



Bright Light Foundation

Sandra Boudreaux

2010 BLF Recipient



On February 25th, 2009 Sandra Boudreaux's life as she knew it changed forever! While visiting a local shopping center in her community, Sandra fell as she was stepping from the parking lot onto the sidewalk in the front of the store and fell into a metal clothes rack, striking the front of her head. Her injuries from the accident included a concussion, a 10 cm laceration on her forehead, two black eyes, and a cut between her eyes from her glasses, badly bruised on her right knee, right hip and right elbow. As the result of her fall Sandra received stitches at the top of her head, between her eyes and on her forehead. Two days later, Sandra was complaining of a severe headache, trouble breathing from the swelling and drainage leaking from her eyes. She was immediately rushed her to the local ER again and the doctors ordered a CAT scan and sent her home with headache medicine. Over the next few months Sandra returned to the ER with the same complaints each time and was sent home with a different diagnosis each time. After several months Sandra's children noticed she was misplacing household items, forgetting family member's names, her speech was slurred; she was unable to write anymore and was dragging her right foot. These actions alarmed her children and they then brought her back to the ER and asked that an MRI be performed because something was obviously wrong. The MRI results showed a large mass on the left side of her brain. She was then rushed to West Jefferson Medical Center where the Neurological surgery team was waiting on her arrival. Within ten minutes she was in emergency surgery, had all of her hair shaved off and a large question mark shaped incision on the left side of her head to extract the large Acute Subdural Hematoma. Her brain surgery was a four hour procedure but the recovery was extensive and the damage to her memory was permanent. She had to learn how to do several things again and had no recollection of even going into surgery or being transported to the hospital by an ambulance. The Hematoma caused a 3.5 cm left to right shift of her brain and this was the cause of most of her symptoms and irreversible damages. That was the first initial surgery associated with her fall. She continued to complain of

pain in her neck, radiating down her arm which was causing her to continuously drop things. She had several injections in her neck to help with relieving the pain but unfortunately this was only temporary relief. Her doctors suggested neck surgery to repair the problem and resolve her pain issues and in return Sandra went through a 10.5 hour posterior and anterior spinal fusion surgery. This procedure was done only six months after her brain surgery. The doctors removed three disks and replaced them with synthetic material and also inserted plates, pins, screws and two large rods down her spine to correct this issue. She has not completely recovered from this procedure as of today.

Since these two major surgeries Sandra has lost the ability to communicate intelligently, loss of motor skills, and short term memory loss. At the time of the incident Sandra had been working as a school bus driver for Terrebonne Parish School Board, as you can imagine with the symptoms of major head trauma, Doctors would not release Sandra to continue driving resulting in a forced early medical retirement as she is permanently disable. As a result her monthly income is now made up of a small retirement and a small Long Term Disability check which combined these totals do not cover a forth of her household utility expenses.

Over the next few months, depression began to set in because of losing her job that she held for the last 20 years servicing the local special needs children which she enjoyed and looked forward to everyday, and declining physical health (cervical stenosis, degenerative disc disease, severe arthritis, osteoporosis, carpal tunnel causing loss of control in both hands and a second hip replacement) with mounting medical expenses has been to say the least a tough pill to swallow for someone that has worked hard all of their life. Sandra is forced to travel to specialist doctors in New Orleans and Thibodaux on an average of 4 times a month to both locations and the fuel cost is overwhelming and has been tough for Sandra's children taking off of work (scheduling nightmare) to bring Sandra back in forth for necessary doctors visits vital for her recovery and rehabilitation. The medical bills, prescription cost, travel expenses, and everyday living cost have been overwhelming for Sandra and family members. Sandra has filed for assistance with government programs to help with escalating cost of medical bills with little successes. Sandra and her family would like to thank the Bright Light Foundation and the Oil and Gas Community for considering her to receive a gift to help with these growing medical costs.

God Bless!