



# Restoring *Hope* Transplant House

Lions Club Council of Governors Report

January 2026

7457 Terrace Avenue • Middleton, WI 53562 • (608) 831-1726 • [www.restoringhope.org](http://www.restoringhope.org)

Dear Lions Council of Governors Friends,

Happy New Year to you all. Here are some of our Restoring Hope Transplant House updates that we wanted to share with you all. Wishing you all a great upcoming meeting!



2026 is our 13<sup>th</sup> year of welcoming transplant families to Restoring Hope Transplant House. We are so grateful for another wonderful year and look forward to furthering our work, friendships and memories in the year ahead. We are so grateful for all of your thoughtful holiday and end of year donations as well as they are so critically important to us as a non-profit in order to maintain our mission.

As has become tradition, we celebrated Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Years with traditional feasts and gatherings for all of our families who were away from home and loved-ones over the holidays.

We are overjoyed to report to you all that our massive roofing project of 2025 that happened over a few different phases was completed. It has totally transformed the look of the house and will go a long way in preserving our historic home feel and charm



for future generations of transplant families.



The total bill for new roof, shingles, gutters, soffit and fascia was in the \$70,000 range. Any and all donations truly help us to offset this major expense and move on to the next major project that much easier. Countless families from every major Lions Club district in Wisconsin have gotten through their

transplant journeys under this roof. Your kindness and generosity help to make a major

project like this possible so that your neighbors in need will always have a home away from home when they need it most.

Shortly after the completion of our roof project, Lion Al paid a visit to the house with one of our favorite surprises ever. He and some wood working friends created the most beautiful Restoring Hope Transplant House sign for the corner that perfectly captured the historic magic of the house and completed our exterior transformation better than we ever could have dreamed. The house is now so welcoming and beautiful for new arrivals and old friends making their way back to the house. It all came at a tremendous expense, but the results have made such a huge difference. Thank you all!



One of our Lions friends Steve was here for his 11 year heart transplant checkup yesterday. His transplant coordinator when he received his life-saving heart was Lion Al's daughter Darcy. How proud Steve was to pose with that new sign yesterday knowing his proud history with the UW Health Transplant Program and as a longtime Lion.

One of the next projects on our immediate radar is the upgrading of our kitchen cabinets. What was once a fresh coat of paint over older cabinets at a work group day, has faded and worn over the years with the countless sets of hands that have gone through our kitchen. While originally hoping to get a volunteer group to sand and repaint the cabinets again, a couple of our Lions suggested that we share this immediate need with our State Lions to see if we could collectively put our connections together to help get donated new cabinets and

countertops along with installation from qualified Lions. Aesthetically, that would be such a huge upgrade to what is the most high traffic area of the house and a place that so often brings the greatest joy, laughter, smiles and togetherness in the house. If you have any leads on this so that it can be done in a strictly donated or very low cost manner, please reach out to Cindy at 608-831-1726.

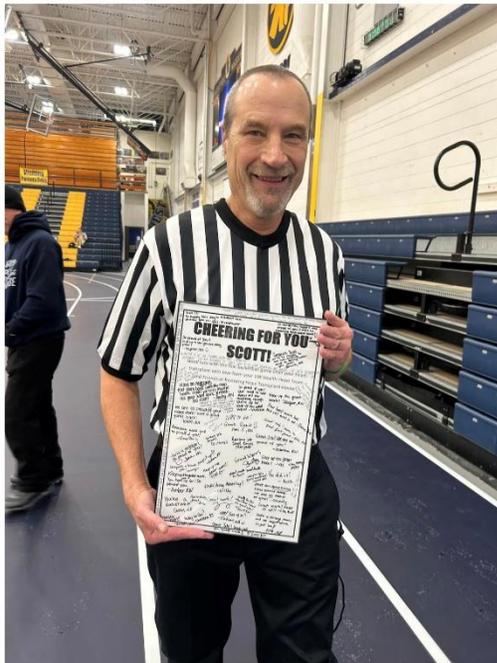
We could go on and on for days sharing the inspirational stories of our guests, but one of our favorites this winter was the heart transplant story of Scott from Wausau. Scott was hospitalized last year in such poor condition that he was told he would never leave the hospital until he received a heart transplant. For many years, Scott was an avid



outdoorsman and all around athlete who got into refereeing basketball games at the master level as a way to stay involved in sports in his advancing years. It brought him so much purpose and joy to become such a community staple working youth sports as a ref. When his heart condition worsened, his activities and refereeing were taken away which not only left him without his greatest means of physical exercise, but also took a major toll on his mental health.



On December 12th, Scott refereed his first game in 10 years. He had a few supporters in the crowd.



Staff from U.W. health that treated Scott signed a plaque for him, celebrating his first time back on the court. (wsaw)

Although Scott and Denis met at UW Health in

Through Scott's heart journey and transplant, it was always his biggest goal to get back out on the floor to ref a basketball game if he could just rebuild himself back into the condition needed to get up and down the floor again with a bunch of energetic young kids.

On December 12<sup>th</sup>, we made the trek up to Scott's hometown of Wausau to watch him ref a high school basketball game for the first time in 10 years. It was one of our favorite moments ever not only for one of our wonderful families, but in also showing how much our work can truly make a difference. His story was all over the local Wausau news and included the signed poster we brought up with well wishes from the entire UW Health heart transplant team. The work we do really does matter and we hope you all take a lot of pride in knowing that you help tremendously in making it all possible!

One of our longtime Lions friends asked us over lunch yesterday, "How do you do this every single day and not go crazy?" After I finish this update and send it your way, I plan on going to visit a very dear friend up in the hospital. His condition has worsened to the point that they sent him to ICU last night. It has gotten to the point where frustration, depression and hopelessness have started to boil over both for the patient and his entire family. Our years of friendship through both the best of moments and the worst, means that our presence will not only be appreciated by the family but is something that could improve the outlook for the patient as well. It also makes us realize that what we do each and every day really can make a difference in helping the people we care about get through this.

Thank you for all you do as Lions to make our state and our respective communities a better place to call home!

-Submitted by Eric Hybert 1/26