See inside:
News and Photos from La Chapelle d’Abondance 2014
CONTENTS

Editorial
Message from the President............Page 3

Profile
Q&A session with
Prof Won-Hyun Cho...............Pages 4-5

Future WTGF Events
20th World Transplant
Games 2015...............................Page 6

WTGF Member Country
News........Pages 5, 7, 8, 9, 12 and 13
News from the
Nicholas Cup 2014..................Page 9
Photos from the 9th Winter
World Transplant Games and
Nicholas Cup................Pages 10-11
TACKERS ...............................Page 14

Sport, Health, Training
Mountaineering - Argentina............Page 15
Waiting for a Donor Heart..............Page 16
WTGF World Records
amendments........................Page 16
WTGF News..........................Page 16
Focus On
Venezuela..........................Page 17
Life Story
Jesse Parker – Canada........Page 18
Erminio Rigos – Italy........Page 19

Acknowledgements:
Editor: Olivier Coustere
Sub Editor: Colleen Horan-Green
Content/Article Coordinators: Karen Cole and Mary Twomey
Artwork: inkCap Design, Somerset, UK
www.inkcapdesign.co.uk
Printer: Printech Europe Ltd, Chelmsford, UK
www.printechurope.com

WTGF
Basepoint Business Centre
1 Winnall Valley Road
Winchester
SO23 0LD United Kingdom
Tel: +44 1962 832560
Email: wtgf@wtgf.org
Website: www.wtgf.org

Front cover: Winter World Transplant
Games 2014, La Chapelle d’Abondance, France
The 9th Winter World Transplant Games and Nicholas Cup was an amazing success in La Chapelle d’Abondance, France. As Chairman of the Local Organising Committee, I was delighted to welcome 211 participants from 19 countries to this beautiful skiing village in the Haute-Savoie. You will find photos and information about the event further on in TransplantWorld and all the results, photos and wonderful videos can be seen on the Games website www.transnoworld2014.org. A huge “thank you” to all the volunteers and helpers who made the Games possible. It is my dream that one day the Winter Games will go again to a country outside of Europe – it is such a friendly and warm event where all the competitors, adult and juniors are in daily contact both on and off the slopes... so, Country Representatives, please give this some consideration...

Since we last met in Durban, I had the honour to meet the newly appointed Medical Director of the International Olympic Committee, Dr Richard Budgett and I was accompanied on the visit by Professor Jacques Pirenne, a senior liver transplant surgeon from Belgium. We explained to Dr Budgett the unique nature of our events and of our athletes and we had a very open and informative discussion. One particular area of strong interest was the idea that some of our transplanted athletes could consider abandoning their prescribed medication in order to enhance their sports performance...this matter was covered strongly by Dr Daryl Wall at the Workshop in Durban and I urge you all to take seriously the advice that is given and which is strongly supported by the IOC Medical Director. By the way, I hope that we may have a representative of the IOC at the next Games and we have issued an invitation to Dr Budgett to come and witness our events and in due course I hope that Professor Pirenne will also become more involved in our work as his knowledge and experience will add much to our research.

By the time you receive this Journal, the WTGF Executive and Councillors will have made a trip to Mar del Plata, Argentina to inspect the sporting venues, accommodation and facilities on offer for the World Transplant Games in 2015. A lot of work is planned for this visit, as in addition to inspections and meeting with the LOC in Argentina, the Council have much WTGF business to discuss in annual face-to-face Council Meetings. We will keep you informed of any relevant discussions and decisions.

At the beginning of May, WTGF Secretary Gary Green, Councillor Willie Uys and I visited Malaga, Spain in order to view the proposed venues in their bid for the 2017 Games. All the relevant information will be circulated to the full Council and a delegation from Malaga will present face-to-face to the Council during the time in Mar del Plata in June. After that time, a formal announcement regarding the venue for 2017 will be made.

I hope that you will all enjoy a sunny summer or a kind winter wherever you are in the world and wish you all health and prosperity until we meet again.

Yours friendly

Olivier Coustere
President

“Believe you can and you’re halfway there.”

