

Paula's CaringBridge Messages

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Thursday, February 15, 2008 - 5:44 AM

Stephanie is currently under sedation for pain and on a breathing tube. When not as heavily sedated, she is able to open her eye and look around. She responds to voices and touch. She absolutely hates her breathing tube and her left arm needs to be strapped down so she doesn't rip it out! (That's the Steph we know and love.) These are all great signs.

She has more testing today. We will update tonight or tomorrow.

We'll continue to update.

Friday, February 16, 2007 - 9:05 AM

This morning Stephanie was responsive to touch and actually followed a command for the nurse. She squeezed her hand and put her thumb up. This is the first time she has been able to follow directions since the surgery, but we know Steph...she never has liked to follow directions, so this probably is a first.

Last night they were having trouble keeping her blood pressure up and were forced to using some medication. She was much less responsive yesterday, but with her increase blood pressure, she is sleeping peaceful.

Friday, February 16, 2007 - 12:16 PM

Stephanie's angiogram came back with no significant changes – this is good news.

Saturday, February 17, 2007 - 4:07 PM

The ICU team of docs just came by. After reviewing the tests that were done this morning, they okayed the removal of Stephanie's breathing tube. This is good news because they believe she is strong enough to breath without support.

Stephanie was pretty perky this morning –when we removed her hand restraint, Stephanie showed that she was able to slowly move her hand toward her breathing tube. ☺ The nurse had us watch to make sure that she didn't try to grab the tube, but we all (including the nurse) wanted to see her try. At one point, she even got her thumb hooked around the breathing tube! Go Stephie!

Right now she has a fever, which the nurse is treating with Tylenol. She is sleeping peacefully now. We'll post a message later to let everyone know how the extubation goes.

Saturday, February 17, 2007 - 4:07 PM

The extubation was difficult for Stephanie because of swelling around her throat. She was having trouble breathing on her own and was having to work harder than they wanted her to. She was intubated with the breathing tube and they will try again in a couple of days. This experience was rough on her, so they've given her some medicine for pain and to help her relax. She continues to open her eyes to track people.

One of the good things that came from this ordeal is it seems to have strengthened Steph's resolve to get the tube out. She is exercising her biceps and triceps and we have to hold her hand tightly to keep this from happening. Silver lining is everything. We are hoping the next couple of days she can rest and recuperate to get ready for the 2nd attempt.

Sunday, February 18, 2007 - 12:15 PM

Thank you for your kind thoughts and positive wishes in the guestbook. We read them to Stephanie daily.

Currently, she has a high fever and a low white cell count. The doctors are scoping her lung to see if it is pneumonia.

Because of the trauma to her brain, her blood vessels are constricting and are not allowing enough blood flow. They are monitoring and medicating for this and will do another scan today.

She is a very strong woman and this morning was awake and looking around responding to voices. Susan and I went to Whidbey last night to gather some supplies and take care of the animals. We put together a photo album of Steph and will post some of the pictures on this website tomorrow. Jenna sat with Steph and said she was 'wakey wakey' most of the night. They have her sedated now for the tests and she is resting peacefully.

These are the two issues the doctors are most concerned about and we are hopeful her spirit and strength will carry her through this. Keep up the thoughts and prayers – we need them. She is the most amazing person I know.

Sunday, February 18, 2007 - 4:58 PM

After the scan this afternoon, it had been decided to do another angiogram and possible angioplasty to help open up the vessels to her brain and increase the blood flow. This will be done tonight –

Sunday, February 18, 2007 - 9:50 PM

Stephi was back tonight! The angioplasty worked wonders and opened up the vessels allowing blood to flow to her brain. She was VERY responsible afterwards – she nodded her head in agreement to questions and shook her head when we told her she was going to have some more test tonight – that wasn't part of her plan tonight...we are sure she wanted to sleep after a rough day.

We told her that many people were thinking about and loving her very much and she nodded her head and got a tear in her eye. She is very aware you are all out there. We are optimistic the angioplasty will decrease the spasms and help her heal.

