

Life changing

Anderla twins survive surgery in their mother's womb

ERIN NOHA
 EagleHerald Staff Writer

MENOMINEE — They looked at her. She looked at her husband. What Phoebe Anderla thought was a second opinion was something much more.

“It’s burned into my memory,” she said, as a group of 10 medical professionals entered the room. “Our lives changed in a matter of a couple of hours.”

Her unborn twins, Shea and Carter, needed surgery — in the womb.

The boys had Stage 3 Twin Anemia Polycythemia Sequence (TAPS), a rare disease that affects twins sharing a placenta. If not treated, TAPS can be fatal.

“It was the first time I had ever heard of it,” Anderla said.

Shea was donating all of his red blood cells to Carter, the other twin, through connected blood vessels. This meant Carter’s heart was working overtime to pump the thick blood through his system. It also left Shea anemic and Carter with polycythemia.

“We had her in the OR within three hours of meeting them,” said Dr. Inna Lobeck, a pediatric and fetal surgeon and director of the UW Health Fetal Diagnosis and Treat-



CHAD AND PHOEBE ANDERLA, PARENTS OF TWIN BABY BOYS SHEA, LEFT, AND CARTER, RIGHT, POSE WITH THEIR SONS CAMDEN, MIDDLE LEFT, AND PIERCE, MIDDLE RIGHT, AT THEIR HOME IN MENOMINEE. SUBMITTED

ment Center in Madison. Nationally, the surgery has a 60% survival rate of both twins and a 70 to 80% survival rate for one twin.

“It wasn’t guaranteed at all, and that was so hard,” Anderla said.

The procedure lasted 45 minutes. The

doctor made an incision on the belly, then went in with a tiny camera. Using a small laser, she disconnected the blood vessels between the twins. The surgery was successful, and the twin’s blood flow began

More **TWINS** | **A3**

Nonprofit group aims to save Walton Blesch Field

Site has been in existence for 130 years

ERIN NOHA
 EagleHerald Staff Writer

MENOMINEE — A nonprofit group called the Walton Blesch Stadium Legacy Foundation asked the Menominee School Board to approve their plan to repair and renovate Walton Blesch Field at a board meeting Wednesday.

“Our vision is that Maroon football should continue to be played at Walton Blesch,” Dave Mathieu said, representing the nonprofit. “We have a 130-year tradition at this field.”



EAGLEHERALD/ERIN NOHA
 Dave Mathieu, representing the Walton Blesch Stadium Legacy Foundation, fielded questions from the Menominee Board of Education on Wednesday concerning the repair and renovations to restore Walton Blesch Field.

The board voiced their approval of the plan, and board president Derek Butler said they would address the plan’s

approval at the next board meeting or a special meeting at an earlier date if needed.

In the meantime, Mathieu

is meeting with superintendent Rich Sarau, Junior/Senior High School principal Drew Buyarski, and athletic director Sam Larson to flush out the project’s feasibility and create a master plan. He said the district couldn’t invest money and briefly referenced what the school has been through in terms of costs associated with asbestos cleanup.

“I would like to thank this committee for coming forward,” Butler said. “There’s going to have to be some sort of contract with this. We’ve learned about construction issues — more than we wanted to. At this point, I would welcome this project, but we would have to flush this out a little more.”

More **BLESCH** | **A3**

MARINETTE COUNTY

Administrator, others, tout recreational trails.

PAGE A3



SPORTS

Marine girls fend off Truckers.

PAGE 20

Good morning, **Alfred Lindner!** Thank you for subscribing to the EagleHerald

DEATHS

Casey, Loreen S. Steinbach, Thomas J. Wilch, Beverly C. Zazeski, Mary J.

More on **A5**

TODAY'S WEATHER

HIGH LOW
10 | 3

Mostly sunny and cold, with 10 to 15 mph winds.

More on **A6**

Advice.....A12-A13
 Classified.....A9
 Comics.....A11, A13
 Crossword.....A11
 Deaths/Obits.....A6
 Opinion.....A5
 Records.....A6
 Sudoku.....A11
 Sports.....A17-A20

Twins/_{from A1}

normalizing almost immediately, Lobeck said.

Less than three months later, the twins were born on Nov. 1 in Green Bay. After a brief stay in the neonatal intensive care unit, they joined their other brothers, Pierce, 7, and Camden, 2, at home in Menominee. It was as if nothing ever happened to them, Lobeck said.

“Every day feels like a blessing,” Anderla said. “I look at them and look at the fact that I may not have been able to see their faces.”

Life-or-death situations aren't anything someone wants, but they offer a vital perspective on life. The couple had spent their entire lives in the area and were settling into a routine with two boys, with another two on the way.

Since she was having twins, Anderla had to be monitored more closely, but it was nothing they couldn't handle. They had a big family in the area to support them — with so much love to share. In the twin boys' case, however, their hearts were working too much. That turned their lives upside down.

The day before the surgery, the family was undergoing routine monitoring in Green Bay when they were referred to Madison.

“That same day, we packed a bag, we drove down there, stayed the night and the next morning, we began a series of ultrasounds,” Anderla said of her and her husband, Chad.

TAPS happens in about 10 to 15% of identical twins who share a placenta and can develop in any number of babies that share a placenta. Lobeck said it's nothing the parents or kids did or didn't do.



Twins Shea, left, and Carter, right, Anderla were born almost three months after receiving life-saving prenatal fetal surgery in Madison in August after developing Stage 3 Twin Anemia Polycythemia Sequence, a rare disease that could have been fatal. Their parents are Phoebe and Chad Anderla of Menominee.

