

UPDATE ON LOU WALTER

8/12/2020: Journal entry by Terry Walter

Some Good News: Surgery has been scheduled for early next week for Lou's knee repair and removal of the external fixture. The hope is that he'll soon begin PT and OT once healed. While Lou is worried about the intubation impacting the healing of his larynx, he's looking forward to the next phase of his recovery (and getting out of that bed!). His doc had mentioned that they may need to amputate down to the first knuckle of one of the fingers on his left hand, but so far they are giving it additional time to heal—and we're all hoping it won't be necessary.

7/31/2020: Journal entry by Terry Walter

Lou was transported by ambulance for his appointment with the orthopedic doctor. They decided to keep the external fixture in the leg for the time being and are setting him up with a hand doctor to check out his left hand. His left leg is doing extremely well, he is able to stand on it and put weight on it, so the doc was pleased. He will meet with the doctor again in a couple weeks and, hopefully, a decision will be made about additional surgery—he needs to have his right knee repaired, along with pins removed from his left hand and, of course, the eternal, external fixture decision! Due to the undiagnosed injury to his larynx, he has had some difficulty breathing and the nurses and docs at Vibra are watching him closely. It has been a frightening couple days for him, especially at night, but he rallies during the day. After his knee surgery, etc., he is facing six to nine months extensive physical therapy as well. He will remain in Vibra for the time being due to continued wound care needs.

7/22/2020: Journal entry by Terry Walter

Lou's doctors and Vibra hospital are working with an orthopedic surgery group and have set up an appointment for next Thursday. They will look at his external fixture, the pins in his left hand, his skin grafts and their healing and decide when to schedule the surgery to remove the external fixture and the pins. Once that happens, he should be able to begin more intensive physical and occupational therapy. The nurses and PT personnel get him to stand once or twice a day and put weight on his on his broken left leg. It was difficult for him at first but as he continues to do it it gets easier and he gets encouraged. He has had a couple "spa days", where Joe shaves him and washes his hair and that makes him feel really good. He's looking forward to manicure, hopefully someday soon. He still has blood and icky stuff deep under his nails from the accident. And a shower— He is really looking forward to a shower.

7/15/2020: Journal entry by Terry Walter

Every day Lou seems to be a bit more chipper. He has moments when he is a bit frightened and leery about the future, but soon bounces back to his optimistic self. He is quite limited to bed care right now due to the external fixture in his leg and the pins in his hand. The pins may come out today and the fixture next week. Then the hard work will begin as he starts therapy to become more mobile. He has a stand now for his phone so he is appreciating phone calls—just recently heard from Charlie Silvernale, who regaled him with happy stories. He doesn't seem to be in much pain now, mostly that darn finger, but, gosh, isn't that just terrific! Pain in a finger when you've had two dislocated ribs, broken all ribs, broken a leg and shredded an artery...just say'in! He's directing me from his bed (today IS tax day, y'know) and is pretty good at retaining information. We were laughing about his call from Charlie (Deacon Charlie) Silvernale and Lou wondered about getting the Sacrament of Anointing.....he called it "Extreme Unction" and, needless to say, I corrected him and told him the correct name and that he didn't need to worry about it because he received it at the hospital in Spokane.....he was surprised. Didn't remember it at all (I told him we got the priest in there the evening of the day he arrived)--said he was glad because if he had looked up and seen a Priest anointing him, he would have been scared. As if a roll-over truck accident at 1 am wasn't scary enough! Anyway, he had a good laugh and was very appreciative! God is good.

7/11/2020: Journal entry by Terry Walter



Lou says Hello!

UPDATE ON LOU WALTER CONTINUED:

7/10/2020: Journal entry by Terry Walter



Lou is doing a bit better every day! His doctors are very optimistic. There is hope that he will get the external fixture in his leg in the pins in his hand removed in 3 to 4 weeks and then he can seriously start PT. He had a phone call today from Joe and Gayle Simpson and was very happy to talk to them. His voice is getting stronger and stronger. If you would like to send him a card or letter, he is at Vibra Specialty Hospital of Portland 10300 N. E. Hancock St., Portland OR 87220. David has ordered a phone stand for him and he's anxious to receive it which will make holding and using his phone much easier. Then he can answer your calls and even call you directly. A big thank you to Jennifer Alford, for going in and cleaning Lou's apartment. We didn't even want to think about food in the refrigerator and on the counter, since he expected to return the day after his accident. blessing Lou's friends are to him.

