



# Life Goes On

Secretary of State Jesse White • Spring 2010

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

Never before has donation been as important as it is now – a record 106,000 people sit in wait of a lifesaving transplant nationally. In Illinois, 4,800 await a lifesaving vital organ transplant. And even with more than 28,000 successful transplants performed nationally in 2009, hundreds still die waiting for that call. The impressive 5.1 million names on the Illinois Organ/Tissue Donor Registry represent hope for many of those in need of a transplant, but it's still not enough to meet the ever-increasing need for viable organs and tissue.

During National Donate Life Month in April, Donor Program staff and countless volunteers, donor specialists, donor family members and transplant recipients will be out in communities across Illinois educating people about donation. I encourage you to join the events in your community and show your support for donation. By doing your part to support organ/tissue donation, we can ensure that people young and old have an opportunity at a better life, a longer life, or the only chance at life through donation.

*Jesse White*

Jesse White  
Secretary of State

## Celebrate National Donate Life Month in April

April is National Donate Life Month, a celebration of life and promoting the importance of organ/tissue donation. Education is critical for the public to understand donation – too many people still believe one of the many myths and misconceptions surrounding donation.

Kicking off Donate Life Month in Illinois is the Secretary of State's new 30-second donor public service announcement, which will run statewide on TV and radio stations. This year's PSA features Chicago Bears cornerback Charles Tillman and his family's donor story. As an infant, Tillman's daughter, Tiana, suffered from cardiomyopathy, an enlargement of the heart, and needed a lifesaving heart transplant. While waiting for a donor heart that the Tillmans prayed would come in time, their daughter was kept alive with the Berlin Heart, a device that keeps blood pumping. Tiana was the first child in Illinois to use it. Tiana is now a healthy, active toddler thanks to both the Berlin heart and the donor heart that saved her life.

In Chicago, a weeklong donor awareness campaign will take place at the James R. Thompson Center, and a Chicago White Sox autograph-signing day will be held in late April. Donor Program staff also is helping coordinate many local activities throughout the state such as tree planting ceremonies, donor dedication days, memo-

rial ceremonies for those who have given the gift of life, and celebrations of donor families who have made the courageous decision to give the gift of life.

For more information on donor events in your area, please visit [LifeGoesOn.com](http://LifeGoesOn.com), the Gift of Hope Web site at [giftofhope.org](http://giftofhope.org), the Donate Life Illinois Web site at [donatelifeillinois.org](http://donatelifeillinois.org), or call the Secretary of State's Organ/Tissue Donor Program at 800-210-2106.

**FACT**

Seven children under age 1 are waiting for transplants in Illinois. Six wait for a liver, one waits for a heart.



Secretary of State Jesse White and Chicago Bears cornerback Charles Tillman following shooting of the new donor commercial in the Bears' locker room at Soldier Field.

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

- Visit [www.LifeGoesOn.com](http://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 "It's Up To YOU" brochure.

## 2010 Donor Poster Contest winners

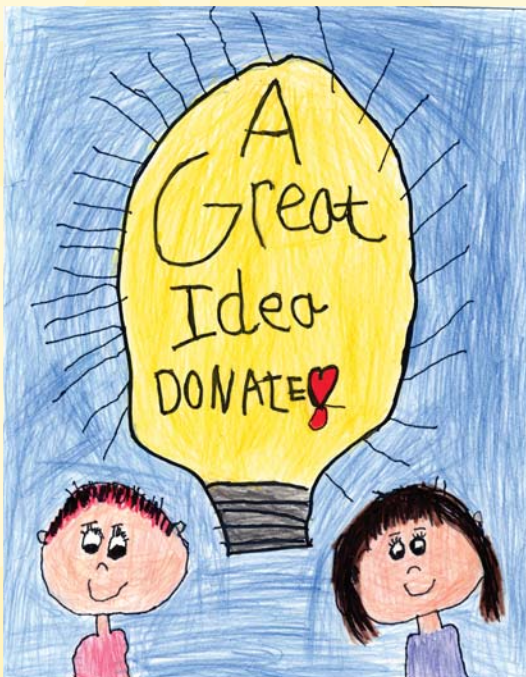
Secretary of State Jesse White has announced the winners of the 2010 Organ/Tissue Donor Poster Contest. More than 6,500 letters and entry forms were sent to kindergarten through 12th-grade schools throughout Illinois last fall. The contest included entries from four categories: K-2nd grade, 3rd-5th grade, 6th-8th grade and 9th-12th grade. One winner was chosen from each category and an overall grand-prize winner was selected. The grand-prize winner was Kieran Baurer, a kindergartner from Pleasant Valley Elementary School in Peoria. Other winners included:

