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17th World Transplant Games: Gold Coast, Australia
Photos and stories from the games

Canadian Transplant Association

Vincent’s Story
Waiting for a Kidney

Celebrating a Milestone
Margaret Benson turns “50” and is proud of it

The Trip of a Lifetime
14 States, 7120km in 13 days

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turns “50” and is proud of it

www.organ-donation-works.org

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MEMBERSHIP FEES

One Year Individual Membership $30.00
Two Year Individual Membership $50.00
Lifetime Individual Membership $300.00
One Year Family Membership $75.00

A family membership will include all related adults and children who live at the same address.

For regional reports and other interesting articles check out “The Members Corner” on our website www.organ-donation-works.org (under About CTA).

President’s Corner

David Smith, Kidney Recipient, Edmonton, AB

As the summer of 2009 has now come to an end, there are 150 transplant recipients, family and friends who have just returned from the 17th World Transplant Games, which were held on the beautiful Gold Coast of Australia.

For some, this experience is something that has drawn them back time and again, to participate in the world’s largest organ and tissue donor awareness event; for others they are finding out for the first time what makes the games so special.

For the first time participants, they come with many questions; how do I get there, who might the competition be, are they faster than me, what if I forget how to swim, will I make friends and have fun?

This is where having a special team manager like Rosie McHugh comes in. Rosie has spent countless hours behind the scenes making sure all your questions will be answered. Besides trying to co-ordinate multiple registrations, flight schedules, accommodations and event questions or changes, Rosie, along with the help of Heather Fisher, also assembled the team uniforms and made sure everyone had them prior to leaving for the games. Upon arrival, Rosie held a team meet and greet, for everyone to get to know each other before we all headed off in opposite directions to our sports venues or sightseeing trips between the events.

First time attendees soon realise that the draw of the games is more than just the lure of shiny medals. It’s a place where lifetime friendships are made, personal goals are reached, and a place where we do our best to show thanks to donor families around the world, for making so many dreams and realities come true.

Thank you to everyone who was able to represent Canada at this fantastic event and a very special thank you to all the living donors and donor families for the Gift of Life that keeps on giving.

Thanksgiving is the time to spend with family and friends, to reflect upon all the wonderful things life has offered. For transplant recipients, it is also a time to think of those whose unselfish decision to be an organ and tissue donor, allowed them to enjoy this wonderful weekend with their loved ones.
Vincent’s Story
Written by Melanie Elliott, Halifax, NS

On past weekends you would have likely found Vincent walking the shores of the Bay of Fundy engaged in his favourite hobby, searching for semi-precious gems of agate, amethyst, etc. With one eye on the level of the 40 foot tides, he, a responsible rockhound, is required to be accountable to this phenomenon.

Pacing himself in his beachside searches has now become an hour-to-hour task in everyday living as Chronic Kidney Failure leaves him with limited energy and increasingly so as function levels decline.

A meeting with a transplant team recently proved to be a rude awakening to his need for a donated kidney. The likelihood of dialysis prepping a live kidney transplant was also presented. He was encouraged to approach family for a donated kidney however blood-type incompatibilities set the stage for the need to reach out to the general public. This certainly was not what he had in mind in his retirement years.

Vincent, a chemist by occupation, had little knowledge of health care protocol and procedures. The idea of extending his search for a donated kidney was a conundrum... How would he get the message out? Who could he ask? Where would he start? — the list of questions continued to grow with each passing day.

Vincent’s ride turned when he reflected back to a Chronic Kidney Failure Workshop orchestrated by the local Renal Unit, Halifax. He located the workshop’s workbook and located an advocate from among its pages... they became a powerful team. Vincent is determined that a donor will be found as it is now their experience that for every contact they reach out to there are three more behind it.

Vincent extends an invitation to all to sign your donor card.

Some Dreams do become a Reality with Work and Perseverance
Written by Diane Brodbin, Castor, AB

“How can I give back?” That was the question I asked myself one January morning as I lay in bed. My son, at age 38, had had a kidney transplant the previous year with my best friend as the living donor. As I lay in bed brainstorming, the decision came to decorate a float for the Castor Rodeo Day parade with “Organ Donation Awareness” as the theme.

