

A son's gift

Family is still celebrating 5 years after transplant

By Sue Mason
staff writer

Audrey Hollandsworth, her husband Ronald, their sons and daughters-in-law and grandchildren got together Sunday for a christening. And so did thousands of other families. Just a typical Sunday in America.

But for Audrey, the party had a special significance. It was a milestone of sorts. The Livonia resident was celebrating her fifth anniversary of a life saving transplant operation.

You see, Audrey in 1953 gave the gift of life to her son Robert. In 1984, Robert reciprocated and gave the gift of life to his mother. The gift was one of his kidneys.

"I've never felt better in my life," Audrey said. "But then I didn't know what feeling good felt like until my operation. My cousin told me to taste life to the fullest and make it a masterpiece and that's what I'm doing."

"I'm happy to be around, really happy."

Audrey's saga started in 1971 when they family lived in Westland. She was diagnosed as having Wegner's Syndrome, a rare disease in which small amounts of dead cells pile up in organs. In Audrey's case, they settled in her kidneys. She didn't have any problems for 11 years even though she only had 50 percent use of her kidneys.

But in 1982, things took a turn for the worse, and eventually she was on dialysis twice a week. But Audrey was among a group of patients who can't tolerate the blood cleaning treatment. She was "sick all the time and threw up constantly." She was so

weak she "couldn't get out of bed or off of the couch."

DESPITE THE discomfort, she continued the treatments for 1½ years. By 1985, she weighed a mere 113 pounds and couldn't get out of bed or off of the couch.

"I never really thought I was going to die, but I knew I was real, real sick," she said.

After nine months of dialysis, it became apparent Audrey needed a kidney transplant. Her three sons met with her doctors; they "wanted to know what was going on, what was going to happen to me and what I needed," Audrey said.

That's when doctors brought up the subject of a transplant. The sons agreed, but, according to Robert, they waited until Audrey made the decision.

"She had to be certain the dialysis wouldn't work, then she asked for the kidney transplant," Robert said.

Her husband offered one of his kidneys for the transplant, but her three sons were the likely donors because of their blood relationship with their mother.

Testing narrowed the donor down to her youngest son, Thomas, whose blood type matched that of his mother. Preparation for the transplant began with blood transfusions. It was during those transfusions that doctors discovered Audrey's immune system was building antibodies, an indication that she would reject the new kidney.

"It went right up to the 11th hour," said Robert. "They were transfusing his blood into hers when her antibodies began attacking his blood."

After more testing, Robert was selected as the donor.

"IT SEEMED like they spent forever with those tests, but they wanted to be very cautious and protect the donor," he said. "Once you take a kidney out, you can't put it back."

The father was with the Hollandsworths on March 12, 1984. Audrey got her new kidney, which started working immediately. She remained in the hospital a month as the result of a bladder infection she developed.

"I could feel I was getting better as soon as I came to," Audrey said.

Audrey doesn't recall much about the pain. Her doctors believe she has blocked it out of her memory. It's a case of "as time goes by, the pain is easy to forget," she said.

Other than the discomfort of the surgery, Robert "hasn't missed a beat" since leaving the hospital, although he admits he "was miserable while I was in there."

"It hasn't hindered me in any way, shape or form," he said.

Robert is modest about the transplant. He doesn't see himself as any more courageous than his brothers. It was, he said, "just a matter of which son had the right chemistry."

"When you see your mother go from a strong and healthy woman to 100 pounds . . . it really wasn't much of a decision," he said. "No one of us was any more courageous than the other."

A March 12 hasn't gone by that Audrey, Ronald, Robert and his wife Loraine haven't observed the anniversary. They've gone out to dinner and even to Hawaii to celebrate.

Today, Audrey is enjoying life. She travels with her husband and spends plenty of time with her grandchildren.

"I TAKE extra pleasure in seeing them grow up, that's why I like to be around them," she said. "I've been at death's door, so that's why every day is so great."

She feels blessed with each new day and thanks to the transplant, she has been able to dance at her son's wedding and watch her family grow with the addition of five more grandchildren. (She had three grandsons at the time of the surgery and within four months' time had three granddaughters.)

She has a message for people needing kidney transplants. It's just one word — hope. Never lose hope



March is a special month for Farmington Hills resident Robert Hollandsworth and his mother Audrey. Five years ago Robert donated one of

his healthy kidneys to his mother, and they've celebrated the anniversary each year since.