February 19, 2007 - 3:00 PM

Today is a quiet day. She has pneumonia and is being sedated to keep the coughing down – the coughing causes some unwanted pressure on the brain. Her spasms, due to the angioplasty, have decreased from severe to moderate...and her breathing is holding up. The ICU team has cleared her to move to the floor – we are waiting on the neuro team to do the same...hopefully this will happen in the next 2 days.

I was in the room alone with her when she woke up and said, “hey, hey, hey” I asked her if she knew who I was and her response was ...”no, but...no one's here – Let's go NOW!” Then she tried to take her restraints off. Right afterwards the nurses walked in and she looked clearly deflated –like her escape would have to wait.

She may not know who she is or anyone around her, but she does know this not where she wants to be. This gives us great hope.

Tuesday, February 20, 2007 - 1:50 PM

Today is another quiet day. She is still battling the pneumonia and her spasms continue to be moderate. They are giving her a scan today to make sure she has no clots in her legs. She is off the sedation medication and wakes up occasionally. When she is awake, she lifts her hand to be held.

Tuesday, February 20, 2007 – 3:34 PM

Steph is very awake this afternoon. We told her the three stooges were by her side and she smiled. She gave the nurse a thumbs up and is still working on removing the tube herself. She is unable to move her right side much, but her left side is strong. She nods and shakes her head when asked questions – we asked her if she knew she was a superstar and she nodded! The ultrasound of her legs was fine and her temperature is down to 98.

It is so nice to be able to communicate with her and know she is still here with us.

Wednesday, February 21, 2007 – 11:37 AM

So far things are pretty much the same this morning. They will to take the tube out today due to the swelling in her airway. She is aware and is scared and anxious. We are not leaving her side – they are giving her a little anti-anxiety medicine to keep her calm. One can only imagine how scary this must be unable to move or talk.

Thursday, February 22, 2007 - 10:46 AM

Stephanie is very awake and panicky today. They are giving her medication to calm her down and will try to extubate her today at 2:00. The doctors are anxious because she does not have much of an air leak around the breathing tube – is unable to sustain her breathing. She is trying to communicate and talk around the tube, which is impossible. I have turned on some cartoons hoping to calm her down until 2 – Susan and I have Venti latte's...not too good for our nerves ☺ yikes. big day.

Thursday, February 22, 2007 – 9:39 PM

Steph was extubated today at 2:15 and has fought like a trooper. At this point, the tube is still out – she is exhausted, but her oxygen and carbon dioxide levels are still within the limit. We will see if she can for all, but they are doing everything possible not to put the tube back in.

Friday, February 23, 2007 - 10:41 AM

Stephanie made it through the night off the tube. They had her on medication to help her breathe and have taken her off of it this morning. They are monitoring her closely to ensure she can continue on her own.

She is awake and talking – not making much sense. She also doesn't seem to recognize us. This could be due to the brain injury or merely being in ICU for 2 weeks...ICU psychosis I think we also have a little of psychosis too ☺

Friday, February 23, 2007 - 7:07 PM

Stephanie did well off the medicine and should be able to breathe on her own from here on out. She is still awake and very unaware of what is going on or what happened to her. We won't know the extent of the injury for some time –

She looks good – her bright sparkling eyes give us hope.

Sunday, February 25, 2007 - 8:46 AM

Stephanie continues to breathe on her own. She is sitting up in a chair a couple hours a day and is stable. She is still confused and doesn't seem to recognize her surroundings or people (yet).

Monday, February 26, 2007 - 12:56 PM

Stephanie is doing well today. She is having mild spasms and her breathing is holding up. The ICU team has cleared her to move to the floor – we are waiting on the neuro team to do the same...hopefully this will happen in the next 2 days.

I was in the room alone with her alone and when she woke up and said, “hey, hey, hey”...I asked her if she knew who I was and her response was...”no, but no one's here – Let's go...NOW!” Then she tried to take her restraints off. Right afterwards the nurses walked in and she looked clearly deflated – like her escape would have to wait.

She may not know who she is or anyone around her, but she does know this isn't where she wants to be. This gives us great hope.

Tuesday, February 27, 2007 - 2:30 AM

She did great today; She is now off the ICU and on the neuro specialty floor (educators call this 504-neurosurgeons call this a “step up” plan) whatever..

The drs came around today and are so hopeful about her progress...she still is confused about who she is and who her family is.

