

Wanda Grant - Seeing Results From Organ Donation Program

by Sandra Hennessey

Three organ transplant recipients were guest speakers at the Transplant Atlantic Forum on November 5th and 6th, in Halifax. Wanda Grant of Minto, who received a corneal transplant in 2012, was one of the speakers, along with a heart transplant recipient from Nova Scotia and a lung transplant recipient from Newfoundland.

Wanda Grant, a lifelong resident of Minto and a popular singer at events in the area, was diagnosed with glaucoma at the early age of nine months. Both of her eyes were affected, and surgery was done before she started school.

"I don't know how many surgeries I had between Fredericton and Halifax when I was a kid," she said. "But I could see well, and never wore glasses until after I graduated from high school, about age 19." Her last glaucoma surgery was done in 1988, and since then the pressure in her eyes has been perfect, she said.

Three years ago, Wanda's regular eye check-up showed cataract surgery was needed. The cataract was removed from her right eye three years ago by Dr. John Dickinson in Halifax.

Six months later, Wanda was told a corneal transplant was needed for her right eye, and she was placed on a waiting list for organ donations. More than a year later, in October 2012, a donor match came available.

"They called at 6:30 on a Tuesday night from Halifax, and I left the next morning on the bus. The transplant surgery was done Thursday morning by Dr. Stan George at the QE 2 Hospital in Halifax," she said.

The procedure was done in day surgery and took about



Wanda Grant is happy with the success of her corneal transplant.

an hour, followed by hours of remaining flat on her back during recovery. Wanda stayed at Point Pleasant Lodge near the hospital while in Halifax. It was comfortable and convenient accommodation, and her recovery went well.

"I had the transplant on

Thursday, came home to Minto Friday, then went to the Fred Fulton Memorial event on the Sunday," Wanda said. "I'm glad I went because they gave me the Fred Fulton award that night."

Further surgery in July 2014 removed the cataract from her left eye, and, so far, no transplant has been needed in that eye.

Wanda, who is now 46, has worked for the provincial government for 20 years, now in the department of health. When she returned to work two-and-a-half months after the corneal transplant, her office computer equipment was adjusted to make it easier on her eye.

Optimistic toward the future, Wanda is grateful for the skill of her doctors and to those who volunteer to donate their organs. She had her most recent eye examination two weeks ago. "I've been upgraded to bifocals now," she said with a smile.

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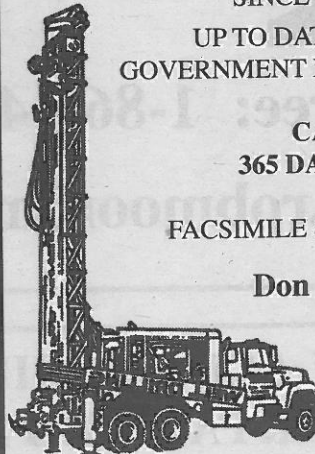
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