

# OUTReach

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## REACH: HELPING ME LIVE MY BEST LIFE

A series of health issues led to the demise of Lynn's kidneys, but she is finding ways to live her best life.

Lynn Ashworth's trouble began in 2013 when she thought she had a routine cold. That "cold" turned into an emergency room visit for congestive heart failure that came from years of uncontrolled high blood

pressure. Lynn was made aware that she had Stage 3 kidney disease at that time. Then, in November of 2015, she had an aortic dissection and a kidney clot that propelled her toward Stage 4 kidney disease.

Lynn's nephrologist wanted to offer additional support for the management of Lynn's kidney disease, so she referred Lynn to REACH Kidney Care. (continued)



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## REACH: HELPING ME LIVE MY BEST LIFE (CONT.)

"My first meeting with REACH was so helpful. It was wonderful to meet a group of people that were looking out for me. Right away they provided extra support for my diet and started counseling me on how to live my best life," explained Lynn. "They are helping me keep my head above water and deal with this chronic illness."

Lynn's wife, Katherine, has been supportive each step of the way. "When I learned that Lynn had kidney disease, I thought, 'What do we do?'" said Katherine. "It's been an adventure. We have explored various things that we can do, diet and activities."

Katherine has joined Lynn at her REACH Kidney Care meetings. "REACH Kidney Care has been beneficial. Without them, we might have slipped. With them, we are maintaining Lynn's kidney function as long as we can," expressed Katherine.



Lynn sometimes struggles with the feeling of failure brought on by her kidney disease. Visiting with her nephrologist is sometimes difficult because of the tough conversations that need to take place. Those conversations revolve around lab values, that are often declining, and whether or not she is on the organ donor wait list.

"But, when I get to see my REACH team, I bring myself back to center. It's like seeing a friend I haven't seen in a long time. My care coordinator takes the time to see me as a person outside of just being a kidney patient," explained Lynn.

Lynn believes a large part of living a healthy life with kidney disease involves separating yourself from the disease. "I have the freedom to figure out what my best life is and I can go after that. I volunteer, work, and serve as a patient advocate. I enjoy spending time with my daughter, wife, and friends. I don't want to think about kidney disease 24/7. Ironically, being able to focus on something other than being a kidney patient, helps me to be a better kidney patient."

Lynn is still holding steady at Stage 4 kidney disease and has recently been added to the Midwest Transplant Network transplant wait list. She is A+. If you want to learn more about becoming a living kidney donor, you can view information on her Facebook page [www.facebook.com/LynnsNewKidney](http://www.facebook.com/LynnsNewKidney).

# Success Stories



### Charles Cooper

is 62 and has been in the REACH program for two years. Although he was hesitant in the beginning, he has developed a trust in his care coordinators. He has stopped smoking and had an access placed. Now he is lively and engaged and makes everyone around him laugh. He is always accompanied by his fiancée, June Hill.

### Terri Mielke

is 59-years-old and has had her transplant for 20 years! She started her journey with REACH about a year ago and had an eGFR of 19. That number has improved now to 23. She is a new grandma to twin boys.



### Jeanette Woodall

has Stage 5 kidney disease but doesn't let that stop her from traveling with her husband. She likes to hit the casinos and flea markets and has been in all 48 continental states. She has her access placed and her eGFR has consistently stayed at 5. She has successfully stayed off of dialysis.



# Raising Awareness for Organ Donation in a Community that Cares

When 68-year-old Phil Norris visited his doctor for his annual check-up in August of 2018, he learned something about his health that would change the course of his life and set him on the path to meeting others in his community that desired to help.

Phil's bloodwork revealed he had End Stage Renal Disease (ESRD), Stage 5 kidney failure.

"I was surprised and shocked," explained Phil. "I had been fatigued a lot, but I had no idea how or why my kidneys were failing."

After his visit to the doctor, he returned home to meet his wife of 26 years, Penny, who had been out for the afternoon. He explained that he was going to need to go to the emergency room. Penny calmly asked when they would need to go. Phil explained it would need to be immediately.

"Right then I knew that we would take it one step at a time, one appointment at a time, and one doctor at a time," said Penny.