After many phone calls and contacts, we acquired a covered wagon and a team of horses as our starting point. Then personnel from the various transplant groups, embracing this new and different idea, donated banners, posters, information packages, write-ups, pins, donor card awareness brochures and candy for the event. Last minute changes included having to trade in the horses for an ATV, due to parade rules! But our float was well received, winning the second place ribbon in the “Not for Profit” float group.

As we drove down the main street of Castor, Alberta on that Saturday morning in July, we received applause and tears from the large crowds of spectators for our theme. Two local families were especially moved; one family has a daughter who is a lung transplant recipient, while the other family has a granddaughter who has received a new heart both being very successful.

Special thanks to David Smith, President of the Canadian Transplant Association, along with the support of the Kidney Foundation, Liver Foundation, and H.O.E.E program of Edmonton. We could not have done this without their help.

Thanks to everyone involved in making my dreams come true.

(To read the complete story, please check the Member’s Corner on the CTA website)
The Games are long past but the memories linger! When 150 Canadians arrived in Australia in late August, they were met by beautiful weather, amazing accommodations — picture waking up each morning to a glorious sunrise over the Pacific Ocean! — and very welcoming Aussies. Our 45 athletes certainly represented our country well. The 23 adult competitors won a total of 27 medals (10 gold, 10 silver and 7 bronze) placing Canada 10th out of the 36 countries represented. Our juniors, with the third largest contingency, placed third with 47 medals (15 gold, 19 silver and 14 bronze). We also had 10 new world records set! Congratulations to Margaret Benson who broke the record in the 3km Race Walk (18:37.4 minutes) and set the new record in the 200m (39.16 sec). Leslie Peter broke her current record in the 800m with a time of 3:37.4 minutes; Michael Sikorski set a new record of 33.69 sec with a time of 47.4s minutes; James Snell, Scott Dorcich and Clint Eastop for all their work capturing the many special moments throughout the week. Thanks too to all the Team “assistants”, Alie, Robin, Vanessa, Maureen and Cecilia who helped support the team at all our events — I couldn’t have done it without you!

The week was full of special moments, but one of the highlights was the marriage proposal early in the week. Picture that early morning sunrise on the Gold Coast beach — what a wonderful place to propose!!... congratulations to RJ Brack and Sasha Lawson!

As an added personal note, I would like to thank the CTA and its members for all their support over the past few years. I will be stepping down as Team Manager after these Games. It has been an amazing experience and I have felt blessed to have had the opportunity to get to know so many wonderful people over the years. Even though I will not be formally involved in the organization I will definitely still be involved in promoting organ donor awareness and hope to see many of you at the Canadian Games in Quebec City next summer!

Special Thanks to our team supporters Astellas, Roche, and Positive Identity — the team looked fabulous in their uniforms!!

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Special Thanks to our team supporters Astellas, Roche, and Positive Identity — the team looked fabulous in their uniforms!!

Les Jeux mondiaux des greffés 2009 sont peut-être déjà chose du passé, mais les souvenirs restent présents! À leur arrivée en Australie, à la fin août, les 150 Canadiens ont découvert des Australiens chaleureux, un temps splendide et des installations extraordinaires avec vue sur le Pacifique et ses extraordinaires lever de soleil...

Nos 45 athlètes ont certainement fait honneur au Canada : les 23 athlètes de la catégorie Adultes ont remporté un total de 27 médailles (10 médailles d’or, 10 d’argent et 7 de bronze), nous plaçant au 10e rang parmi les 36 pays représentés. Nos athlètes de la catégorie Juniors, qui constituaient le troisième plus gros contingent, se sont classés au troisième rang avec 47 médailles (15 d’or, 19 d’argent et 14 de bronze). Dix nouveaux records ont été attribués aux Canadiens. Bravo à Margaret Benson, qui a battu le record du 3 km à la marche rapide (18 min 37 s) et du 200 m (39,16 s). Leslie Peter a pour sa part fait tomber son propre record au 800 m en 3 min 37,2 s. Michael Sikorski a quant à lui établi un nouveau record de 33,69 s au 50 m papillon. Chez les Juniors, les records reviennent à Seth Delguidice au 50 m (8,86 s) et au baal throw (34,77 m), à Jessica Dorcich, également au baal throw (21,63 m), Chris Milliard, au 100 m (13,26 s) et à Matthew Sikorski, au saut en hauteur (1,40 m).