We are so thankful for your daily thoughts – I will let you know when she is ready for visitors – Thank you for loving her. It's kinda easy....

Tuesday, February 27, 2007 - 3:22 PM

Stephanie is sleeping very peacefully today. There wasn't much sleeping in the CIU...the floor she is on is very quiet and comfortable. She is running a bit of a temp, but they say it is nothing to worry about.

The specialists will do evaluations on her today or tomorrow-this will determine her next placement. Rehabilitation or a skilled nursing facility is ready for rehab. She is still on a feeding tube and oxygen mask...I am sure she would love a hamburger and fries with tartar sauce from Toby's Tavern in Coupeville.

Tuesday February 28, 2007 - 9:21 PM

Today was a quiet day – she has a fever of 104. They gave her a lumbar puncture to help determine the cause of the fever. Physical therapy came today and had her stand up with support.

She is still chatty, however, still very confused. The doctors indicated again today that it will take time before they know the full impact of her injury.

Sometimes its okay to find humor in difficult experiences-while the attending doctor was doing the lumbar puncture. Stephanie had some choice words and specific finger movements (your imagination cannot do justice...trust me). Very appropriate for the situation I might add...

Keep the messages coming...we do read them to her and love the support.

Thursday, March 1, 2007 - 2:55 PM

Steph is having a pretty good day – she still has her fever but the tests aren't back yet...so we don't know the cause. I showed up this morning and she'd managed to get both legs off the bed and was trying to escape...she is now in full restraints at night.

She passed her swallowing test and had mac/cheese and orange juice for lunch. She loved oj... "man that is good what is it?" If she can continue to eat and swallow, they will take the feeding tube out.

She is talking a lot –string words together that make little no sense but it often sounds like a staff meeting or a teacher hiring committee...no surprise there.

We are hoping soon she will be able to make some sense and be able to recognize her surroundings.

Thursday, March 1, 2007 - 3:02 PM

Lumbar test came back with high pressure ...not good news. They will repeat the procedure this afternoon.

Friday, March 2, 2007 – 4:30 PM

Stephanie was pretty active today. Trying to move and get out of bed....they now have her restrained under lock and key. They just attempted another lumbar puncture with little success – her pressure is still high, but they were unable to drain much fluid – I honestly don't know what the next step will be...they are talking about an internal shunt that will drain the fluid from brain into her digestive tract – this would require a pretty invasive surgery and will set her back a little.

She is communicating and the focus is on getting out of here. She is one determined piece of work! Definitely keeping me busy during the day...She still has no concept of what happened or who those around – I am waiting patiently everyday for the recognition of something or someone – a bottom champagne is cooling in the fridge...hope to crack it open soon.

Sunday, March 4, 2007 - 10:14 PM

Stephanie had an active day yesterday...she wanted out of the hospital BADLY. She pulled out her IV. She pulled out her IV and decided it was time to go. She was difficult to restrain because she is gaining so much strength in both sides of her body.

She does currently have an infection – the doctors think it is a staph infection in her spinal fluid that can be treated with antibiotics successfully. She is still unable to absorb the fluid from her brain and the shunt will probably happen once the infection is taken care of.

As of tonight, her fever has decreased and her day today was restful....she did invite the nursing assistant to have a beer with us and remembered this two hours later when she came in to check her blood sugar..."are we ready for that beer?" Even though she cannot recall names, she definitely recognizes people and makes appropriate comments to each individual...she referred to Susan as Shirley 3 times and talked about living on the island...we are on the way to opening that bottle of champagne.

Monday, March 5, 2007 - 10:44 PM

So, today was a good day. Stephanie was talkative and curious. She gave the nurses and the radiology team a run for their money when they tried to give her an MRI. She was not really very interested in doing that. They finally sedated her a bit so that they could do the test and another lumbar puncture.

Other thrilling moments...Her fever was down today and she took a few steps with support to the door. While watching her favorite movies today...51 First Dates (ironic, right?), she mentioned that there was a funny part coming up. (She was right)

She told Paula that she was ready to get out of “this hotel” because they keep waking her up all the time.

She is keen on knowing what time it is and seems to be always making a plan, which usually includes her getting out of here. (We support that plan.)