ART EMANUELE/staff photographer

7 ministers officiate at Good Friday services

The fourth annual Community Good Friday service, sponsored by the Farmington Ministerial Association, will be held 1-2:15 p.m. at the First United Methodist Church, 33112 Grand River. Featured will be brief addresses from seven members of the area clergy on the phrase from the Nicene Creed, "I believe in Jesus Christ . . . Who suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, and died and was buried."

Speaking will be the Rev. Charles Fox, pastor of St. John's Evangelical Lutheran Church; the Rev. Richard E. Iwick, rector of Trinity Episcopal Church; Molly McGillis, seminary intern at the First Presbyterian Church of Farmington; the Rev. John E. Maki, pastor of Salem United Church of Christ; the Rev. Victor H. Messenbring, pastor of Hope

Evangelical Lutheran Church; Dr. Stanley D. Nieschlag, pastor of North Farmington Baptist Church; and the Rev. Arthur L. Spafford, pastor of the host congregation.

Music for the liturgy will be provided by an Ecumenical Choir, conducted by Catherine Burnett and featuring organist Charles Miller. Handbell ringers Jo Perlan and Joan Robbins will assist Rev. Messenbring with a rendition of the Psalm 22.

A free-will offering will go to support the Samaritan Counseling Center of Southeastern Michigan, an effort to assist people with stress-related problems. The Rev. Wesley L. Brun is the director of the center, which is headquartered in the First Presbyterian Church of Farmington, at Farmington and 11 Mile roads.

Tuition available

The Women's Resource Center at Schoolcraft College is offering financial aid to students who are displaced homemakers, single parents or non-traditional job trainees who lack adequate job skills as well as recent, skilled full-time employment.

The money is being made available through a grant by the state Department of Education.

The Single Parent/Homemaker and Sex Equity Project offers tuition assistance for associate degree and certified career curricula as well as approved career-guidance courses.

Funds are available for the spring 1989 semester. For information, call WRC at 462-4400, ext. 5346.

IT'S SPRING AT THE HANDBAG GALLERY

Always 20% OFF
Handbags • Jewelry
Luggage • Accessories

32930 Middlebelt (At 14 Mile Rd.)
Farmington Hills
626-8068

20% OFF
Personality Portraits
30% OFF
Family Portraits

focal point STUDIO
PHOTOGRAPHY
478-1113
33431 Grand River • Farmington
Just West of Farmington Rd.
Closed Sun. & Mon.

Silk Forest

WEDDINGS IN SILK

- Bouquets
- Corage
- Hair pieces

Place Your Wedding Order By
April 27

Receive a "10 Gift Certificate" (wedding orders over \$100)
call Janet for a
free personal consultation
647-2888
239 Pierce • Birmingham



Her very own room.
The memories start at Bedrooms For Kids.

Storage beds, bunkbeds, trundles. Desks, chests, nightstands. Storage and bookcases. Comforters, sheets, decorative wall coverings and lighting. For information about our Free In-Home Design Assistance call Bedrooms For Kids at 540-5551.

BEDROOMS FOR KIDS

Birmingham—The Corners • Southfield Road & 13 Mile Road
Phone 540-5551

Visit our Easter Sunday Grand Opening.

A guilt trip you won't get.

Before we started Maple Hill Church we surveyed the area to find out why people don't go to church. Here's what they said:

"The sermons are dull and make you feel guilty." "Church people are cold and judgemental." "Churches aren't interested in me, all they want is my money." "If you share these feelings, we've got good news for you."

At Maple Hill our Pastor delivers uplifting sermons (even the flat ones) that help you face Monday with a smile. Our people are friendly. Our service is informal and contemporary. And you can leave your wallet at home. We're interested in you.

We're a new church and we're Christians. Try us Easter Sunday. And you be the judge. Nursery provided.

One-hour Easter Sunday Service
March 26, 10:30 A.M.
Seaholm High School
2436 W. Lincoln, Birmingham
Gary Foran, Pastor

Maple Hill CHURCH

Borch Imports...Since 1956

scandinavian furniture
at warehouse prices

WINTER CLEARANCE
ALL MERCHANDISE!!!
FLOOR SAMPLES AND STOCK

30-70% OFF
ALL MERCHANDISE ON LOCATION!

Scandinavian/U.S. Trading Company
720 W. Eighth Mile, 1/2 Mile West of Woodward, Ferndale...look for the flag!
543-5410
Monday thru Saturday 10-6; Sunday Noon-5; Closed Wednesday