Mais les Jeux signifient bien plus que des médailles! Pour les familles et amis, c’est une chance unique de se rencontrer pour partager expériences, espoirs et rêves. Surtout, c’est une occasion de montrer au monde entier qu’après une transplantation, on peut mener une vie normale et active, en parfaite santé. Et puis, les nouveaux greffés, en rencontrant des athlètes dont la transplantation est moins récente, sont à même de constater qu’ils peuvent aussi avoir des rêves... et les réaliser.

Ces Jeux, qui accueillaient des participants de 7 à 77 ans, ont permis aux jeunes et aux moins jeunes de fraterniser et de belles amitiés sont nées. On se souviendra longtemps de la partie de volley-ball, la course à relais 200 m style libre et le relais hommes de 4 x 100 m, où nos athlètes juniors ont affirmé l’équipe des adultes, haussant la barre avec de remarquables performances. L’équipe Canada comptait plusieurs jeunes athlètes remarquables! Durant les compétitions de cyclisme, on a même vu des mentors adultes encourager et supporter de jeunes athlètes... C’est ce qui fait la force et le caractère unique des Jeux des greffés : on s’y entraîne pour que chaque exploite son plein potentiel!

Le bulletin contient des photos qui rappellent les événements de la semaine, ainsi que la liste des médailles et des médaillées. Nous devons ces photos à notre équipe médias officielle. Un grand merci à nos membres : Cecilia McHugh, James Snell, Scott Dorcich et Clint Eastop! D’un autre côté, sans les efforts de croquer sur le vif des moments uniques. Merci aussi à toute l’équipe des assistants : Alie, Robin, Vanessa, Maureen et Cecilia, qui soutenu et assuré l’équipe durant toutes les activités. Je n’y serais pas arrivée sans leur aide!

Nous avons vécu plusieurs grands moments durant ces Jeux, mais la palme revient à la demande en mariage faite en début de semaine. Peut-on imaginer cadre plus romantique pour faire «la grande demande» qu’un lever de soleil sur la plage de Gold Coast? Félicitations à RJ Brack et Sasha Lawson!

Sur une note plus personnelle, je tiens à remercier l’Association canadienne des greffés (ACG) et ses membres pour tout le soutien qu’ils m’ont apporté au cours des dernières années. Ces Jeux étaient mes derniers comme chef d’équipe et je vais maintenant céder ma place. Ce fut pour moi une expérience extraordinaire qui m’a donné, au cours des dernières années, le privilège de côtoyer des gens merveilleux. Sans m’impliquer officiellement dans l’Association, je continuerai très certainement à faire la promotion du don d’organes et de tissus, en souhaitant voir beaucoup d’entre vous aux Jeux canadiens qui se tiendront à Québec l’été prochain!

En terminant, un merci spécial aux supporters de notre équipe : Astellas, Roche et Positive Identity : les membres de l’équipe avaient très fière allure dans leur uniforme.
2009 World Transplant Games: Gold Coast, Australia
You can find David Maggiori on the baseball diamond practicing his pitching every Monday and Wednesday.

Tuesdays and Thursdays, the 14-year-old is in his parent's basement, lifting weights and running on the treadmill. In between, the grade eight student from Vaughan is working on his badminton game or training with his sports coach. It's an impressive workout schedule, and even more impressive when you realize that just last October Maggiori received a heart transplant that saved his life.

Now, only months later, he is preparing to compete at the 17th World Transplant Games in Australia this August.

"I am really looking forward to meeting people from around the world," said Maggiori, a grade eight student at St. Claire Catholic Elementary School in Vaughan. "Especially because I will get to see other kids who have gone through the same things as me." Maggiori has been a Team SickKids coordinator since 2009 and has been involved in the Sick Kids cardiac transplant program, discussing this with their loved ones. "Alison Drabble, a heart and lung transplant nurse in the Sick Kids cardiac transplant program, has been a Team SickKids coordinator since 2007 and sees a great link between the experience of the games and the vitality of the child." Maggiori will attend the eight-day sporting event with his mother, Patricia, father, Danny, and older sister, Andrea. He will be competing in singles badminton matches and boy's ball throw.