Dr. Nath worked with Phil over a course of six weeks, reviewing his bloodwork to observe his overall kidney function and evaluate the next steps. Dr. Nath told Phil that it looked like his kidneys were rapidly declining. He needed to become active on the kidney transplant list and consider his dialysis options while waiting for a transplant. Dr. Nath referred Phil to REACH Kidney Care.



"I really had no idea how REACH fit into the picture," stated Phil. Yet, Phil took his doctor's advice and met with the team at REACH. "The REACH team was my first contact with treatment options and nutrition. I met with them two times and they were very helpful."

The REACH team was located in the same building as Dialysis Clinic, Inc. (DCI) North Hills. At DCI North Hills, he met with the home therapy team.

"The nurses there have been wonderful! They spent several weeks training me on peritoneal dialysis (PD)," said Phil.

Peritoneal dialysis allows Phil to complete his daily dialysis in the comfort of his own home. He is finally feeling more rested. However, he would love to have his whole life back and a transplant is the best therapy for restoring his quality of life.

It was during a meeting with his home therapy team that a nurse mentioned to Phil that a local hair salon might allow him to post his flyer mentioning the need for an organ donor.

Penny and Phil drove over to [Studio Raw](#) and met with Dan Burda, the salon owner. They asked him to share Phil's pamphlet and Dan surprised them by asking if he could do a video on Phil. The couple agreed and Dan met the couple in their home to complete a 7 minute 32 second video regarding Phil's need for an organ donor. The [Facebook](#) video has been shared 22 times and has received over 1,300 views.



Dan has led the charge to raise awareness about organ donation through his hair salon. He started a campaign to register organ donors and had 100 people register last year and expects to double that number this year.

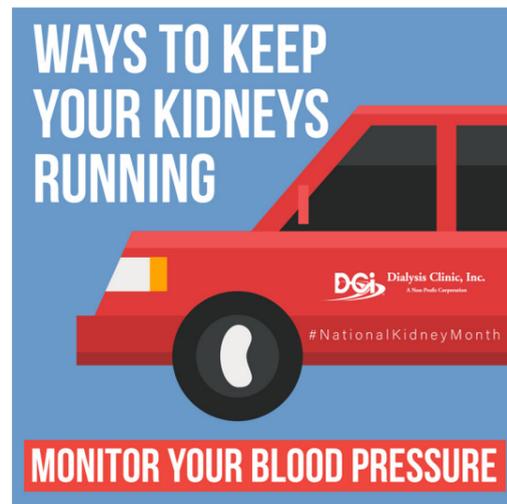
Many people have worked with Phil to encourage him in his journey toward a kidney transplant. Phil is grateful to Dan for sharing his message about the need for a living kidney donor. He is thankful for the support of his doctor and his dialysis team. He is type O and registered at the UPMC transplant center. More information is at [livingdonorreg.upmc.com](http://livingdonorreg.upmc.com).



# KEEP YOUR KIDNEYS RUNNING!

 **DON'T IGNORE THE WARNING SIGNS** 

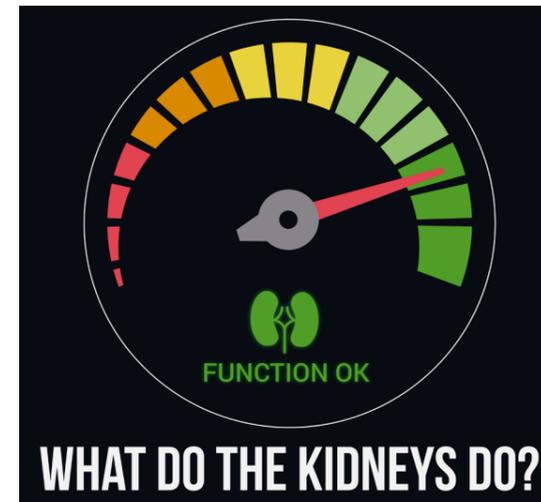
Just as a car requires maintenance to run properly, your kidneys require preventative maintenance to ensure optimal health.



Monitoring your blood pressure is a crucial way to keep your kidneys running. Having high blood pressure can decrease the function of your kidneys because it damages the blood vessels. This can limit the amount of waste and fluid they can filter over time.



