

EHS principal continues to struggle with health

BY KAREN LA PIERRE

As of press time Wednesday morning, Ellinwood High School Principal Mark Cook remains in the University of Kansas Medical Center with serious health issues.

The family has relied on their Christian faith to make it through the dark times.

"I have given God praise for the blessings he has given us and leaned on him during the dark times," said Cook's wife Signe in a Facebook message. "There are several Christian hymns or songs that come to me at the right moment."

"Another thing that has helped us is the amount of support that he is getting on Facebook. We are definitely not alone in this fight. There have been many students who have reached out. They express that they want to be here for Mr. Cook because he has done so much for them."

"One of the night nurses is former student from Lakin. He has touched so many lives and isn't done yet."

"A volunteer that has been bringing in the (electronic) cards said it is the most that has ever been delivered to one patient."

The cards are printed in greeting card form. The link is: <https://www.kansashealthsystem.com/patient-visitor/send-card/send-message-to-patient>

As of June 13, Cook has been in the hospital 19 days, with 18 in intensive care. He is undergoing dialysis and continues to have white blood cell counts that spike. His health issues began unexpectedly in mid-May and include a flight to the Kansas City hospital.

Cook's primary diagnosis is tentative for acute viral myocarditis, but he hasn't been a typical case.

"They do not know for certain what virus or if it was the virus that originally caused all of this," Signe said. "Mark has improved a lot with the blood transfusion. We thank everyone who donates blood. You never know when you will be in a situation where you will need it."



Cook

"The nurses are saying his journey has been more difficult due to the fact that there are so many new issues that have come up. There hasn't been just one issue to focus on."

"Getting his heart shocked (6 times) has given his body quite a shock."

"I am making a list of the many blessings we have already been given. That is also helping me get through this. Mark is a fighter."

"We will get through this."

Extreme Ice in Ellinwood held a fundraiser last week for Cook. All proceeds went to the Cook family.

The Snow Barn in Herrington, originally owned by the Cooks, also held a fundraiser for the family.

"The fundraiser was wildly successful," said Ben Jacobs, owner of Extreme Ice. "Through the generosity of the citizens of Ellinwood and the surrounding area, Extreme Ice was able to raise \$3,413.10 for the Cook family."

"Extreme Ice opened on Mr. Cook Day at noon with approximately 40 people waiting to be served and did not stop accommodating customers until 10:30 p.m. There was never a time in the interim in which a customer was not being served, and the line was consistently at 10 customers or greater."

"It was an extremely moving event. Beyond the fundraising aspect, the emotional and symbolic support provided to the family by the attendees and their actions is something that will serve the Cook family well during this trying time. I'm supremely proud of the Ellinwood community in supporting one of its own."



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Missing Person



Megan Foglesong has been missing since late 2015. She is 5'4" tall and weighs appx. 150 lbs. Anyone with information is encouraged to call the Rice County Sheriff's Office at (620) 257-7876.

This year's Ellinwood After Harvest Festival is scheduled for July 19-21. Watch for our AHF special section in the July 13 edition of the Leader



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