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Blood, organ donations keep hope alive



MARCIA SMITH

OUT AND ABOUT

I am not a giver. Well, I am not a donor. I have never given blood and I am not a registered organ donor. I am not even sure why I am not a donor, except that I may have had an irrational fear (or two) until I spoke to **Mary Schlereth** at the Kidney Foundation while I was out and about last week. I learned that there are 97,000 Americans in the U.S. awaiting organ transplants. Of them, 73,000 are waiting for a kidney. It's a six year

wait list to receive a kidney. In Illinois alone, 4,700 people are waiting for an organ. 3,000 of them are waiting on a kidney. I do not even want to imagine how many lives might be lost in a six year span due to lack of donors.

Thanks to my discussion with Schlereth, I learned that I may put too much faith in the television I watch. One important lesson was that in order for a person to be considered to be a donor, irrevocable brain death must occur. Once that has happened, a local organ procurement organization steps in. It has nothing to do with the doctor or nurse who cared for that patient. "There are so many misconceptions out there," said Schlereth. "People need to get factual information." www.giftofhope.org is a Web

site recommended by Schlereth. It's an organ and tissue donor network.

I met **Jenny Chesney** of Lake in the Hills months ago when I wrote about her life with juvenile arthritis. Since then, she and her family have been on a roller coaster ride with two new diagnoses. Jenny, has been diagnosed with an auto-immune disease called Glomerulonephritis as well as a skin disease. Right now, Jenny is taking an anti-rejection medicine in hopes that her body will not reject her kidneys. While Jenny's condition does not warrant a kidney donation at this time, her mother, Mary Chesney, feels that the more donors, the better everyone who is in need's chances are.

If you are asking yourself right now how you can help. I

have an answer. Sunday, October 28th, the Lake in the Hills Algonquin Falcons Football and Cheerleading Organization is hosting a Cheer for the Cure Blood Drive at the field house at Jacobs High School.

Julianne Dellert of Gilberts said that each year the organization arranges a day to give back to the community. Several families in the organization have been touched by cancer. Dellert said her dad passed away in April from Lymphoma and her husband has been diagnosed with Melanoma.

If you would like to donate blood or money to Cheer for the Cure, you may call Dellert at 847-841-1192 to set up a time to give on October 28th. You are also welcome to walk in any time between 8 a.m.-3 p.m. Donate Life Illinois will be at the field house between 11am and 3pm to register organ donors as well. All you need is your drivers license and be over 18-years-old to register. I hope to see you there.

If you have fun or interesting news about our Algonquin or Lake in the Hills residents, please contact Marcia Smith at Marciam2004@yahoo.com.

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