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# SHARING THE *gift*

A NEWSLETTER OF GIFT OF LIFE TRANSPLANT HOUSE VOLUME 5 | NO. 4 | FALL 2005

## Ben's Garden: Loss of a Young Life Helps Others "Feel Completely New"

AT A QUIANT HOUSE IN RED WING, MINNESOTA THAT ITS OWNERS AFFECTIONATELY CALL "BREATHLESS ACRES" THERE IS THE BEGINNING OF A BEAUTIFUL GARDEN. AS SUMMER PROGRESSES THE GARDEN WILL BE FILLED WITH WILDFLOWERS AND INCLUDE A ROCK ENGRAVED WITH "BEN'S GARDEN," NAMED FOR THE YOUNG MAN WHO SO GENEROUSLY GAVE THE GIFT OF LIFE SO THAT THE GARDEN'S OWNER – AND FOUR OTHERS –COULD LIVE. HUNDREDS OF MILES AWAY IN ROCHELLE, ILLINOIS, A SIMILAR GARDEN IS BEING PLANTED IN MEMORY OF THE SAME YOUNG MAN, A TESTAMENT TO THE LEGACY OF LIFE HE LEFT BEHIND. THE TWO GARDENERS, MARVIN JECH AND TERRY VON ASTEN, HAVE DEVELOPED A STRONG CONNECTION, BONDED BY THEIR COMMON EXPERIENCE AND THE GENEROSITY OF THEIR DONOR, BEN, AND HIS FAMILY.

Benjamin Lammon was a wonderful and generous young man. Described by his mother, Diane, as a go-getter and someone who was very special, Ben always had a hug or a handshake for everyone he met. As a child he was diagnosed with mild cerebral palsy, yet he never let his disability hold him back. "He did whatever he could," says Diane. "He enjoyed people. He was an avid newspaper reader and loved to talk about sports." In 10th grade Ben became manager of the girl's softball team at his high school. He was with the team until they graduated, and even received a varsity letter for his involvement – the first person with a disability to accomplish this at his high school.

Tragically, Ben died unexpectedly at age 26. A family discussion from two years earlier played in his parent's heads as they faced the difficult news that their youngest son had died – Ben thought organ donation was a good thing. "When another member of our family needed an organ transplant, he turned to me and said, 'Yeah, that sounds like a good idea, mom.'" reflects Diane. Knowing Ben's feelings made their decision easier, and prompted his parents to say yes to donation. Ben was able to give the gift of his kidneys, liver, heart and right lung. "Ben lost his life, but he helped others live. That's a wonderful thing," comments Diane.

Marvin Jech had been waiting for a lung transplant for almost a year and a half when he received the call that would save his life. Diagnosed with two co-existing lung conditions, he had been on oxygen twenty four hours a day, seven days a week since 1999. Though he was able to continue his job as a supervisor at a wastewater treatment plant up until his transplant, his quality of life was severely compromised. He would get winded performing routine tasks, and it was difficult to tote his oxygen tank everywhere he went. Immediately after transplant Marv felt healthier and was able to part with his oxygen tank. "It was a world of difference," he explains.

Terry was born with two rare genetic heart diseases, and struggled with his health all his life. Three years ago his health began deteriorating and he was forced to leave his job as assistant bakery manager in December of 2002. Shortly thereafter he was transferred to Mayo Clinic in Rochester, Minnesota, to be under the care of a cardiologist who specializes in one of his rare diseases. Based on his rapidly deteriorating health, his cardiologist recommended a heart transplant. He waited at Mayo Clinic for two months before he received the call that a heart was available for transplant—a call that came only hours before Marv's life-saving call. Immediately after transplant Terry could feel the difference. "I felt completely new. I never had a good heart before, and this one was so strong." Terry explains.

Marv, Terry and their wives first met prior to their transplants during their weekly heart-lung support group. Although they knew one another, their friendship really developed when they were transplanted on the same day and then deepened when they found out they received their gifts of life from the same generous young man – Ben. Both Marv and Terry had written letters to their donor's family through their transplant center and *LifeSource*, the non-profit organization that manages organ donation activities in the region. Around Christmas of 2003 both Marv and Terry received a card from their donor family. When their wives were on the phone they read it aloud to one another and realized they had received the exact same card, signed with the same first names. They were thrilled to realize their connection ran deeper than friendship and now refer to one another as brothers. They speak on the phone and e-mail one another regularly, and the two couples even went on a cruise together.

