

# THE LEGACY

A Publication of the Center for Donation and Transplant

Volume 6, Number 2

## Wilson Memorial Nurse Honored as CDT Nurse of the Year

**I**F HE COULD PICK one word to describe the honor of being named CDT's sixth "Nurse of the Year," Matthew Smith, R.N., would choose the term "bittersweet."

"It's a very nice honor but bittersweet at the same time," said Smith, "because the nurse isn't the one who deserves it, but those who do are the family members."

Smith is referring to the family members who chose to give the gift of life to others during their most difficult time of grief after just having

lost a loved one. Smith, an intensive care nurse at Wilson Memorial Regional Medical Center in Johnson City, New York, offered support to two donor families over the course of the past year.

In nominating him for the award, Toni Nash, R.N., nurse manager, said, "Matthew forms a significant bond with his families, providing them with answers and support."

Smith was also nominated for the honor based on his eagerness to learn about organ

and tissue donation so that he is knowledgeable when working with families. He was presented with a personalized award and a check for \$250 at CDT's sixth annual "Nurse of the Year" Award and Appreciation Dinner in April.

Smith has worked at Wilson for four years - two years as a nurse assistant before becoming an ICU nurse. He attended Broome County Community College.

The "Nurse of the Year" award is chosen based on nominations submitted by nurses,

physicians, administrators and support staff at CDT's 48 hospitals. The award is presented to one nurse who has shown an exemplary commitment to organ and tissue donation. The typical role of a nurse in the donation process is to recognize if the patient might be a suitable organ donor after nothing more can be done for that patient. The nurse would then make the call to CDT. If CDT staff determines that the patient is a potential candidate for donation, the nurse might join the CDT staff when the family is approached to obtain consent for donation.

This marks the second time in recent years that a Wilson Memorial nurse has been selected for the award. In 2000, Elsie Ciccone, R.N., was the first United Health Services nurse to be honored with the award.

Wilson Memorial Regional Medical Center is a 296-bed teaching hospital providing a full range of medical-surgical services. Wilson is part of the United Health Services Network.

## From the Executive Director

**A**S transplant waiting lists continue to grow, the number of people waiting for organ transplantation is now over 80,000 people. Many of these people will succumb to their disease before an organ becomes available. Because of the dramatic shortage, many organ procurement organizations in the country, in cooperation with their donor hospitals are developing protocols for what is referred to as non-heart beating organ donation. This procedure was used in the late 1960's and early 1970's prior to the development of brain death legislation. Now that we have strict defined criteria for brain death, we find that there is a population of patients who, although they are critically injured, will not meet brain death criteria, but will also not recover from their injuries. In many of these cases, after a period of time families, in consultation

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**Matthew Smith, R.N., (center) is surrounded by family, friends and coworkers from Wilson Memorial after being named "Nurse of the Year" by CDT.**

# Transplant Recipient Participates in 5K Race/Walk for Awareness

**L**IKE MOST runners, Dedra Croll sites getting outside, getting fresh air and staying in shape as her motivations for running. But the 44-year-old from central New York also runs to motivate others - to become organ and tissue donors.

Croll and a number of other transplant recipients and donor families participated in the 2nd Neighborhood Challenge 5K Race/Walk for organ and tissue donation at the Albany Medical Center's South Clinical Campus on May 4. The event is held in hopes of raising awareness of donation.

Croll knows all too well the importance of organ and tissue donation. Ten years ago, she made a discovery that would ultimately save her life. An ultrasound technician by profession, she discovered a mass on her liver while testing new equipment in her office. Although she otherwise appeared to be in perfect health, Croll had a biopsy performed as a precautionary measure and was diagnosed with a rare form of liver cancer. After being placed on the transplant waiting list, she received a new liver on February 22, 1993 at the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center (UPMC).

"I had never thought about organ donation before because it just didn't hit home," said Croll. "Hopefully through my love of running, I can encourage others to consider becoming donors."

Four years after her transplant, Croll returned to Pittsburgh to run along side her husband, Bill, in the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center Marathon. "Going to Pittsburgh and running beside my husband was my



**Dedra Croll during the 2nd Neighborhood Challenge 5K Race/Walk**

way of saying thank you to my donor family and to UPMC for giving me back my life," said Croll.

Since then she has competed in three U.S. Transplant Games, winning gold medals in the 1,500-meter, 3,000-meter, and 5K events. She hopes to one day compete in the World Transplant Games.

Although Croll's wait for a liver was not long - just three months - many are not so lucky. Many transplant patients undergo what is to become a race against time. Sharon Boehlke, race coordinator, decided to team up with CDT for the 5K because her brother, Jim Dunn, of Rotterdam, has been waiting for a kidney for over one year.

More than 260 runners and walkers participated in the event held in Dunn's honor.

