



Life Goes On

Secretary of State Jesse White • Fall 2008

A newsletter for Secretary of State facility employees and other organ/tissue donation advocates

As we inch toward 100,000 individuals on the national transplant waiting list, Donor Program staff has reached out far and wide across Illinois. We continue to talk to young people, encouraging them to register to be donors when they turn 18; to couples – perhaps one who wants to be a donor and the other who hesitates; to those who have received a transplant; and to those who are in need of a transplant, who wait day after endless day for that lifesaving phone call.

We intensify our donor awareness efforts in November by reaching out to our faith communities. During National Donor Sabbath, donor advocates will pair with religious leaders to reach even more people, from all walks of life, from every ethnic background and from every religious affiliation, with our message of hope and a second chance at life.

A big thanks goes out to facility employees who welcomed Donor Program staff, transplant recipients and donor families this summer, who brought donor brochure racks to be displayed in facilities. This effort has put a local face on our donor message and serves as a reminder to customers that there are donor recipients and family members in virtually every community in Illinois.

Jesse White

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Secretary of State

National Donor Sabbath — November 14-16



National Donor Sabbath – a weekend when donor advocates and faith communities come together toward a common cause – will be observed

November 14-16. Bringing the message of organ/tissue donation to the faith community is a very important step in getting those not familiar with donation to better understand what it's all about.

"Donor family members and transplant recipients are encouraged to speak to local faith congregations and organizations over the Donor Sabbath weekend to share their donor stories and show others, firsthand, the lifesaving benefits of transplantation,"

said Secretary of State Jesse White. "If you have a donor story or know someone who does, please ask them to contact their place of worship about relaying their donor story and reminding their faith community that every major eastern and western religion embraces organ/tissue donation."

The Organ/Tissue Donor Program will participate in a statewide Donate Life Illinois campaign to increase awareness about National Donor Sabbath, distributing public service announcements to religious radio stations across Illinois and bookmarks to places of worship. If you or someone you know needs donor materials such as suggested reading lists, church bulletin inserts or bookmarks, please call the donor hotline at 800-210-2106.



DONOR FAMILY PROMOTES DONATION AT STATE FAIR — Donor family members Jay and Pat Landers of Springfield, who donated their son Ryan's organs and tissue, helped promote organ/tissue donation in the Secretary of State's tent at the Illinois State Fair in August.

It's easy to join the Organ/Tissue Donor Registry:

- Visit www.LifeGoesOn.com (it only takes 60 seconds to register online).
- Visit any Driver Services facility and say "yes" to the donor question.
- Call the Organ/Tissue Donor Program hotline at 800-210-2106.
- Complete and mail the registration card on the YOU DECIDE brochure.



Cheryl Cameron, Carmi facility

Coworker Connection

For Carmi facility employee Cheryl Cameron, tissue transplantation was a blessing that was available 30 years ago. Cheryl's daughter Tonya, now 34, was born with a rare genetic defect – the lack of eyelid muscles needed to open and close her eyes. The defect was so rare that it was very difficult for Cheryl to find the proper medical care and receive a tissue transplant for Tonya years ago.

A physician was finally located at Barnes Children's Hospital in St. Louis when Tonya was four years old. Using donor tissue, surgeons performed the delicate eyelid tissue transplant. Donor tissue formed a bridge from Tonya's eyebrow to the edge of her upper lid, providing muscle for the eye to open and close. Recently as an adult, Tonya had the surgery repeated, again using donated tissue.

"The doctor told us that she would need it again someday but it worked great for 30 years," said Cheryl of her daughter's second successful tissue transplant. "Some people just don't understand how important donation is...my daughter is leading a healthy, happy life because of generous donors."

Donor registry climbs toward 4 million

The Illinois Organ/Tissue Donor Registry number continues to climb as we close in on the 4 million mark. Many people are hearing about the registry at health fairs, hospital events, schools and colleges, community events and businesses. Those over age 18 are encouraged to join the registry; those under 18 are encouraged to talk to their families about donation.

In addition, those who turn 18 in Illinois receive a letter from Secretary of State Jesse White encouraging them to join the registry. The office has had an encouraging response from young people who have received letters.

