Teachers Now "Kidney Sisters" After Life-Saving Donation

By Karen Lovett

There are blood sisters, there are soul sisters, and then there is Sherri Dyer and Jen Guillemette. They’re the “kidney sisters.”

It’s a title these Center Woods Elementary teaching colleagues joyfully adopted after a successful transplant surgery in January, during which Dyer donated her right kidney to Guillemette, who had been diagnosed with organ failure nearly a year before.

“What she did is save my life,” said Guillemette in a recent interview, with Dyer alongside her. “And she’s made my life a whole lot better.”

Dyer, 46, has taught kindergarten at Center Woods for 15 years. Guillemette, 41, became a preschool teacher there six years ago; their classrooms are directly across the hall from one another.

Early last year, Guillemette became very sick with what she thought was a vicious flu. After a trip to the emergency room, she learned her kidneys were failing. Doctors hoped that temporary dialysis would help them bounce back; it did not.

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Center Woods Announces 2020 Invention Convention Winners

Projects presented at the Center Woods Elementary School Invention Convention on February 16 showcased student creativity and innovative thinking while also highlighting thoughtfulness and compassion for others.

“As is the case every year, the students and their projects for the Invention Convention inspire us with their originality and creativity,” said event organizer Kate Rodgers.

The Invention Convention is part of The Young Inventor’s Program administered by The Academy of Applied Science in Concord. The Young Inventors' Program is a project-based learning program that provides hands-on STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Math) enrichment to budding youth inventors.

There were three categories: General (solves everyday problems), Challenge (The Green School Challenge), and Rube Goldberg (a complicated machine that accomplishes a simple task using a chain reaction). All students presented their inventions to a panel of judges, which enhances both their social and public speaking skills.

Winners compete at the Regional Convention on March 28 at Southern New Hampshire University.

Invention Convention inventions must be designed and built by students, but teachers can support them in brainstorming ideas, developing a plan, and assisting them with writing components such as keeping an inventor’s journal. Students may work on inventions on their own or in pairs. The invention idea must come from the student, but parental support in the project is highly encouraged.

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In February of 2019, Guillemette began nightly at-home dialysis treatments, which accompanied her regular medical appointments and kidney clinic visits— all while she mothered her four children and continued teaching two classes of preschoolers.

“Honestly, it was exhausting,” Guillemette recalled. “But, it was a moment in time. There was no choice but to get through it.”

“She had such a good outlook,” Dyer added.

Guillemette’s treatment team recommended searching for a living donor. In May, she was approved to undergo transplant surgery if the right candidate was found.

The waiting list is long. Around 102,000 people need kidney transplants in the United States, according to the federal health department.

Being a donor match requires passing a battery of tests; being physically fit and free of major health complications; general compatibility with the patient; and acceptance of the risks.

Guillemette said 10 or 15 of her family members and friends signed up for an initial screening, though she felt hesitant all along because the process is difficult and can have serious consequences.

But nothing was going to stop the force of nature across the hall.

“I kept bugging her,” Dyer said with a laugh. “‘What do I need to do? Where do I sign up?’”

“She burst into my room and said, ‘So, what blood type are you?’” Guillemette recalled. (Of course, these educators share a blood type of A+.)

Dyer’s persistence began to pay off. While others in Guillemette’s pool weren’t compatible, Dyer was called in for a series of extra meetings and screenings through the summer and early fall. By November, things were going so well that they felt a surgery date was imminent.

Around Thanksgiving, Dyer shared news of her potential donation with others in her family.

Her boyfriend had already expressed his concerns, especially as Dyer has two children of her own. Her parents were worried, too.

But Dyer shared with them what she learned, which is that most living donors recover normally and experience no negative effects to their remaining kidney. The risk of death is 1 in 10,000.

“The benefits so outweighed the risk involved,” she said. “Plus, this is who I am. When I get something in my head, I don’t back down.”

Hope for a surgery date waned in December, though, when Dyer was asked to complete yet another round of tests. Her right kidney contained a stone, and the medical team wasn’t sure how problematic it could be. In the end, doctors decided that “the jewel” — which Dyer and Guillemette affectionately named the kidney stone — was not enough to derail the plan.