*Ben continued on page 2*

### *2005 Capital Campaign Renovations Near Completion!*

#### *The Little House Next Door*

The three bedroom 1900s L-shaped house directly adjacent to our parking lot is owned by Gift of Life, Inc. Historically, we have rented the house to doctors, residents, and nursing students but last year after our most recent tenants moved out, the house stood vacant. We were contemplating how the house would best suit our guests when the answer came to us.

During a house tour, a couple from Michigan mentioned that as wonderful as Gift of Life was it would be extremely difficult for them to stay a long stretch of time without their five young children. During their stay in Rochester, the little house next door became their own personal Gift of Life.

After their departure, the decision was made to renovate the house to provide additional rooms for guests returning for a visit to Mayo Clinic on a short-term basis.

The house, built in 1914 has all the charm of a bed and breakfast. It has beautiful woodwork and stained glass windows, yet is desperately in need of updating, repair, and TLC. The exterior requires window replacements, roof repair, and painting.



*A large tree is removed from behind the house, clearing room for a new storage garage.*

We are renovating the existing bath and installing two additional baths for our guests' comfort. The interior has been repainted, carpeted, and air conditioned. We are also in the process of furnishing the house.

Just last week while excavating the area directly behind the house, where the new storage garage will be constructed an unexpected challenge hit us. Rather, we hit it! A cistern that stored water for the Judd family years ago was still buried beneath the property. For safety purposes we had the top portion removed and the remaining hole filled with sand.

*renovations continued on page 2*



## President's letter

Dear Friends,

Gift of Life is proudly celebrating our 21st birthday.

2005 promises to be a historic year. This year more guests than ever will have called Gift of Life their "Home in Rochester." The growth in our occupancy is paralleling an impressive 20 percent increase in transplantation at Mayo Clinic.

Our home is such an important factor in transplant care that Mayo Clinic Jacksonville, Florida and Mayo Clinic Scottsdale, Arizona are both collaborating to develop their own transplant homes with the help of our Rochester Gift of Life founders and staff.

Earlier this spring under the leadership of Ron Kreinbring, ambitious improvement plans were implemented to open new guest rooms at the "714 House," construct new storage facilities, and repair the roof of the Judd House. All three projects are already nearly finished.



To fund these and future improvements our capital campaign, "Continuing the Dream", was launched. Mayo Foundation is generously matching our contributors' gifts. "Continuing the Dream" is off to a promising start. Thank you to those friends who have already contributed to the campaign.

This summer our annual Gift of Life Golf Tournament was a spectacular reunion. Our guest speaker, distinguished sportscaster and liver transplant recipient, Pat Summerall, gave an inspirational speech to all in attendance that beautiful day.

This fall we are hosting a second benefit event. The inaugural Gift of Life Wine Tasting is just around the corner. Save the date for a special evening on September 23rd.

Everyday, Gift of Life makes a difference in the lives and transplant experience of our guests. Our home and mission are blessed by you, our friends. Thank you for your interest, volunteerism, and generosity. It is a privilege to serve such an effective charitable organization.

Best wishes for good health and happiness for you and your family.

Thomas R. Schwab, M.D.,  
President  
Gift of Life Board of Directors

P.S. Please look for recent Sharing the Gift newsletters and the very latest news and announcements at [www.gift-of-life.org](http://www.gift-of-life.org), our Internet home.

## A PICNIC TO REMEMBER

Saturday, July 9th was a gloriously sunny day! A total of 330 transplant patients, families, caregivers, and volunteers gathered at Essex Park in Rochester, Minnesota, to celebrate life at the annual Transplant Picnic.

One of the attendees proudly announced that she had not missed a picnic in 18 years. Since its inauguration in 1987 the picnic has changed quite a bit. Originally for liver transplant patients only, the picnic has grown, along with the Mayo Clinic Transplant Center, and now includes all solid-organ and bone marrow transplant patients as well. The more the merrier!

There were lots of hugs, happy tears, and stories shared as old and new friends played horseshoes, learned magic tricks from Bob the magician, and enjoyed tunes spun by DJ Jeremy of *Complete Music* in Minneapolis.

Rochester's *Canadian Honker Restaurant* provided a fantastic spread of gourmet croissant sandwiches, pasta salad and desserts including Bunnie's famous coconut cake. Gift of Life shared in the fun, too, selling hats, T-shirts, and assorted Gift of Life items. Next time we'll remember the sunscreen.

