

Organ donation drive set for April 26

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Seventeen months ago, Colette Jordan was close to death from a hepatitis virus.

In the hospital, she had three goals: to dance at her oldest son's wedding, to take her daughter to a concert and to watch her other son pitch in a playoff game.

Thanks to an organ donor, Jordan has a new liver and has completed all her goals.

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Organ donation recipient Collete Jordan poses with donor awareness mascot Morgan D. Organ at a recent registration drive. Both will be at Jewel in Lisle on April 26 for Donor Awareness Day.

Courtesy of Collete Jordan

AT A GLANCE

What: Lisle Donor Awareness Day organ donor registration drive

When: 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. April 26

Where: Jewel, at Route 53 and Maple Avenue

How much: Free

On the Web: Become an organ donor online at www.donatelifellinois.org

"Every day I wake up and say thank you to my donor," she said.

Since recovering from the illness, Jordan has been giving back by making people aware of how to sign up to become organ donors.

Before 2006, signing the back of a driver's license was enough to register a person to become an organ donor, although family members could override that decision.

On Jan. 1, 2006, the organ and tissue donor program in Illinois was changed so that donors' wishes cannot be overridden. Under the new system, donors must register online or through registration drives, and those who signed up to be donors under the old system need to sign up again.

Lisle Mayor Joe Broda named April 26 as Lisle Donor Awareness Day, and to celebrate the occasion, Jordan, along with fellow transplant recipient Kim Carlson and Chris Seigars, whose father was an organ donor, are running an organ donor registration drive in front of the Jewel store at Route 53 and Maple Avenue.

"Everybody has a chance to be a hero," said Seigars, of Lisle.

Anyone who wishes to register at the drive should bring a state ID or driver's license. Donors must be at least 18 years old.

Patients often stay on waiting years lists for years to receive a transplant, and not everyone has that much time. In Illinois, more than 4,700 people are waiting for organ donations.

"This is one of the health problems that we can have control over," Jordan said.

This is the first Lisle Donor Awareness Day, but the organizers hope to make it an annual event.