The neuro team thinks that they’ll have to put in the shunt to create a better way to drain the cerebral spinal fluid so they can stop doing the lumbar punctures. We’ll keep everyone posted on the specifics on this – it won’t happen until the infection is gone. Once these two things are done, she is scheduled to begin rehab.

Stephanie will probably be up for visitors once the shunt is in and she’s stable. Please email Paula so she can arrange a time when Stephanie is not getting tests, etc.

Wednesday, March 07, 2007 - 7:00 PM

Not too many changes over the past two days... she continues to be a thorn in the nurse’s side with her stubbornness. She doesn’t like the IV’s in her arm, so they don’t stay too long...she also decided she would rather not do the lumbar punctures –so they now sedate her to get them done.

They will continue to do the punctures every 3rd day to see her pressure and will make a decision about the shunt if she is unable to process the fluid.

She has a lot of her vocabulary, but is still unable to make many connections to people of her life. This does improve slightly everyday. We are hoping for the best.

I will continue to Stephanie’s progress, but as it is slow...there are days I won’t have much to report. Don’t worry on these days ...if ANYTHING happens, I will let you all know.

The PT, Dori and I took Steph for a walk into the hall...as soon as she saw the elevators; she said she would like to go there. At least she knows the way out! Rehab will have their hands full with our spunky little one! We love her spirit...wouldn’t be this far without it – the nurses and doctors don’t know the half of it.

Thursday, March 8, 2007 - 9:26 PM

Today was a pretty quiet day...Stephanie had a shower for the first time today in a month and thought she had gone to heaven! She is walking farther everyday and continues to talk constantly...working those language skills.

She is also becoming more accustomed to the situation and this is causing her frustration – she doesn't understand where she is and why she can't leave. The doctors say this is rehab, but definitely doesn't need to be in the ICU – it will be tough for a while. She really wanted to go home with Susan and I and told me to take a rest...she was going to get the car and would meet me later...didn't know where she would meet me, maybe someday. I am just glad the beds have alarms!

Still debating the shunt....

Friday, March 9, 2007 - 9:04 AM

Stephanie is fine...but pour Houdini escaped last night- she wiggled out of her restraints and headed out of the hospital. She did fall right outside the doors and put a 2-foot hole in the wall. Luckily, she landed on her shoulder and back of her head,...this could've been much worse. They immediately did a CAT scan and all tests were negatively...a BIG scare! She is now in a room right outside the nurse's station and on more restraints.

They will be placing the shunt on the 17th of March, so she will be in this wing for a few more weeks. Today is another lumbar puncture and they will place a PIC line in her for all of her medications – her veins are starting to collapse and the medicine is causing some irritation under her skin.

Sunday, March 11, 2007 -7:17 AM

Steph had a good day yesterday – she has not been sleeping due to anxiety, but napped a lot yesterday. We have asked for some anxiety medication at night to help her sleep...we went for a ride in a cool movable chair (that has restraints) down to get some coffee and went for a pretty long walk. That tired her out let her look at some new surroundings.

Mike Watson, a friend and speech therapist, came down and had a pretty good conversation with Stephanie – he thought she was doing great and gave us a lot of hope – Of course, I want her home now working in the garden...patience is not my virtue – obviously not Stephanie's either!

The PIC line lasted about 45 minutes – as soon as the nurses and doctors walked out, she managed to rip it out. They will insert another one on Monday...She hates being restrained when we are not there, but it is the only way to ensure her safety – I wish she could understand that. She did have a roommate who moved yesterday to another room..you think it could be Stephanie talking all night? That is one sure-fire way to get your own room!

Monday, March 12, 2007 - 8:04 PM

Stephanie continues to gain strength in her mobility – she actually got out of her restraints again last night. One ankle, two wrists and a belly LOCKED restraint... This time they caught her before she exited the unit. She is very anxious we are working on some medication to calm her down and get her some sleep... I spent the night last night – I now know why she wants out of there so badly! Yikes....

During the day, where I am not there, they have resorted to placing her in a wheelchair at the nurse's station – easier to keep an eye on her and gives her a lot of people to talk to. I take her for walks and rides around the joint... we also packed up the room about 3 times today getting ready to go home. One-track mind. Good thing she doesn't realize she will be there for a while. We also starting making "to do" lists that she writes – this also takes some time. She is busy all day long.

