

Raising organ donation awareness on 6-month anniversary of transplant

By Patricia Villers

Anniversaries can evoke happy and sad memories. Thursday was a happy anniversary for me.

Six months ago I received a gift that has improved my life immeasurably: a kidney.

I can't thank my altruistic donor, Robin Gilmartin of West Hartford, enough for giving a healthy kidney to an anonymous recipient - me.

We had our surgeries on May 9. Little did we know that we were the start of an historic 18-person kidney chain - nine donors and nine recipients - at Yale-New Haven Hospital. Surgeries were performed in May and June.

I also must give a huge shout-out to Ralph's sister, Suzanne Watson, who, as it turned out, initiated the chain of events.

She was tested to be a donor - driving the three-plus hours from her home in New Hampshire to Yale-New Haven Hospital several times - and amazingly she was a match for me.

That was a godsend.

I knew I would be getting a kidney to do the job that my own kidneys - riddled with cysts from inherited Polycystic Kidney Disease - could no longer do well.

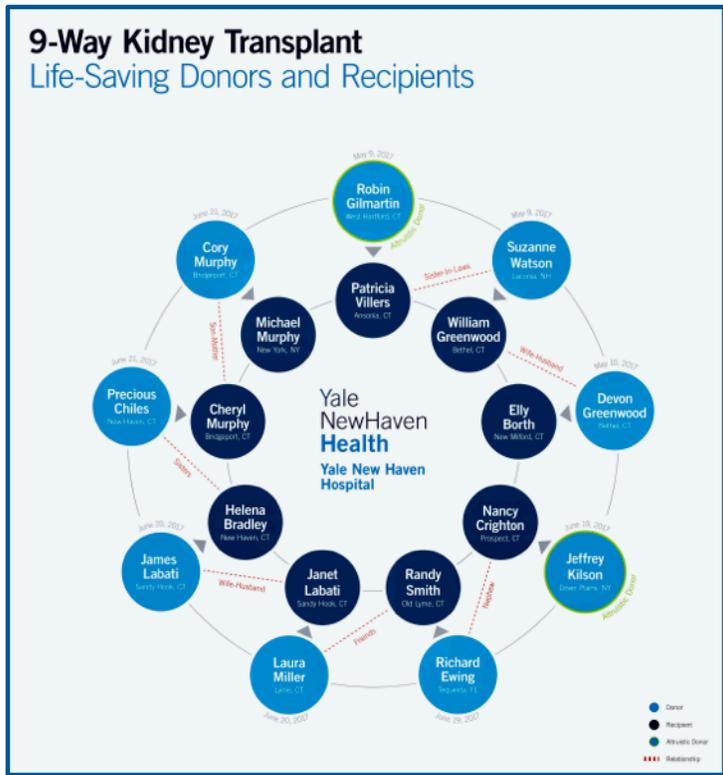
We soon learned Sue's kidney was found to be a better match for another person, who turned out to be Bethel resident William Greenwood.

I was asked if I'd agree to allow Sue's kidney be given to someone else, as long as there was one to give to me. I immediately signed the required document, and the surgeries were scheduled.

As I wrote on my blog, the waiting was the hardest part. I wasn't at all worried about the looming operation, just anxious to have it done.

In addition to being unable to thank Suzanne and Robin enough for their altruism, I also cannot thank enough the health professionals who have treated me. The experience has been a blessing.

I've written about my transplant many times before, and will continue to do so. Raising awareness of organ donation is vital to save the lives of so many people waiting to get a second chance at life.



THE AMERICAN LEGION Thank you to all who served

Post 16 saluting our military veterans of all wars and periods
this November 11 - and every day. Thank you for serving
America with honor, courage and commitment.

Services will be held at Veterans Park
on the Riverwalk in Shelton at 10:30



Shelton dentist, family collect holiday food for Spooner House

By Patricia Villers

SHELTON - A 31-year Thanksgiving tradition continued Thursday as Dr. Bruce Sofferman, his wife, Deborah, and their daughter, Sophia, collected frozen turkeys and non-perishable foods for Spooner House.

As in the past, the couple was dressed in Pilgrim garb, while Sophia wore a Native American costume. They were accompanied by a turkey mascot. The man behind the costume was Brendan Carey of the Shelton Grow Group.

The drive was held outside of 1000 Bridgeport Ave., where Sofferman's Smile Dental Center is located. Spooner House homeless shelter and food bank, at 30 Todd Road, is operated by Area Congregations Together.

The family waved to a steady stream of motorists passing by the driveway entrance.

Deborah Sofferman said even if a driver doesn't stop to donate

food or money, "we are helping to raise consciousness" about the need. "The seed is planted," she said, and those who see them will think about giving to a food drive in the future.

Derby resident Bob Laccone, a member of Knights of Columbus Council 10537 at Holy Rosary Church in Ansonia and his wife, Sharon, stopped by with donations.

Laccone said, "This is beautiful, and what mankind should do for each other. My purpose is to be able to give."

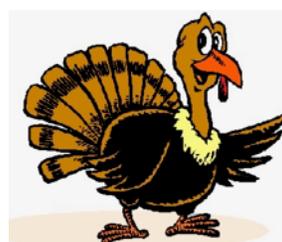


FREE! COMMUNITY THANKSGIVING DINNER

Presented by Master's Table Community Meals

Assumption Church
61 N Cliff St, Ansonia CT
1:00 pm – 3:00 pm
Sunday November 19, 2017

Everyone is welcome to join us for a fabulous traditional spread.



For more information contact Master's Table community meals at 203-732-7792 or www.masterstablemeals.org or masterstablect@gmail.com.