Picnic goers were brought up to date with the incredible progress of the Transplant Center by Mark Litzow, M.D., section head of hematology. Dr. Litzow was joined by Jack Keller (a double lung transplant recipient just nine months ago), who spoke compellingly of lessons learned by his life-altering transplant experience. Jack urged listeners never to allow a few negative things in life outweigh the many positives. These are certainly words to live by.



(Top): Kidney donor Maria Christina Jackson;  
(Lower): Jack Keller (right) and friends

Ben continued

The idea for "Ben's Garden" was born when they received a card and some wildflower seeds from Diane in June of 2004. The enclosed card read "Please plant these in memory of Ben." Ben loved the outdoors, and would always pick wildflowers for his mother when he was out hunting or fishing with his father. Marv and Terry took their seeds to a nursery to get them started, and then replanted them in their garden when the seedlings were strong enough. They took pictures of the two of them with the seedlings and sent them to Ben's family, along with a description of what they had done. This year they plan on expanding their gardens as a way to keep Ben's memory alive and pay tribute to his family.

"I thank God every day that Mike and Diane had the courage to donate Ben's organs at such a terrible time in their life," says Marv. "I think about their family every day, and will be forever grateful and in their debt." Terry couldn't agree more. "I think about Mike and Diane a thousand times a day. 'Thank you' will never be enough."

"Ben's Garden" (©2005), is reprinted with permission from LifeSource, Upper Midwest Organ Procurement Organization, Inc. LifeSource is a not-for-profit, federally designated organization responsible for management of organ donation activities in North Dakota, South Dakota, Minnesota and portions of western Wisconsin. In addition, LifeSource manages a comprehensive tissue donation program.

renovations continued

The footings and foundation wall have been poured and we expect the building will be framed and shingled in the next three weeks. The main construction will be completed by the end of August with work progressing on the interior through October.

Sister Jane and her crew of contractors are doing a superb job attending to these projects in order to have them completed by the end of September so that we may open the house to our guests.

### Up on the Roof

Preserving a 94 year old building is not an easy task. Yet, work is progressing well at Gift of Life Transplant House. A major goal of this project is to make repairs without



Workers under way in the summer heat, replacing shingles, and repairing dormers to the House.

changing the appearance of our Home. The house currently stands with scaffolding on three sides. The roofers have removed and replaced the shingles on the sloping portion of the high roof. The siding company is replacing siding on the dormers, re-building the eyebrow roofs, and replacing the exterior trim, and the soffit of the main roof overhang. On the interior, workers are placing ventilation in the attic and installing deeper insulation.

We've overcome some challenges by replacing the deteriorated portions of the dormer fascia system and insulating previously inaccessible attic spaces. Fortunately, the structural wood framing and wood sheathing was found to be sound. The building will be much more energy efficient and will help shed the snow and ice of our Minnesota winters.

September 1st is our target date for completing this project. (It's time to give the grounds back to Sister Jane for her tender care.) The project team is satisfied knowing this work is making the building suitable to serve our guests, visitors, volunteers, and staff, many years into the future. The building's architecture is much appreciated in the neighborhood, and we aim to preserve it.

## Wish list

fall needs – thank you for your donations

- Paper products, including paper towels
- Kitchen towels & kitchen knives
- Anti-bacterial liquid dish soap, and liquid hand soap & refills
- Window cleaner & Vinegar
- Murphy's Oil soap
- Pine-Sol cleaner / disinfectant
- Light bulbs – 60 & 100 watt
- Plastic yard bags (for leaves & grass cuttings)
- New quartz alarm clocks / clock radios
- Holiday baked treats or dishes
- Wrapped candy & candy bars
- \$25 to cover a one night stay for a family in financial need
- Pop can tabs (please bag) – recycled proceeds help supply office equipment, or aid toward lodging costs for families in financial need
- Groceries, spices, and baking needs for "house" use
- Postage stamps for office use

## Words... Can They Change Your Life?

– By Barbara Schroeder, M.S., R.N., C.N.S., and Denise Stegall, Communications Manager

We live in a world where change is inevitable. Change can be unpredictable like the change in the weather to finding out one day that your spouse requires an organ transplant. At that moment, your life changes forever. You may be the sole caregiver for your spouse both pre- and post-transplant. You may not be able to change this reality, but you can be in charge of the way you live with this situation.

So how do you take charge of the situation? Sit in a peaceful place, quiet your mind and settle your thoughts. It helps to sit quietly for 20 minutes every morning and concentrate on your breathing. Are there negative thoughts? Concentrate on making them positive by using self talk affirmations.

