

# Spirit of Giving

A NEWSLETTER FOR DONORS AND FRIENDS OF ST. JOHN PROVIDENCE

Vibrant volunteer  
dances to recovery

Son's tragedy propels  
parents to battle  
against opioid use

Brothers crusade  
for smoke-free air  
and lung cancer care

Colorful handmade  
bedding cheers up  
pediatric patients

One heart (bracelet)  
makes a difference

Young boy is budding  
philanthropist



A patient relearns to walk in physical rehabilitation.

## Vibrant volunteer dances to recovery with advanced physical rehab care



Vicki Lock

For many years, Vicki Lock and her late husband Tom generously supported several health-related organizations in the St. Clair community—including St. John River District Hospital. Tom, who passed away in 2008, served on the hospital board. For more than 10 years, Vicki has volunteered on the hospital's Dinner Dance committee, serving as chair for several years. The event raises funds for hospital equipment and services.

The Locks, who owned a prominent dry cleaning business for 30 years, were always touched by the personalized care they received at River District Hospital and comforted by its access to St. John Hospital & Medical Center (SJHMC). So when Vicki suffered a series of strokes in October 2015, no other health system would do.

"The right side of my body was paralyzed," said Vicki. "The stroke also

impacted my speech. A few words came out, but they weren't what I wanted to say. My mind felt intact, but my body wouldn't function."

St. John River District Hospital transferred Vicki to SJHMC, where she received advanced care and began speech, physical and occupational therapy at the hospital's Cracchiolo Inpatient Rehabilitation Center. Gifts from the Cracchiolo family and the Peter J. and Constance M. Cracchiolo Foundation and other generous donors helped create the center, which opened in 2010. The state-of-the-art facility serves patients who have had their lives altered due to injury, disease or neurological disorders.

Vicki's determination to recover became bolstered on her first day of rehab.

"The therapist said, 'I'm going to help you. Just tell me what it is you'd like to do,'" Vicki said. "The word 'dance' came out. I didn't know how that would be possible, but it's what I wanted to do."

The therapist placed Vicki in a harness for support (like the patient in the cover photo), put on some music and brought other therapists over to dance with her.

"I must have looked a lot like a fish out of water flopping around, moving my arms and legs the best I could," Vicki said. "But to me, it was the best dance of my life."

For two weeks, Vicki continued intensive rehab, making gains and forming

bonds with doctors, therapists and other patients.

"The speech therapists helped me talk about my life experiences and get my words out," Vicki said. "One day in occupational therapy, we baked cookies and passed them around to everyone. I felt a real sense of accomplishment. I couldn't have asked for better or more sympathetic care. The therapists were always in it with me, providing encouragement and hope. The other patients were also inspirational. We'd congratulate each other on achieving therapeutic milestones. That created a sense of community."

After discharge, Vicki completed three additional weeks of in-home therapy. She's since recovered her speech and nearly all her motor abilities.

Vicki shared her rehab experience story with attendees at the 2017 River District Hospital Dinner Dance, where she was honored as Community Leader of the Year. In addition to her charitable work for the hospital, Vicki is a board member for the Visiting Nurse Association and Blue Water Hospice and the St. Clair Community Mental Health Authority.

"When I find a cause that's good for the community, I become passionate about it and want to help," Vicki said. "I continue to support River District Hospital so it will be there for other people, just as it's been there for me and my family."