



Serenity

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National Donor Sabbath November 11-13

National Donor Sabbath is a weekend designated by the federal government for faith communities and clergy to share with their congregations the importance of organ, tissue and eye donation. It is observed two weekends before Thanksgiving as members of faith communities focus on the life-affirming gifts of organ, eye, tissue, marrow and blood donors. Many faith leaders participate in services and programs to educate their congregations about the critical need for donors.

Has your house of worship participated in National Donor Sabbath? MTN has an extensive group of volunteers who will be happy to come out and assist with a Donor Sabbath program and share his/her story. You may want to share your own story about why organ and tissue donation is important to you. Please ask your religious leader to contact MTN's Community Education Department at 913-262-1668 for a Donor Sabbath Clergy Manual and materials. Call today to find out how you can help.



Midwest Transplant Network invites you to attend its Donor Family Workshop and Celebration of Heroes

(Formerly MTN's Gift of Life Memorial Service)

Saturday, November 19, 2011
Leawood United Methodist Church
2915 West 95th Street • Leawood, Kansas

Workshop 10 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. • Celebration of Heroes 1 p.m.

Workshop

Harold Ivan Smith, wordsmith, storyteller and local grief educator, will lead the morning workshop discussing "**Nexting: An Agenda After the Unthinkable Has Happened to You!**" Often griever ask "Why?" of themselves, God, doctors, friends and experts. But the question refuses answers. A different question is: "Now what? Now what do I do with what has happened to me?" Writing the next chapter requires strength some never suspected they possess. After you become hoarse asking, "Why?" we can try, "Now what?"

A video presentation, "A Ray of Hope: Facing the Holidays Following a Loss," featuring Paul Alexander, psychotherapist, bereavement specialist and singer/songwriter, will round out the morning. The entire workshop is geared to an adult audience, and there will be no child care provided. A box lunch will be served for all workshop participants.

**To RSVP for the workshop and/or
Celebration of Heroes, please return the
enclosed card to MTN by Friday, November 11.**

MIDWEST TRANSPLANT NETWORK

MISSION

Together, we save lives through organ and tissue donation.

VISION

That the treatment of disease and suffering not be limited by the lack of transplantable organs and tissues.

Celebration of Heroes

Please join us in the afternoon as MTN celebrates and honors those who have given gifts of life through organ, tissue and eye donation at its Celebration of Heroes.

As always a video tribute to these heroes will highlight the celebration. If you have submitted a photo in the past, it will be included in this year's tribute. If you have not and wish to share a photo of your loved one, please send a high-quality photo no larger than 5x7 and release form* to Midwest Transplant Network no later than **Monday, November 7**. Please be sure to provide your loved one's name and date of donation, your name and return address. All photos will be returned following the service. Your photo may also be submitted by email to info@mwtm.org. Please be sure to provide the same vital information in order for your photo to be included.

*A photo release can be obtained by calling Sherry Martin at 913-261-6182.

MTN's biannual Quilt Pinning will also take place at the celebration. If you wish to create a quilt square to honor your loved one you may bring it that day and pin it on the quilt, or send it to Midwest Transplant Donor Family Quilt. A quilt release form must be included with either. For information on how to create a square or to obtain the required quilt release form go to www.mwtm.org or call Sherry Martin at 913-261-6182.

DEALING WITH THE HOLIDAYS

Ask anyone who has suffered the loss of a loved one, and they will most likely tell you the holiday season is a particularly challenging time of year. With this thought in mind, Midwest Transplant Network reached out to some donor families who have experienced at least one holiday season since the death of their loved one. The following is a collection of their reflections and suggestions on what may be helpful for you as the holidays approach. It is our hope you will be inspired by their thoughts and know that you, too, can experience a peaceful, albeit different, holiday season.

Be nice to yourself and to other grieving family members and friends. Everyone needs their own time to grieve. We all grieve differently.

Can't imagine fixing a big dinner? Have pizza.

Encourage family and friends to talk about your loved one. Don't expect friends or even family members to know how much we want to "hear" our loved ones' names spoken.

Take deep breaths as needed. Whether you are at the point in your journey of living minute to minute, hour to hour or day to day...recognize the gains you have made. Remember, our loved ones will always be in our hearts and minds.

~ Kathy, Darrick's mother, Lexington, MO

The only decorations I put out were some that Clint had made for me when he was in Kindergarten, 1st and 2nd grade. I don't think my family and friends knew how important they were. It always made me feel better when someone would mention his name or talk about him, I knew they were remembering him.

~ Ann, Clint's mother, Jefferson City, MO

Andy was the tallest in the family, so he was always the one who put the angel on the tree. The first Christmas I thought I could put the tree up, but it got really hard. I put the artificial tree up, but that was only thing I could do. It did not seem right. Who would put the angel on the tree? So it turned into Andy's tree. His goalie gloves, his drum sticks, his soccer scarf from Germany, things he brought back from Europe when he studied abroad, his work nametag, and to top the tree that year instead of an angel, we put his cowboy hat on top. I think this made it easier for everyone that came by – they knew that we wanted to talk about Andy. Many stories were told that Christmas. Many tears, but that was OK, too.

~ Linda, Andy's mother, Olathe KS

The hardest thing for me was remembering that "normal" had changed and that if I decided to hibernate that would be OK. I truly hope folks just go easy on themselves; holiday seasons are typically stressful times – and sadness and grief just make it that much more stressful.

~ Barbette, Doug's mother, Kansas City, MO

Tell your family not to expect anything out of you...you might come to the family celebration; you might not. You may be able to control your emotions; you may not.

