

# MOUNT PROSPECT Local News



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## Life Saved From Another State

Mt. Prospect Woman In Need Of Transplant Receives Kidney From Wisconsin Man

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Journal Reporter

What would you do if your kidneys failed and you needed a transplant? Who would you ask? Where would you get it from?

Mt. Prospect resident Margaret McGlynn was faced with those very issues approximately three years ago after both her kidneys failed due to a rare disease called Membranoproliferative Glomerulonephritis (MPGN).

MPGN is a type of kidney disease usually leading to progressive kidney failure. It is caused by a large number of diseases and disorders and it usually presents protein in the urine (proteinuria) and/or kidney inflammation (nephritis).

McGlynn said approximately eight years ago at age 37, she began to feel ill. Around that time, she was told she had the rare kidney disease that children mostly suffer from, she said.

A transplant was needed to save her life. However, a match was difficult because her B-negative blood type was rare to find. Out of McGlynn's six siblings, her brother Roger had the only matching blood type.

On Mar. 30, 2005, the kidney transplant between her and her brother was held. However, six hours later a blood clot formed and the transplant was unsuccessful.

With the search for a donor continuing, McGlynn found a 25-year old man from Wisconsin named John who was married and had children. However, he was sick and close to passing away.

On Apr. 16, 2005, two weeks after the first operation was unsuccessful, McGlynn's second operation was a success. She now had a functioning kidney.

Since then, McGlynn has had some ups and downs with her health, and must take numerous medications for the rest of her life, but she said she feels "very fortunate."

She was admitted back into the hospital about a year ago after experiencing a rejection with her one kidney. She suffered a seizure, experienced high blood pressure and was put on a life support system for a short time.

Over the years, McGlynn has met and stayed in contact with John's family.

"I am very fortunate," said McGlynn. "It's very rare that a recipient gets to meet the donor's family. As soon as I left the hospital, I wrote to them saying thank you and then met them almost a year after the operation. There were definitely a lot of tears."

She said she also thought it might have been "fate" that she and John came together in this matter, because their two birthdays were separated by just eight days. She was born on July 10 and he was born on July 18.

Aside from John and his family, she said she owes many thanks and appreciation to her husband Sean and her son.

"My husband and I were just dating when I first became sick. He could have left, but he toughed it out with and for me," said McGlynn.

She also said her sickness was difficult on her son, who was 8 years old at the time her illness began.

"During that entire time, he kept up his grades and remained focused. Many children would use their parent being sick as an excuse," added McGlynn.

Today, McGlynn said she is doing much better, and remains in contact with John's family, because it's "important to have a network of friends," she said.

"I am very lucky to be alive and to not be on dialysis, like many people are," McGlynn mentioned. "I want to share my story with as many people as possible, because just when people think this can't happen to them, it does."

McGlynn said she has always been an organ donor and encourages everyone to sign up to save someone's life.

According to Jeff Slutz, coordinator for Donate Life Illinois, currently, more than 4,700 Illinois residents and 98,000 people nationwide are waiting for lifesaving transplants. In addition, he said more than 18 people die every day waiting for a second chance in life.

April is National Donate Life Month, and Donate Life Illinois is on a mission to remind Illinois residents about the need to re-register to join the state's new registry and ensure wishes as a donor are honored. April also marks the final month of Donate Life Illinois' initial statewide campaign to register 3.5 million residents in the state's new registry by the end of this month. Currently, more than 3.2 million residents have joined the new registry.

"Surpassing 3.5 million registration in just 18 months is a fantastic accomplishment, but there is still work to be done," said Dave Bosch, chairman of Donate Life Illinois. "There were over six million people signed up in the state's old donor intent registry which required additional witnesses for you to become a donor. If these people have not registered since Jan. 1, 2006, they need to re-register in the new registry to ensure their wishes as a donor are honored."