We are having a meeting with her doctors tomorrow to discuss her continued care and care on this unit. The shunt has been moved back to the 19th or 20th.

Tuesday, March 13, 2007 - 8:09 PM

Stephanie had a good day today...they replaced her PIC line and put stitches in to hold it in place...if she gets this one out, I don't know what they do next!

She had another lumbar puncture this evening but the results are not in yet. She is getting better each day and seems to be able to understand some conversations and her personality is definitely in place. She still is into moving and packing and wanted to take her out for pizza and beer... That a girl.

Psych reviewed her today and has ordered some medicating for sleeping and anxiety...this should help tremendously.

Today she asked me how much I was getting paid...and she asked for my phone to call Susan... she actually dialed the numbers and left a message. We are on the way back. She cannot recall names, but was able to identify Dori, Susan and my relationship to her attending physician today.

She loves to chat with visitors..I am usually there from 8am-6pm.

Wednesday, March 14, 2007 - 8:44 PM

Stephanie continues to negotiate her release "from the hotel" with anyone who will listen. She is becoming more cognitively aware daily, but as I read some of the guestbook entries, I realize I may be sugar coating the situation...she has a LONG road ahead of her with a lot of cognitive rehab. She has a difficult time recalling words to communicate what she is thinking or needing

and still can't tell us where she is or what has happened to her. She talks continuously about...I am not always sure and do a lot of guessing, which is frustrating for everyone involved. In time, this will improve.

I think her progress to this point is amazing – 4.5 weeks ago the doctors told us she wouldn't live; if she did she would not be moving her right side and little cognitive ability. She has shown them that is not true –she is moving both sides and walking on her own. I think she has amazed even her neurosurgeon.

The rehab doctors think her stay may be a short one as she is mobile; the cognitive will come in time with a lot of outpatient care. I don't know what that means at this point, but will keep you posted.

She will have another LP tomorrow and is on the antibiotics until Saturday. If her pressure remains low, they may rethink the shunt. Everyday changes...

Susan, Dori, John and I took her to the cafeteria tonight for dinner (Susan brought her Ivar's)... she took her helmet off and put it on backwards – said it felt “better”. What a sight...It was the hardest I have laughed in a long time – she doesn't know the entertainment she is creating for us. Keeps up all going and gives us strength.

To the Oak Harbor teachers who donated sick leave for me- you are amazing! I feel so privileged to work with such a caring and amazing group of people...I hope you know daily that your support means the world to me. Makes me a little teary...not easy to do.

Friday, March 16, 2007 - 1:53 PM

Stephanie had an active day yesterday – she even sat at the nurse's station for a couple of hours helping them get their work done! (I'm sure she was more work than help...)Anything we could think of to keep her busy...She was very difficult to manage and told me to “stop stalling.”

She has another lumbar puncture last night and the pressure was very high. We are thinking that is part of the cause of her anxiousness. She managed to remove her 2nd PIC line and get out of bed again last night (was caught) but had no sleep.

Monday, March 19, 2007 - 9:00 AM

Stephanie has a good weekend and a lot of visitors...she is understanding what happened to her as the days go on. She is asking questions and is amazed what happened – keeps saying “I don't remember any of that.” She is also starting to realize her words are not making sense –these are both good signs.

She will have surgery this afternoon to put in the shunt and may spend tonight in the ICU, but

will then be moved to the regular floor before she starts rehab hopefully at the end of this week. We are getting closer to the Island by the day! Yipee

Monday, March 19, 2007 - 3:15 PM

Stephanie went to surgery earlier than expected, about 11a.m. to put in the shunt. The surgery went fine and she is currently in the recovery room. She will not go to the ICU but return to her room for tonight and may be placed on the regular floor tomorrow. I will update on how she is doing later on tonight once she returns.

Tuesday, March 20, 2007 - 9:14 AM

Stephanie returned to her room about 6:30 last night and today is in some significant pain from the surgery. She has another lovely scar on her head and a brand new shaved head...much better than my attempt to even out her cut with a pair of moustache clippers after the surgery...now we are all event!