Theodore Roosevelt
Q. Since the first renal transplant in South Korea in 1969, how has the transplant program for all organs developed in your country?

A. We started in 1969 with a program of living donor kidney transplantation and it took another 10 years to 1979 before we conducted our first deceased donor transplantation, followed four years later by our first deceased liver transplant. Since that time, we have continued to progress with exchange donor kidneys, simultaneous kidney-pancreas, heart, lung, small bowel, and multi-visceral transplantation. There has been an ongoing review in South Korea of legislation relating to transplantation with the most recent reform of transplantation law being effective in 2010.

The various agencies involved in promotion and awareness campaigns of the benefits of organ donation include KONOS (Korean Network for Organ Sharing), hospital based Organ Procurement System, KODA (Korean Organ Donation Agency) and Vitallink Korea and Viallink International.

Q. Is South Korea a role model for transplantation and organ donation awareness in Asian countries?

A. We are trying to be a model country in organ transplantation and donation. Before legislation of transplant law, Korea also suffered from organ trade and associated social problems. But the Korean Transplantation Society and Ministry of Health made every effort to create an ethical transplantation environment and legal framework and governing system which resulted in our transplantation law in 2000.

As a result of this legislation, we can operate under the guidance of this law, and can strictly prohibit organ trade. As the Korean Network for Organ Sharing (KONOS) was established in 2000, transparency of organ allocation became possible and management of waiting-lists on the official website. Organ donation campaigns are being conducted by many NGOs since 1990 and these NGOs are performing collaborative work since 2009.

Because of these legal, social and academic efforts, we were able to achieve 8.3 deceased donor rate per million population in 2013 compared to 0.8 in 2002.

Q. What was the reason that you chose to lead the team of transplanted athletes to the World Transplant Games as their Team Manager and then to put your name for the election to the WTGF Council?

A. I seriously considered the most effective campaigning method to advertise the necessity for organs for transplantation and my final decision was showing the normal healthy life of transplanted recipients to the public. For this purpose, the World Transplant Games was the one I had been looking for. Team Korea has participated at the WTG regularly but they needed a person to lead them. Actually, the Korean Transplant Society, NGOs and volunteers didn’t know about the Games so the athletes had no-one to lead them and were disappointed and confused a lot when they wanted to attend the Games. This is why I chose to volunteer as Team Manager in 2011. At the same time, I wanted to produce an advertising video clip for TV broadcasting about their activity in the World Transplant Games and their success stories.

“Even the last competitor to the finishing line in swimming or the marathon, will receive the biggest applause for achieving their goal.”
By attending the WTG, I had a chance to put my name forward for WTGF council. I wanted to use this opportunity to activate organ donation in Asian countries by devoting myself to encourage transplantation and organ donation systems in each country.

Q. What do you consider the main message and the main benefits of the World Transplant Games and other sporting events for transplanted people?

A. For the transplanted athletes, the WTG provides a stimulus to recipients to rehabilitate themselves. For the general population, the Games are an opportunity to show the normal healthy life of transplanted athletes and this will inspire people who hesitate or have negative views about organ donation. This could eventually change their minds and help to develop a general consensus about the benefits of organ donation. For the donor family, the Games can allow them to be proud about their decision to donate their loved ones organs. They can realize their decision was not in vain.

Like the Olympic Games, the colour of the medal is not important. Even the last competitor to the finishing line in swimming or the marathon, will receive the biggest applause for achieving their goal.

Q. Explain the work of Vitalink which you founded and of which you are President.

A. Vitalink is a compound word of ‘vital’ and ‘link’, which means link of donor’s vital sign to recipient. It really means organ recipients can continuously survive by transplanting the donated organ. It was founded by Korean Transplantation Society in 2009 and most of the leaders of transplantation centers and transplantation coordinators in Korea joined Vitalink as a Board or Member. The main purpose is to develop educational materials for organ donation campaigns and periodical education of contact persons of NGOs, students and medical staff in ICU. Also Vitalink suggests better policy direction to the Ministry of Health about organ transplantation and donation. By doing this, we hope to establish an ethical and legal transplantation and organ donation system in my country. But now, we are trying to share our experience with other neighboring Asian countries especially the countries that just begin transplantation.

