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Brian Bush joins Organ/Tissue Donor Program staff

Brian Bush of Galatia, Illinois, joined the Secretary of State's Organ/Tissue Donor Program June 1 as a regional coordinator for the southern Illinois region.

Brian has a degree in mortuary science and funeral services from Southern Illinois University Carbondale. For the last 10 years, he has worked for Mid-America Transplant Services (MTS) in St. Louis, most recently as manager of its communications center. He also has worked on MTS's organ/tissue recovery team and in hospital development, donor family support and public education.

"I am very excited to join the Secretary of State's office and continue to help raise public awareness for organ and tissue donation in Illinois," said Brian. "I am looking forward to working with the donor staff as we watch the new donor registry in Illinois climb. It's an exciting time for everyone in the donor field."



I am pleased to announce that the new Organ/Tissue Donor Registry has surpassed the 2-million-person mark! We reached this milestone during National Donate Life Month in April by stepping up our public education efforts with the message that donation saves lives.

Many days I meet with individuals who graciously say, "I wouldn't be here today without my kidney or heart transplant." These are the people for whom the second chance at life means everything. I want to thank all the Driver Services facility employees who ask that lifesaving question everyday, "Do you wish to become an organ/tissue donor?" I often tell people that if we can do one thing each day to make someone's life easier, we have made a difference. The decisions made because of your efforts have touched countless lives.

Look for the Organ/Tissue Donor Program staff in communities this summer dispensing information about donation and signing up people on the new registry. What a difference we can all make when we work together! Keep up the great work!

Jesse White

Jesse White
Secretary of State

Jesse White, Secretary of State
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Life Goes On

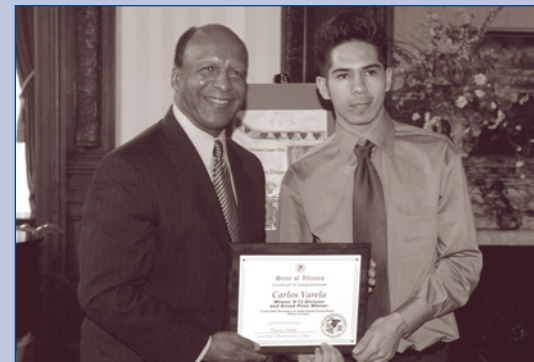
Life Goes On
Secretary of State Jesse White • Summer 2007
A newsletter for Secretary of State facility employees and other organ/tissue donation advocates

New Donor Registry reaches 2 million!

Since January 2006, Illinoisans continue to say "YES" to donation, bringing the new registry number to more than 2 million!

The old registry had 6 million people registered. These donors remain in the registry but still require family consent upon donation. The goal of the Organ/Tissue Donor Program is to get everyone from the old registry onto the new one in the next 18 months so everyone's wishes to be a donor will be honored. It's an ambitious task, but significant progress is being made each week.

Donor staff members are out in communities participating in donor designation drives and manning informational booths. Everyone who visits a donor booth is engaged in a short conversation about donation and asked if they have registered or re-registered on the new registry. If they have not, they may register onsite. It only takes a few minutes to re-register by showing a driver's license and confirming their address. As soon as it's entered into the system, the person is on the new registry. It's that simple!



2007 POSTER CONTEST WINNER — The 2007 Secretary of State Organ/Tissue Donor Program Poster Contest winner was announced during Donate Life Month in April. Carlos Varela, a junior at Curie High School in Chicago, won first place in his division and was overall winner of the contest with his depiction of a young child reaching for the moon with the tagline, "Make Dreams Come True, Be An Organ Donor." His original artwork, selected from hundreds of entries, has been reproduced and is on display at Driver Services facilities, schools, hospitals and libraries throughout Illinois.



It's easy to join the new 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 Secretary of State's Organ/Tissue Donor Program hotline at 800-210-2106.
- Complete and mail the registration card on the YOU DECIDE brochure.

Coworker Connection



Thorp family (left to right): Jody, Jason, Katie, Darcy and James.

For 20-year Aledo Driver Services facility employee Jody Thorp, donation has been bittersweet. Her son and daughter-in-law donated their 3-year-old daughter Katie's organs after she drown in a neighborhood swimming pool last summer.

Jody said it was the only decision that made any sense, as she fought back tears when recalling the family's decision to donate Katie's organs and tissues after the tragic accident just a year ago. "I've always been an organ donor," said Jody. "It's easy to make the decision for myself. But we never thought we'd be asked this for a child."

Katie's parents, Jason and Darcy Thorp, of Knoxville, Ill., donated their daughter's organs, including heart valves, to help save another person's life. Jody said her son, who works for the EPA in Peoria, and his wife are very compassionate, strong people and they made the decision themselves.

Katie helped save up to nine lives. The Musculoskeletal Transplant Foundation will be updating the Thorp family this summer with additional information on Katie's donation.

This past Christmas, Jody's daughter-in-law wrote a family Christmas letter asking everyone to become donors, and the family has a one-year anniversary memorial for Katie planned in July. The family also has donated books to their local library in Katie's name.

The good news is that Jason and Darcy welcomed a new baby, Jacob Crandall, in May to join older brother James, age 6. Jody is looking forward to telling her new grandson all about Katie, whose memory will never be forgotten in the Thorp family.

Illinois celebrates Donor Awareness Month in April

April was National Donor Awareness month across the country. In Illinois, Organ/Tissue Donor Program staff fanned out across the state, spreading the "Gift of Life" message to thousands of people.

Chicago — Secretary of State Jesse White kicked off the month with a press conference at the James R. Thompson Center in Chicago with donor recipients featured in the new Secretary of State donor awareness television and radio commercial. He and donor recipients then signed up donors throughout the afternoon.