Because of the pain, there is no plan to move her at this point.

Wednesday, March 21, 2007 - 7:11 PM

Stephanie continues to be in pain from the invasive surgery and is sleeping most of the day. At this point, the plan is to send her to rehab (4th floor on Harborview) as soon as she recovers from the surgery. This could happen on Monday of next week.

Thursday, March 22, 2007 7:22PM

Stephanie was still on pain medicine today, but was much more awake – we went on a couple walks today, which seemed to tire her out. They are talking about rehab tomorrow and taking off the cast replacing it with a splint that is removable...they may rethink this soon!

Friday, March 22, 2007, 2:53 PM

Stephanie is now in rehab – room 462 at Harborview. She is a bit anxious and nervous about her new surroundings. Her rehab will begin on Monday, assessment will occur tomorrow. We will have a Team Meeting on each Tuesday, will know about her goals, and expected discharge date at that time. Sundays are a great day to visit if anyone is interested – there are no rehab services. Also, any evening after 5.

Monday, March 26, 2007 - 10:53

Stephanie has a good weekend with rehab assessments all day Saturday and a day of visitors on Sunday.

She realizes that she must work hard during this time in order to make progress and get home. However, this has NOT stopped the negotiations one little bit – she worked at the nurses station a little on Friday – they will love her.

The shunt seems to be working as the swelling is down and she is becoming aware that her speech doesn't always make sense. This will be very frustrating for her, but she can do it.

Her cast is off and she now wears a splint. There was an ulceration under her cast that is being treated with antibiotics (orally) – no more IV's at the moment.

The doctors are projecting about a month in rehab, but that can change depending on her progress.

Monday, March 26, 2007 - 8:11 PM

Update:

Stephanie will have surgery tomorrow to remove the pins in her wrist so she will be able to do more in rehab (it is her right arm...includes writing, etc.) She was not too happy about it, but it is a vital to her progress at this point.

She did fabulous on her first day of rehab.

Wednesday, March 28, 2007 - 2:43 PM

Surgery went fine last night – she now can use her right arm. She was very confused after surgery and decided it was time to go – she gave the nurses a rough time so pay off is a private room near the nurses station with a beautiful view of Elliot Bay! Good job.

She is doing fabulous in her therapies and her current discharge date is...next Thursday, April 5th, 2007. This seems very early, but her main issue is her speech – she will be getting rehab at Whidbey General Hospital 3 times a week.

Thursday, March 29, 2007 - 6:22 PM

Stephanie is continuing her progress and says, "I am thinking more and more each day." She wants me to communicate with everyone that she will be updating the journal very soon, probably starting in two weeks. (Her timeline – I think it will be sooner than that)

Tuesday, April 03, 2007 - 2:50 PM

We had our final meeting with the doctors today – we WILL be leaving on Thursday morning, heading back to the island! We had a crew from Oak Harbor come over for a “work party” on Monday – boy did they work! We have the house cleaned up, yard planted and weeded, power washed...all ready for Steph to come home and enjoy the view from the deck.

We will continue to update the journal from home to let everyone know how she is doing –feel free to call and visit if you get a chance.

Thank you for all your love and support – without it; she wouldn’t be where she is today.

Saturday, April 07, 2007 - 6:40 AM

Stephanie is home and seems to be loving it. She has slept a lot the past 2 days and is enjoying some good home cooking and beautiful view from the deck. That alone should speed up her recovery.

She remembers the animals and their behaviors...While I the hospital, she never could quite figure out how to push the red button to get the nurses, but she is a champ running the Tivo remote – go figure. Priorities I guess.

Monday, April 16, 2007 - 7:32 AM

Stephanie is doing great and loves being home around the animas and her “things”. Her speech assessment went great last week – she likes her therapist and we will be going every Monday and Wednesday for one hour. She is one smart cookie – she is working very hard on her communication strategies and is aware that she doesn’t always make sense, but knows it will take time. We have spent time at the coffee shop, out for lunch, the grocery store, and home depot. Yesterday we went for a drive and she was trying to tell me something – when I informed her that her words didn’t make sense, she let me know that I had a limited vocabulary and the word was actually a word and made perfect sense....speckle – anyone heard that one? Could be my limited vocabulary!