What is self talk? The conversations you have with yourself each day is called self talk. It is crucial to become aware of your self talk in order to change it. Words have the power to move us, they can lift our spirits, inspire us, give us courage, and most of all change our lives.

What are affirmations? They are positive statements you say to yourself. Using positive statements can help change your thinking. There are five parts to a successful affirmation. First, it must be positive. Secondly, affirmations must be said with passion and power, with positive feelings, and with energy. They must be said in the present tense. They must be possible to achieve. Finally, affirmations must be personal.

How does this work? Write or say your affirmation faithfully 10 times daily for 21 consecutive days. It is generally accepted that it takes 21 days to effect any perceptible change. If you miss a day, you must start again.

It may take 21 days to completely make changes such as feeling confident as a caregiver. The good news is that you don't have to wait long to change how you feel about almost anything. The power of words can be yours in an instant.

Here are suggested affirmations that can be incredibly helpful:

1. *I have a positive and healthy attitude today.*
2. *I am taking care of myself, mentally, physically, and spiritually.*
3. *I am letting go of my entire struggle to change what I cannot change.*
4. *I have all the strength, support, and guidance I need to get through this situation.*
5. *I start each day with my gratitude list.*

In the course of each day, there are many things you cannot change and will not have control over. You can be positive by controlling your thoughts, monitoring your self talk, and using affirmations. Affirmations really work and the way to find out is to use them.

The following books can provide additional information:

*Change Almost Anything in 21 Days*, by Ruth Fishel; Health Communications, Inc., Deerfield Beach, 2003  
*Little Shifts*, by Suzanna Stinnett; Sourcebook, Inc., Naperville, 2004

# Start each day with a gratitude list.

***“If we don't praise him,  
the rocks will cry out.”*** LUKE 19:40

When I see a drip of water falling off  
of a mountain, roadside, or a  
waterfall, I am amazed, the rocks  
are crying!

Who isn't praying?

Is there someone I need to pray for?

Are the tears frozen?

Is it a light drip or a waterfall?

How many tears are there, is it a pool?

Is there road debris?

Is the area so remote that no one  
notices?

Are the rocks stained or have the  
tears worn a path on the face of  
the rock?

Have I praised Him today?

Are the rocks crying for me?

The tears are beautiful.

Should I be ashamed to see their  
beauty, especially in the  
glistening sun or in the stripes  
of a rainbow?

Does my life show praise?

My heart soars in praise.

My mind goes to infinite thoughts  
of these mountains  
and I find sweet peace.

I'm sure I will praise Him more...

Tomorrow

– Submitted by Pamela Lawson

### IN MEMORY OF A FRIEND



Dr. David J. Brandhagen  
September 29, 1963 – July 22, 2005

***Gift of Life Transplant House sadly announces  
Mayo Clinic Physician and Gift of Life Friend,  
Dr. David Brandhagen,  
died on July 22nd from injuries sustained  
in an automobile accident.***

***We extend our deepest sympathy to his wife, Jane,  
and their children, Kristen and Mitchell. Our sympathy  
is offered also to his parents, Jon and Joan,  
and to his brother, Robert.***

***Joan is a dedicated volunteer at Gift of Life.***

### STAFF PROFILE: Denise Stegall



*“This is the best job I've ever had,” says Denise Stegall, Communications and Volunteer Manager for Gift of Life Transplant House. She doesn't, in fact, regard the position as work. “It's something I do because I like to,” she says.*

*Thanksgiving, 2003 – and green beans sautéed in olive oil and garlic – marked the start of Denise's tenure at Gift of Life. She prepared the savory dish in response to an appeal for contributions to Thanksgiving dinner at the House. When she returned the following week to retrieve her dish, she filled out a volunteer application.*

*Naturally Gift of Life accepted her offer. “As time went on, I was spending more hours at the House and was thrilled when Sister Margeen and Sister Jane offered me a part-time position,” says Denise, who joined the staff in May, 2004.*

*A native of Long Island, New York, Denise graduated from Penn State University with a bachelor's degree in hotel, restaurant, and business management. She took a job with Eli Lilly Pharmaceuticals as sales representative for the company's new women's health team. “I was excited to have the opportunity to grow professionally,” she says. “It was an incredible learning experience, which exposed me to many personalities.”*

*Interesting as the job was, it was not a perfect fit, she says. “I took my sales experience and applied it to what I knew best – hospitality.” Starwood Hotels in Philadelphia offered her a position as director of catering. She coordinated events for as few as 12 people to as many as 3,000. Those Starwood occasions clearly succeeded; a recruiter for whom Denise had planned several special events soon recruited her!*