In early January, they finally got the go-ahead.

“We just jumped around, screaming,” Dyer said. “We had a little celebration,” Guillemette added.

After a successful transplant surgery at Mass General on January 28th, the first thing Guillemette saw when she woke up was Dyer, dancing in the hall outside her room.

“I wanted her to know I was ok,” Dyer said.

These days, Guillemette has her energy back and says her kidney function “is perfect.” Both women are recovering well and plan to return to their classrooms in March, sporting bracelets they bought one another, each with a silver “sister” charm.

For the past few weeks, they have enjoyed some unexpected celebrity. WMUR ran their story, and it was picked up by a handful of other New England-based stations and publications. Then ABC News aired it as well.

They don’t mind the attention if it means spreading the word about the power of living donors.

“We wanted to inspire anyone who’s thinking about it,” Dyer said. “Just planting the seeds is what it is.”

In Like A Lion

Inspired by the marble lions in front of the New York Public Library, Sam Small sculpted this snow lion with help from his kids. (Photo by Alyssa Small)
Weare Police Faces Critical Staff Shortage

By Tom Clow

Vacancies in police departments and difficulty recruiting new applicants is a problem statewide, and Weare is no exception.

According to Police Chief Christopher Moore, the town is reaching "a critical point where if we lose one more officer, we may have to reduce coverage to 12 hours a day." Presently, the town has 20 hours per day coverage.

Moore said that over the last 15 months two Weare officers have gone to Antrim, one to Nashua, and another is leaving soon to join the Hillsborough County Sheriff’s Department. There has also been one resignation for personal reasons.

If at full staff, the department would have 12 full-time officers, including the chief, and two part-time officers. After the pending departure, there will be only eight full-time, chief included, and no part-time officers. With two officers on administrative duty, the scheduling becomes even more difficult.

Moore said that recruitment is ongoing and that he has a fully certified officer who he expects will be joining the department in March after background checks are completed. Most of the candidates who are invited to apply have taken a qualifying test at Great Bay Community College in Portsmouth. Moore said the same written test is scheduled at the police department for local applicants.

The town reached an agreement with the police union on a new three-year contract in January, and this will appear on the ballot for voter approval on March 10. Passage of the new contract is recommended by both the Board of Selectmen and the Finance Committee and hopefully will help. Moore said, “We don’t have to be at the top of the pay scale, but we must be competitive,” to retain and recruit officers.

There are also two articles on the town warrant for the replacement of police vehicles, which also received positive recommendations from the Selectmen and Finance Committee. One of the vehicles will replace the Ford Explorer, which will be transferred to the animal control officer, who is presently using her own vehicle. The other will likely replace the one remaining Crown Victoria, which is constantly in need of repair. The new vehicles will be Chevrolet Tahoes, which Chief Moore says don’t have the ergonomic issues discovered in the Dodge Chargers and are also better suited for the varied terrain in town.

Full List of 2020 Invention Convention Winners

First Grade:
3rd place: Jordyn Dion, The Ultimate Shopping Cart.
2nd place: Lindsey Geisler, Cool Clean Cat Mat.
1st place: Hudson Trudel, Mr. Cereal.

Second Grade:
3rd place: Sol Totten, Shoe-To-Go.
2nd place: Gavin O’Neal, Pedal Defense.
1st place: Melody Carrara, Cozy Crate Cover.

Third Grade:
3rd place: Caden Potter & Lucas Guillemette, Clock Table.
2nd place: Riley Lees, Night Light Blanket.
1st place: Christian Whiteman, TPR, (Trash Processor and Recycler).

Rube Goldberg category:
Winner: Brendan Burke, Ding-Donger.

Kids Vote category:
3rd place: Rose Van Kalken, Koala Safety Box.
2nd place: Hudson Trudel, Mr. Cereal.
1st place: Brendan Burke, The Ding-Donger.