SUBMITTED

There are five stages, with Stage 3 being the first stage that doctors will intervene if it's TAPS, Lobeck said. Stage 4 is both fetuses are very close to death, or one is close to death. Stage 5 is the fetal demise of one or both of the babies. Doctors will intervene for Twin-to-Twin Transfusion Syndrome at Stage 2 or more, which the Anderlas thought it may have been before learning about TAPS.

“We were very lucky that Phoebe came down here and intervened in the nick of time,” Lobeck said. “Both twins were showing cardiac complications from this.”

With surgery options, families can choose to do surgery or not do anything. Once babies are at

Stage 3, the chances of survival are low unless doctors operate. With cases that aren't as severe, one baby is born extremely anemic, needing multiple blood transfusions, Lobeck said.

There were concerns that Anderla would go into pre-labor during the surgery, which meant that a NICU consultant met with her before surgery. If the children were born then, they would've been 23 weeks. A premature birth is when a baby is born before 37 weeks of pregnancy has concluded, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

“Throughout the whole situation, we kept a positive outlook,” Chad Anderla said. “When they came to explain

what they found, they were all very calm and professional. I think that helped us with staying positive and hoping for the best.”

Phoebe said surgery wasn't an easy decision. Still, on the other hand, it was an easy decision, given the couple's love for each other and love for their kids.

“Having had kids

already, I could completely understand the unconditional love I had for these twins that I didn't even know yet,” Phoebe said.

With the kids at home, the parents are slowly adjusting to taking care of twins, joking about getting out of the house and talking about family again.

“We do not say no to

help,” Chad said. “Mom and dad. Grandma and grandpa. Aunts and uncles. If they want to come over for an hour, we say yes.”

They're thankful for their stay at the UW Health Fetal Diagnosis and Treatment Center, a collaboration between UW Health and Unity-Point Health — Meriter, which opened in March 2022. Phoebe was the first laser procedure performed at the center and the first set of twins born after visiting the center.

With life-saving treatment as close as Madison, families no longer have to travel to Chicago or Cincinnati, eliminating the emotional and financial stress on families if they had to move for monitoring afterward.

“We're so happy to be able to offer this in people's backyards,” Lobeck said.

The surgery bonded the team with the Anderlas. They sent them UW onesies after they were home.

“They send us pictures all the time now,” Lobeck said. “They're really extended family at this point.”

One thing's for sure, the Anderla family is resilient, just like their kids, navigating life's ups and downs with more perspective.

“I'm not the same person as I was before this pregnancy,” Phoebe said.

Erin Noha can be reached by email at enoha@eagleherald.com

Dreaming up the ideal retirement is your job. Helping you get there is ours.

To learn more about why Edward Jones makes sense for you, call our office today.

Member SIPC • edwardjones.com

Joe Klug
AAMS® CRPC®
Financial Advisor

Tanesa L. Klug
AAMS® CRPC®
Financial Advisor

3908 Hall Ave Ste C
Marinette, WI 54143-1018
715-330-6046

Edward Jones
MAKING SENSE OF INVESTING



1809 Dunlap Ave., P.O. Box 77
MARINETTE, WI 54143
715-735-6611
ehextra.com

Published three times a week Monday, Wednesday and Friday, except holidays, by Adams Publishing Group.

USPS #012-581. Periodicals postage paid at Marinette, WI.

SUBSCRIPTION RATES

By postal delivery: \$63.70 for 13 weeks, \$127.40 for 26 weeks, \$254.80 for 52 weeks
Digital only rates: \$57.20 for 13 weeks, \$114.40 for 26 weeks, \$228.80 for 52 weeks
Above AUTOPAY rates reflect best value
Certain issues of The EagleHerald will be considered premium day editions and incur additional charges. These additional charges will change the paid-through date of your subscription.



Jim Ferolie,
Regional Executive Editor

SUBSCRIPTION TERMS: An EZ-Pay (Auto-Renew) subscription is considered a CONTINUOUS SUBSCRIPTION, which means it will automatically renew at the end of the initial term. Notice of cancellation must be provided before the end of this SUBSCRIPTION TERM to avoid charges for an additional term. Future SUBSCRIPTION TERM prices and publication days are subject to change. This subscription grants you a FULLY PREPAID, NON-REFUNDABLE license to receive and access the subscription materials for the duration of

the subscription term. **PRE-PAYMENT:** if you choose the convenience of prepay, price changes, premiums and/or surcharges during the pre-payment term may apply, this could reduce or extend the pre-payment term. We reserve the right to issue refunds or credits at our sole discretion. If we issue a refund or credit, we are under no obligation to issue the same or similar refund or credit in the future. All subscriptions will automatically include up to six premium content editions, there will be a charge for these premium editions, which will

Dan Kitkowski, Editor
715-750-2103
Matt Lehmann, Sports Editor
715-750-2113
Erin Noha, Staff Writer
715-750-2105
Todd Colling, General Manager
tcolling@eagleherald.com

Tricia Hurley,
Sales & Marketing Manager
715-750-2122

CIRCULATION
Brian Hult, 715-750-2099
LeRoy Wood, 715-750-2112
subscriptions@eagleherald.com

CLASSIFIED ADVERTISING
Judith Kline, 715-750-2109

shorten the length of your subscription. The publisher reserves the right to change subscription rates during the term of any subscription. A Maintenance fee may be added to subscriptions to accommodate for increased business expenses during the year.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to EagleHerald, P.O. Box 77, Marinette, WI 54143.