*Denise's new job as senior project manager at a medical communications company meshed her work experience and allowed her to enjoy one of her passions – traveling. “I love to travel and experience new places, activities, and people,” she says. “I've walked through umpteen museums, gone deep sea fishing, driven a dune buggy, and stayed in some of the most beautiful places in the world.”*

*In 2002, she met Dr. Mark Stegall, chair, division of transplantation surgery at Mayo Clinic in Rochester. Denise moved to Minnesota in January, 2003, and spent most of the year making long-distance plans for their wedding which took place in New York. “After the wedding,” she says, “I was sitting at home with literally nothing to do. I had NEVER been in that position before.” For Denise, lots of leisure held no allure so she chose to volunteer – and was soon sautéing green beans for Gift of Life's holiday feast.*

*“I believe everything I've done in the past has led me here,” Denise says; and beyond doubt, her background suits her job-she-says-isn't-a-job. Denise's responsibilities include: managing the newsletter, recruiting, scheduling, and training volunteers, organizing events, conducting guest intake interviews and house tours, and making presentations about Gift of Life to civic, church, and other groups.*

*In addition, because of her training and career experience, she serves on several Gift of Life committees including golf tournament, public relations, and development.*

*“I feel that I have found my niche in Rochester,” Denise says. “Guests say Gift of Life is a home away from home. It's become mine, as well. I feel loved here. I have a purpose. It's meaningful to me that I've done something to make somebody's day easier.”*

## Mental Health Vital Signs for Transplant Patients

Submitted by Sheila Jowsey, M.D.,  
Assistant Professor of Psychiatry,  
Mayo Clinic



Dr. Sheila Jowsey

**TRANSPLANTATION IS AN EXPERIENCE SIMILAR TO TRAINING FOR A MARATHON. THERE ARE MANY STEPS DOWN A LONG, SOMETIMES DIFFICULT ROAD, BUT THE REWARDS CAN BE GREAT AT THE END.** Patients needing a transplant undergo a full week of medical appointments and tests followed by the much anticipated meeting of the transplant team to determine if transplantation is the right medical option. Patients often say that this experience is “like a marathon”, but they really are only beginning a process that may extend over years. The waiting period, the surgery or bone or stem cell transplant and the recovery are all part of the experience. Good mental health preparation can make a significant difference to the quality of life you have while waiting.

**MANY PATIENTS SAY “WOULDN’T ANYONE BE DEPRESSED IF HE/SHE NEEDED A TRANSPLANT?” FORTUNATELY, THE ANSWER IS “NO”.** It is possible to be patient, persistent, and positive while waiting for transplantation. Patients develop strong coping abilities that allow them to be resilient despite severe medical problems. It is true that medically ill patients are at higher risk for developing Major Depression, a clinical syndrome lasting for weeks or months. Major Depression is characterized by daily “down” or depressed mood, sleep and appetite disturbance, decreased concentration, loss of enjoyment in life, and sometimes thoughts associated with suicide. The good news is that Major Depression is very treatable. If you think you have symptoms of depression, tell your doctor, who may prescribe an antidepressant or refer you for counseling or may recommend both.

**ANOTHER COMMON PROBLEM FOR TRANSPLANT PATIENTS IS ANXIETY, ESPECIALLY DURING THE EVALUATION PROCESS AND WHILE ON THE WAITING LIST.** While mild anxiety about medical procedures and appointments is to be expected, some patients feel so anxious that they dread coming to Mayo Clinic or will feel extremely anxious during tests. One form of anxiety, panic attacks, is so severe that patients will think they are going crazy or are going to lose control of themselves. Some medical conditions put patients at higher risk for anxiety. Patients with shortness of breath or who have implanted defibrillators may be at increased risk. Fortunately, treatments exist which can be very helpful. Psychological strategies can be used to target anxiety symptoms. Medications are also very helpful.

