

Hospital Report: Friday and Saturday

So Friday morning Kramer was scheduled for a videofluoroscopy. It was a test that would check Kramer's swallowing ability. He swallowed food with bips in it and the technicians videotaped the throat internally and examined how the food was handled.

The best news was that we got the results right away...and they were good. Kramer passed the swallowing test with flying colors...that's such good news. He can keep progressing towards eating again. VERY slowly that is getting better. For awhile pudding was even hard to swallow but now he's back to pudding. YAHOO. They said that it will very slowly get better...and it is.

From there is was doctor visits. Kramer seemed some better. He got moved to oral antibiotics..and we were given the choice to stay another day or go home. After some discussion we decided we want to try to go home. The good news, Kalissa and Kelli both didn't work on Saturday so should things go south, I'd have help to get Kramer back to the hospital.

The change with Kramer after this stay, he's requiring more oxygen. This is typical with a pneumonia and the hope is that once the pneumonia completely clears, he'll be able to lower his oxygen needs.

Getting discharged was a nightmare. We were no not impressed. Everything else about the hospital and stay we loved...getting released we hated. I mentioned that I would like to get a wheelchair for Kramer. We want to go to Menards and look at stuff for a shower. With the change in his oxygen needs, this is more difficult as he can't walk that far without being winded. I also worry that with his neck brace

he can't see the ground. He's been hoping to go to the Labor Day service but our town streets aren't the best. There are pot holes. What happens if he doesn't see the pothole and falls. For safety and health, a wheelchair would be beneficial for him. Anyone can see that...but it's not that easy.

I said something to the nurse. She smiled at me and said, "I can try...but..."

The doctor came in and I said something to the doctor. He said, "Well that might need to go through a different doctor." The nurse came back and she said, "I think that has to go through the social worker." Finally the social worker came. She said, "I'm sorry but this is going to take a lot more. The doctor has to sign off. It has to be approved by insurance. You need to go to a medical supply company. They likely can't get you one until insurance pre-approves it...and the doctor can't sign off on it until you go to physical therapy and I doubt physical therapy will sign off as you are in too good of shape." WHAT?? UGH. I wanted one for Monday so I could take him to the Memorial Day service. At this point Kramer was frustrated. I'll admit to being a little frustrated too. Kramer asked, "How much does one cost outright?" The answer...about \$250. The nurse was in during the conversation and she apologized and told us she thought it all was dumb too. Then about five minutes passed and the social worker walked through the door and said, "Here you go." In her hand was the prescription for the wheelchair. Oh my word. That whole run around took about 3 hours. Like Kramer said...I bet that used up more than \$250 in labor costs just to get us that prescription.

In the end, Kelli works at the nursing home and in the basement of the nursing home is a "graveyard" of unused medical equipment. People die and then the family doesn't want the equipment so they give it to the nursing home. She was sure we could borrow one from them so I can get Kramer to

the Memorial Day service.

That wasn't the only trouble we ran into. Kramer has a patch for pain management related to his broken neck. The new hospital policy was that he couldn't leave with a patch on his arm unless the doctor signed off on it. It's fentanyl. It's a dangerous addictive drug when not used properly. Well the nurse was going to take it off and give us another patch that we could put on once we left. WHAT?? What sense does that make? So...we had to wait to get written permission from the doctor so he could leave the hospital with the pain patch on. UGH.

Both the wheelchair and a the pain patch issue were happening at the same time which happened to be at shift change too. It made checking out a miserable experience.

We ended up home finally by supper time. Kramer tried sausage gravy and potatoes and he could eat it...very slowly and very small amount...but that was reason to celebrate.

I think these two missed me.



...and Grandpa too.





After a late bedtime, I couldn't sleep. I was worried how Kramer would do overnight. I tossed and turned much of the night. At 7am I went to check on him to find that he had taken his oxygen off in his sleep...so we had an oxygen crisis. That took some time to get over. Kalissa called me to see how things were and offered to come over. We got him in "normal for him" range and started in on the day.

A bit later Kalissa was back home and called me. Carver was sick and going to Urgent Care. He had a temp and was throwing up...all complications due to his tube and adenoid surgery on Tuesday. He was miserable. I kept Gannon and off they went. It turns out he's okay...sick but typical for day 4 after surgery.

While they were gone, I started in on reorganizing the laundry room. I cleaned out shelving in the cupboard to hold some of Kramer's supplies. It was covering the counters and it was

getting depressing.



I am settling in to the fact that Kramer needs a lot more space nowadays and it's my job to find it for him...so out came my sewing and and crafting stuff and in went the things Kramer needs.

I gotta say, the work is so worth having some counter space again!!

Fingers crossed that we can stay out of the hospital and ER this weekend. We need a few home days.

Thanks so much for the thoughts, prayers and cards that have been sent our way. We so appreciate it.

Work Night at the “Fire Station”

On Thursday night I got a call from Craig. I was in Lacrosse in the hospital with Kramer. He said, “Hey the firemen got done with their stuff at the fire station and we decided to come to your house and do some work. How wide do you want the landscaping around the fence by the garage?”

