

Bethany Boudreaux



Although unfinished, this is Bethany's story. We, Beth's family have been her voice since October 6th, 2007. You see, while Bethany was waiting at a stoplight, she was hit from behind at a high rate of speed. She was not to see her home again for almost nine months. We reside, post Hurricane Rita, in Lake Charles, LA. Miss Bethany Claire Boudreaux is a 24 year old, recent college graduate. After graduation from McNeese State University she worked full time at Reflexions, as a salon manger to earn money that would allow her pursuit of a Master's Degree enabling her to become a social worker. We are convinced that angels were riding with her that night, as she survived an accident that by all accounts should not have been possible.

Bethany sustained a traumatic brain injury, a fractured bone in her pelvis, and abrasions and cuts on her right leg. As an Intensive Care Unit patient for 32 days, Bethany was placed in a drug induced coma in an effort to keep the swelling of her brain within safe limits. On October 12th, she underwent a hemicraniectomy to relieve the pressure in her brain as it was reaching a dangerous level. On October 15, 2007 she began demonstrating her first responses to commands by her doctor. After an unsuccessful first try, a procedure to place a j-pej feeding tube was successful on October 25th, 2007. November

2nd, 2007 was the date Beth's skull flap was replaced, along with a Teflon shield and a shunt. Our Sleeping Beauty continued to respond and demonstrate progress. During this time Bethany, her boyfriend Matt and our family were upheld by prayer warriors, with prayer circles 80 strong 6 times daily.

Bethany arrived at The Institute for Rehabilitation and Research (T.I.R.R.) in Houston, Texas by ambulance on November 8, 2007. We, her parents were following directly behind the ambulance. She began the many phases of recovery as her brain and body began to work in sync again. Bethany began 3 hours of aggressive therapy 5 days a week. Ten days after arrival she began getting nauseated and vomiting and experienced her first infection. Beth was transferred to Hermann Memorial and underwent removal of the upper part of the shunt November 19, 2007 with the fluid being drained externally. The shunt was totally removed November 20, 2007 and a new shunt with antibiotic tubing was placed on the left side three days later. This was done in an effort to remove the infection, but later proved to be unsuccessful. Bethany steadily improved and was eating normally with her j-pej feeding tube being removed 2 days after Christmas. On January 19th, 2008 she was also talking, writing with her right hand, and walking up and down 3 flights of stairs with minimal assistance. We were then transferred to Hermann again for a Burr hole procedure to remove fluid on the brain. On January 22, 2008, Bethany underwent her second hemicranectomy, to remove the Teflon shield, the infected portion of her skull and replace it with a bovine membrane. The surgery went well. Eight hours of nausea and vomiting precipitated placement of an anti-siphoning device on January 31st, to correct the over-drainage of fluid in her brain whenever Bethany sat and stood up. Over the next two months she underwent numerous shunt adjustments in an effort to regulate her intracranial pressure and allow her full participation in therapies. A nasal feeding tube procedure was warranted on February 22nd, 2008 after Bethany stopped eating and talking. She underwent a j-peg feeding tube placement procedure on March 11, 2008. On the 12th and 18th of March, 2008 she underwent Botox and phenol injections to help control the contraction of tendons in her hands and feet, a potentially crippling problem for patients who are unable to move normally for extended periods of time. On April 9, 2008, and after 8 weeks of intense antibiotics Bethany underwent a cranioplasty to replace the previously infected portion of her skull with a prosthetic plate. A month later, on May 8, 2008, she went through a tendon lengthening procedure to increase mobility in her feet and ankles. Three weeks later her shunt valve was replaced with a fixed valve shunt and the anti-siphoning device was removed. Again, on June 20th and 22nd Beth underwent Botox and phenol injections. Our prayer warriors have been ever faithful.

A month later, on June 26, 2008, Bethany was released from TIRR. We have been home in Louisiana ever since, Praise GOD! She is undergoing speech, physical and occupational therapies 5 days a week, slowly gaining weight, getting stronger and being able to vocalize more. Bethany began to eat small amounts of food normally the 10th of August, 2008, and she is beginning to sit independently, stand and take steps. Bethany has been improving steadily in her home environment surrounded by her loving friends and family. We know that the plans God has for Bethany are greater than we can imagine. We have witnessed many miracles and we know that God draws people unto her to assist in her recovery, just as he has brought the Bright Light Foundation to assist Bethany and our family in this journey of recovery.

May GOD bless you all, each and everyone!

Undying Gratitude,
Tommy, Nancy Claire and Neil Boudreaux