

Holiday extra special for Winks



Photo contributed by the Wink family

Junior Kila Wink gives her father a big hug. Marvin Wink, 52, had major heart surgery in April and was hospitalized for almost a month.

By Garrett Pearlman

This upcoming Christmas is extra special for junior Kila Wink due to a medical emergency this spring that left her father close to death.

Kila’s dad, Marvin, underwent a 14-hour long aortic dissection surgery on April 20 and was hospitalized for almost a month.

Kila remembers how frightening the whole situation truly was.

“They told us that if his heart stopped during surgery, they couldn’t do anything about it,” said Kila. “I think that was probably the scariest part was knowing that like, we could be 12 hours in, and his heart could stop, and he would be dead.”

On April 20, Kila remembers coming home to pick up a jacket prior to leaving for work since it was cold out that day.

“Then when I walked inside, he was pale and just didn’t look good, like he just looked sick” said Kila. “My mom had already called 911. It was 10 o’clock when we called 911, and then surgery started about two hours later.”

As Kila explained, her father had tears in his ascending and descending aorta,

and open-heart surgery was required to graft his heart.

“They left his chest open in case anything happened,” said Kila. “I have a drawn picture of it from the surgeon.”

Kila, her mother, Tammie, and her older sister, Kennedy, waited at the hospital, Genesis East in Davenport, for 17 hours. The surgery finally finished at 3 a.m. the next day, and Kila got to see her dad a couple of hours later for the first time.

“That waiting room was filled with people, and I think that really shows how good of a person my dad is,” said Kila. “Like I’ve never met somebody that doesn’t smile when they know that he’s my dad.”

Kila’s dad was in the intensive care unit (ICU) for thirteen days before he was moved to the cardiac step down unit. While he was in the ICU, Kila made sure that her dad still got to see her in her prom dress

“I went in there in my prom dress to see him, and I have a picture of him holding up a peace sign in the hospital bed,” said Kila. “He couldn’t even talk, and he still knew that I was there, and he still knew that it was me.”

Marvin was released from Genesis

on May 17 and went back to work at his job at the Rock Island Arsenal five months later.

Kila appreciated her dad in the past, but she took for granted that he was her dad and would always be there.

“I feel like I definitely took for granted the fact that when he wasn’t there, it was like, what do I do?” said Kila. “I don’t know what to do. My dad’s always here. Like, I can’t open a pickle jar; oh, where’s my dad at?”

Kila mentions how thankful her dad has been throughout the whole ordeal, and Marvin said he saw this as an opportunity to better himself by trying to live life to the fullest.

“Oddly enough, the day before it happened, it was just another day, and after it happened, there is nothing as a normal day anymore, as far as I’m concerned,” he said.

Although Marvin went through a traumatic experience, he still felt responsible for the rest of his family, highlighting the emotional, restless nights they endured.

“I would trade my situation, all of the physical stuff I went through and the recovery and everything else in a second, a hundred times over to keep my family from having to witness that,” said Marvin.

Marvin believes that “there’s no way to possibly thank everybody for everything they did for me and my family.”

He brings that same appreciation with him as the holidays approach.

“My experience taught me that you literally do not know from one day to the next whether the same people will be in your life that you started that day with,” said Marvin.

“Then when you have some holiday as special as Christmas, just being able to spend time with my family and friends and yeah, it’s definitely more special than it’s ever been.”

For Kila, a special moment for her came after her dad arrived at home and saw the family’s two dogs, a mini Bernedoodle named Sullivan and a wiener dog named Moe. Due to the surgery, the dogs hadn’t seen Marvin for about a month and were very excited when he came home.

“That was really sad seeing the dogs for the first time because they didn’t know what was going on,” Kila said. “Dad’s their favorite person, and he wasn’t there, and so when he came home, it was also really sad.”

Cohen Jepsen

Ski slopes test your courage

Winter has arrived, and snow is beginning to fall.

At such a time, a gateway opens up to many winter activities like sledding, snow construction, ice skating, and best of all, skiing.

No sport is more exhilarating than skiing and snowboarding. Granted, the first time is a little unnerving

I remember when I first saw videos of people shredding powder, and everybody made it look super easy.

They swayed and curved down the slopes as smooth as a knife through butter.

However, the first time I hopped on a snowboard up at Sundown Mountain in Dubuque, I soon found out that the sport is a lot harder than I realized.

Many times I found myself wiggling in the snow and unable to get up.

Other times, I would get a good line down a slope and have it fall short because I didn’t know how to stop.

Almost every time I fell over after trying to get off the relentless ski lift.

But it is a little difficult to get involved in the skiing culture here in Iowa where the largest hills big enough for skiing are the metaphorical Little Leagues compared to the Colorado ski resorts nestled in the Rocky Mountains.

So it made me wonder—how many other people here at school have the desire to shred powder during the cold months?

I know P.E. teacher Mr. Cody Wille often tells me about his unique and extravagant sled. Mr. Wille often takes the sled out during the winter months.

A good number of students here have skied once or twice, like junior Clay Dierickx, who said that falling down was the best part.

Other students have also skied or jumped on the snowboard once or twice.

After lots of practice, one thing I know for certain is that the feeling of hurtling down the mountain and being able to move like you want on a snowboard or skis is ecstatic.

Many times when I was in the snow, I would look around and be awe-struck when I saw the super skiers doing insane flips and tricks.

I have found that skiing and snowboarding are sports where you have to abandon all your fear and doubt to be able to make the most of the experience.

The major takeaway from this experience is that oftentimes, even when off the board, teetering on the edge of a giant hill consumed with the fear of descending can make that hill seem a lot bigger.

But if you take the plunge, you may find that the hill isn’t so big, and it also provides a memorable experience.

I have only gone twice, and I’ve just grasped the fundamentals of staying upright. The only way to improve is by getting out there on the slopes.

The slopes await my arrival once the snow starts gathering, as I’m determined to see if I can get better—and to feel that intoxicating rush again.



Green Acres employee of the month



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Kendal Gruman, a Durant freshman, has been working at Green Acres for six months. She enjoys working there because of the animals. Gruman plans on working as a vet in her future.



Gruman



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The Wildcat Chronicles

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The Wildcat Chronicles staff believes a school newspaper is uniquely qualified to inform, entertain, and represent our peers. We strive to present accurate stories and thought-provoking commentary, and we are responsible for the content of each issue.

Today's




Dentistry

502 9th Ave.
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Today's Dentistry coach of the month

Casey Strub is coaching the Durant boys' and girls' wrestling teams. He has been coaching at Durant for 11 years. He got into coaching because he loved the sport of wrestling and said, "It is a great tool to prepare young men and women for whatever they may encounter in life." Coach Strub's goals this season are to place as many athletes at the state tournament as possible and have his athletes achieve their goals.




Strub



PAPER'S LUMBER & SUPPLY
901 5th St., Durant, IA 52747
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Liberty Trust & Savings Bank's club member of the month



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Senior Rilynn Buesing has been a member of the yearbook staff for three years. Some of the tasks for the yearbook include taking pictures and designing the yearbook cover. She joined because her friends encouraged her to. Buesing enjoys seeing the finished yearbook.



Buesing