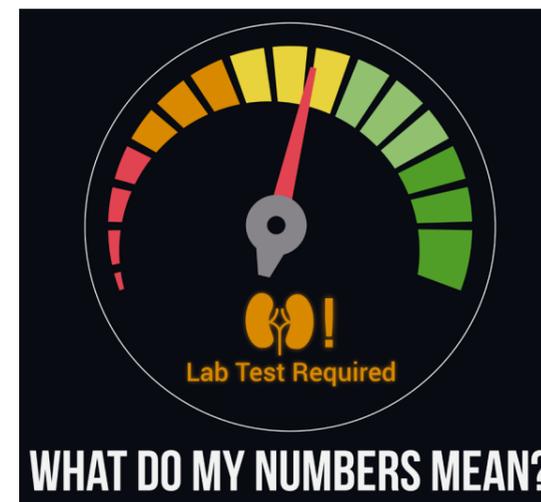
An important way for you to keep your kidneys running is to keep your diabetes in check. If you have diabetes, it is important to keep your blood sugar under control because this can directly lead to kidney disease. You and your doctor can work on ways to manage your blood sugar to help avoid kidney failure.



Are you curious about what the kidneys do? They do way more than just clean your blood. Learn all about the kidneys and the roles they play by checking out our Kidney Function information page at <https://www.dciinc.org/education/kidney-function/>.



Do you know what kidney disease is? It's where the kidneys are unable to filter your blood, due to other conditions such as diabetes and high blood pressure, among others. Read more to learn about kidney failure, what can cause it, and what the symptoms can be at <https://www.dciinc.org/kidney-disease-progression/>.



A series of tests can be done to help diagnose kidney disease, but sometimes those numbers can be hard for you to interpret. Staying informed during the process is crucial to you successfully managing your health. Take a look at our Lab Values Explained page to learn more at <https://www.dciinc.org/lab-values-explained/>.

# Dialysis Doesn't Have to Diminish Your Quality of Life

Talk to Delia Marshall and you'll soon hear her tinkling laughter and feel the joy that envelopes her conversation. You'll also hear the gentle kindness in her husband's voice as Adrian completes the details of the journey they've shared for 35 years together. Their marriage, built on faith and love, has endured the many challenges associated with chronic kidney disease. Over the years, they became a team that utilized every therapy available for kidney disease in order to enjoy a full life. "She's definitely full of positivity," explained Adrian Marshall when he talks about his wife, Delia.



Delia, diagnosed with Lupus at age 12, grew up in a town just 15 minutes from Adrian. Both were a part of the close-knit Jehovah Witness community. As children they knew each other because Adrian was a friend of Delia's brother. When Delia became a senior in high school, they realized their relationship was maturing beyond simple friendship. "We talked on the phone a lot. I knew he liked me," shared Delia with a smile in her voice.

In 1984, when Delia was 19 and Adrian was 21, they married. The young couple enjoyed volunteer work and bible education together. Delia was a part-time seamstress and Adrian was working in mental health vocational training. During their first few years together, they learned that Delia's kidneys were near failure. Believing they would not be able to have children, they adopted a two-day old son, Alec, in 1989. Shortly thereafter, Delia started dialysis.

"At first we were on in-center hemodialysis in a clinic at a local hospital. Delia didn't enjoy the process of in-center hemodialysis but she enjoyed the people," stated Adrian. "We soon learned about peritoneal dialysis (PD) and switched to that in 1990. PD made life more manageable."

In 1990, the Marshalls learned the birth parents to their son would be having another child, Austin. They were faced with the question of whether or not to adopt their son's brother. "We talked to our friends and family. People were honest with us. It would be tough being on dialysis and raising a newborn and a 10-month-old. We prayed about it and decided to do it," said Adrian.

Then, the surprise of lifetime came. In 1990, Delia found out she was pregnant with twin girls. She delivered her daughters, Jasmine and Monique, 11 weeks early. Tragically, Jasmine only survived a week.

In the midst of great joy and sorrow, the young family of five learned to adjust to dialysis at home. Life began to normal out for them. They were even able to take a short cruise to the Bahamas. "With PD we just mailed our supplies ahead of time to the ship and then carried on the cyclor machine. It was no problem. It didn't slow us down," explained Adrian.

In 2000, Delia received a kidney transplant and life was much easier. Unfortunately, the transplant failed in 2007. Delia wanted to go back to peritoneal dialysis, but there was scar tissue, so she learned to do home hemodialysis instead.

