

# My Personal Hero

(My Uncle Steve)

I chose my uncle/godfather as my personal hero. My uncle Steve has a very big heart and a great sense of humor. No matter when I see him he makes me laugh! He gives me great advice on basketball since he coached his son and has played a lot of basketball. His greatest advice was to never pass the ball, always take the shot myself. Of course that is his sense of humor again. He will come to my school events or 4-H events to support my sisters and me whenever he can. After reading my essay you will know why he is my hero!

His birthday is August 3rd, 1960. He has Seven siblings and their names are. Kevin, Lawrence, Dennis, Joe, Ann, and Amy. His parents names are Alois and Cecilia. My grandma Cecilia passed away in 2008, and my grandpa is 86. Uncle Steve lived in Kaukauna with his family. He graduated from Kaukauna High School and got his first job at Thilmany Pulp and Paper Mill. He went back to school to get his degree as an electrician. He married his wife Nancy and they had two kids Shanna and David.

The reason my uncle is my hero is not only because of who he is. The uncle that is supportive with the big heart and sense of humor, but because of what he has been through. The loss he has experienced and he still reaches out to help others. My cousin Shanna just completed her first year of college at UW Madison, when she came home for the summer she was able to see her brother David graduate from Kaukauna High School. She loved running and nature! Shanna went for a run on June 25, 2000 and never returned!

My uncle Steve and his wife, Nancy, drove the route that she runs to find it blocked off by police cars! Shanna was hit while jogging in daylight. The man who hit her with his car had been stalking Shanna. There was another man named David Carnot, who tried to help Shanna, but the murderer tried to hurt him also. After a high speed chase that ended in Greenville on Highway 15, he was caught.

He was able to fire seven lawyers and drag out the jury trial. He eventually tried to fire his lawyer during the trial. However, the judge told him, he could choose to keep his lawyer or defend himself. That this trial will not be rescheduled. He was convicted of murder and sentenced to life in prison plus 75 years for attempted murder. This stranger had charges against him for hitting a different girl

and trying to lure her into his mobile home. The day that he took Shanna, he actually tried to get a girl into his vehicle in Appleton. There have been many motion hearings since his conviction, and it has gone to the Appellate Court and been sent back to Outagamie County because he defended himself. He still claims his innocence, and is trying to get another trial. This has been going on for almost 16 years. The amount of support that was given to my uncle from Shanna's high school friends and college friends was truly amazing. There were two court rooms full supporting her during the trial and motion hearings.

After her death, my uncle did not work for about a year and eventually he went back to school to earn a police science degree. He volunteered as a victim crisis response team member. That means he has lost a loved one, and if someone else had lost a loved one, the police or ambulance contact him. Then he goes and helps them through their hard times of losing a loved one. He also goes to Fox Valley Technical College and talks about his life experience. He is actually kind of a hero to other people too.

He works for the town of Greenville. On the water towers to check the water levels and make sure that there is nothing wrong with the water. He actually gave me a tour

through one of the building that holds the water out by Grand Chute. It was really cool how they fill the towers and check to see if they're empty or not. I got to see the well and the filtered and nonfiltered water tanks too.

From him being a supportive and big hearted uncle to his tragic Story, my uncle is my hero. He has experienced tragedy and continues to help others. I am so glad I have him in my life.