

Tears still puddle in 30-year old Tony Linner's eyes when he talks about his journey since his fiery accident. The tears are not because of his dozens of surgeries, skin grafts, or never-ending pain. Tony is tough. He is a fighter. But, he misses all the "daddy time" with his kids, "The hardest part for me is not being with my family like I was."

On June 26, Tony was enjoying his exciting, energy-filled favorite hobby: racing sprint cars---those smaller, high-powered vehicles that race slipping and sliding, usually on small ovals or dirt tracks. Tony had just roared across the finish line when his car flipped over and burst into flames. Instantly, Tony's wife, Joyce, and three of their children reacted, "Kayden, Kormick, Kali and I were screaming his name and for someone to help him," Joyce remembers.

Tony recalls: "I remember screaming for help and it was hard to get out." The flame and heat had melted his gloves, and Tony spent an agonizing five full minutes trapped in the burning car. When he finally escaped, he had burns over nearly 90 percent of his body.

Tony was transferred to Saint Elizabeth Regional Burn Center, where he laid in a coma for three weeks. "When I woke up this place felt like home," he recalls. Joyce has never been far from her husband's side during the months of treatments and recovery and thankfully, their family helps care for their four children at home in Kearney.

Joyce can't help but also reflect on the traumatic brain injury their youngest child, Koldin, suffered in a tragic fall less than two years earlier. She also relied on her family's support then. Now, she also is thankful for the incredible personal and clinical support of the Saint Elizabeth Burn Center medical team. Tony says it's almost hard to leave because the medical team has become his friends. Joyce agrees, "They just really, really cared. Having the nurses to talk to was amazing, and they were so great with our kids."

Tony is still recovering and goes to therapy every day. He is looking forward to getting back to the life he used to enjoy and waking up in his own home with wife and children each day. Tony would not wish this experience on anyone, but he also feels everyone deserves the same level of care that he has experienced, "I think this is the best care that I've had anywhere."

Please help us fulfill Tony's wish of ensuring that every patient has access to the same exceptional care that he has received.

A Cherished Tradition

Saint Elizabeth Foundation's *Lights of Love* is a cherished tradition that allows you to honor a special person while at the same time helping to create a healing, caring environment for all patients at Saint Elizabeth Regional Medical Center. When you donate to *Lights of Love*, you may designate an individual whose name will be placed on a Tree of Life and in the Book of Honor at Saint Elizabeth. The person you wish to honor may be a respected friend or someone you wish to memorialize.

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This year, please give a gift to support the incredible healing that takes place within the Burn Center at Saint Elizabeth Regional Medical Center.

Each year, the Saint Elizabeth Burn Center, credentialed by the American Burn Association, cares for many burn victims from across the state. Our team helps each burn patient, adult or child make a physical, emotional and psychological recovery. In order to continue our excellent level of care, our burn center's nearly outdated vital signs monitors need to be replaced in each patient room. You can help make this a "Christmas to Hope" for someone like Tony by participating in *Lights of Love*.

A Tribute to Your Loved One

When you make a donation to *Lights of Love*, we will place the name of your loved one or dear friend on a Tree of Life at Saint Elizabeth, in the Book of Honor, and on our *Lights of Love* Web page at www.saintelizabethonline.com/lol.

**Please join us at the Lights of Love Ceremony on Sunday, November 29 at 6:00 p.m.
Enjoy the lighting ceremony, fellowship and refreshments.**

Make this a Christmas for Hope

Your gift to Saint Elizabeth Foundation is an investment in the future....allowing us to continue our commitment to serving as a state-of-the art burn trauma center for our region. Thank you for giving as generously as you can and for truly helping this holiday season to be a "Christmas for Hope."

Your volunteers,



Doris Buechel
Lights of Love Co-Chair



Marcia Carkoski
Auxiliary Chair



Mary Merritt
Lights of Love Co-Chair

Donate online at www.saintelizabethonline.com/lol

**We will place a special ornament on the Trees of Life before the
Lights of Love Ceremony on November 29.**

You can track Tony Linner's journey on Facebook – "Tony's Support Group"

~ Please Join Us ~

2009 *Lights of Love* Ceremony

"Christmas for Hope"

Sunday, November 29 - 6:00 p.m.

Saint Elizabeth Regional Medical Center

Lower Level Lobby & Reflection Overlook