If it feels right, do something special in memory of your loved one: light a candle, say a prayer, ask everyone in the family to write down a favorite memory, and then share them aloud together, buy a gift from an angel tree in your loved one's memory.

There is no right or wrong way...whatever works for you in that moment is the thing to do...there is no manual on how to get through this thing we call grief!

~ Kay, Bryan's mother, Olathe, KS

We always hang Bill's Christmas sock, and then we each write a memory, put it in the sock, and then we read them aloud at some point Christmas Day.

~ Diana, Bill's wife, Wichita, KS

Our first holiday, we chose to go away with just our immediate family. It was a special time for all of us together. It made it easier to face the holidays, and we had something to look forward to, as we'd made special plans.

~ Julie, Denton's mother, Liberty, MO

Christmastime was one of Robbie's favorites. We hang his stocking on the fireplace along with all the others, but his is filled with scratch-off lottery tickets (\$1.00 kind), enough for everyone who is there celebrating with us. Some win, most lose, but we remember Robbie each year with this tribute. While everyone is scratching their tickets, we talk about him and remember.

~ Paul, Robbie's father, Wichita, KS

When we lost my son, Pat, last summer, I could not even think about Thanksgiving without him. It was his favorite holiday, and just thinking about it hurt. I did something completely different. I helped cook and serve a Thanksgiving brunch for the homeless. Focusing on their need helped me cope with what would have been an otherwise unbearable day for me. Pat would have approved. We hung his stocking at Christmas and set a place for him at the table. He is MIA but always in our hearts. Love doesn't end with death.

~ Elisabeth, Pat's mother, Overland Park, KS

Heroes

HONOR YOUR LOVED ONE ON THE 2012 ROSE PARADE DONATE LIFE FLOAT



On January 2, 2012, transplant recipients, living donors and family members of deceased donors will join together in Pasadena, California to honor the preciousness of **...One More**

Day on the ninth Donate Life Rose Parade Float entry. The float is a partnership of more than 100 organizations dedicated to inspiring people to save and heal lives through the donation of organs, eyes and tissue.

This year's float design was inspired by floral clocks and clock towers from around the world and will once again include the Donate Life Float Dedication Garden. This area of the float offers all people touched by organ and tissue donation the opportunity to honor loved ones by dedicating a rose tagged with a personal message. Each rose, bearing a vial along with a personal message honoring a loved one, is then placed in the Dedication Garden on the **Donate Life Rose Parade Float**. Each holiday season, Donate Life's annual float entry in the Rose Parade inspires tens of millions of people nationwide to save lives as organ and tissue donors.

A rose is a symbol of love, loss and renewal. It represents something different to every family; to some it is a symbol of hope, to others it is an expression of grief, and to still others it is an offering of gratitude. Anyone who has been touched by donation and transplantation can dedicate a rose on the Donate Life Rose Parade Float. The rose will bear the name of someone who has given, received, awaits or died while waiting for the gift of life.

To dedicate your Donate Life Rose go to www.donatelifefloat.org or call Midwest Transplant Network for an order form.



A rose dedicated to a local donor hero, Melissa Gieselman, on the 2011 Donate Life Rose Parade Float.

2012 DONOR FAMILY PICNIC



MTN CEO, Rob Linderer welcomes donor families.

On August 27, more than 300 donor family members, friends, MTN Ambassadors and staff gathered at Faulkner's Ranch in Raytown, Missouri for an afternoon of fun and fellowship. Some enjoyed pony rides and the bounce houses while others were busy at the fishing hole or in the petting farm. A highlight of the afternoon for many was the opportunity to make a photo button commemorating the life of their loved one. A delicious barbeque dinner was enjoyed by all. The balloon toss, tug-of-war and musical chairs topped off a wonderful summer afternoon at the ranch! It was a great day of camaraderie for the families, recipients and friends attending.

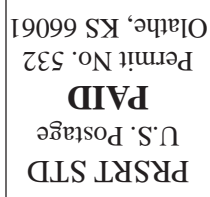


CONTACT US:

Follow MTN on Twitter at @MwTransplant
"like" us at Facebook.com/MidwestTransplantNetwork
For more information or questions call
913.262.1668 or visit www.mwtn.org

Donor Family Services Staff

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Serenity

Amos Family Funeral Home: “Handling the Holidays” Seminar, Saturday, November 5

The Amos Family Funeral Home is hosting a “Handling the Holidays[®]” seminar on Saturday, November 5, from 2 – 4 p.m. at The Amos Family Chapel of Shawnee, 10901 Johnson Drive, Shawnee, KS. This two-hour program was developed by Darcie D. Sims, PhD, president of Grief, Inc., a national grief consulting business. Sims, a grief management counselor and author, has been presenting programs on grief issues for more than 20 years. “Handling the Holidays[®]” is designed to provide information about the grieving process and offer practical ideas about how to “get through” the holidays and the special days that occur during the year. Please make a reservation by calling 913-631-5566 or by e-mail to mark@amosfamily.com.

The Compassionate Friends: Worldwide Candle Lighting[®], Sunday, December 12

The Compassionate Friends 14th Annual Worldwide Candle Lighting will be Sunday, December 12. This annual event during the holiday season remembers all children who have died. It is officially held at 7 p.m. local time for one hour, although some services are held throughout the day. Last year nearly 530 services open to the public were held in all 50 states, plus Washington D.C. and Puerto Rico and at least 15 countries around the world. The event is believed to be the world’s largest mass candle lighting. The Compassionate Friends organization has united with sister groups, funeral homes, churches, hospitals, hospices and community groups around the world to celebrate this annual day of remembrance.

For more information on local Worldwide Candle Lighting activities go to www.thecompassionatefriends.org or call Barb Starr at 816-229-2640.