

# Serenity

*A newsletter for our donor families*

**QUARTER 2 • 2022**



## **Donor Family Event: Healing with Music** **Tuesday, May 17, 2022 • 5:30 p.m.**

**Midwest Transplant Network • 1900 W. 47th Place • Westwood, KS 66205**

**M**idwest Transplant Network is excited to partner with donor sister Mattie Bonner and the Girl Scouts of America to invite you to attend our upcoming donor family event. Healing with Music is a Gold Award project that introduces the healing properties of music.

At this event, families will create musical memory boxes and learn about the importance music can play in healing during grief. All supplies will be provided, and dinner will also be served at this event. Registration is required, and space is limited to the first 40 participants. 



*Mattie Bonner*

### **In This Issue**

Our quarterly newsletter features inspirational stories of organ, eye and tissue donors as well as resources for Midwest Transplant Network's donor families.

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**Register for the event:**  
[mwtn.org/events](http://mwtn.org/events)



**MIDWEST  
TRANSPLANT  
NETWORK**



## Donate Life Legacy Walk 2022

**M**idwest Transplant Network invites you to join us for our sixth annual Donate Life Legacy Walk on Saturday, June 4. The 2022 walk will feature both in-person and virtual options for participants from all over the country to honor and celebrate the gift of life given through organ, eye and tissue donation. The in-person event will be hosted at the National WWI Museum and Memorial beginning at 6:30 p.m.

Here are some commonly asked questions that may help as you prepare to celebrate the gift of organ, eye and tissue donation with us:

### Q: Do I need to register?

**A:** Yes, please go to [mwn.org/legacy-walk](https://mwn.org/legacy-walk) to register — regardless of whether you plan to walk on your own or with us at the National WWI Museum and Memorial. You will be asked to indicate if you plan to participate in person or virtually in order to help us properly plan for a safe event. If you are unsure how you plan to participate, please select both virtually and in-person registration. By registering, you will ensure that you receive resources and announcements as they become available.

### Q: Can I register a team?

**A:** Yes, we encourage people to form teams and register together. To do that, a team leader should register for the walk, selecting “Creating a team and adding participants” for the first field. After the leader registers, that individual will receive a link on the confirmation page and via a confirmation email to share with team members so they can register themselves. Team leaders will receive a confirmation email when someone joins their team.

### Q: Is this a free event?

**A:** Midwest Transplant Network is honored to present the Legacy Walk at no cost to virtual or in-person participants as a celebration of organ, eye and tissue donation in our community.

### Q: How can I share my donation story with fellow Legacy Walk participants?

**A:** We encourage you to share your story by completing the form at [mwn.org/share-your-story](https://mwn.org/share-your-story) on our website. We will highlight these stories on our social media platforms leading up to, during and after the Legacy Walk.

### Q: As an in-person participant, what kind of programming can I expect on June 4?

**A:** The event will begin at 6:30 p.m. at the National WWI Museum and Memorial. We will celebrate the gift of life throughout the program and feature Funk Syndicate, a local Kansas City band. Participants will enjoy the opportunity to walk a Tribute Trail throughout the evening, with the program ending at 9:30 p.m.

### Q: If I participate in the in-person event, will there be COVID-19 restrictions?

**A:** We will follow current Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and City of Kansas City, Missouri guidelines.

### Q: Will food be available?

**A:** We are working to secure a variety of food trucks for the 2022 event. Trucks will be self-pay. You also may bring a picnic. Don't forget your water! No alcohol, please.

### Q: Will there be seating?

**A:** The event will take place on the North Lawn of the National WWI Museum and Memorial. We encourage you to bring your own blanket and/or portable chairs.

### Q: Where should I park?

**A:** There are several parking options near the National WWI Memorial and Museum. To find both free and paid parking options in the area, visit [parking.com/kansas-city](https://parking.com/kansas-city).