7/5/2020: Journal entry by Terry Walter

Lou was much more animated today. The docs told him he'd get the fixture out in about three weeks and Lou is excited about that. He asked for a paper calendar because he's having trouble tracking the days...apparently every day seems the same when all you do is sleep & eat in a hospital room.

6/27/2020: Journal entry by Terry Walter

From Lou, Saturday afternoon:

I'm moved to Portland, it's good to be with Joey. Thank you for all your thoughts, I feel the love. Visitors here are restricted, but when I'm a little stronger, I am looking forward to getting on the phone with all my friends.

6/25/2020: Journal entry by Terry Walter — 23 hours ago

Lou has been cleared for transfer to a long-term acute care hospital in Portland Oregon. It is very close to Joe. He will be transferred by ambulance with an EMT on board because he is still medically fragile. There is only one designated visitor for Lou's entire stay at the hospital. Once he gets settled, and is feeling better, I'm sure he'll appreciate getting phone calls. When I have a confirmation that he's in the hospital, I'll post an address if you would like to drop him a line. Again, thank you for all the good thoughts and prayers for his recovery. He still has a long way to go.

6/23/2020: Journal entry by Terry Walter

Lou has been moved to.....a new room. Oh well, we'll take what we can get. He texted me at 12:30 am with the new "address". Twelve. Thirty. A.M. Later this morning they removed the wound vac from the skin graft and felt encouraged that it is healing so well. He was a bit discouraged today, and let us cheer him up. He sure is touched and encouraged by the cards & letters he receives. Thank you, everyone! No confirmation yet on a transfer to the West Side if the state, but we are praying he improves enough for a move.

6/21/2020: Journal entry by Terry Walter — 20 hours ago

Lou has been told that he may be moved to a rehab facility in Portland or Vancouver as soon as this week. Good news! We'll know more, hopefully, on Monday. Joe is excited for the opportunity to peer at Lou through plate glass twenty minutes from his house instead of having to drive six hours for that privilege! Happy Fathers Day to Lou, Joe and David!

6/20/2020: Journal entry by Terry Walter — Jun 20, 2020

Lou's recuperation is exhausting him and needs lots of rest. His nurse assures us the is doing well. If you are trying to call him, just know that he has difficulty answering and holding the phone. Maybe cards and notes would be the best way to reach him for the time being. I know all ya'll are keeping his spirits up! Thank you!

6/18/2020: Journal entry by Terry Walter — 13 hours ago

I talked to Lou this morning, but he was extremely fatigued and his voice was very faint. He said he hadn't slept was --apparently he is getting feeling back in his knees and they really hurt. Called his nurse and was told that both doctors had been in and were happy and satisfied with his condition. The nurse promised to keep him awake and busy so he'd sleep tonight! Called the nurse again this evening and was told that they got Lou into a "cardiac" chair today for about an hour. It's a reclines to a flat position, they slide him onto it and then raise him to a sitting position with his right leg straight out in front. Apparently, it tired him out, but is good for him!

6/17/2020: Journal entry by Terry Walter — Lou is feeling up for visitors! He's still bed-bound and looks a little beat-up and his voice is very soft, but he is looking forward to seeing folks. If you have any skills with scissors and a razor.....The hospital allows one visitor per day and you'll need to wear your own mask. They'll take your temperature the entrance, too. Maybe, for now, check with him first on his cell to see how he feels.

6/16/2020: Journal entry by Terry Walter — 16 hours ago: Lou has skin graft surgery thus afternoon (I won't post a picture—you can thank me later). They were able to close the wound and only needed a 1.5 hand-sized piece of skin from his thigh. He's been sleeping most of the last two days so they were able to do the surgery without general anesthesia—trying to avoid a ventilator.

UPDATE ON LOU WALTER CONTINUED:

6/14/2020: Journal entry by Terry Walter — 4 hours ago: Lou continues to improve. No additional surgeries are scheduled at this point, although Tuesday is still an option for the skin graft. He is eating well and feeding himself with his right hand. He has remained in the ICU because his surgeon wanted to keep a closer eye on him due to his respiratory issues. He slept well Saturday night and didn't use the CPAP at all, which encouraged his doctors. They may move him out of the ICU today if they can guarantee a 3:1 or 2:1 ratio on the floor (instead of the usual 5:1). He has had some occupational therapy including teeth brushing, combing his hair and feeding himself. He's getting better with using his right arm and we are hoping he can manage a iPad soon so we can check on him personally when David has to leave. He voice is still very, very frail and he gets exhausted when he talks too much. This is due to his fragile lungs and his broken ribs.