### Coping Strategies:

1. **Make healthy living a top priority** – Everyday, do what you can to take care of yourself by eating right, getting a good night's sleep, and avoiding alcohol or other harmful substances. Exercise, according to your doctor's guidelines, so that you are as healthy as possible at the time of transplant. Actively follow your doctor's recommendations and find ways to make taking your medication a routine part of your day.
2. **Find a buddy** – Patients who do well usually have someone who is partnering with them in solving problems, helping with tasks, and being a sympathetic listener. Often a partner, usually the patient's spouse, will also be able to listen to complex medical information and help the patient consider how best to proceed. Their encouragement and support are crucial during those times when life feels overwhelming.
3. **Recruit a back-up team** – Often the tasks that face a transplant patient and his/her spouse or family are more than he/she can handle. This is especially true when you are away from home or are too ill to get out of your home. This is when friends will lend a helping hand. They can also help remind you that life exists outside the hospital, and they can keep you connected to your home community. Sometimes they can just be there to share the “ups and downs” with you.
4. **Find meaning in what is happening to you** – It is hard to understand why severe health problems have happened to you. Some patients turn to their religious faith to help them understand how suffering fits into their life story. Marcus Aurelius, a Roman philosopher, wrote about the meaning of suffering over a thousand years ago. Doctors who work with patients with terminal illnesses hear how patients have grown through their experiences of suffering. Suffering and the fear of death become tangible for patients with serious medical illnesses. Patients who accept this as part of their life story feel less overwhelmed and may be more psychologically resilient.

### Frequently Asked Questions:

- Q. If I have depression or anxiety, will I become addicted to the medication that is prescribed?**  
A. The medications used for depression are not addictive. Some antidepressants are also effective for certain anxiety conditions. Some anti-anxiety medications can be addictive if used daily for many weeks. Your medical team and the Transplant Psychiatry team can help you choose the best option for you.
- Q. If I tell the transplant team that I have depression or anxiety, will that mean I am not a good candidate for a transplant?**  
A. Depression and anxiety are very common in patients who need transplants and can be well treated in patients who are waiting for transplant and for patients who have had a transplant.
- Q. Will the medication for depression or anxiety interfere with other medications that I am taking?**  
A. Usually, patients can tolerate the medications for depression and anxiety without significant drug interactions. St. John's Wort, an herbal substance sometimes used in the past for depression, has serious drug interactions with immunosuppressant medications and should be avoided in transplant patients.
- Q. What about the caregiver?**  
A. Spouses and other supporters of the transplant patient can experience significant distress and anxiety, too. If they notice symptoms of depression or anxiety, they should talk to their doctor or let the transplant team know so that a referral can be arranged.
- Q. Will going to the support group help me?**  
A. Yes. It is hard to know what someone else is going through, but patients in a support group come close to being able to relate. Often, they can provide useful ideas about how to cope. Seeing someone who is doing well after a transplant can help you see beyond the difficulties of the pre-transplant period to the possibilities that exist after transplantation.
- Q. I feel badly that someone has to die so that I can receive an organ. What can I do about those feelings?**  
A. Many patients worry about hoping for a transplant and somehow this resulting in an accident that causes someone else to die. Everyone will die someday and patients who receive an organ are simply respecting the deceased donor's wishes about the use of his/her organs. There is no connection between you needing a transplant and someone else dying at a particular time.

## Believe. Protect. Reach Out.

### Caring Every Day: November is National Family Caregivers Month

– Reprinted with permission from the  
National Family Caregivers Association

**National Family Caregivers Month (NFC Month)** – observed every November – is a nationally recognized month that seeks to draw attention to the many challenges facing family caregivers, advocate for stronger public policy to address family caregiving issues, and raise awareness about community programs that support family caregivers. NFC Month is a time to thank, support, educate, and celebrate more than 50 million family caregivers across the country.

This November, NFCA will introduce a new theme for NFC Month: “**Caring Every Day.**” This theme corresponds with a new campaign from NFCA, “**The Caring Every Day Campaign.**” The Caring Every Day Campaign encourages family caregivers to take three steps every day to make their lives easier, improve care, and raise awareness about their continued love and commitment.

The three steps include:

- Believe in Yourself.
- Protect Your Health.
- Reach Out for Help.

To celebrate National Family Caregivers Month the Mayo Clinic 10th floor transplant nurses will provide a House dinner in early November, for all patients and caregivers staying at Gift of Life.

## FORE! – By Denise Stegall, Communications Manager

Monica Kirk, of Auburn, Washington, watched from the clubhouse patio as her husband, Kevin, teed off at the 21st annual Gift of Life Transplant House Golf Tournament. What was remarkable about that tee shot was not its distance or accuracy but rather the fact that Kevin is a liver transplant recipient.

In 2001, a few months after his transplant, Kevin watched the tournament and vowed he'd play in it. This year's tournament was his third. He now coordinates his yearly checkup with the tournament. "He's doing fine," Monica says. "And so is his golf game. Every year his tournament score improves."

