



National Kidney
Foundation

NDFC

NATIONAL
DONOR FAMILY
COUNCIL

PATCHES of LOVE

The National Donor Family Quilt





Donor: JEREMY WALKER GEORGITIS
February 17, 1984 - May 10, 1999

Our beloved son, Jeremy, died suddenly and tragically at age 15. We have taken great solace in the knowledge that seven people were given another chance at life from his organ donation.

When he was 12, Jeremy asked me about the donor sticker on my driver's license. He thought about it and suddenly asked if he, too, would be able to get a sticker when he received his license. I assured him he could and that we would honor his decision.

Our son was a loving, funny, caring young man who delighted in the outdoors. With us, he learned to hike, canoe, backpack and rock-climb. He hiked part of the Appalachian Trail and canoed on the St. Croix River. The nature preserve near our home dedicated a trail to Jeremy, and a poem I wrote, *This Child of Mine*, now hangs beneath the sign on "Jeremy's Trail."

The photo for the Quilt square was taken at Goose Rocks Beach, several miles from our home. Jeremy was two and he was an expressive, loving child. These traits never left him, and his last words to me were, "Love you, Mom."

The navy blue material in the Quilt square is leftover from the suit coat I made for him for eighth grade graduation, and the plaid material was from a shirt he wore as a child.

Though Jeremy's life was short, he lived it fully, having experienced adventures that some adults will never see. He loved life, loved his friends and, most of all, loved his family.

Sincerely,
Debra Georgitis

Note: This is one example of a Quilt square and story from a donor family. Additional Quilt squares and stories can be viewed online at www.donorfamily.org, along with other resources for donor families. Each Quilt square is unique and different, as were our loved ones.

ABOUT THE NATIONAL DONOR FAMILY QUILT

What is the National Donor Family Quilt?

Since 1995, thousands of families have created Quilt squares for *Patches of Love, the National Donor Family Quilt*. The Quilt is an ever-growing memorial created by donor families in honor of their loved ones.

Donor families are:

- Families whose loved ones died and donated their organs, tissues or both for transplantation or research efforts
- Families that would have liked to donate, but could not due to medical or other reasons
- Families that did not donate, but might have, had they been given the opportunity.

Quilt patches are adorned with special details such as photographs, poems and symbols of the loved one's life. Patches have been made out of sentimental materials such as baby blankets, high school jackets, ties and favorite sweaters.

The Quilt travels to events throughout the world to pay special tribute to our loved ones, while raising awareness about donation.

Patches of Love, the National Donor Family Quilt is a special project of the National Donor Family Council (NDFC) of the National Kidney Foundation (NKF).

Please be aware that the National Donor Family Quilt is designed to commemorate deceased donors. For ideas on honoring living donors, please contact the National Kidney Foundation.



Maggie Coolican, Donor Mom, Founding Chair of the National Donor Family Council

QUILT BEGINNINGS

As a mom of six, I have had the privilege of making “story” quilts for my children’s teachers and family friends, often for weddings or baby gifts.

I thought about how great it would be to make a quilt to remember my little Katie, who died at age six and was a donor. I wondered about the kind of patch she might like, and about other donor families. I thought, ‘Wouldn’t it be great to have a national quilt to remember all of them and to promote organ and tissue donation?’ The NDFC eagerly supported the project. The Quilt became a reality.

Families Share Patches

Patches of Love began arriving as soon as we published an article in *For Those Who Give and Grieve*, a quarterly newsletter for donor families published by the NDFC. There were traditional Quilt patches, some made from baby blankets or the donor’s favorite clothes, some with photos or embroidery.

As I sewed, I wondered about the donor, feeling that I knew each one in a special way through the life represented on the patch. I knew in a personal way how very difficult it was to put the life of a loved one on an eight-inch square. Soon, many of the local recovery organizations developed local quilts, giving families the opportunity to make patches for both national and local quilts.

The Quilt Today

Before we knew it, we had several panels that traveled throughout the United States, honoring donors and promoting organ and tissue donation. As of this printing, the Quilt has over 32 panels and it will never be finished. We know there will always be more families who face the death of a loved one and make the decision to donate. We would like to offer them the opportunity to honor that special person.

