

Accident changed outlook on life, student says

By Karla Price
The News-Leader

Just two months after suffering life-threatening injuries during a Halloween night hayride accident in Springfield, Marcy Vassalli is making a full recovery at her home in House Springs and is making plans to return to Southwest Missouri State University in January.

"I'm a little tired," she said. "Christmas has worn me out."

Vassalli, 19, fell beneath the wheels of a flatbed trailer loaded with students. She apparently had been standing on the wagon tongue that connected the wagon to the back of a pickup truck.

Both her lungs collapsed. Vassalli also suffered fractured ribs and arms and facial lacerations. Velvet Reed-Wood, a neuro-trauma unit nurse at Cox Medical Center South, said the unit staff was amazed by Vassalli's speedy recovery.

"We were surprised that she made it at all,"

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Reed-Wood said. "She had such extensive injuries. But she had some really good physicians and lots of people taking care of her, and her parents were a great support."

To facilitate Vassalli's breathing, a tracheostomy was performed during her hospital stay. During a tracheostomy, an opening is made in the neck through the trachea where a tube can be inserted. The tube was removed from Vassalli's trachea after two and a half weeks, leaving a small scar at her throat.

"The scar will eventually heal over and you will hardly be able to see it," Reed-Wood said.

Vassalli said she would like to help the hospital's new patients who undergo the operation

when she returns to Springfield.

"I'd like to talk to younger people who are going to be getting tracheostomies because I know I was terrified that I was getting this hole in my throat. Maybe I can help them by saying, 'I was there, I know what it's like.'"

Vassalli will have limited movement of her arms until the bones heal completely, and she will require two more skin graft operations for her face and head. The operations are scheduled for the summer, she said.

Vassalli said her accident has helped change her outlook on life.

"I learned to appreciate things more, simple things you usually don't think about," she said. "To be able to drink water — because for a long time I was so thirsty and couldn't drink anything — to be able to breathe. And I appreciate people more. I became much closer to my mom and dad. This really united our family."



Marcy Vassalli
Recovering from hayride accident

Dangerous Trailers.Org & Dangerous Hayrides.Org Another Accident Changed Outlook On Life Springfield News Leader Missouri 31 December 1990

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