

Oct 17/06



Debbie Cobby's story....

It was on September 9<sup>th</sup>, 2005, that Debbie was given a second chance on life. She had just celebrated, in essence, her new "1<sup>st</sup>" birthday!

In 1995, Debbie was diagnosed with "Primary Sclerosing Cholangitis" after a brief bout with fatigue, nausea, jaundice and yellowing of the skin & eyes. This disease is a blockage of the bile ducts in the liver which prevents bile from being secreted to the digestive organs in one's body and results in scarring of the liver. There was no known cause but ultimately, it would result in her requiring a liver transplant.

For the next few years, she went on to live a fairly healthy, happy life with no further complications other than the occasional blood work. In February 2005, she went in for some minor dental surgery where anesthesia was administered. Shortly after this surgery, Debbie started experiencing the symptoms she had back in 1995 but they were more aggressive this time. Her health progressively worsened and she was forced to leave her job by June 2005. The entire summer consisted of endless doctor's appointments, hospital assessments/ admissions, numerous medical tests and her feeling sicker and sicker. The results showed that her liver disease was progressing rapidly and that a liver transplant was the only option. After her transplant assessment in June, she was immediately placed on the liver transplant list.

The wait seemed endless for Debbie and her family and friends, but miraculously, on September 9<sup>th</sup>, 2005 her prayers were answered. She had already been admitted to University Hospital in London a few days prior and had pretty much given up hope for the miracle she so desperately needed. The call came that there was a compatible donor for her and she would be scheduled for the transplant that evening. The 6½ hour operation was a success and Debbie woke up the next morning in disbelief that the transplant had already taken place and that she was alive! Within 2½ weeks after the transplant, Debbie was well enough to be discharged from the hospital on an out-patient basis. For the next 3 weeks, she continued visiting the hospital for her daily blood tests and consultation with her liver specialists.

Today, she, her husband Ken and 2 sons, Chris and Derek share a wonderful, exciting new future together. Debbie and her husband have now become involved with a group called "Sport Fest Windsor", an organization with over 100 dedicated volunteers who are involved with planning annual sporting, entertainment and cultural events designed to help increase organ donor awareness as well as raise funds for the Canadian Liver Foundation. This past summer, she along with the Seacliffe Inn golf tournament organizers raised \$9,675 which was donated to the Canadian Liver Foundation.

She hopes that everyone here tonight will think twice about organ donation and how important it is for all of us to discuss with our families and sign our organ donation cards! She never thought it would happen to her either. How thankful she is today that her donor signed his card and discussed with his family!

Sadly, due to an unrelated transplant issue Debbie passed away on Wednesday January 4, 2017, in her 63rd year. She passed away peacefully, surrounded by her family at Victoria Hospital, London. Debbie is survived by her loving husband Ken. She will be sadly missed by her children Chris (Dawn) and Derek (Krista). Loving grandma to Peyton, Brooklyn and Conor who brought her so much joy. Forever cherished by her sister Gail Morrison (Tim Sheehan) and brother Ken Morrison (Lorri). Predeceased by her parents Eric and Carole Morrison. Debbie will be fondly remembered by her extended family as well as her many close friends.

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