a spinal cord stroke.

Doctors said he would never recover, but wife Shawna countered, "You don't know Jason." A year and a half later, he is living proof of hope, and his loving community is coming together to fundraise for a healthy future at:

<https://helphopelive.org/campaign/26466/>

"He headed out the door with the biggest smile on his face," Shawna said, recounting the day that changed their lives. As she headed to her first day of a new job, Jason prepared to play bass for his rock band. At 8:30 p.m. that night, Jason collapsed in the middle of a set.

His bandmates were frantic. They called 911, and his band's guitar player started CPR—he had just completed his CPR certification 2 days before the incident.

Thanks to their help and medical intervention, Jason survived 4 cardiac arrests. He experienced a spinal stroke, and doctors put him in a medically induced coma. "For a week, he fought for his life," Shawna explained. "Doctors said he would be in a vegetative state for the rest of his life."

Despite the prognosis, Shawna stood her ground. "You don't know him," she told doctors. "I became a feral female in those rooms. I was not going to give up on him—the kindest, funniest, most loving, and most generous man I've ever known."

As Shawna explained, her tireless advocacy on her husband's behalf drew from the strength of their story: "Jason taught me what unconditional love is. We met later in life, and he helped me raise my two boys. He loved me through the dark times. I knew if anyone could come back from this, it would be him."

Shawna's hope became a miracle: Jason woke up and was able to speak a few words. He could not move his legs, and doctors had to install a pacemaker to get his heart back into rhythm.

"He lost about 80% of his memory," Shawna explained. "Foods, people, devices...his first shower was scary to him, as he didn't understand the water hitting him."

Jason had to begin the slow process of relearning how to live. He transferred to a rehabilitation facility in San Jose, but only 30 days of recovery was covered by insurance.

Across his initial recovery, he spent 89 days hospitalized. "I had to quit my job to care for him," Shawna explained. "I had to be his teacher, mother, cook, maid, nurse, and handyman. We had to move to a smaller and more affordable home."

Today, Jason and Shawn's community is rallying to help them fund a critical need for a healthier and brighter future. With robotic legs, a service dog, and an accessible golf cart, Jason can get back on the move and reduce the strain on his body as he continues to adjust to life with paralysis with his beloved wife by his side.

They have partnered with the trusted national nonprofit Help Hope Live to fundraise. Donations can be made at: <https://helphopelive.org/campaign/26466/>

Unlike a GoFundMe campaign, donations to Help Hope Live are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law, and all funds raised will be administered by the nonprofit to

cover verified medical and related expenses. Help Hope Live verifies medical and financial need for every patient.

Help Hope Live is a national nonprofit that specializes in engaging communities in secure, tax-deductible fundraising campaigns for people who need a transplant or are affected by a catastrophic injury or illness. Since 1983, campaigns organized by Help Hope Live have raised over \$193 million to pay patient expenses, assisting more than 25,000 patient families.

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