What?? How cool. Then he went on to explain that the house siding that had hail damage had been replaced.



He said the that trees in front of the house were being trimmed.



Right now the trees hang a little low for vehicles passing by our house. They needed to be trimmed and I worried how I was going to get that done. No worries now.

I told Craig what I had in mind for the landscape and plants along the fence.









Then I said, "Craig, one more thing...can you snap some pictures so I can blog about it?" Craig said, "Already on it". Oh I love that guy.

By the time we were done talking, I had tears. The help we've been getting is totally overwhelming. We so appreciate it.

Little did I know they tilled the garden....





Little did I know that this was all done while Craig had Carver and Gannon in toe too.



I'm guessing Mel, one of the fireman's gals, came and helped with the boys as Kalissa was working the overnight.

I went back up to Kramer's room and told him. He laughed. He said, "You know, with the timing of this, I doubt that they did anything at the fire station. I think they only went to our house." I believe it.

I totally believe it.

The firemen in our town are seriously the best.



They have asked and offered to do a benefit for us. We've put it off. Doing this was PERFECT. We couldn't be more impressed with them. You hear all sorts of things like "Firemen are a band of brothers". These guys have proved that!!

There are young people who flock to the city for jobs....I think that at times they miss out on the "community" of living in a small town. This is priceless...it truly is. We are so blessed to have these people in our lives. We can't thank them enough!!

Here We Are...Again!

We got home later in the evening last night and then guess where we went this morning? If you guessed back to the ER, you are right.

It was like Friday morning all over again. He was sweating,

had shortness of breath, slightly confused, low oxygen level even with a higher levels of oxygen and now pain in his lower right lung.

We had a big debate. Do we go to the local ER or do we go straight to Lacrosse. Kelli came as quick as she could to watch the childcare kiddos. After the debate, we ended up at the local ER and again, Kalissa was working.

So rather than dwell on the troublesome and worry about what all this means, I stitched.



They ran some tests...they did some observations...all the typical ER stuff and then..they shipped up off to Lacrosse. Kramer went by ambulance. I drove.

It was a beautiful day with a beautiful drive...



So, here I am typing...I'm going back to cross stitching. In cases like this, it's what I do best.

As always, I'll let you know something when I know.

That Bathroom

So on our list of MUST dos is get a shower in the main floor bathroom. When we built the house, we always knew that a main floor bathroom shower was in the retirement plan.

I had in mind a wonderful tile shower. I wanted it wonderful and perfect...then I saw the price tags and saw the work to it. I knew tiling wasn't in Kramer's repertoire of things he could manage so we put in an old claw foot tub. It was what we had and we were going the cheap route...besides, I liked claw foot tubs.

Fast forward and I was doing childcare with the claw foot tub

on the main floor of the house. The childcare kids would go in and turn on the water. Of course it was the hot water. I always worried about the water being hot and hurting the kids. I don't keep the water that hot but still...I didn't like the idea of kids turning on the water in a bathtub. So...about a year or so ago I asked Kramer if we could take the claw foot tub out. We never used the tub anyway. We did and I put the changing table where I change baby diapers in the bathroom where the tub was.

Fast forward to Kramer's health problems. He used to shower in the basement all the time. I shower upstairs. We had no need for a main floor shower but now, we do. With Kramer in a neck brace, maneuvering up and down the steps isn't practical. It doesn't allow him to be as independent as he'd like. So the plan is to get a main floor shower.

Kayla's husband Spencer was great trying to quickly get a shower put in while Kramer was still in the hospital but Kramer and I ended up slowing things down. Yes, we want a shower...but we still want a nice shower that we'd pick in a style we'd like. We've always wanted a tile shower.

So...how do we do that?

I've been Pinteresting.

I seem to be attracted to showers like this one...



I like the wood look tile. I like the half walls.

Then I saw this...

I liked this even better. If I can avoid a door, that would be awesome. It would also help cut costs and cleaning. I

like this one with the glass. I don't need two shower heads.



I love the storage on the side. I'm campaigning for this.

We had the carpenter stop by. He had a different idea that he shared. I didn't hate that idea, but I think I like this one a little better.

Our bathroom is a little wider so the half wall, that Kramer says he would want to be shoulder height, would be wider.

What do you all think? I'm sure we'll have a bunch of ideas. Yes we'd love a floor level shower but that's not possible. The carpenter did say if we end up needing it, he could build a little ramp. That made me feel better.

I know lots of people will suggest a shower chair...We are considering putting a wall chair like this...It folds up.



This was not an expense that we were thinking we needed to

address at this point but here we are. Thankfully we've kept a savings account. We do want to do it right. I know we'd both rather do it right rather than slap something temporary in.

So add this project to the stuff we are trying to juggle and manage. Thankfully a lot of this can be done by others. We just have to get people in and deal with the mess.

Oh but wait. Kalissa found something else.



Where all the white woodwork is we'd put trim to match our house. Oh my...I love this. Now to choose.