Canadian athletes from six to 77 years of age will compete in a total of 14 Olympic-style events including track & field, swimming, tennis, badminton, bowling, cycling, and volleyball, McHugh said. On their visit to the land Down Under, the Maggiori family plans to visit Sydney and attend a rugby match, and exploring the cities of Sydney and Brisbane. Before his departure, Maggiori will be promoting transplant research and awareness at various charity events, such as the SickKids Telethon. Although he has little recollection of the three open-heart surgeries he underwent in 10 days, Maggiori says the ordeal has given him a new-found appreciation for his friends and family. "I am thankful for all of their support," he says. "Especially because I know everything can be taken away so easily."

(David has returned from the World Transplant Games with many happy memories and experiences including a bronze medal in Ball throw and a fourth place finish in badminton!)
Celebrating A Milestone...
Margaret Benson turns “50” and is proud of it.

Since I was three years old I had always dreamed of having a Teddy Bear’s picnic as a birthday party, just like the song, “Let’s go down to the woods.” I just didn’t think I’d have to wait until I turned 50 — but it was well worth it.

To imagine I would live to see this age is simply a miracle. My parents were told I wouldn’t make it to celebrate my first birthday let alone my 50th. At the age of fourteen I was diagnosed with Cystic Fibrosis, a time when the life expectancy with this disease was fifteen. The thought of turning fifty was a far off dream. Ten years ago, dependent on full time oxygen, waiting for a double lung transplant, I was unable to blow out the candles on my birthday cake. Celebrating another birthday seemed impossible.

Yet, my life changed in December 1999 when I received the greatest gift of all, a double lung transplant. Reaching this next milestone was now achievable. Ten years later on July 15th, 2009, surrounded by 130 of my family and closest friends, I celebrated my 50th birthday with a Teddy Bear’s picnic. We enjoyed a picnic style luncheon of homemade pulled pork sandwiches, pork’n beans, coleslaw and of course two teddy bear shaped chocolate cakes.

This special occasion included a slide show, speeches and an entire table overflowing with teddy bears and stuffies. Why teddy bears and stuffies you ask? They have always been an important part of my life, and these bears were presents from my guests. Instead of bringing gifts for me, I asked them to bring a brand new teddy bear so I could donate them to children and special people in hospitals.

What better way to celebrate a milestone than to give back to others. Many of the over 130 animals have already been donated to hospitals and transplant clinics in the Vancouver area. Some have found their way into the loving arms of children and young adults where the bears are enjoying their new homes.

Turning fifty was a huge accomplishment and I wanted to share my story of hope and believing in your dreams and goals.

Everyone can be cheered by a bear. If you see a bear with a little message of hope attached to its ear, chances are it’s from me. If you wish to share my idea and give some hope and encouragement to someone special, take a brand new teddy bear or stuffy to your local hospital. It will warm your heart and theirs.

Thank you to everyone who has shared in my 50-year journey. A very special thanks to my donor and donor family. Here’s to the next 50 — the best is yet to come!!
5th Canadian Games: Quebec City, Aug 9–14, 2010
Written by Gaston Martin, Quebec Regional Director

Quebec City will be the host of the 5th Canadian Transplant Games, Aug 9–14th, 2010! These Games, which should attract more than 400 participants accompanied by their love ones, are a unique opportunity for transplant recipients from all over Canada to gather in a friendly and warm atmosphere... in beautiful Quebec City.

For the first time in Sherbrooke in August 2000, the Canadian Transplant Games take place in a different city every two years. Since the first games, the participation rate has more than quadrupled! The goal of the Games is to increase public awareness on organ and tissue donation by showing that not only can recipients return to a full and active life.

All transplant recipients, young and old, competitive or recreational athletes can be part of the Games! Activities and sports events include tennis, swimming, track and field, bowling and golf, to name just a few. Each one can find his or her own sport's match. The most important thing is to be there and have fun!