She is doing many chores around the house – started a fire in the wood stove because she was cold (it was actually a good one too!), feeds the cats, does dishes...in no time she will be running the show again.

We will be in Seattle this week for a check up appointments with her doctors Thursday and Friday and Susan is coming to spend the weekend with us.

Friday, April 20, 2007 - 9:18 AM

Hello Everyone

This is Stephanie here on the computer and I wanted to take a minute to thank you for your support.

This has been amazing and I have been amazed at what it takes. I have been supported at my home trying to pull all the necessities together. The communities' support of my efforts has helped me make progress day by day.

Thank you ...thank you. Hope to see all of you when summer roles around.

Love,

Stephanie

Monday, April 23, 2007 - 4:50 AM

As you can tell, Stephanie is doing great. Her doctor's appointments at Harborview went well... she would begin outpatient rehab on her hand to increase her range of motion a couple times a week.

If anyone would like to call and chat with her, she would love it.

Monday, May 28, 2007 - 9:18 PM

Sorry it has taken me so long to update, Stephanie has kept me VERY busy! Had a great meeting with her doctor last week...she thanked him for keeping her alive and asked him to put that "spot" back in her head. He loved it and informed her that he did not get many chances to talk to patients who where a "level 5" ...Steph asked what a level 6 was...said "death". She was pretty proud of her accomplishments after that comment!

We have scheduled the surgery for her bone replacement on the 22 of June. They don't know whether they will use her bone in the freezer (still freaks me out) or titanium late – looks like less chance of infection with the plate, but longer recovery time – we'll see. The plate will require screws, the bone just glue...who knows.

Will keep you posted, thanks for the continued support. I think the fact she surprised the neurosurgeon with her progress shows that she is doing much better than expected.

Monday, June 25, 2007 - 10:29 PM

Stephanie successfully had her own bone (with a little bit of titanium mesh) replaced on Friday night – NO MORE HELMET! The doctor let me know they used a little Elmer's and some paint glue to make sure her bone was intact...I, of course, believed him. Her recovery is a bit more that we had bargained....

She is now the owner of a "reverse mullet" and lots of stitches! Definitely makes people turn their heads...She is fighting some sort of infection and has a bit of a fever – it went down today, so she was released into my care and we are currently at home. She is sleepy and very swollen – we will be monitoring the infection very closely from here. Hopeful that is our last stay at the hospital – neither of us could take much more of the food or service.

Her speech took a DIVE and will take a couple of weeks to get back to where we were, but she is happy to be out of "that place". No Houdini escapes this time...kinda miss that.

Feel free to give a call next week after she's had some time to sleep and shower off the hospital.

Thank you all again for your continued support through this crazy process.

Sunday, July 1, 2007 - 11:18

I miss the helmet – who gets on the ferry faster that a handicap sticker and a helmet? Will keep it for future rides...

Steph is going great – has a massive scar and doesn't want any pain meds...geez. What a trouper

Her fever is down and she is beginning to work on her rehab schedule – I predict she will be back in no time. She gets her stitches out tomorrow and we will work on the hairdo as it grows – what a treat to worry only about...hair. Can't wait,

Wednesday, July 25, 2007 - 7:31 AM

Steph has made amazing progress since her bone replacement...watch out Whidbey –she is working on driving – I am her trusted co pilot! Silver Volvousually between Welcher and downtown Coupeville – very right.

Tuesday, August 14, 2007 -11:56 PM

THIS IS THE LAST EMAIL ON THE WEB PAGE

Stephanie is doing great and passed her 6-month exam with the neurosurgeon with flying colors (she interviewed him for 25 minutes...shocked him senseless). He said, "See you next August".

He gave her the go ahead to drive on the island – yikes.

He was amazed at her progress and indicated again to her that she is a MIRACLE. Steph again thanked him for keeping her alive and his response was amazing. He indicated that taking her blood clots out kept her alive, but did not give her live –it is her friends and family that helped her stay the course and have a reason to live – thank you all for that.

We wouldn't have our Steph if it weren't for your support. I wish I knew a cute poem to put here but I don't ...so thanks. I hope that is enough.

Much love to all...

Paula