Last February, we held the 2nd Vitalink international workshop together with the West Pacific regional office of WHO. Delegates from more than 12 Asian countries participated and we could draw a tailored consensus that suits each country. We will hold this workshop every two years and hope to develop transplantation systems and to achieve self sufficiency in organ donation together with us in every Asian country. This is why organ shortage is not one country’s problem but a global and international problem.
WELCOME TO MAR DEL PLATA, ARGENTINA!
20th World Transplant Games
23rd to 30th August 2015

The next World Transplant Games will take place for the first time in Latin America. This gives us the chance to spread the word in the region about organ donation and the benefits of transplanted people practicing sport. But it also gives us the chance to welcome transplanted athletes from all over the world, together with their friends and families, and to share the beauty of our country and the warmth of our people.

You are about to enjoy a different time in Mar del Plata, where beautiful natural resources, culture, top ranking facilities, highlighted services and the warmest hospitality are joined together.

During the 20th World Transplant Games, you will have the opportunity to visit places of historical and religious interest such as museums, churches and chapels and wander the streets that were at the time wandered by famous personalities such as Juan Carlos Castagnino, the musician Astor Piazzolla, the poet Alfonsina Storni and the writer Victoria Ocampo.

Tango is the Argentine typical musical genre and dance. In Mar del Plata you will find a great variety of “milongas” and “tanguerías” (places to dance and listen to Tango) which are part of the tourist attractions and the traditions of our country.

The big Argentine bandoneon player and composer, Astor Piazzolla, considered to be one of the best musicians of the 20th century, is an icon and pride for the city - his work is a very important part of our identity.

Mar del Plata is also proud of being an experienced host of international sports events. The World Transplant Games Opening Ceremony in 2015 will take place at the Polideportivo Islas Malvinas stadium, located at a Municipal Sports Park. This is an indoor stadium for multiple purposes, built in 1995 for the Pan American Games. Competitions of different sports can take place in this venue and other kind of shows such as conventions, exhibitions, religious events and ceremonies as well.

The building has a capacity of 7600 seating spectators. It also has VIP access for press, exclusive entrance for judges and players, conference room, changing rooms and additional facilities.

This place has hosted many international championships of sports such as basketball, volleyball, handball, and even hosted the final of the Davis Cup between Argentina and Spain in 2008.

We are now looking forward to welcoming the World Transplant Games Federation President and Council to Mar del Plata on June 15th.

We are getting ready to offer a wonderful Games next year in Argentina. We know you will have a great time in Mar del Plata and once again we will have the chance to spread the word together about the gift of life, throughout the world.

Follow us at facebook:
https://www.facebook.com/officialworldtransplantgames
The 28th Heart Race 2014
From April 2nd to April 6th - 4 days/4 nights, 750 km, 225 runners...an extraordinary race to promote organ donation across France.

As every year, with humanitarian vocation, and supported by Professor Christian Cabrol (who performed the first heart transplantation in Europe - April 27th, 1968), the Heart Race 2014 allowed 15 teams of 14 runners, and a team of 14 transplanted runners to link Paris to the winter sports resort of Les Arcs (Arc 1800 in Savoy in France) after 4 days and 4 nights and 750 km in relays.

At the same time, the action group “10,000 hearts for hospitals” collected more than 13,000 “paper hearts” - symbols of generosity and support for transplanted people and patients waiting for a graft. These were made and offered by school children along the route. One of the key points of the race and the most memorable moments will doubtless be the extraordinary participation of villages that we passed through - thanks to the sensitization work of Trans-Forme volunteers to increase awareness about organ donation together with the work of our supporting organizations and the Ville du Coeur de Semur en Auxois, Moûtiers and Bourg-Saint-Maurice. In addition to the great applause and warm reception, villagers often accompanied their paper hearts with a friendship drink, which was much appreciated by the runners.

