

Former fire chief given second chance at life

By [Jocelyn Berkahn](#) *Wausau Daily Herald* April 7, 2008

ROTHSCHILD -- Former Rothschild Fire Chief Bill Paduan is showing all the signs of a full recovery after a Feb. 21 bone marrow transplant.



Former Rothschild Fire Chief Bill Paduan holds a photograph of himself. *Corey Schjoth/Wausau Daily Herald*

The 50-year-old, who found out in July he had acute myeloid leukemia, is not yet considered to be in remission, but his doctors said he's doing as well as can be expected.

"I now have two birthdays, because the day I was given my transplant, I was given a new life," Paduan said. "I'm very happy I got a second chance."

Dr. Walter Longo, an oncologist at the University of Wisconsin Hospital and Clinics in Madison who performed the transplant, said Paduan was in remission at one point, but it was unlikely he would have been cured by chemotherapy. A transplant was his best chance for an enduring life, Longo said.

Most times, siblings of the cancer patient are considered first as donors. Paduan, who is an only child, didn't have that option.

That's why doctors turned to an outside donor, a practice that can be difficult given the low number of marrow donors, Longo said.

Paduan said he does not know the identity of his donor, except that he's a male. Paduan will be eligible to find out who it is in one year, Longo said.

The donor was given medication to increase the number of stem cells released by his marrow into the bloodstream. The blood was then removed and put into a machine where the stem cells were removed. The blood was then returned to the donor, and the collected cells were put into Paduan.

At his most recent checkup, doctors found the stem cells reproducing new white blood cells, red blood cells and platelets -- exactly what should be happening, Longo said.

Paduan said he still has bouts of nausea and diarrhea, but said, "It's nothing I haven't already endured."