Headed up by the Canadian Transplant Association (CTA), the 2010 Canadian Transplant Games in Quebec City will be organized by MC2 Experience stratégique, a not-for-profit organization specializing in event planning who utilize university students and graduates. Lodging and most of the Games events and competitions will take place on the University of Laval campus.

All CTA members are eligible to attend these Games. For information on the CTA, or the 2010 Games, please check out the following websites:

www.organ-donation-works.org
and www.jeuxcanadiensdesgreffes.ca

We look forward seeing you in Quebec City!

Gloria Santini Memorial Award
Written by Janet Brady, Past President, CTA

In memory of the late Gloria Santini, one of the founding members of the CTA, (formally known as the Canadian Transplant Games Association), for her dedication and perseverance in raising organ donor awareness locally and internationally.

Any member of the CTA, who demonstrates the determination, ambition, dedication, perseverance, and professionalism that Gloria did in promoting and supporting the CTA, Mission, nationally and/or internationally, is eligible for nomination.

This award will keep the memory of Gloria alive and in the hearts of many, and will encourage members, old and new to be involved in very productive roles in the interest of the CTA and to make the CTA a household name, not only in Canada but around the world, while educating the public about the desperate need for organ and tissue donation. Gloria will be remembered for her unwavering commitment to saving lives as well as for her participation in the World Transplant Games, the world’s largest organ donor awareness event.

Nomination forms and details will be sent by Canada Post, on the World Transplant Games website and www.jeuxcanadiensdesgreffes.ca.

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Do you have any articles or pictures that you would like to submit for the newsletter? If so, please forward to Rose McHugh at rmcHugh@twxworks.ca. The deadline for items for our next edition is December 7, 2009. Please forward articles in Word Format (300 word limit) and pictures as high resolution JPEG files.

Quebec accueillera les 5e Jeux Canadiens des greffés du 9 au 14 août 2010 !
Écrit par Gaston Martin, Directeur régional Québec

La ville de Québec accueillera l’été prochain les 5e Jeux canadiens des greffés et c’est avec plaisir que nous vous invitons à participer à cet événement qui devrait attirer plus de 400 participants, ainsi que leurs proches.

Ces jeux sont une occasion unique pour les greffés en provenance de toutes les provinces canadiennes de se retrouver dans une ambiance conviviale et fraternelle... et ce dans la superbe ville de Québec.


Les Jeux canadiens des greffés se tiennent tous les deux ans, habituellement au début du mois d’août et en l’année, le taux de participation a plus que quadruplé! L’objectif est de sensibiliser et de promouvoir la population au don d’organes et de tissus.

Il est également nécessaire de promouvoir la population au don d’organes et de tissus. Les Jeux canadiens des greffés se tiennent tous les deux ans, habituellement au début du mois d’août et en l’année, le taux de participation a plus que quadruplé! L’objectif est de sensibiliser et de promouvoir la population au don d’organes et de tissus.

En plus de la promotion du don d’organes et de tissus, les Jeux fournissent aux greffés et à leurs proches l’occasion de rencontrer des familles de donneurs et de leur exprimer leur reconnaissance. L’objectif est de promouvoir la population au don d’organes et de tissus. Les Jeux fournissent aux greffés et à leurs proches l’occasion de rencontrer des familles de donneurs et de leur exprimer leur reconnaissance.

Par ailleurs, la préparation aux compétitions constitue une excellente motivation pour les participants à améliorer leur condition physique et à s’inscrire dans leur vie quotidienne l’activité physique. Tous les greffés, jeunes et moins jeunes, sportifs ou non, peuvent y prendre part. Les disciplines sont variées : de la natation aux quilles, en passant par l’athlétisme, le tennis ou le golf. Chacun peut y trouver quelque chose qui lui convienne.

Chaque année, l’association canadienne des greffés (ACG), les Jeux de Québec 2010 sont organisés par MC2 expérience stratégique, un organisme à but non lucratif qui se spécialise dans l’organisation des événements réalisés par des étudiants et des diplômés universitaires, en collaboration avec l’Université Laval. C’est en effet sur le campus de cette université que se tiendra la majeure partie des activités sportives et que les athlètes seront en mesure de le faire.