6/12/2020: Journal entry by Terry Walter: Additional surgery may be on the horizon. His broken ribs are really impacting his respiration so they are considering a fixture on his rib cage. They are searching for an ortho specialist and have him off food and drink today in prep. He is in a lot of pain.

6/11/2020: Update from Terry Walter: Lou was off the CPAP most of the day yesterday. There is a discussion of moving him out of ICU, depending on his respiration and if he can keep his oxygen levels up. I was able to FaceTime with him a bit, and he is very frail and weak but David and I were able to make him laugh. He seems to be in a lot of pain and he looks very beat up, but they have him sitting up a bit which seems to help his breathing. He doesn't remember much of the accident and is having a lot of very vivid dreams which we attribute to the meds. He wanted to watch the news, so David turned on MSNBC for him.

6/10/2020: From Lou's son Joe last night: Dad had the mask off all day, they're going to put it back on him for the night. He is talking more and asking for lots of water. The speech therapist came by today and cleared him to start eating food. The physical therapists came by today as well but they can only do upper body stuff because the surgery team does not want any weight bearing on his legs. They know Dave will be there tomorrow.

6/9/2020: Lou is a bit more aware today but very fragile. Joe was with him until about noon or so and left to go back to Portland. David arrives from Los Angeles this evening. Lou's CPAP mask was removed this morning to see if he could breathe well on his own. They were going to attempt to feed him solid food as well, to get his strength up. I was able to FaceTime with him briefly this morning and saw how weak he is and he was barely able to speak, but it was good to "lay eyes on him."

6/8/2020 3:30 PM: Lou is incrementally improving. The ventilator has been replaced with a CPAP with the hope that his lungs are strong enough to breathe on his own. They are weaning him off fentanyl and on to a PCA that he can use himself to control pain. He is a bit aware and needs to be reminded to push the button for the meds. He has tried to talk, but is still pretty weak and inarticulate. Surgeries on the horizon include the possibility of putting fixtures in for his ribs (if he cannot breathe) and further surgeries on his right leg, including a skin graft. He is making eye contact with Joe and squeezing his hand, so we know he is aware Joe is with him.

6/8/2020: Lou is doing well, they took the chest tube, he still has the breathing tube in. It will probably be in for a week or so until the chest pain lightens up and he can breath without the ventilator help. Joe and the family are wanting to start doing some FaceTime calls when he is more lucid and mobile.

A CaringBridge Site was created for Lou. It's a caring social network to help people stay connected with family and friends during a health event. Visit Lou's Site: <https://caringbridge.org/visit/louwalter> Site Name: louwalter

6/6/2020: Not a lot of big developments. He is still pretty sedated. They are doing tests every morning to see how he breathes without the ventilator. Once he is strong enough they can take the breathing tube out and lower sedatives. Then they can start working on rehab and mobility.

6/5/2020: Lou's son Joe met with doctors yesterday and he seemed optimistic of a good recovery. Joe said the doctors told him there will be a long recovery and rehab. The good news is there are no injuries to his spine or head and Lou should get back to where we was. He goes back in for surgery today to adjust the fixation device on his leg. I ask all of our brothers and sisters to keep Lou and his family in your thoughts and prayers. There is a go fund me page on both our Facebook and Web page.

6/4/2020: I wanted to give an update on Lou. Mike Brown and Dave Garegnani visited with Lou's son Joe yesterday late afternoon at Deaconess Hospital and talked to him to see if there was anything we could do to help. At the time Lou was still in surgery. The extent of Lou's injuries are mainly his legs, some broken ribs and a collapsed lung. Luckily no head injuries. After a short visit they offered to put him up in a hotel for the next 2 days and to please keep us updated. Dave received a text later in the evening from Joe telling him that Lou was out of surgery. He is pretty beat up but is stable. They performed extensive surgery on his legs, re-inflated his lung and kept a close eye on him all night. Joe wanted to express his gratitude for all the support from Local 77. I will share more information when we hear from Joe today. Please keep praying for Brother Lou. Be safe all!!!!

6/3/2020: This morning, we learned that Brother and past Business Manager/Financial Secretary Lou Walter was involved in a serious auto accident in Spokane. Lou is currently at Deaconess Hospital in Spokane and in critical condition. We ask all to send their thoughts and prayers to Brother Walter and his family. Due to COVID-19 visitors other than immediate family are not allowed. We will keep you updated as we receive them.