3rd-5th grade: Kamryn Rutledge,  
Pleasant Valley Elementary School-Peoria

6th-8th grade: Morgan Hall,  
Vandalia Junior High School

9th-12th grade: Samantha Palacios,  
Oak Lawn Community High School

Secretary of State Jesse White will award the winners their prizes in his State Capitol office in April. The grand-prize-winning poster will be reproduced and displayed at all Driver Services facilities, libraries, hospitals and other locations statewide.



By Kieran Baurer, age 6  
Pleasant Valley Elementary School, Peoria

## “Sing For Life” in Peoria

On November 13, in conjunction with National Donor Sabbath, Donor Program staff coordinator Damarius Blanks and the Peoria Life Goes On Committee organized a “Sing For Life” event at Zion Baptist Church in Peoria. The program included performances by several local church choirs and testimonials from transplant recipients, donor family members and those who had lost loved ones waiting for a transplant. Secretary of State Jesse White was the featured speaker and met and exchanged donor stories with many after the ceremony. The event was a huge success and very inspirational to those who attended.



Secretary of State Jesse White with the vocal group “Generation of Destiny” from Church of the Living God Temple, which performed at Peoria’s Zion Baptist Church during the National Donor Sabbath in November.

**FACT**

The number of people waiting nationally for a lifesaving vital organ is more than 106,000.

## Lisle receives Governor’s Hometown Award for donor efforts

Donate Life Illinois volunteers Colette Jordan and Chris Seigars, along with their hometown of Lisle, a Chicago suburb, were honored with a 2009 Governor’s Hometown Award for their efforts to register donors and share their donor message in their community. Colette is a liver recipient and Chris is a donor family member.

The Governor’s Hometown Award recognizes volunteers for making their communities better places to live and work. Colette and Chris attended an awards ceremony in Springfield hosted by Governor Pat Quinn at the Executive Mansion. Secretary of State staff members Sitha Hun and Vicki Tulus attended the ceremony on behalf of the Organ/Tissue Donor Program.

**FACT**

The liver is the second-most needed transplant, with nearly 16,000 people waiting nationally. Nearly 600 people are waiting for a liver transplant in Illinois.

**LIFE GOES ON**

# Donor awareness efforts around the state



(Left) Secretary of State Jesse White was recognized at a Northern Illinois University basketball game in January for his office's donor awareness efforts. Pictured with him are: (left to right) Joe Matty of the NIU Alumni Association; Jeff Compher, NIU Associate Vice President and Director of Athletics; and NIU President Dr. John Peters.

(Below) Members of the newly formed Macon County Life Goes On Committee met recently to plan April Donate Life Month activities in the Decatur area.



(Right) Donor Program coordinator Gail Grabczynski staffs a donor table at the *Chicago Defender* newspaper's health fair in December.

(Below) (Left to right) Maribeth Landwehr and Jennifer Hobbs from Astella Pharma US, Inc. join members of Walton Payton's family — Brittney Payton, Jarrett Payton and his wife Trisha, and Connie Payton-Strotter — along with Secretary White and Dave Bosch from Gift of Hope for the "Tackle the Shortage" donor program at a Chicago Bears football game.



Brian Bush's grandfather, Robert Phillips

## Employee Connection

According to Brian Bush, an outreach coordinator for the Donor Program, his grandfather was an accomplished musician, guitarist and vocalist with a local southern gospel group during much of his lifetime. When he died last year at age 85, Robert Phillips of Galatia in Southern Illinois was a tissue donor, able to give numerous people bone donations.

"One of his greatest joys in life was his music," said Brian, also of Galatia. "He played the guitar and sang for 65 years. His musical ability was one of his biggest influences on me," added Brian, who plays the piano.

