



A Family's Journey

The Sunderlins'A story of a young family's beginning Journey dealing with Amyloidosis

We are sharing with you stories of families who will allow us to share; who allow us to help; who invite us into their lives as they begin their journey & their battle against a hideous disease known as Amyloidosis.

This journey begins with Chris and me meeting to promote our Awareness Campaign; to add local hospitals to the growing group of physicians who are working with new Amyloidosis patients. A simple phone call to the Cleveland Clinic social worker, we are ***Secure Harbor***, we provide temporary housing / meals / transportation needs for Amyloidosis families; I am transferred to Marketing. Hanging up from that call, I try again, and a young lady, Blerina answers this time. Are you for real? Yes we are, and she politely puts us on hold. Being unable to forward my call; she says, can you help anyone today? Dang. We wanted to start in October. We wanted to make sure we had the resources. What we wanted, and what was needed collided.

She explained there was a person who needed our help immediately. Asking questions like, 'who is she/he' –Sorry, can't say HIPPA'what is their circumstance' – can't say HIPPA.and the conversation continues. She finally stated, if the person would allow help; she would have the person call.

A small, tiny but strong voice on the phone, "Hi, I am April Sunderlin, my husband Matt has Amyloidosis, he is on life support." I tried not to cry. I tried to be strong. April, a 33 year old mom of 3; her daughter Maddie 10, her son Brady 6, her baby daughter Delilah 11 weeks, mom, Mimi; and close friend Danielle, & daughter Rikki turns out have spent the last 4 weeks in the ***waiting room of Cleveland Clinic***. Matt, the just turned 40 year old husband, dad, teacher & coach; was on life support in ICU, and no one could figure out what was wrong. They came to the clinic for a heart biopsy. Simple, quick, in and out in a day or so....then his BP dropped; then they had to revive him, again and again. April's world started to collapse.

Six months of misdiagnosis caused this father of 3 now struggling on life support and dialysis, to have emergency surgery. It was touch and go all these past 4 weeks; all the while his family was in the ***waiting room, young children, a grandma with needs of her own; using the bathroom for cleaning up, the waiting room, sleeping on a cold hard concrete floor; cold, we were told, we can't lie to you, they say, it was cold on that floor. Shove everything under the chairs in the morning. McDonald's every day.*** From Michigan, not knowing anyone or any place, her husband on life support; the Clinic asked them to leave the waiting room.

Craig Campbell, Director of Sales and Marketing for the **INTERCONTINENTAL HOTELS CLEVELAND**, he and the Chaplin from the Clinic finally placed her in the Cleveland Guest house for 6 days; but due to financial restraints they were on their way out and back to the waiting room... the day we were asked to help.

Secure Harbor met April on July 7th, and thanks to Craig's compassion for the family; we were able to pick up her existing tab and provide financial assistance with meal allowance and 2 more paid weeks of lodging. But after Chris and I met April; saw the accommodations; we knew the family needed more. With little space & no full size refrigerator, it was impossible to cook and feed her family. It was nice April says, it was the BEST. Thanks never left her heart. We were not satisfied. After hours on the phone with so many hotels and so many apartment searchers for short term rentals; Googling paid off; and a company called Private Lodgings appeared on the computer screen. Carl, at Private Lodgings, listened to our usual banter starting; "Hello, do you have a two bedroom apartment – furnished – for a family in need, in need today?" Telling him April's story, the story part we knew.....and he no sorry, no I don't have anything, this is terrible, I am sorry, then he hesitated. "Wait. I have an idea." Ten minutes later, Carl said, I just spoke to Terry L. –after Terry heard April's story; we were given a miracle. We moved April and her family into Terry's lovely – beautiful – secure – 3 bedroom home in Braenahl, fenced yard, quiet neighborhood and 4.54 miles from the hospital. No more cold floors. No more McDonald's.

Our thanks to all the people who helped April from here to there:

Blerina, for going beyond the let me pass you to marketing.....she cared.

Craig, in a world where people in high places don't care, you haven't met Craig.

Carl, reaching beyond the impossible to help someone he didn't even know.

Terry, an angel on God's earth; giving more than most people would in a lifetime.

The journey began with April saying, YES, please help; and the people who made it possible above.

& finally the **Secure Harbor Board**, especially **Matt Reid and his constant day to day encouragement and work** for putting up with my inability to turn anyone down for anything, and his agreeing to financially support April's family.

We will keep you updated on Matt's condition hopefully through a blog link on our website which April will be able to maintain.

Thank you for your generous support & helping give us the strength to grow and help more Aprils' in the future.

We may not be able to save people's lives but we can relieve the stress and ease the grief during their journey...Thank you April, for allowing us the opportunity to serve you.

*Keeping the Faith,
Connie A. Hornbeck
Secure Harbor*

'What matters more than the type of service is the heart behind the service.' Max Lucado Everyone Needs a Miracle - He Still Moves Stones