Tous les membres de l’ACG peuvent s’inscrire aux Jeux. Vous trouverez toute l’information sur l’ACG, les Jeux 2010, les compétitions, l’hébergement et les différentes conditions de participation, aux adresses Internet suivantes :

www.organ-donation-works.org
et www.jeuxcanadiensdesgreffes.ca

Nous serons très heureux de vous voir tous à Québec!

In Memory

Felicity O’Brien 1939–2009
Written by Amy Holcomb, VP East

Longtime CTA member Felicity O’Brien passed away on August 30, 2009, at age 70. She received a kidney transplant in October 1994, and was very active in supporting the CTA and the Kidney Foundation of Canada, both nationally and in her home province of Newfoundland. She represented Canada at the 1997 World Games in Sydney, Australia, and won medals in table tennis, 3k race walking, and lawn bowling. She also participated in World games in Hungary, Japan, France, and Canada, and all of the Canadian Transplant Games, winning medals in a wide variety of sports. In 2002, she co-chaired the very successful Second Canadian Transplant Games in St. John’s, NL. Additionally, she served on the CTA executive board as Vice President and Regional Director for Atlantic provinces. Felicity also displayed her athletic prowess in judo. She was a Sensei of the Kokoto Judo Club in Conception Bay South, NL, and was a 4th degree black belt (one of two in Newfoundland/Labrador!).

Felicity, born in England, came to St. John’s in 1967 to teach in the geography department at Memorial University. She had a masters degree in geology and taught both geography and general science. When she retired from Memorial University in 1991, she began volunteering with the Johnson Geo Centre in St. John’s where she applied her geography expertise to teach the general public.

Felicity O’Brien 1939–2009
Written by Ian Babish, Ontario East Transplant Support Group

In Memory

Sylvie Gauthier, double lung recipient and founder member of the Ontario East Transplant Support Group, passed away peacefully on Tuesday, August 4th, 2009, almost seven years to the day since she received her Gift of Life. Her last few months had been difficult ones for Sylvie as she battled with health issues.

Many will remember Felicity for her incredible spirit, her enthusiasm, and her infectious laugh. She did everything she could to support the CTA and to promote organ donation and transplantation. She was an incredible role model for organ recipients, and truly showed that an active, normal life is possible after transplantation.

Sylvie will live on among all those of us who were able to call her our friend.

Sylvie Gauthier, double lung recipient and founder member of the Ontario East Transplant Support Group, passed away peacefully on Tuesday, August 4th, 2009, almost seven years to the day since she received her Gift of Life. Her last few months had been difficult ones for Sylvie as she battled with health issues. Those of us who were blessed to share a small part of her life knew her as a person dedicated to helping and informing others about the benefits of giving the gift of life. Sylvie was a gold medalist in the 2006 Games in Edmonton and a strong participant in the 2008 Windsor Games. She will be greatly missed by all and her courage and Spirit will live on among all those of us who were able to call her our friend.

In Memory

Prix de reconnaissance Gloria Santini

Ce prix est attribué en mémoire de Mme Gloria Santini pour reconnaître ses efforts et son dévouement pour la promotion du don d’organes et de tissus. Mme Santini était membre et fondatrice de l’Association Canadienne des Jeux des Greffés, aujourd’hui connue sous le nom de l’Association Canadienne des Greffés (ACG).

Chaque membre en « rôles de l’ACG démontrant son dévouement envers la promotion du don d’organes et de tissus, sur la scène nationale et ou internationale, peut poser sa candidature pour ce prestigieux prix.

Cet initiative va permettre de rappeler à l’ensemble des membres de l’ACG de leur faire la promotion du don d’organes et de tissus, sur la scène nationale et ou internationale, peut poser sa candidature pour ce prestigieux prix.

La documentation pour la mise en candidature vous sera acheminée par la poste, accompagnée du formulaire pour la prochaine élection aux postes de direction de l’ACG.

Do you have any articles or pictures that you would like to submit for the newsletter? If so, please forward to Rose McHugh at rmcHugh@twxworks.ca. The deadline for items for our next edition is December 7, 2009. Please forward articles in Word Format (300 word limit) and pictures as high resolution JPEG files.