A former ironworker, Robert also had been blind since age 30. He lost his sight to glaucoma but lived for 50 years able to do most anything sighted people could do. He learned Braille, listened to books on tape, and maintained his independence to the end. His other senses more than made up for his lack of sight. In 1985, Brian's grandmother died and his grandfather lived independently until a few years before his death. Robert had made it clear to his family that he wanted to be a donor someday if he could.

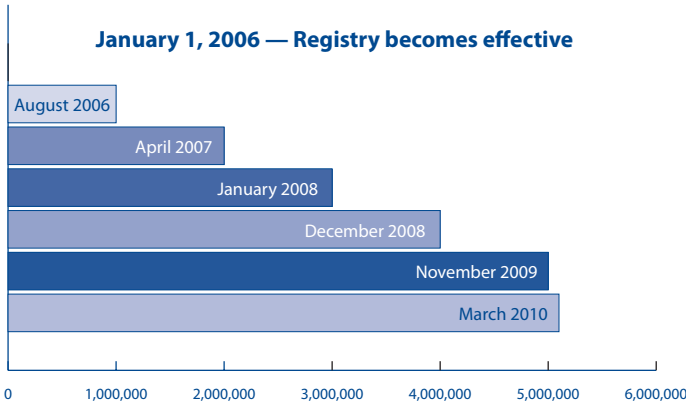
Brian's family has not heard directly from any of his grandfather's tissue recipients, but Mid America Transplant, the organ procurement organization that services Southern Illinois, told the Bush family that he helped a number of people. That has helped the Bush family to know that many people are living a better, more active life because of Robert's generosity.

BE AN ORGAN/TISSUE DONOR.

# Donor registry growing

It's hard to believe that the new Organ/Tissue Donor Registry is already four years old! There are currently 5.1 million people in the new registry, which debuted in Illinois in January 2006 and made donation a legally binding agreement. Donor staff, facility employees and donor advocates across the state have worked tirelessly over the past four years registering new donors and re-registering donors from the previous registry at facilities, health fairs, community events, sporting events and other venues across the state. The graph below shows the impressive growth of the registry.

## Illinois Organ/Tissue Donor Registry Growth



The most waited for organ transplant nationally is kidney — nearly 84,000 — more than 75 percent of the total waiting list. In Illinois, of the 4,800 people waiting for a transplant, 3,800 are waiting for a kidney.

## Donor numbers for facilities

Beginning this year, Donor Program staff will provide statistics to all Driver Services facilities across the state as well as to regional managers and staff personnel. Facilities, managers and staff will be sent two statistics sheets: one with the numbers from the start of the current program's registry (2006) through the current month, and the other with the numbers for that current month. The statistics will include the number of people who have said yes to donation as well as the percentage for each facility.



**DONOR AWARENESS AT CHICAGO SLAUGHTER GAMES** — Donor Program staff is coordinating donor registration drives at Chicago Slaughter football games this spring. The Chicago Slaughter is the premier indoor football team in the Chicago area, owned by former Chicago Bears quarterback Jim McMahon. The team has signed running back Jarrett Payton, son of the late Chicago Bears player Walter Payton. The Slaughter plays at the Sears Centre Arena in Hoffman Estates. Pictured at the first Slaughter game in March are: (left to right) Donate Life Illinois volunteer Lisa Campagnolo, Donor Program regional coordinator Jean Anderson, and Donate Life Illinois volunteer Josie Emnace.

## 13-way Kidney Swap

What do you do when you need a kidney transplant but a loved one who offered to donate his or her kidney is not a match? You look into new programs such as paired kidney donation, or "kidney swap," being offered by more transplant centers.

Georgetown University Hospital and Washington Hospital Center recently pioneered a 26-person transplant effort — 13 people donating a kidney to 13 recipients waiting. In paired kidney donation, a person willing to be a living kidney donor for a family member is not a match but might be a match for a person needing a transplant in another mismatched family situation. The pairing allows a family member from one family to donate to a person needing a transplant in another family if someone else agrees to donate to his or her family member in need.

According to the National Kidney Foundation and the Alliance for Paired Donation, this type of cross-matching of living kidney donation may save an additional 3,000 lives annually.