While the registry is growing, the number of people waiting for transplants nationally also is growing. According to the United Network for Organ Sharing (UNOS), the number of people awaiting a lifesaving organ transplant in the country is 99,560, far too many people to have their transplant needs met by the number of available organs and donors.

U.S. Transplant Games

The 2008 U.S. Transplant Games were held this summer in Pittsburgh. Team Illinois was well represented with nearly 50 athletes and more than 120 supporters. Illinois brought home several gold medals in golf, tennis, cycling and racing, and received bronze medals in 3-on-3 basketball and volleyball.

The Transplant Games are held every two years and are open to anyone who has received an organ transplant, and is at least six months post-transplant. Thousands attended this year's event to make the Transplant Games one of the largest competitive sporting events in the United States. Many athletes are already planning to participate in the 2010 games to be held in Madison, Wisconsin.



Liver recipient Colette Jordan (back, second from right) of Lisle and donor family member Chris Seigars (back, second from left) are surrounded by their families at the 2008 U.S. Transplant Games in Pittsburgh.

Facilities feature local donor stories

Many Driver Services facilities received donor brochure racks this summer featuring a local donor story. The racks include the Life Goes On brochure alongside a flyer featuring a picture and short story about a local transplant recipient or donor family. Below are photos of a few of the facilities that displayed the racks.



DONOR BOOTH IN CARTERVILLE — Ann Ashby of the Driver Services Department and Brian Bush, regional coordinator for the Organ/Tissue Donor Program, staffed a donor booth this summer at the Senior Fun Fest at John A. Logan College in Carterville.

Kidney transplant gap widens for African-Americans

Because diabetes, hypertension and high blood pressure affect a large number of African-Americans, those high numbers are translating into a disproportionate and growing number of African-Americans on the kidney transplant list. Many will wait a number of years for a kidney or continue to live life on dialysis.

The best match for a kidney transplant includes tissue matching, which increases the success of the transplant. Most African-Americans will have better success with a kidney match from another African-American; however, a smaller percentage of donors are African-American.

Chicago Bears player's baby receives new heart

Chicago Bears cornerback Charles Tillman faced a life or death situation earlier this summer with his infant daughter. Tiana suffered from cardiomyopathy and her enlarged heart was beating 220 times a minute just to keep her alive. She received a heart transplant at just three months old at Children's Memorial Hospital in Chicago.

Tillman is an advocate of organ donation and urged many people to become donors at a press conference at the hospital when his daughter was released.



Belleville facility manager Amelia Odom (left) received a brochure rack from Jessica Fritz, whose late husband Mark, a liver recipient who recently passed away, is featured on the donor story flyer.



Jerry Purcell (left), facility regional manager, and Mike Unser, Taylorville facility manager, received a brochure rack from 12-year-old heart recipient Benjamin Sims, whose story is featured on the donor flyer.



Tuscola facility manager Mary Jo Fitzjarrald (left) and staff received a brochure rack from Joe Irace (right), who received a new heart in March.

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**Secretary of State Jesse White
Organ/Tissue Donor Program**

451 Howlett Bldg. • Springfield, IL 62756

BE AN ORGAN/TISSUE DONOR.

LONGEST SURVIVING ORGAN TRANSPLANT RECIPIENTS

Kidney-living related donor . . .	44 years+
Kidney-deceased donor	39 years+
Liver	37 years+
Heart	28 years+
Lung-single	20 years+
Lung-double	20 years+
Pancreas	24 years+

FACTS YOU SHOULD KNOW

Nearly 100,000 Americans are awaiting a lifesaving organ transplant.

Nearly 5,000 are waiting here in Illinois.

On average, nearly 20 people die each day waiting for a transplant.

Every 13 minutes in this country a name is added to the national waiting list.

One in 20 Americans will need some type of tissue transplant in his lifetime.

Nearly 6,000 Americans are waiting for a bone marrow transplant.

Organ/Tissue Donor Program Staff

Please use the following updated list when contacting donor staff for story ideas or volunteering for events in your community

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