In past years, Monica walked along as Kevin played, but not this year. With the temperatures soaring into the 90's, occasional escapes into the air-conditioned clubhouse had more appeal. Cooling off wasn't a luxury for the 140 golfers who played in this year's tournament in support of Gift of Life.

John Fitzpatrick of Anaheim, California, and Tom Dube of Rochester, Minnesota, donated their talents with the camera. As golfers shot golf, Tom and John shot photos. John, of *Lights Camera Reaction!* digital photography, who flew in as a favor to his friend, Sister Margeen, waited at the first tee and took pictures of each group of golfers. Meanwhile, Tom Dube, of *A Memorable Experience Photography* covered the course, taking snapshots from a golf cart. Tom's son, John, who drove the cart for his dad "had a blast!" said Joyce Overman Dube, John's mother and Tom's wife, and a member of the Gift of Life board of directors.

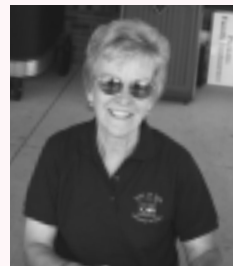
After the tournament, golfers, friends, and Gift of Life family enjoyed cocktails and hors d'oeuvres while perusing the displayed silent auction items. Notre Dame football, Timberwolves basketball, and Twins baseball tickets were among the high end items up for grabs.

Once everyone was comfortably seated in the dining room, the top two winning teams in each flight were awarded their prizes. First flight, first place winners were: Glenn Stafford, Jason Vandervest, Brian Fredrickson, Andy Robarge and Kathy Drudick. Second flight, first place winners were: Audrey Betcher, Dean Wilson, Clint Ernst, Greg Smith, and John Brockman.

This year's American Airlines raffle winner was Yvonne Sterioff. Yvonne is the proud owner of two tickets to any American Airlines destination in the continental U.S., the Caribbean, or Mexico. Adios, Yvonne!

Our guest speaker for the evening was award winning broadcaster and sports icon, Pat Summerall. Pat, who had a liver transplant at Mayo Jacksonville in the spring of 2004, expressed that he was, "Overcome with gratitude for being asked to do this."

Life in broadcasting, Pat says, was "so good – too good!" The result of this lifestyle was alcoholism. After family and friends called an intervention, Pat checked into the Betty Ford Center. "I was full of anger at those friends. Great respect for all of them, but I was angry." Pat's first five days at Betty Ford didn't count because of that anger and he ended up spending 33 days there instead of the suggested 28 days.



Photos by Tom Dube of A Memorable Experience Photography, with help from son John (clockwise from top left): Minnesota Vikings cheerleaders; Mark Powers and friend; Sister Jane; Keith and Jan Larson, Kathy Monet, and Bob Shively

That was 14 years ago and he hasn't had a drink since. Two weeks after returning home from the Betty Ford Center, he was baptized. "The act of baptism had a big effect. I felt like I knew what it was like to be reborn."

Unfortunately, years of drinking had damaged his liver, and even though he'd quit, doctors explained the damage would progress and someday he'd need a transplant. They were right. As his health deteriorated, he investigated several transplant centers and ended up at Mayo Jacksonville. "When I got the liver transplant in Jacksonville, my family wanted to be with me. The accommodations were terribly expensive, especially at that time of year." He was impressed by the homey and comfortable feel our accommodations provide. "I'm overcome by what you've done," Pat said after touring the Gift of Life Transplant House.

Since his transplant Pat feels that God isn't through with him. "Whatever Christ has in mind for me, I want to do it. I want to do it all. What does He want me to do? Maybe it's something like this," Pat says, referring to his presentation at the Gift of Life annual fundraiser.

As if one sports icon wasn't exciting enough for an evening we were privileged to have two. Last year's speaker, former San Francisco 49ers tight-end and kidney transplant recipient, Keith Farnhorst, returned this year to join in the fun. "Somebody asked me to come again this year. I do everything I can to help because I've been so blessed," Keith said. He and pal Pat Summerall chatted, had their pictures taken together, and mingled among the 270 guests attending dinner.

Special thanks to our many dedicated sponsors who, without their continued support, we would be unable to succeed in our mission. We also extend our gratitude to those who donated items for the silent auction, to the tournament organizers and volunteers, and to the Rochester Golf & Country Club. Your combined efforts helped us raise over \$30,000.