## The Legacy

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Want  
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**If you are a member of an affiliated hospital who would like to advertise an upcoming event or submit an article to the Legacy, contact Sue Cain at (800) 256-7811 or via e-mail at [scain@cdtny.org](mailto:scain@cdtny.org). The Legacy is published quarterly.**

## In the News...

### Vermont Resident Wins Scholarship

A total of 117 high school seniors submitted essays for the Amy Bindelglass Memorial Scholarship.

The scholarship was created in memory of two-year-old Amy Bindelglass, who lost her life following an automobile accident. Amy's family made the decision to donate her organs after her death, saving a five-year-old boy who was waiting for a heart.

We were surprised with the number of students who shared personal stories about donation or transplantation and were delighted at how much so many young adults know about donation. The volunteer judging panel, which consisted of Marcia Schultz, a member of a donor family; Celeste Sierad, a liver recipient; and Catherine McTague, a retired school teacher, faced the difficult task of choosing one essay.

The winning essay was written by Virginia Haley of Rutland, Vt., who will receive the scholarship in the amount of \$500. Haley relayed the story of a girl who is waiting for a kidney to become available. After detailing this girl's hopes and dreams, Haley revealed herself as the girl waiting.

An honorable mention went to David Haeselin of Kingston, N.Y., who eloquently compared becoming an organ donor to a young person's dream to live forever. Haeslin will receive a scholarship in the amount of \$200.

### CDT Joins the Chamber of Commerce

CDT has recently become a member of the Albany-Colonie Regional Chamber of Commerce in hopes of increased networking capabilities and partnerships with the other 2,700 member businesses and non-profit organizations who are also members of the Chamber.

### Coordinator Completes CPTC Certification

Jonathan Fenimore, B.A., organ procurement coordinator, recently completed the requirements of the American Board of Transplant coordinators to become a Certified Procurement and Transplant coordinator. Successful completion of the 175-question examination includes testing in the areas of hospital development, donor evaluation, donor family interactions, donor management, organ recovery and allocation. Congratulations Jonathan!

### Poster Contest Winner

**Megan Chaput, a ninth grade student from North Country Union High School in Newport, Vt., designed the winning essay for CDT's Vermont poster contest. Megan will receive a check in the amount of \$100.**



# CDT Celebrates National Organ and Tissue Donation Awareness Week

CONGRESS ESTABLISHED National Organ and Tissue Donation Awareness Week (NOTDAW) in 1985 as a means of raising awareness of the critical need for additional organ and tissue donors. Organ procurement organizations and transplant programs throughout the country celebrate by planning multiple events to educate the public and to recognize donor families and others who have helped us raise awareness about the importance of organ and tissue donation. The Center For Donation & Transplant celebrated a jam-packed week of events and activities for NOTDAW, April 21-27.

## Corporate Partnership

Two well-known businesses assisted CDT in promoting NOTDAW by printing donation messages on their promotional materials. Stewart's Dairy Shops printed a panel on their milk cartons encouraging people to talk to their families about "Sharing Life." There are more than 300 Stewart's Shops in CDT's service area. Patrons who dined in any of 35 McDonald's Restaurants in northern New York or western Vermont could read the truth behind the myths about donation on their tray-liners. Wegman's Grocery Stores in Binghamton, New York, printed information about donation in their sale flyers.



**Stewart's Shops printed an awareness panel on milk cartons for NOTDAW.**



**McDonald's Restaurants in western Vermont and northern New York participated in NOTDAW by printing educational tray liners.**

## SUNY Albany Students Launch Pilot Project

Students at the State University of New York at Albany launched an awareness campaign as part of a pilot project overseen by the New York State Task Force to Increase Organ and Tissue Donation. The purpose of the pilot is to develop a means of edu-

cating the diverse student population about donation and to evaluate its effectiveness as a possible blue print for other SUNY schools to use. SUNY Albany officials chose to facilitate the program by developing a course for students in the Communications program. Approximately 20 upper-level communications students who were enrolled in "Communications Campaign Practicum" with instructor Larry Sombke, learned first hand how to create and carry out a public information campaign. They kicked off the campaign with a press conference featuring State Health Commissioner Antonia Novello, M.D., UAlbany President Karen Hitch-

# Organ and Tissue Donation Awareness Week

cock, MOD Squad member Vicki Crosier and Christian Scharl, heart recipient and volunteer with CDT. In praising the students, President Hitchcock pledged to enroll on the New York State Organ and Tissue Donation Registry.

Other activities held by the students included a UAlbany men's basketball game, informational tabling sessions with a raffle, music and giveaways. In addition, the students developed their own website, where visitors could enroll on the Registry. To date, more than 300 people have enrolled on the NYS Registry as a result of the campaign.