Two clowns, artists and Trans-Forme partners, also put on a show for children in schools and got the kids and the adult spectators involved and interested. Clowns called Boula and Zébule gently work to increase organ donation awareness. Patient concerns are approached with simple words. Furthermore, humour and music allow the young audience to think positively about organ donation.

Three comedians from theatre company “Viva” also performed in a public show! Set in the 17th century in a French village, a doctor was trying to save his wife by performing the first lung transplant. Using the comic mode, the show called “Isabelle’s Resurrection” was also used to increase the public awareness in a light and didactic way.

Sustainable development – This year, Trans-Forme dedicated two volunteers to help the race to be more attentive to the environment. They were in charge of educating runners and volunteers to take care of their environment and change their habits with a system of selective sorting. During the race, they did their best to teach everyone how to separate the rubbish in order to be more environmentally friendly.

For this 28th year, Trans-Forme also produced a special donor card - edition 2014 from the Heart Race - which can be downloaded at www.lacourseducoeur.com. You will also see that this is next to other numerous “collector” donor cards produced by famous personalities, friends of the race, who all support organ donation!

French weekend “Surf & Golf” at Mimizan Beach - France
Trans-Forme organized a weekend of “Surf & Golf” at Mimizan Beach in September 2013. The aim of the trip was to encourage its members to discover and/or improve in surf and/or golf. Open to all French association members, eight participants with three juniors enjoyed a fabulous weekend with amazing sunshine.

The “Transplant Football Team”
The French Transplant Football Team was born thanks to the passion for football of some transplant athletes. The team is composed of organ recipients – (heart, liver and kidney) as well as supporters of Trans-Forme and matches are organized throughout the year all over France.

The last match was held in November 2013 at Cachan in the Paris suburbs against the team of “Polymusclés”. The “Transplant Football Team” won the match 2-1!

The next match will take place on Saturday, May the 17th at Cachan again, versus the famous French team “Foot sans Frontières”!

www.trans-forme.org
9th Austrian Skiing Championships – Innerkrems 2014

More than 70 contestants, recipients, dialysis patients and accompanying staff from Austria and Germany converged on the Carinthian ski region of Innerkrems over the weekend of the 21st and 22nd March to compete in the Austrian Championships of Giant Slalom and Cross Country.

Unbeatable Chantal Bausch and Andreas Wieser!

Friday started with majestic blue skies and perfectly groomed slopes. The afternoon was set aside for the first practice runs and competition began in earnest on the Saturday.

The Giant Slalom slope, which had hosted the Croatian and Slovenian Skiing Championships on Thursday, presented itself in shipshape condition despite the spring-like temperatures. The Ski Club Innerkrems-Eisentratten flagged out a highly selective championship course. Just like last year, the Bremen skier Chantal Bausch came in first, closely followed by the Salzburg skier Uli Semrad and Upper Austrian, Andrea Leitner. The ladies Category 2 winner was Monika Blüml from Lower Austria, runner up was Gudrun Manuwald-Seemüller from Germany and in third place was the Tyrolean, Erika Langbauer.

The men’s race witnessed a change in generations as our last years’ Category 1 winner Walter Rettenegger submitted his crown to Andreas Wieser. The results of the men’s competition are:

Category 1: 1. Andreas Wieser (Salzburg)  2. Thomas Römiger (Salzburg) 3. Helmut Steigersdorfer (Upper Austria) and Martin Krimbacher (Tyrol)
Category 2: 1. Walter Rettenegger (Styria) 2. Egon Neuner (Tyrol), 3. Reinhard Stocker (Styria)
Category 3: 1. Rudi Hauser (Upper Austria)  2. Franz Hackl (Upper Austria)  3. Ulf Ederer (Tyrol)

A gripping “head to head” of two Tyroleans!

The afternoon saw the Cross Country athletes compete. Eleven ladies and men had a tough race over four laps in the deep and soft cross country tracks. Our showcase skier Renata Hönisch from Upper Austria proved to be in a class of her own. Accompanied by her guide Peter Schmid, she scored the third fastest time (ladies and men combined) and thus beat her opponents by a long shot. Lower Austrian, Gertrude Gundinger came in second.

