

# Thankful for a special friend

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GILLETT - This Thanksgiving Day Robby McClain is grateful for many things, but extra special this year, is his friend Pam Nelson.



For about eight years, Robby has had kidney problems. He says three years ago, both his kidneys shut down, and he's been waiting for a new one.

"I asked him what can we do? So he said you just get your blood tested, so we did the testing at Madison and it came back as a match," said Pam Nelson.

Pam has known Robby for more than 15 years. Both of them work as emergency responders with Mountain Ambulance Service.

Though Pam's kidney appeared to be a match, it took her a little time to move forward with the process. The surgery does come with risks, but after researching and talking with her family, she decided to give one of her kidneys to Robby.

Pam explains, "Well, working with Rob and seeing how much he gave the community all these years, it's like I have to do something. I think when you're in EMS you kinda are a giver anyway, so it was the right thing to do."

"It's just unreal, it's almost unheard of," said Robby.

Now, two weeks after the surgery, both Pam and Robby are sore, but grateful that so far things have gone well.

"I'm so thankful that I was able to give the gift to Rob, because just to see him, it's such an emotional thing and like he said we're always gonna have that connection. I'm very thankful for that as well as my family of course, always. And life is good. A little pain is nothing compared to what he had to go through," said Pam.

Pam is grateful for the opportunity as well as all the support she's received from others throughout the process.

"Everybody's been just really supportive and awesome," said Robby.

Robby is grateful for the many people who have supported him, and he's grateful for his friend, who he calls his hero.

"She's a real special person. It really saved my life," said Robby.

Both Pam and Robby plan to return to work as emergency responders for the Mountain Ambulance Service after they have recovered from their surgeries.