Maggie Coolican

OPPORTUNITIES TO VIEW THE QUILT

What is the *Quilt on Tour* Schedule?

The entire Quilt is displayed at the U.S. **Transplant Games** (held in even-numbered years by the National Kidney Foundation) and at the **National Donor Recognition Ceremony and Workshop** (held in odd-numbered years by the Division of Transplantation, Health Resources and Services Administration, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services).

The NDFC is proud to have one panel of the National Donor Family Quilt on permanent display at **The National Donor Memorial** in Richmond, Virginia.

(Note: This Quilt panel is occasionally shipped to other events, such as the U.S. Transplant Games or other events, as requested. Please contact the NDFC with questions about its availability.)

Many organizations, including organ recovery organizations, display the Quilt at special events. Families can also reserve the Quilt for family gatherings or milestone events.

The *Quilt on Tour* schedule can be viewed online at www.donorfamily.org and is also published in the *For Those Who Give and Grieve* newsletter. For the most up-to-date tour information, please contact the NDFC.

Please note: The entire Quilt is *not* displayed at every event, and not every event is open to the public. For information about which panels will be displayed at a particular event, or to request a specific panel of the Quilt, please call the organization sponsoring the event or the NDFC.

The entire Quilt can also be viewed online at www.donorfamily.org

Can Donor Families Reserve the Quilt?

Yes! Donor families can reserve a panel of the Quilt for family gatherings or events in their local area. Families can request their loved one’s Quilt panel for display on special occasions, holidays or local events. Some families reserve a Quilt panel for family reunions, memorial services, weddings, birthdays or anniversaries.

THANK YOU!

Thank you for your interest in *Patches of Love, The National Donor Family Quilt*. The National Donor Family Council is honored to work with donor families to commemorate their loved ones and promote donation.

8 inches

7 inches

quilt size guide

Your Quilt **fabric** must be an 8-inch square. It should be the same size as the yellow square shown here, and your **design** must fit within the pink square (7 by 7-inches). It is very important that you follow these size requirements so that your finished Quilt square will “fit” into the National Donor Family Quilt.



HOW TO MAKE A QUILT SQUARE

Where Can the Quilt Be Displayed?

Families and organizations can display the Quilt almost anywhere, at both public and private events, including:

- Local events honoring donors such as donor recognition ceremonies, memorial events, dinners, brunches, picnics
- Family gatherings or milestone events such as reunions, memorial services, weddings, anniversaries, birthdays and holidays
- Donor awareness activities: April is National Donate Life Month, but the Quilt can be reserved for a donor awareness campaign at any time throughout the year.
- Educational workshops, support groups
- Shopping malls, holiday gift fairs
- Universities, schools, lecture halls, libraries
- Places of employment
- Churches, synagogues, temples or other places of worship
- Arts and crafts shows, art classes, quilt-making workshops
- Health fairs, health screenings, hospitals, nursing homes

How Do I Reserve the Quilt?

For information about reserving a Quilt panel, please contact the NDFC for updated information and pricing. The NDFC can be reached by e-mail at donorfamily@kidney.org or by phone at 212.889.2210 or toll-free at 800.622.9010. Please notify the NDFC of any special requests, including requests for a specific panel of the Quilt.

Arrangements must be made in advance to display the Quilt properly and to obtain permission from the venue where the Quilt will be displayed.

How Do I Begin?

- Talk to your family members and friends. Get their input on designing the square, since only one square can be submitted per donor. Take your time and think about what you would like to include on the Quilt square. What was important to your loved one? What reminds you of him or her?
- Please use the size guide on pages 4–5 when designing your Quilt square. Your Quilt square **MUST** be an 8-inch x 8-inch square. Your design must fit inside a 7-inch square.
- You may use almost any fabric color or type, including sentimental materials such as part of your loved one's baby blanket, high school jacket, tie or favorite sweater. You may use paint (no watercolors), permanent markers, laminated photos or paper and thread to design the square.
- Please do **NOT** use glitter, stickers, glue, crayons or paper (unless laminated), as these items can easily fall off of your Quilt square.
- You may adorn the square with poems, quotes and/or symbols of your loved one's life, your loved one's name, date of birth and/or date of death. Please sew everything securely (do not use glue). The Quilt travels frequently, so make sure everything is as secure as possible.
- Do not “finish” the square with quilting or backing.
- If you would like to include a photograph of your loved one, you can have a photo transferred onto fabric at a copy shop. You may also be able to purchase special fabric for your personal printer.

