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Letters to the editor: Thanks to an organ donor

(<http://www.pioneerlocal.com/lakezurich/news/forum/1951163.lake-zurich-letter-122409-s1.article>)

December 21, 2009

Never has the Christmas tree looked as beautiful for me as it does this year. The white lights seem to have a life of their own, as they illuminate the ornaments that gently rest upon the branches. Each ornament brings back a memory from a Christmas past. The tree itself seems taller, almost mammoth-like. It stands tall and proud even with the absence of presents. The void below the Christmas tree caused me to ponder what I want this year for Christmas. Anything that can be store-bought seemed so meaningless and cold. It was then that I realized my Christmas had come early this year, and that I have already received the greatest gift of all, the gift of life.

This Christmas, I wouldn't be able to stare at this magnificent tree if it were not for my donor, from which I received a new heart and kidney. This Christmas, I get to watch old holiday films. This Christmas, I feel the same excitement that I did as a child on Christmas morning as I dashed frantically down the stairs to see what Santa had brought for me. I would have never been able to do any of this if it were not for the family of my donor, who in their darkest hour mustered the ability to step outside of their pain, so that they could take away mine.

I've realized what I want more than anything this year for Christmas. I want the donor family to be happy. I want them to be thankful that they have each other. I want their holiday to be filled with the same traditions, and for the New Year to bring them only happiness, because they gave me happiness. I am thankful for them, and I am thankful to be alive.

I encourage everyone to make a simple New Year's resolution this year and pledge to give the gift of life by registering to be an organ and tissue donor at www.DonateLifeIllinois.org. It will only take a moment, but could someday save a life like my own.

Bill Coon

Lake Zurich

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