CWES first-grader Hudson Trudel demonstrates his invention, Mr. Cereal. Hudson took first prize in his age group and came second in the Kids Vote category. (Courtesy Photo)
What & When in Weare:

Wednesday, March 4
10:30 am-12:00 pm – Baby and Toddler Playgroup, Weare Library
4:30 pm-7:00 pm – Weare Food Pantry Open, Town Offices
5:00 pm-6:00 pm – Ruff Readers, Weare Library
5:00 pm-6:30 pm – Curriculum Night, Center Woods
6 pm – Mildred Hall Advisory Committee, Library Sawyer Room
6:30 pm – Finance Committee, Town Offices

Thursday, March 5
8:30 am – Seniorcise, Old Town Hall
10:00 am - Community Coffee - Town Budget Questions, Weare Library
7:00 pm – Boy Scout Troop 24, Weare Middle School Cafeteria
7:00 pm – Planning Board, Town Offices
7:00 pm – Library Trustees, Weare Library
7:00 pm – Agricultural Commission, Town Offices

Friday, March 6
10:30 am – Weare Area Writers Guild, Library Sawyer Room
5 pm – Wine and Beer Tasting, Country3Corners
8:00 pm – Live Music, Stark House Tavern

Saturday, March 7
8:00 pm – Live Music, Stark House Tavern

Monday, March 9
11:00 am – Stories and Play, Weare Library
5 pm – Board of Fire Wards
6:30 pm – Board of Selectmen

Tuesday, March 10
7:00 am-7:00 pm - Town Elections, Weare Middle School Gym
8:30 am – Seniorcise, Old Town Hall
1:30 pm – Caregiver Support Group, Holy Cross Church
5:00 pm – Cemetery Trustees, Town Offices
7:00 pm – Boy Scout Troop 529, Weare Middle School Cafeteria
7 pm – Parks & Recreation Commission, Town Offices

Wednesday, March 11
10:30 am-12:00 pm – Baby and Toddler Playgroup, Weare Library
4:15 pm – Trustees of the Trust Funds, Town Offices
4:30 pm-7:00 pm – Weare Food Pantry Open, Town Offices
5:00 pm-6:00 pm – Ruff Readers, Weare Library
6:30 pm – John Stark School Board, JSRHS Library
7:00 pm – Weare Democrats, Library Sawyer Room
7:00 pm – Conservation Commission, Town Offices

Thursday, March 12
8:30 am – Seniorcise, Old Town Hall
7:00 pm – Boy Scout Troop 24, Weare Middle School Cafeteria
7:00 pm – Planning Board, Town Offices

Friday, March 13
5 pm – Wine and Beer Tasting, Country3Corners

Saturday, March 14
6:00 pm-8:00 pm - Pre-K-5 Rodeo Dance, Center Woods Elementary School
8:00 pm – Live Music, Stark House Tavern

Sunday, March 15
2 pm – Weare Kids Service Club, Library Sawyer Room

Monday, March 16
11:00 am – Stories and Play, Weare Library
6:30 pm – Piscataquog River Committee, Library Sawyer Room
6:30 pm – Board of Selectmen, Town Offices

Tuesday, March 17
8:30 am – Seniorcise, Old Town Hall
11:00 am – Senior Weare-ites, Intervale Pancake House, Henniker
6:30 pm – John Stark Generals Football Boosters, JSR Room 192
7:00 pm – Boy Scout Troop 529, Weare Middle School Cafeteria
7:00 pm – Weare Winter Wanderers, Library Sawyer Room
7:00 pm – Cable Committee, Town Offices

Sample Ballots Online
Sample ballots for the March 10 town and school elections are posted on their respective websites. Town ballots are at weare.nh.gov and schools at sau24.org. All households should also have received a town mailer with further explanation of all warrant articles.

Breaking Bread Senior Cafe
Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays 9am-1pm
33 North Stark Highway

Finance Committee
Wednesday, March 4, 6:30pm
Town Office Building
15 Flanders Memorial Road
Goffstown Rotary Club  
**Tuesday Mornings, 7 am**
The Village Trestle, Goffstown  
Tuesday, March 17th - Monthly Club Business meeting (no speaker); Tuesday, March 24th - Dianne Hathaway, Director, Goffstown Library; Tuesday, March 31st - Todd Fahey, State Director, AARP

The general public is welcome at all meetings, and a light breakfast is served free of charge! For more information on meeting schedules or other club-related business, please visit us online at goffstownrotary.org, call us at 606-8758, or find us on Facebook!