What if I Can't Sew or I Need Help Getting Started?

If you are unsure of what to do:

- Visit www.donorfamily.org to view other Quilt squares for ideas and inspiration.
- Ask a friend or relative to help.
- Ask local fabric stores for tips from experienced quilters.
- Call the NDFC and we will find someone who can help you with your design.

- Attend a quilt-making workshop at special events, such as the U.S. Transplant Games.

Can I Make More Than One Square?

No. Due to the overwhelming response to this project, we request that each family honor their loved one with only one square.

You may want to ask other family members for their input when designing the square.

There may be a local quilt in your area, which would give you the opportunity to create another quilt square. Visit www.donorfamily.org or contact the NDFC for assistance in locating a local quilt.

What is the Deadline?

There is no deadline; the Quilt is never finished. This project is ongoing so that new families always have the opportunity to remember their loved ones in this special way.

Mailing in Your Quilt Square

- Please take a photo of your Quilt square before you mail it so you will always remember your design. Some families make pillows, wall hangings or other artwork from their Quilt design.
- A photo of your Quilt square will be added to the Web site at www.donorfamily.org, unless you indicate you don't want it published. We invite you to share a story about your Quilt design for our Web site as well. Stories must be limited to 100 words. You may send your story with your Quilt square, or wait and send it at a later time.
- Please complete the Quilt Release Form in this brochure.
- Enclose the square in a zippered plastic bag to ensure its clean, safe arrival. We recommend that you send your Quilt square in a padded envelope with cardboard to protect it. Send your square, Quilt Release Form and story (if you are enclosing one at this time) by *registered mail* or *insured carrier* to: **National Kidney Foundation • National Donor Family Quilt • 30 East 33rd Street • New York, NY 10016 • Phone: 212.889.2210**
- You will receive a letter confirming receipt of your square in six to eight weeks. If you want to confirm that your square was received or if you have questions, please contact the NDFC.



QUILT RELEASE FORM

Please complete this form if you are sending a Quilt square to the NDFC. You can also make a photocopy of this form or e-mail donorfamily@kidney.org for a copy.

Your Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Phone: () _____ E-mail: _____

I, _____, agree to allow the National Kidney Foundation (NKF) to include my Quilt square in the National Donor Family Quilt, as well as a picture of my Quilt square on www.donorfamily.org. If I am enclosing a story, I agree to allow the NKF to reprint all or parts of my story in national publications and/or on the Internet. I contributed a Quilt square in memory of _____

Name of donor _____

His/her date of birth: _____ Date of death: _____

He/she is my: _____
i.e., mother, brother, daughter, son

If you are including a story for www.donorfamily.org please choose one:

- Please print my story along with my name only.
- Please print my story along with my name, city & state.
- Do not print my name. Print only my story.

Signature _____ Date _____

Guardian's signature, if under 18-years-old _____

ABOUT THE NATIONAL DONOR FAMILY COUNCIL

The mission of the National Donor Family Council is to enhance the sensitivity and effectiveness of the organ and tissue recovery process, to provide opportunities for families to grieve and grow, and to utilize the unique perspective and experiences of these families to increase organ and tissue donation.

The National Kidney Foundation founded the National Donor Family Council (NDFC) in 1992 as a home for donor families. With more than 11,000 donor family members, the Council is the largest organized group of donor families in the world, representing donors of all organs and tissues.

The National Donor Family Council is part of the NKF's "People Like Us," a growing movement to empower, educate and enable donors and family members, people with chronic kidney disease (CKD) and transplant recipients to become effective advocates on issues related to their health.



This booklet is made possible by a generous gift from the Coolican family and is dedicated to Katie Coolican, the littlest mud wrestler...you led the way.



**National Kidney
Foundation™**

National Donor Family Council
30 East 33rd Street
New York, NY 10016
E-mail: donorfamily@kidney.org
Phone: 212.889.2210 or toll-free 800.622.9010

Visit the NDFC at: www.donorfamily.org
View the entire National Donor Family Quilt online.