## In the News...

In addition to the coverage prompted by the press conference, press kits were sent to all media outlets encouraging them to promote NOTDAW. WXXXA (Fox) in Albany interviewed 28-year-old Darrell Young about what it's like to be waiting for a heart. In honor of National Volunteer Appreciation Week, which fell the same week of NOTDAW, the Utica Observer Dispatch interviewed John Weakley and Ron Abeling, both heart recipients, about their role as volunteers for Faxton/St. Luke's Health Care and CDT. Several other letters to the editor, radio PSAs and articles appeared throughout CDT's service area and in its hospitals' newsletters.

## Sixth Annual Nurse of the Year Award and Appreciation Dinner Held

At CDT's Sixth Annual Nurse of the Year Award and Appreciation Dinner, CDT executive director Frank Taft referred to the evening as "a special time set aside to recognize those who make organ and tissue donation possible and to remember those who have given the ultimate gift - the gift of life."

In recognizing the nurses present at the dinner, Taft said, "While we face the difficult task of choosing just one of you to be honored as our Nurse of the Year, we honor each and every one of you tonight. There is not one of you who are not appreciated and your dedication to our cause does not go unnoticed by us or by the people whose lives you save through donation."

Stephanie Senior, health quality review specialist for the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services, addressed the audience of nearly 250 nurs-

es, hospital administrators and community leaders about the importance of their role in the donation process. Senior acknowledged the ten nominees for Nurse of the Year with a certificate of recognition and received her own surprise when Taft honored her with CDT's Distinguished Service Award for her support to the organization throughout the years.

Clear Channel Broadcasting was honored for their role in CDT's "Got Organs" campaign, which enrolled more than 10,000 people on the New York Organ and Tissue Donor Registry.

## MOD Squad Recognized by Governor Pataki



Governor George E. Pataki proclaimed April 22, 2002, as Mothers of Organ Donors Day in the State of New York. Twenty members of the MOD Squad (Mothers of Organ Donors) from across the state were recognized during the New York State Assembly's session before meeting with Governor Pataki. Earlier that day, the group had the opportunity to converse with representatives from four major religious groups at a panel presentation about religious views concerning death and dying. The women also heard a lecture entitled "Humor and Grief," by Eileen Leary, Ph.D., of New Insights, Inc., a counseling and consulting firm in grief and trauma.

**Members of the MOD Squad (pictured here with Frank Taft and NYS Assemblyman Jim Conte) were recognized by the NYS Assembly with resolutions and roses.**

## Community Education

CDT staff and volunteers participated in several health fairs and distributed informational and promotional items at each of our 48 hospitals. To end the week, an aerial ad was flown over parts of Albany, Rensselaer, Saratoga, Schenectady and Greene Counties with the message "Make a Miracle. Be An Organ Donor." If you saw the message call us at 1-800-256-7811 and let us know where you were.

## What is a Tissue Requestor's Workshop?

Federal and State Law require that the person seeking consent for donation be an organ procurement organization (OPO) staff person or someone who has received OPO approved training. Under the Conditions of Participation for Medicare, hospitals are required to notify their affiliated organ procurement organization of all deaths or imminent deaths.

Although request for organ donation is done by a trained CDT coordinator, CDT and the Lion's Eye Bank of Albany have developed a curriculum for a tissue requestor's workshop to train hospital staff to offer the option of tissue donation to families in a compassionate and informed manner. Successful completion of the program qualifies a medical professional to obtain consent legally under the Medicare Conditions of Participation and under State Department of Health requirements.

Participants are educated in the areas of regulation, barriers to donation, medical criteria, the consent process, how to present the option and what happens after consent at a full-day program presented by CDT staff. Participants have the opportunity to interact with CDT staff in role-play situations similar to situations they may face when speaking to a family.

The program is free for any health care professional from our 48 affiliated hospitals and has been approved by the AACN for seven contact hours. To find out if there is a Tissue Requestor's Workshop coming up in your area, refer to our "Upcoming Events" list or call CDT at 1-800-256-7811.

## Living Organ Donors Outpace Cadaveric

Living organ donations reached a record high last year, outnumbering non-living donations for the first time, according to data released by the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS).

A total of 6,445 people donated a kidney or part of their liver - an increase of 13.4 percent over 2000, while there were a total of 6,081 non-living donors.

With waiting lists growing, the number of organs donated by the living has been growing more quickly than those given after death as desperate patients have turned to family and friends to assist them.

## Nurses' Advisory Group Meets

Nurses had an opportunity to collaborate on ways to improve donation at CDT's first meeting of the Registered Nurse Advisory Council (RNAC) in April. Participants were asked for feedback on barriers to procurement and ways to increase awareness in hospitals and communities. The committee used these ideas to develop five subcommittees to the RNAC, including: professional education, community education, policies and procedures, legislative issues and public awareness. Members of the RNAC will divide into these subgroups at upcoming meetings.