**Baby & Toddler Playgroup**  
**Wednesday, March 4 and 11, 10:30 am**
Weare Public Library  
An informal gathering for caregivers and young children. Get out of the house; meet new friends! Books, puzzles, early literacy toys, music.

**Signs Of Life: Why Church Matters**  
Sundays, March 8-April 5, Noon  
Holy Cross Episcopal Church

The Lenten study program at Holy Cross - *Signs of Life: Why Church Matters*, will begin Sunday, March 8, and run through Palm Sunday, April 5. The program comes from the monks of St. John the Evangelist in Cambridge, MA partnered with Lifelong Learning at Virginia Seminary. Weekly sessions begin after Sunday worship, with simple soup and bread at noon, followed by a video, a reader and discussion as participants take a deeper dive into what we do and possibly take for granted as Christians.

**Boy Scout Troop 24**  
**Thursday, March 5 & 12, 7 pm**  
**WMS Cafeteria**
Contact Scoutmaster Marc Hallee at wearetroop24@gmail.com to attend a meeting, or get information to join Troop 24! We also have a full calendar available at sites.google.com/site/wearetroop24

**Boy Scout Troop 529**  
**Tuesday, March 10 & 17, 7 pm**  
**WMS Cafeteria**
A brand new BSA Scout Troop has formed in Weare NH. Troop 529 is chartered by the Holy Cross Episcopal Church in Weare and is accepting new members. Troop 529 was numbered in homage to Weare’s telephone code of 529. The troop has several activities and outings planned for the spring and will be attending Hidden Valley Scout Reservation in Gilmanton, NH this summer. If you are interested in having your child join scouting or would like to donate to help this new Troop with startup expenses please contact Scoutmaster Marc Payeur at 529-8888.

**Stories & Play**  
**Monday, March 9 & 16, 11 am**  
**Weare Public Library**
Stories, songs and movement for ages 5 and under with their caregivers. Afterwards, stay & play with a variety of toys and activities.

**Senior Weare-ites Lunch**  
**Tuesday, March 17, 12 noon**  
Intervale Pancake House, Henniker

For more information, call Pat at 529-2259.

**IF: Gathering Women's Conference**  
**Friday, March 20, 6:30 - 9 pm, Saturday, March 21, 12 - 6 pm**  
**Christ Community Church, 727 South Stark Highway**
An event for women to gather and grow more deeply in their walk with God and connect with one another. There will be food, speakers, music and more. The event is open to women and girls of all ages.

**Community Coffee:**  
**Town Budget Discussion**  
**Thursday, March 5, 10 am**  
**Weare Public Library**
Ongoing:

**Seniorize**  
**Tuesdays & Thursdays, 8:30 am**  
**Weare Town Hall**
For a very nominal pay-as-you-go fee, get the convenience of a local group and individualized support for beginners. An attractive alternative to a trip to the gym. For more information, contact Valerie White, 529-4975.

**Caregivers Support Group**  
**2nd and 4th Tuesday, 1:30-3 pm**  
**Holy Cross Episcopal Church**  
118 Center Road, North Weare  
Contact Marge Burke, 529-7792.
In honor of Women’s History Month, this puzzle features clues about Louisa May Alcott’s “Little Women”.

Across

3. Name of the March sisters’ club.
6. March family cook.
7. Amy attends this wealthy family’s party.
10. Jo’s one beauty.
11. Amy wishes this facial feature was more aristocratic.
15. Beth helps this sickly family: The ______.
18. Mr. Laurence’s gift to Beth.
20. Director of the 2019 Little Women film.
21. City where Amy studies painting.
22. Laurie’s first name.
23. Laurie’s tutor: John _____.

Down

1. Jo’s pet.
2. March mother’s moniker.
3. Friedrich Bhaer’s occupation (abbrev.).
4. Jo and Laure pull Amy from here.
5. Meg is governess to this family: The ______.
8. Alcott was friends with this reclusive Walden author.
9. Currency at Amy’s school.
11. Jo’s city (Abbrev.).
12. Fine material for Meg’s dress.
13. Amy’s intended: Fred ______.
16. Number of March sisters.
17. The March girls’ father fought in this war.
20. John Brooke retains this item of Meg’s