World Transplant Games After Liver Cancer

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Karen Hoyt is a blogger who has a story about hepatitis C, cirrhosis, end-stage liver disease, liver cancer, and liver transplantation. This excerpt first appeared on Karen's I Help C blog.

It's difficult to put into words – being at that door and then coming through to the other side. The door was double and led into a rather crowded room with many machines and a metal table in the middle. I kissed my husband outside the door – and then climbed from the gurney over onto that skinny table. Warm blankets covered my Self as medical staff poured in. I counted 5, 6, 7 and then my anesthesiologist entered – we needed to talk. "You've got my mind and body for the next few hours," I said. "Thanks in advance for studying hard."

The school teacher in me was forever grateful to each person who had played a role in the recent medical mess. From the sweet OU grad who woefully found the tumor on a routine ultrasound, to the young surgeon who would soon be slicing me open, I was thankful for the brainiacs.

After joking with the staff about what music to listen to during the several hour surgery, I closed my eyes in prayer. I felt angel wings, as heavy as grandma's quilt, lying on my chest, covering the cancer ridden liver.

I opened my eyes to see my family holding hands in a circle around my bed. I was praying aloud, giving thanks for the miracle of life. The tube in my nose gave my voice a watery sound. My mind drifted in and out of morphine induced dreams.

Cycling in My Dreams
My feet kept moving in circles, waking me up. I had cycled indoors during the tumor killing treatments. Training for the Transplant Games, and training for the transplant itself was embedded in my thoughts. I had been pedaling my bicycle along the Arkansas River in the summer of 2010 when my liver failed. The summer of 2017 became the year that my donor and I finally cycled together in the World Transplant Games in Malaga, Spain. We brought home the gold medal.

Click here to read Karen's blog in its entirety, celebrate true victory, and learn more about the World Transplant Games.

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