

Emily Progin, Content Manager
eprogin@helphopelive.org / 800.642.8399
Release: Immediate

\$19,000+ RAISED IN 1 MONTH TO HELP POLICE CHIEF GET TRANSPLANT
Willard Chief of Police Thomas McClain Needs Double Lung Transplant

WILLARD, Mo.—After 32 years of community impact as the Willard Chief of Police, Thomas McClain now needs a little help himself to bring a life-saving double lung transplant within reach. His community has raised over \$19,000 to assist with critical out-of-pocket transplant costs in just 1 month of medical fundraising.

Tax-deductible donations can be made through the nonprofit Help Hope Live at:
<https://helphopelive.org/campaign/26716/>

In addition to online donations, an upcoming talent show fundraiser on Friday, January 23 in Willard will contribute to fundraising efforts in Tom's honor.

Talent Show Fundraiser Details

When: Friday, January 23. Doors at 6:00 p.m. Show 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.

Where: Black Box Theater at Willard Middle School (205 Miller Road, Willard, MO 65781)

What: Talent contest and showcase for a cause.

Cause: Funds raised will benefit the nonprofit Help Hope Live in honor of Thomas McClain to offset out-of-pocket transplant-related expenses.

Cost: \$10 – buy your tickets at the door.

Contact: Emily Elliot at (417) 849-5058

Tom's Story

Tom McClain says his service to the Willard community began “when God tapped me on the shoulder” in May 1993.

After serving in a police department in Oregon, Tom relocated after feeling a call that he could do the most good by continuing his career in Willard. Starting out in a patrol position, he began serving as the Chief of Police in Willard in July 1993.

After 32 years of service, Tom's impact on the community is immeasurable. Beyond the badge, he has led camp and character programs that have impacted hundreds of youth lives, run a DARE program to support healthy choices for students, assisted families in need through the annual Shop With a Cop holiday program, and more.

See video of the Willard PAL outdoor camp here:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DHe0NRtM_4M

And the DARE program with special thanks to Officer McClain here:

<https://youtu.be/66N53CswBdc?si=QCqwssWRuJGIz4fE>

And the youth boxing program here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7Ec6RssiXQU>

Off-duty, Tom is a husband, father of two, grandfather of five, and mentor to thousands. He's also a pastor at Rose Hill Baptist Church.

Tom's ability to give back to his family and community has been interrupted by a serious and progressive lung disease, pulmonary fibrosis. To have hope for a bright, healthy, and community-enriching future, Tom must undergo a double lung transplant.

The transplant will require at least 3 months of medical relocation for the procedure and recovery as well as full-time caregiving and time off from work. All of these needs and others come with a substantial out-of-pocket cost for Tom and his family.

That's why his loving community began fundraising with the trusted national nonprofit Help Hope Live. In less than 1 month, the community has raised over \$19,000 towards the family's \$30,000 fundraising goal for critical transplant costs, including raising over \$13,000 in the first week.

Infused with support from his family and community, Tom is setting his sights on the future. "Initially, I was distraught and in denial about the diagnosis—but today, I can say I am fully committed to preparing for this transplant," he explained. "I still have goals at the police department, so I am single-minded about giving my all to this process and getting back to work."

Thanks to his community's support and early intervention from his medical team, Tom says, "My initial despair has been replaced with gratitude and thankfulness." Tom's medical team is estimating that he will join the waiting list for a double lung transplant as early as January or February 2026.

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. ###