The family was introduced to home hemodialysis at DCI Clark Home Training Center in Albany, Georgia. "Gayla was the home training nurse. Our son, Austin, was trained to be Delia's care partner. The process was easy to learn and the staff was supportive and kind," claimed Adrian.

Being on home hemodialysis hasn't slowed the family down. They have travelled throughout the United States to Washington, Oklahoma, Connecticut, North Carolina, Nevada and Hawaii. "We travel a lot with our dialysis machine. You just have to remember to get to the airline early and check the machine as a medical device at the airline. It weighs about 100 pounds in total, but it flies free," explained Adrian.

Calcified arteries preclude Delia from getting another transplant, but that doesn't steal her joy. Currently, she is content to continue with home hemodialysis. Yet, she will tell you, having tried all the treatments, peritoneal dialysis (PD) is her favorite. "No needles" is something Delia likes. "You can dialyze while you sleep, there are no needles, and it's a smaller machine," explained Adrian.

Reflecting over their journey with kidney disease, the Marshall's identify the importance of a good relationship with the care team. "Dr. John Schilling and Dr. William DaVanzo from Albany, Georgia, have been key to Delia's successful treatment. I am certain that they have literally saved her life," stated Adrian.



As the Marshall family continues to live life to the fullest, they have advice for others facing kidney disease, "It's incredibly important for people with kidney disease to take control of their care. As the patient, you are in charge. Ask your doctor questions. Make informed decisions. Remember to be compliant with your treatment and talk openly with your doctors and nurses about what is and isn't working. Establish trust with open communication. Even with kidney disease, you can fully enjoy life."

# APRIL IS DONATE LIFE MONTH

April is Donate Life Month, and April 12th, is Blue and Green Day! We celebrate and show off our blue and green colors to raise awareness of organ donation and the need for organ donors. This month, we celebrate anyone who has received a transplant or has been an organ donor.

## Quick facts about organ donation:

**Someone is added to the transplant list every 10 minutes!**

[www.americantransplantfoundation.org/about-transplant/facts-and-myths/](http://www.americantransplantfoundation.org/about-transplant/facts-and-myths/)

**One deceased donor can save up to 8 lives through donation!**

[www.americantransplantfoundation.org/about-transplant/facts-and-myths/](http://www.americantransplantfoundation.org/about-transplant/facts-and-myths/)

If you want to sign up to be an organ donor, register at <https://www.organdonor.gov/register.html>

DCI clinics put together educational boards for patients to view in the clinic. With themes such as "Road to Transplant" and "Monopoly® - Kidney Edition" the DCI staff were able to educate patients and care givers on the facts about transplantation and the need for donors.



DCI Cullman, AL, created a board stressing the importance of emergency preparedness. The staff helped patients understand their nutritional options during an emergency situation.

## Kidney-Friendly Recipe:

# Cranberry-Lime Apple Spritzer

**Servings:** 20

**Total Time:** 35 minutes

### Ingredients:

- 1 zest of lime
- 2 bags 12 oz. Fresh or frozen cranberries
- 2/3 cup fresh lime juice about 5 limes
- 3 T. honey
- 4 cups apple juice
- 1 bottle of chilled seltzer water



### Directions:

1. Zest a lime: To remove the lime zest (the thin, colored portion of the peel), use a vegetable peeler to take it off in strips. Try to get just the zest portion, because that's where all of the flavor is.
2. Juice 5 limes and set juice aside.
3. In a large saucepan, combine the cranberries, apple juice, honey, and lime zest. Bring to a boil.
4. Reduce to a simmer and cook until the berries have all popped, about 15 minutes.
5. Strain the mixture through a fine-mesh sieve, pushing on the berries to extract as much liquid as possible.
6. Let cool to room temperature, then transfer the cranberry-lime juice to a jar or juice container with a tight-fitting lid.
7. Stir in the lime juice and shake to combine.
8. Store in the refrigerator. Makes five cups juice.
9. For one spritzer: Spoon ¼ cup of cranberry-lime juice into a tall glass and add ½ cup chilled seltzer.
10. Add ice if desired. Add flavoring to mix and shake well.

### Nutritional content per serving:

Potassium: 152 mg

Phosphorus: 14 mg

Sodium: 6 mg

**Sources:** Montanez Wade