The RNAC was developed by CDT as a means for directors of nursing, nurse managers, nurse supervisors, nurse educators, policy and procedure nurse liaisons and staff nurses from each of our 48 hospitals to collaborate on ways to improve donation.

The next meeting will be held on July 31 at an Albany location to be determined.

## Message from the Executive Director,

from page 1

with their physician and the hospital ethics committee, agree to disconnect life support of their loved one. Many of these families will also ask about organ donation. Most families derive comfort from the possibility of donation. In these cases the patient is taken to the operating room and prepped for donation. The surgical team scrubs and stands by until the patient is declared dead. At this time a physician not involved with the recovery of organs or the transplant of organs will disconnect life support from the patient.

When the patient's heart stops, the attending physician declares the patient dead and allows the recovery team to begin the procurement of organ(s). This procedure must be done very quickly because unlike the brain dead donor, blood supply to the organs has ceased. It is very important that the organs in these cases are cooled as quickly as possible to minimize warm ischemia time. Using this technique it is estimated that we could increase the number of available organs for transplant by as much as 10 to 15 percent.

# Nathan Littauer Hospital: Small Rural Hospital Experiences First Organ Donation

**I**N THE 108 YEARS that Nathan Littauer Hospital has served its community as the only hospital in Fulton County, the 124-bed facility had its first organ donor recently, thanks to a caring family.

“This reiterates that a smaller hospital can play just as important a role in donation as a larger medical center,” said Frank Taft, executive director of CDT. “I commend the medical professionals at Nathan Littauer who recognized that this patient could be an organ donor despite the fact that they had never had that experience before.”



**Lawrence Kelly, president and chief executive officer of Nathan Littauer Hospital, meets with Mary Weaver, Director of Nursing.**

Since organ donation can only occur as a result of a brain death, most cases occur at larger trauma centers, where patients who are inflicted with head trauma as a result of a motor vehicle or other accident are usually transported.

Being required by law to report each death to their local organ procurement organization under the Medicare Conditions of Participation rule, Nathan Littauer has held a consistent compliancy rate of 100 percent since 1998. This can be attributed in part to a unique audit system overseen by Mary Weaver, R.N., associate director of nursing.

On a monthly basis, Weaver meets with Joey Nuqui, the CDT coor-

dinator assigned to Nathan Littauer, to go over the hospital's death reports to ensure that each call was made. Staff are required to complete a peach-colored form indicating that CDT has been called. The colored forms are easily found in the patients' charts.

In addition, Nathan Littauer limits tissue requestor certification to the nursing supervisor management team.

“Knowing who is assigned to request makes it easier to keep a handle on things,” said Weaver.

Lawrence Kelly, president and chief executive officer of Nathan Littauer, credits Weaver with the hospital's excellent compliancy rates.

“The manner in which Mary assures that we comply with responsibilities related to regulation serves as a reminder and education to staff about donation,” said Kelly. “By her doing so, people become comfortable dealing with the situation.”

Kelly also attributes Weaver's compassionate way with families and her ability to recognize that through donation, some good can come out of a difficult situation such as the loss of a loved one, to the hospital's success with compliancy.

## Contact CDT if you desire to:

- **OBTAIN INFORMATION** pamphlets and donor cards
- **ENROLL** in the New York State Organ and Tissue Donor Registry
- **REQUEST SPEAKERS** for civic or professional groups

Call or write to:  
The Center for Donation and Transplant  
218 Great Oaks Boulevard  
Albany, New York 12203

(518) 262-5606 (800) 256-7811



Center for Donation & Transplant  
 218 Great Oaks Boulevard, Albany, New York 12203  
 Phone 518 262-5606, Fax 518 262-5427  
 P2301



**Upcoming Events**

- June 3 .....Re-Cycle for Life Ride**  
 Departs Seymour’s Motorized Sports, Latham, NY at 10 a.m.  
 for King Neptune’s Lounge, Lake George, NY
- June 26 .....Tissue Requestors Workshop**  
 Howard Johnson, Lake Placid, NY
- July 4-7 .....Gathering of the Vibes “Knowledge Tent”**  
 Mariaville, NY
- July 10 .....Tissue Requestors Workshop**  
 Location TBA, Binghamton, NY
- July 24 .....Tissue Requestors Workshop**  
 CDT Offices, Albany, NY
- July 31 .....Registered Nurse Advisory Council Meeting**  
 Location TBA, Albany, NY
- August 27 .....“Donor Awareness Night” with the Vermont Expos,**  
 Winooski, VT
- September 21 .....Adirondack “Spin”tacular Bike-A-Thon to Raise Awareness**  
 Mayfield Fairgrounds, Mayfield, NY

If you have questions about any of our upcoming events, please call Sue Cain at (800) 256-7811.