

Update: Tracy Hard Brings Joy To Families After She Is Able To Donate Her Corneas, Heart Valves and Tissue

by Chris Rhodes, Reporter
February 15 2021 7:45 PM







EAST ALTON - What started out as a somber Valentine's Day and her husband's birthday turned into a joyous day for the Hard and Ziegler families after Tracy Hard will be able to donate her corneas, heart valves, and tissue.

Tracy Hard died at 12:25 p.m. Monday after a courageous fight. Her family said since she was pulled off of life support on Sunday and she held on until Monday, her liver and kidneys couldn't be used but she is able to donate her corneas, heart valves, and tissue. Her family said Tracy went out her own way and fought until after her husband's birthday to die.

Hard, a mother of two, had a medical emergency Wednesday afternoon at the East Alton Elementary School while picking up her nine-year-old daughter and her six-year-old son. The family wanted to give credit to the school nurse, East Alton Police Department, especially Sergeant Mike McCormick, East Alton Fire Department, and Wood River Fire Department. The family said, that if they did not start CPR when they did, she wouldn't have made it this long and wouldn't be surrounded by family.

Tracy was described as being quiet until she got to know you. She was 46 years old and worked for Illinois-American Water. Her husband Mike Hard said she was an amazing person and an amazing wife. She was also a lifelong resident of East Alton. She also spent time when she was growing up around the East Alton Fire Department because her dad Earl Ziegler spent a lot of years in the fire department. She played volleyball and softball growing up. Tracy and Mike were not supposed to be able to have kids but they had two beautiful kids a boy and a girl.

At 4 p.m. Sunday, Tracy Hard received an Honor Walk. The Honor Walk is when a donor patient, who is on life support, is transferred from the nursing unit to the operating room. During the walk, caregivers quietly line the hallways from the patient's room. In some cases, a dedication or reading is done at the start of the honor walk.

An Honor Walk is a quiet, yet profound and powerful way to give a loved one a hero's goodbye and to give thanks for a gift that will save and enhance the lives of many.

The family had this quote: "She brings life and love to other people, the giver in life and giver in death."

The organ donation company donated two blankets to Tracy's kids. The family wanted to thank the amazing staff at Alton Memorial Hospital, especially Tracy Walker and Tracy Lewis.

The family's biggest request is for everyone to sign up to be a donor. The link is below.

<https://apps.ilsos.gov/organdonorregister/>