Secretary White threw out the first pitch at a Chicago White Sox game and appeared on the pitcher's mound with two of the children featured in the donor commercial. He also participated in several media interviews around the state and was a featured guest on The Steve Cochran Show on WGN-radio, Chicago.

Bloomington — The McLean County Life Goes On Committee and Secretary White set up donor designation stations at Country Insurance and Financial Services in Bloomington where they registered more than 300 people on the new registry. Company employees were given information about donation and a luncheon was held in honor of Secretary White.

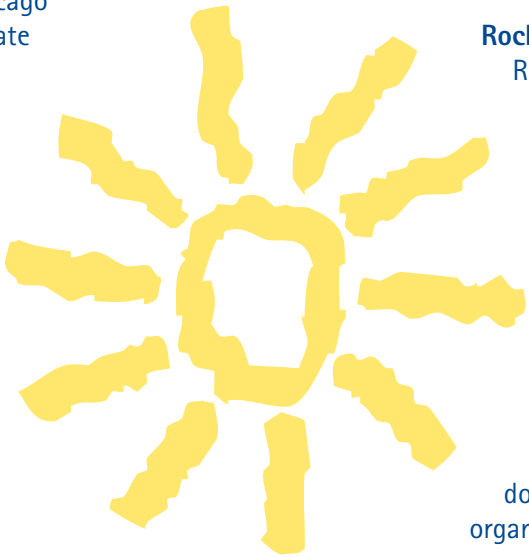
Naperville — Naperville's Organ Transplant Support held its 17th annual Donor Family Dedication and Tree-Planting Ceremony at Naperville Central

High School and Naper Settlement in honor of donor families, recipients and those on the waiting list. Speakers included Naperville Mayor George Pradel; Gift of Hope's Vikki Tulcus; Secretary of State regional donor coordinator Margaret Pearson; Peggy Frank of Naper Settlement, as well as several recipients and donor family members.

Rockford — The Rockford Life Goes On Committee held a 5K Red Shoe Run for Donor Awareness at Rock Valley College. The annual run is dedicated to Carrie Smith, who was a tissue donor in 2002. The event, which raises awareness and funds for blood, bone marrow and organ/tissue donation, has raised nearly \$55,000 for donation since 2003.

Byron — The Tim O'Hare Drive for Life was held at the Byron Fire Department for Byron resident Tim O'Hare, who is in need of a bone marrow transplant. Mayor Scott Nason and hometown NFL player Sean Considine (#37 for the Philadelphia Eagles) promoted donor awareness. Nearly 100 people signed up to be organ/tissue donors, 280 donated blood and 801 joined the marrow registry at the event.

Peoria — The Peoria Life Goes On Committee participated in a variety of activities, from payroll staffers promoting donation, distributing information at blood drives, issuing a proclamation declaring donor awareness in April, and manning informational booths at local malls.



Secretary of State Jesse White signs up people for the new donor registry at the James R. Thompson Center in Chicago with the help of Micaela Prunty, a liver recipient featured in the Secretary of State's donor awareness commercial.



Secretary of State Jesse White with (left to right): Carolyn Watkins, Gift of Hope Community Affairs Coordinator; Micaela Prunty, liver recipient; Alecia McClung, kidney/pancreas recipient; and Jack Lynch, Gift of Hope Community Affairs Director, during a donor drive at the James R. Thompson Center.



Members of the McLean County Life Goes on Committee include: Dianne Kelly, Regional Superintendent of Schools office; Dave Hearn, Illinois Eye Bank; Vikki Tulcus, Gift of Hope; Mike Matejka, Trades Council; Sherry Galbreath, BroMenn Medical Center; and Damarius Blanks, Secretary of State Organ/Tissue Donor Program.



Organ Transplant Support in Naperville celebrated its 17th annual Donor Family Dedication and tree-planting ceremony. Pictured left to right are: Vikki Tulcus, Gift of Hope; Tim Joos, donor father; Naperville Mayor George Pradel; Margaret Pearson, Secretary of State Organ/Tissue Donor Program; and Alecia McClung, kidney/pancreas recipient.



Philadelphia Eagles player Sean Considine (at the wheel) participated in the Tim O'Hare Drive for Life event in Byron. Pictured left to right with Sean are: Jan Eschen, Donate Life Illinois; Sharon Malone, Gift of Hope; Cathy Hahn, volunteer; Margaret Shannon, Secretary of State Organ/Tissue Donor Program; and Beverly Edwards and Colleen Young, Gift of Hope.

Q & A

Q A member of my family wants to be an organ/tissue donor someday but does not want to put her name on a list. Can she still be a donor?

A Yes. Families of those who are not on the registry are asked for consent. However, it is best that she register as a donor to ensure her wishes are honored.

Q I registered to be a donor through the I Am Are You? Web site. Do I still have to register through the Secretary of State's Life Goes On Web site?

A No. There is only one donor registry in Illinois, managed by the Secretary of State's office, but many ways to get to it, including the I Am Are You? site and links on other Web sites.

Getting the word out

To reach out to volunteers who wish to spread the word about organ/tissue donation, volunteer training sessions were held in March in Rosemont (Chicago area) and Normal (central Illinois area). Hosted by Gift of Hope and its partners with Donate Life Illinois (including the Secretary of State's Organ/Tissue Donor Program), the training provided an overview of the new donor campaigns in Illinois, local donor registration goals and ideas for coordinating donor drives.

Volunteers as well as staff from donor groups were encouraged to set up donor drives, tell people about the new registry and sign up people. Armed with training materials, promotional pieces and ideas for successful donor booths, volunteers and staff will be actively seeking new donors in communities across the state this summer.

LIFE GOES ON. BE AN ORGAN/TISSUE DONOR.