The men’s competition proved very exciting with both Tyrolean board members Erich Sonnweber and Martin Krimbacher in top form. Our board member Martin missed the title by a mere seven seconds when Treasurer Erich Sonnweber secured first place. Upper Austrian, Christian Lechner pocketed the bronze medal. Carinthian, Hubert Wastian finished first in the higher age category for men with Alois Rossman from Vienna and Tyrolean, Ulf Ederer coming in second and third respectively.

Every contestant is a winner!

“Bubbly Thigh Slappers” boost the mood!

Aside from the athletic and sporting aspect, the weekend was a social highlight. For us on the organising committee this is a very relevant part of the event. The skiing championships are a meeting ground where recipients and their companions can meet up with others and chat in a casual atmosphere. The Sporthotel Frühauf proved to be a base second to none! Several athletes made use of their time to discuss the day’s events at the cosy hotel bar.

The highlight of the weekend was the medal ceremony on Saturday evening. The Vice-Mayor Stefan Schiffer of Krems municipality and Heinz Kabusch, Head of the Innerkrems Ski Club and Chairman of the Carinthian Ski Union, were our guests of honour. Both were impressed by the transplant recipients’ achievements in the races. The highpoint was set by the Hochstadlerbuam from Isrschen, whose thigh slapping performance had the audience cheering and contributed to a great night out. Some carried on celebrating into the small hours!

Martin Krimbacher
Austria
9th Winter World Transplant Games 2014 - Nicholas Cup!

During the week of the last Winter World Transplant Games 2014 at La Chapelle d’Abondance, six transplanted children, all of whom had never skied before, participated in the “Nicholas Cup”. They spent each morning learning how to ski and every afternoon the children took part in many fun activities such as snake-gliss, sledge horse, sledge dog, snowshoes... and even swimming!

The six youngsters comprised of four French children aged between 10 and 11 years, an Irish boy of 16 years and a 9 year old British girl. The week culminated in the Nicholas Cup race on the final day with some wonderful results and great effort from all the children who each received a medal for their commitment.

Every child who participated in the Nicholas Cup experienced a lot of fun during a memorable week and smiles were to be seen on all their faces.

Rachel Hooley – happy to be awarded the 2014 Nicholas Cup

The 2014 Nicholas Cup kids with volunteers and instructors

On the final day of the Winter World Transplant Games, Rachel Hooley, a heart recipient from the United Kingdom, was delighted to be awarded the Nicholas Cup Award for her endeavours throughout the week!

Anais Garnier
France

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NAME</th>
<th>COUNTRY</th>
<th>RUN 1</th>
<th>RUN 2</th>
<th>BEST RUN</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Victoire Detourne</td>
<td>France</td>
<td>29.62</td>
<td>26.88</td>
<td>26.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mathilde Chassoux</td>
<td>France</td>
<td>31.24</td>
<td>28.41</td>
<td>28.41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alice Tapping</td>
<td>France</td>
<td>33.41</td>
<td>30.23</td>
<td>30.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Andrew Duncan</td>
<td>Ireland</td>
<td>34.30</td>
<td>34.30</td>
<td>58.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rachel Hooley</td>
<td>Great Britain &amp; NI</td>
<td>56.92</td>
<td>39.31</td>
<td>39.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Julia Acar</td>
<td>France</td>
<td>1:08.75</td>
<td>46.72</td>
<td>46.72</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

WORLD KIDNEY DAY IN BHUTAN

The Bhutan Kidney Foundation (BKF) in collaboration with Royal Institute of Health & Science (RIHS) observed World Kidney Day (WKD) for the first time ever in Bhutan on 13th March, 2014 at Clock Tower Square in Thimphu.