We would like to extend a very special thank you to John Fitzpatrick of Lights Camera Reaction! John, a former student of Gift of Life executive director Sister Margeen Hoffmann, flew from California to donate his time and expertise to provide digital photographs for the 21st annual Gift of Life Golf Tournament. Event pictures can be viewed via the internet by logging onto [lightscamera-reaction.com](http://lightscamera-reaction.com). Pictures taken at the tournament and dinner can be ordered directly from the website.

A few of John's photos are featured at the left (left to right): our tournament winners; Keith Farnhorst and Pat Summerall; and John Fitzpatrick with Sister Margeen.

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It's never too early to start your **Holiday Shopping!**

*"A World of Delights"*

ANNOUNCING GIFT OF LIFE TRANSPLANT HOUSE'S 10TH ANNUAL HOLIDAY GIFT BOUTIQUE FEATURING MARY KAY GIFT ITEMS

From December 10th – 21st, order your Mary Kay beauty products and gift items from Margie Balint, sister of our executive director, Sister Margeen Hoffmann, O.S.F. A percentage of the proceeds will be donated to Gift of Life Transplant House!

**HOW TO SHOP**

- If you live nearby, come to our *Holiday Gift Boutique and Open House* on Saturday, December 10th, 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., or Sunday, December 11th, 1:00 to 6:00 p.m.
- Margie will offer free facials at 2 p.m. Saturday and Sunday
- Order on Margie's web site: [www.marykay.com/mbalint](http://www.marykay.com/mbalint)\*
- E-mail her personally at [mbalint68@aol.com](mailto:mbalint68@aol.com)\*
- Call her toll-free, 800-453-6027 (PIN 0822).\*

This is the tenth year we've partnered with Margie on this Open House. Dozens of women have enjoyed the facials; men and women alike have sampled new products and scents. The House will be decked out for the holidays, so we hope you will stop in and benefit Gift of Life with your holiday shopping!

\* Be sure to mention Gift of Life when ordering via telephone or internet!



**HONORING OUR BENEFACTORS**

By donating to the Gift of Life Transplant House our benefactors help fulfill our mission every day. In appreciation we display a few words of honor on our elegant Benefactors' Wall, which includes the following

**LEVELS OF GIVING:**

- \$100,000.00 – \$250,000.00+ Edward P. Pompeian Founder Gifts
- \$ 50,000.00 – \$ 99,999.99 Sustaining Gifts
- \$ 25,000.00 – \$ 49,999.99 Legacy Gifts
- \$ 10,000.00 – \$ 24,999.99 Vision Gifts
- \$ 5,000.00 – \$ 9,999.99 Leadership Gifts
- \$ 2,500.00 – \$ 4,999.99 Tribute Gifts

*a taste for life*

CELEBRATE LIFE'S GOOD SPIRITS AT THE GIFT OF LIFE

**WINE AND BEER TASTING**

FEATURING

SPECIALLY CHOSEN WINES PAIRED WITH A LITE FARE  
SILENT AUCTION  
HIGHLIGHTED BY A TAHITIAN BLACK PEARL SET WITH DIAMONDS

**Friday, September 23rd, 2005**

Mayo Civic Center Grand Ballroom, Rochester, Minnesota

**6:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m.**

**Reserve Tickets by September 15th**

*Gift of Life Transplant House thanks*

*US Bank, our Gold Level Sponsor, our Silver Sponsors, and our major contributors.*



GIFT OF LIFE TRANSPLANT HOUSE **"A TASTE FOR LIFE"** WINE AND FOOD PAIRING

Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Please reserve \_\_\_\_\_ ticket(s) at \$40 per person

Please reserve \_\_\_\_\_ Group Rate (10) tickets at \$360 per group

Regrets that I/we are unable to attend. Enclosed is my/our donation of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ made out to the "Gift of Life Transplant House 2005 Capital Campaign".

Call Gift of Life for ticket information. Tickets may be reserved by mailing a check or calling between 10 a.m. - 4 p.m., Monday-Friday, with a credit card. Reserved tickets will be held at the Grand Ballroom.

**Please respond by September 15th.**

*Gift of Life Transplant House • 705 Second St., SW • Rochester, Minnesota 55902 • 507-288-7470*

**GIFT OF LIFE TRANSPLANT HOUSE MISSION STATEMENT**

*The mission of Gift of Life Transplant House is to provide transplant patients and their caregivers with high quality, affordable accommodations in a supportive, home-like environment.*

*Gift of Life Transplant House is a proud member of*



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