

# FROM RECIPIENT TO DONOR

## SCOTT MORAVIK AND HIS GIFT OF LIFE

A heart transplant gave Scott Moravik 18-and-a-half years with his family he wouldn't have otherwise had, so, when it came time for Scott's family to decide whether Scott would want to offer the gift of life, they knew exactly what the answer to that important question was.

Scott was a family man who loved bass fishing and woodworking. He and his wife, Jackie, lived in a lake community in Sandwich, Ill., where Scott was heavily involved in the local fishing club volunteering for children's fishing tournaments and even winning Sportsman of the Year in 2011. He and their son, Jeff, both avid Chicago sports fans, spent countless hours in their woodshop making Chicago Cubs signs out of reclaimed wood and selling them to customers in the Chicago area. Scott loved life, but, most of all, he loved his family.

### FROM RECIPIENT TO DONOR

The Moravik family is no stranger to the gift of organ and tissue donation. In the late 1990s, they almost lost Scott because he needed a new heart. But, on June 27, 1999, he got the call that a donor heart was available. And, like a true fisherman, he was out on the boat fishing when the call came in.

It was a major to-do because Scott became the recipient of Loyola University Medical Center's 500th heart transplant. When the Chicago Tribune interviewed him, Jackie said he told the reporter, "I caught a fish and a heart on the same day!"

Scott was also the recipient of two cornea transplants just three years ago, which kept him from losing his sight. His experiences as an organ recipient only served to strengthen Scott's existing support for organ and tissue donation.

"Scott signed up to be an organ and tissue donor even before he had a

heart," said Jackie "He just believed and would often say, 'Why take your organs with you when someone else can use them?' Whether we were at a gathering or he was at the fishing club meetings, he'd always talk about donation."

The Moravik family enjoyed 18 more years with Scott after his heart transplant before his health began to deteriorate because his liver was struggling to filter all of the transplant rejection medications he had to take. He was admitted to University of Illinois Hospital on Dec. 18, 2017, due to liver failure and passed away with Jackie and Jeff at his bedside on Jan. 6, 2018.

### OFFERING THE GIFT OF LIFE

Jackie was at home making Scott's funeral arrangements when she received the call from Gift of Hope. She was a little surprised by the call because she thought a person who was already an organ recipient or had died of liver disease couldn't be a donor, but she learned from Gift of Hope staff that Scott could offer the gift of tissue.

"They were very respectful and patient," said Jackie. "I told Jeff that there was an opportunity for tissue donation, and Scott was such a supporter of helping others, so, of course, I authorized it."

Jackie recommends that other families talk about donation so they know their loved one's wishes before they die, but if they have to make the difficult decision about whether to donate, she encourages people to "give the gift of life."

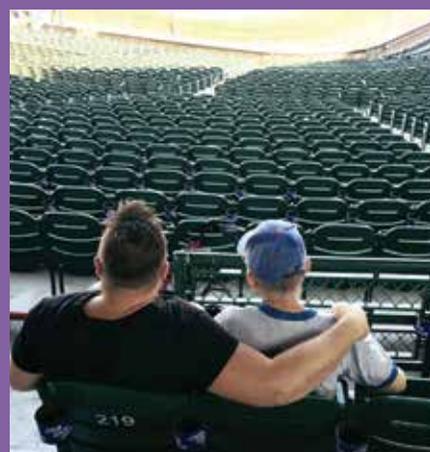
"There are just so many years that my son and I would not have had with Scott if it wasn't for the gift of donation," Jackie said. "Scott got to see his son grow up to be a wonderful man. You just have to pay it forward."



Scott, a long-time Cubs fan, and his son Jeff posed with the Cubs World Series 2016 Championship Trophy at Wrigley Field in September 2017.



Scott, wife Jackie, son Jeff, and beloved pets Smokey, Gunner and Bandit in December 2017.



Scott and his son Jeff enjoy the view of Wrigley Field during their tour of the stadium.