

Kidney Transplant Survivor Returns to Snow Plowing After 13-Year Span

Highway Technician Terry Lundy loves nothing more than plowing snow, so when he finally had the chance to hop into an INDOT plow truck in late January after a 13-year absence, he said watching the snow come off the plow was “like a farmer in a field watching grain shooting off a grain chute.”

As documented in a [2019 story about Lundy](#), the Vincennes District employee longed to return to the job that he had to leave in 2008 because of kidney disease. After 11 years of fighting for his life, Lundy received a kidney transplant and was cleared by his doctor to return to the Loogootee Unit in

July 2019.



Terry Lundy gets ready to plow snow Jan. 27 in the Vincennes District.

Summer and fall work duties at INDOT were satisfying, but Lundy couldn’t wait for winter to arrive. He regained his commercial driver’s license in late 2019 in anticipation of plowing snow, but there was only one problem: Measurable snow never materialized. Lundy spent the winter of 2019-2020 doing other work as his unit never was called to fight snow.

“Snow plowing is enjoyable and relaxing to me,” said Lundy. “You get in your own element, watch your controls, the roads, and the snow, see how it’s flying, see if you need to speed up, slow down, and make sure you don’t knock over mailboxes. It’s almost like therapy for me.”

The winter of 2020-2021 started the same way as the previous winter, with hardly any flakes. Finally, on Jan. 27, Lundy had his chance, as 4 inches of wet snow fell on the region. He was part of a crew that staged plow trucks out of the Washington Unit, which has no crews — only a salt dome. Lundy ran the plow on I-69, south of Washington, for part of the 12-hour shift, and then spent the rest of the day plowing State Road 57, north of Washington.

“It was wonderful,” said Lundy. “I thought, ‘Wow, my time had come around again.’ My main concern was trying to do a good job to keep people safe and not slide off the road. I hate to see someone slide off roads on my route.”

Lundy continued: “I like to get out there early, get prepared, get the truck ready, and make sure it’s all

tuned like a well-played fiddle. Sometimes the hours are long, but the key is to keep good spirits, don't let anything get you down, and when you're off, don't waste time playing with your cellphone; get some quality sleep and good rest."

Both I-69 and SR 57 provided good mental challenges for Lundy.

"On the interstate, people get in their head that they really want to drive 70 mph and have to get down the road when they should be driving 40 mph; slow and steady will get you home," said Lundy. "On the rural roads, you don't have near the volume of traffic, so you get to see a lot of wildlife that comes out of the woods and crosses the road to eat the grass. You see wild turkeys and the like come out."

A lot has changed in the 13 years since Lundy last plowed snow.

"The trucks now compared to then are like Cadillacs," said Lundy. "It's like the horse and buggy compared to rocket science now."

He cited technology and safety features among the changes.

"Years ago, we had just a basic truck with an on-off switch and some hydraulic control," said Lundy. "Now, they're electric, hydraulic, and computerized. Instead of having to put salt beds in the truck, the truck already has them; the truck is a working snowplow. The new trucks are heads and shoulders above what we had years ago."

While snow plowing in January, Lundy also noticed that today's INDOT roads are wider, better well-marked, and feature more rumble strips.

In 13 years, Lundy said two things haven't changed.

One is unpredictable weather; Lundy stated that it's useless to compare storms because some linger while others come and go during one's shift, and this has always been the case.

The other is his unbridled joy and enthusiasm for fighting snow.

"I just love what I am doing," said Lundy.

Loogootee Unit Supervisor Jeff Berry said: "Terry seemed to be excited when he finally got the chance to plow snow again, and he is very grateful that the good Lord gave him a second chance to be at INDOT. We, likewise, are grateful that he was able to get his transplant and come back to us."



In January 2020, Lundy attended a class about snow fighting (top photo) but never got to plow snow because of a mild winter. Lundy finally gets his chance in late January 2021, and he loads salt in his truck (bottom photo) before heading out to plow snow.

