

NEXUS CHAMPION

WILLIAM MCKEON



Sour Lake Police Officer William (Bill) McKeon is more than an officer to his community. As a volunteer firefighter, security guard for his church and school district, and four-year veteran-of-the-force, Bill is a person whose goodness and compassion have touched the lives of countless people.

On Memorial Day Monday, Bill was dispatched to a report of a person loitering at a local gas station. Upon arrival at the scene, Officer McKeon was viciously attacked and severely injured by this transient person.

"I received a knock on the door and was told by a city member that Bill had been assaulted," explained Stephanie McKeon, Bill's wife. **It wasn't until we were at the hospital that the trauma team told me all the bones in Bill's face were broken."**

After being airlifted to CHRISTUS St. Elizabeth in Beaumont, Bill's family was told he had a brain injury and that it could be weeks to months before it would even be possible for Bill to wake up from the coma. It was then that the family truly realized the difficult journey ahead. About a week later, Bill's medical team decided he was ready for the next phase of treatment, so he was transferred to Nexus Specialty Hospital.

"He was in a vegetative state and for a while he didn't move or interact," said Stephanie. **"But after we got there, he started responding. All of a sudden Bill would do something miraculous that let us know there was more going on with him."**

As Bill began to emerge under Dr. Cassidy's care, his family recalls him first opening his eyes and whispering and then making eye contact, tracking, and speaking directly to them as time went on.

"One weekend I walked into his room and he looked right at me and said, 'Hey Scott!'" That's when I first started feeling like we were going to get through this," said Scott Burns, Bill's son-in-law.

Bill's daughter Layna Burns explained their faith helped them through this time, saying, **"We had to believe that my father would get better. So many people were thinking of him and we felt those prayers bringing us peace and comfort. Once at Nexus, he started improving right away. We'd visit every week and his progress was always evident."**

Bill's team at Nexus had him complete all types of therapies, including physical therapy to regain his strength. His family recalls him showing off that he could finally stand, and then just a short time later, they visited and saw him standing on his own at the nurse's station.

"Nexus was a huge part of the journey," explained Layna. **"Dr. Cassidy was a godsend. He was an amazing doctor, and his team always made us feel welcome and part of the family."**

Scott echoed similar sentiments, saying, **"Everything they did at Nexus was instrumental in getting Bill to where he is at today. We were encouraged by the staff to reach our goal of 100% recovery."**

After his stay at Nexus Specialty Hospital, Bill went on to the next phase of his journey at other inpatient rehabilitation hospitals. Today, he is at home, doing well, and engaged back within the community he loves so much. He is also completing outpatient therapy to continue healing, and was excited to share that he feels like the person he used to be.

"I feel very good and strong," said Bill. **"I'm happy and feel like I'm right where I need to be."**

Looking back on Bill's journey at Nexus Specialty Hospital, Dr. Cassidy said: **"It's always a tragedy when anyone has a brain injury, but especially so when an individual who works to protect and serve all of us has such an event occur to him. Bill's courage and fortitude helped his recovery tremendously. I feel honored that I was able to help guide part of his way back to health."**