### **Q: What if there is bad weather?**

**A:** We encourage registrants to walk or recognize the Legacy Walk at any time leading up to, during or after June 4. Please be safe, follow the CDC's and your local health department's guidelines regarding COVID-19 and check weather conditions in your area before walking outdoors.

### **Q: When will the virtual event begin?**

**A:** The virtual event will begin at 9 a.m. on MTN's Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, LinkedIn and YouTube accounts.

### **Q: As a virtual participant, what kind of programming can I expect on June 4?**

**A:** Beginning at 9 a.m., we will share stories, videos, donation facts, photos and more from our Ambassadors, partners, community advocates and staff members through our social media platforms.

### **Q: What is a hybrid event?**

**A:** The hybrid walk allows you to choose how you participate. Those who cannot make it to Kansas City or who are more comfortable creating their own small celebration are encouraged to share their story and pictures throughout the week and day of the walk. In-person participants are invited to join us in a socially distanced and safe environment based on local guidelines at the time of the walk.

### **Q: I have a question that is not on the Q&A. Whom should I contact?**

**A:** Please email your questions to [legacywalk@mwtn.org](mailto:legacywalk@mwtn.org). 

## **What the Newly Bereaved Should Know**

**I**f you are new to the grief journey, you may find it darker, foggier, and more frightening than you expected. If you've been here before, you'll probably notice that things look different than you remember.

Many newly bereaved individuals find that they feel incredibly alone. There may be times when you feel let down by your support system, but try and remember, that more than likely, your friends and family have good intentions, but varying levels of tact and execution.

Though providing honest feedback to your support system sometimes feels awkward, you'll get more of what you need if you can tell people what is and is not helpful. Also, try and lean on your loved one's strengths and forgive their weaknesses. And when all else fails, look for the grief safe havens in your community, the counselors, support groups, and grief centers.

The next thing you should know is that there's no trail of breadcrumbs to lead you back to your old life. After someone you love dies, life changes. That's not to say everything familiar is lost. Some things about your old life are already gone, and some will necessarily change, but some parts will stay the same; you don't need to know which is which right now. Uncertainty is scary, but it's normal for things to be hazy in the beginning. There are a lot of things you can't know right now, but they will become more evident over time.

Also, there's a lot that probably hasn't sunk in just yet. Many people say the days following their loved one's death were a blur. You won't always feel this way. For many newly bereaved, what you're experiencing is probably more akin to a temporary acute stress response than grief.

As you become more familiar with grief, throw away any preconceived notions about it following a set of stages or about grief having a timeline with a beginning, middle, and an end. It's so tempting to believe in something that makes grief seem manageable. But how could anything unique to you and your relationship with your loved one possibly be so uniform?

Grief can be unruly and unpredictable. Sometimes you hear the rumble of thunder before the grief storms hit, and sometimes it bubbles up out of nowhere, but they do always subside. And it's through weathering these storms time and again that they incrementally become more bearable.

Your grief will forever be a part of you because your loved one is forever a part of you. Your loved one is never really gone from this world because they will live on in your mind, heart, and spirit. This is the guiding light that will help you during your grief journey. 

## Mission

Saving lives by honoring the gift of donation with dignity and compassion



1900 W. 47th Place, Suite 400  
Westwood, KS 66205

## Vision

Leading organ and tissue donation through excellence, quality and partnerships

## Contact Us

For more information or questions, call **913-262-1668** or visit **[mwtn.org](http://mwtn.org)**

To receive Serenity via email or to unsubscribe, please send your request to **[dfamily@mwtn.org](mailto:dfamily@mwtn.org)**.

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## Virtual Donor Hero Remembrance Garden

**A**pril 30 is Donor Remembrance Day, a day in which we all come together to honor and celebrate donor heroes who have given the gift of life through organ, eye and tissue donation. Together we “plant” forget-me-not flowers to symbolize that these heroes and their gifts will always be remembered. 



**Learn more or view donor hero tributes:**  
**[aopo.org/donor-remembrance-day](http://aopo.org/donor-remembrance-day)**

