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From Left: Diane Krzyzanowski, kidney recipient, two surgical interns, and kidney donor Karyn Anderson in Buffalo General before the surgery.

New Website a Life Saver

by Nancy Gish

You can get almost anything these days on the Internet, and now you can even get a kidney thanks to a new website.

Alden High School graduate class of 1977, and a nurse at Buffalo General Hospital, Diane Krzyzanowski has recently been a recipient of a kidney from a live donor.

This unusual act has transformed Diane's life. The 47 year old Akron woman, once facing dialysis to stay alive due to kidney disease, is now healthy and part of a group of kidney recipients that have started a website to help others find a living donor also.

The local site has been up and running since last September. People in need of a kidney can

post their profile on the site. It started with 3 recipients and now there are 24 of us, said Diane.

She acknowledged that being a living donor is not for everybody. For those who are considering this unbelievably unselfish gift, the site can help you. The donor's operation is completely paid for by the health insurance of the recipient. The donor is urged to pay for the loss wages if any and food of the donor and air fare if they come from out of state. Diane said her co-workers had a benefit to help pay expenses for Diane's donor.

Diane said of donors, "these people are very unique and special. Some are on a mission. We are very blest to have someone who wouldn't give up." Diane said "My donor, Karyn Anderson



Diane Krzyzanowski and Karyn Anderson

came from Minnesota, three states away, to give me a kidney. Karyn comes from a "donor family- three other members of her family have been living donors."

Often, a person in need of a kidney has failed to find a match with a family member so they are looking to strangers or co-workers to step forward. Living donors are now outnumbering deceased donors for the first time. Buffalo General Hospital now takes living donors kidneys and more and more hospitals are coming on board with this."

Physicians say deceased donors kidneys last about 10-15 years while living donors kidneys last up to 20-30 years. Matches are for those over 21 and 60 or under. They try to match up people close to your own age within 5-10 years, said Diane.

And donors must be in almost 100% good condition. She called her new kidney, "a miraculous experience". "I lost my mom and aunt to kidney failure and my 40 year old cousin is now on dialysis while looking for a donor."

Diane said she was on a national list for a donor called "Matching donors.com" when a donor came forward for another young man. Fortunately for me, he had already found a donor and the new donor just happened to be a perfect match for me! "It was divine intervention!"

She said she and Karyn talk almost every day on the phone and she plans to visit here soon.

The website is www.wnykidneyconnection.com.