Background
World Kidney Day (WKD) is a global health awareness campaign focusing on the importance of the kidneys and aiming to reduce the frequency and impact of kidney disease and its associated health problems worldwide. World Kidney Day is held annually on the second Thursday in March. Initially 66 countries observed this date in 2006 and numbers continue to rise each year with 157 countries taking part in 2013. WKD is a joint initiative of the International Society of Nephrology (ISN) and the International Federation of Kidney Foundations (IFKF). It is true that most forms of kidney disease are treatable if detected early but this is often not generally known. Hence, WKD spreads the message across the world through campaigns which raise awareness regarding kidney health.

The Event
The joint activities with BKF and RIHS saw a program of free checkups of blood pressure, glucose random, and body mass index held from 9am till 4pm on the day which attracted much interest and many people signing up for testing. The Health Minister, Tandin Wangchuk, joined the day as a guest of honour and shared his deep concern with the growing number of kidney failure patients in the country.

The day in Thimphu was marked with cultural programs by various artists and singers volunteering their time and with talks on kidney disease and other non-communicable disease.

Tashi Namgay
Bhutan
9th WINTER WORLD TRANSPLANT GAMES AND NICHOLAS CUP
LA CHAPELLE D’ABONDANCE, FRANCE 2014

Snowshoes and snowfall!
Rushing through the snow!
Curling competitors!

The teams gather round for the Opening Ceremony

Proudly leading the procession!

Happy participants!

Biathlon - concentration and skill
A fantastic week in the snow was enjoyed by 211 participants from 19 countries at the 9th Winter World Transplant Games and Nicholas Cup in La Chapelle d’Abondance, France in January 2014 – fun, competition and friendship were on the agenda! The beautiful Opening Ceremony was followed by a week of winter sports which included Slalom, Parallel Slalom, Giant Slalom, Super Giant, Cross Country, Snowboarding, Biathlon, the Nicholas Cup race and, for the first time at a Winter Games, the 150m Schuss. Curling and Snowshoes events were also available to give less experienced or non-skiers a chance at competition and an Organ Donation Walk through the beautiful ski village of La Chapelle was just one of the activities enjoyed by all.

The invaluable hard work of the Local Organising Committee and volunteers made this a Winter Games to remember. A huge “Thank You” to everyone involved.

An inspiring film made during the Games week, “Smiles & Slopes”, can be accessed on www.wtgf.org/galleries.
**HEADLINE NEWS FROM NEPAL**

**“Health Minister’s Team defeated by 4-0!”**

The 5th Nepal Transplant Games was held in Butwal, near Buddha’s birthplace Lumbini, on the occasion of Happy New Year 2071. The Aarogya Foundation, Lalitpur and Human Organ Transplant Center, Bhaktapur jointly organise this event every year on the 1st day of the Nepali new year. The local organisers were the Lions Clubs of Butwal Tilottama and Tilottama Mayadevi and the Leo Club of Tilottama Mayadeve. The program was attended by chief guest, Minister for Health and Population Khaga Raj Adhikari, guest of honour, Chief Secretary of Nepal government, Mr Lila Mani Paudel. Special guests were the President of Aarogya Foundation, famous entertainers Ani Choying Drolma and ‘MaHa’ Jodi, Human rights activist Mrs Sapana Pradhan Malla, senior clinicians and other guests from Australia, UK and all over the country.

The Games featured 100m, 200m and 400m races for recipients and organ donors but the main attraction of the Games was a friendly football match between transplant recipients and the Health Minister’s team which included the Chief Secretary of Nepal, clinicians from Nepal and abroad, artists, human right activists, journalists and social workers. Transplant recipients defeated the Health Minister’s team by 4-0!

The Minister for Health and Population declared he would donate his kidneys after death and promised to bring forward a concrete program for the prevention of kidney disease soon. Chief Secretary Mr. Lila Mani Paudel stressed the need to spread such an awareness program throughout the country. Artists Ani and ‘MaHa’ also highlighted the importance of an awareness campaign to promote organ donation and transplantation in the country. The Local Organising Committee arranged a grand transplant rally on the eve of the New Year which proceeded through the streets of Butwal city.

Dr Pukar Shrestha reiterated that transplant sport provides the best opportunity to prove that transplant recipients are fit and active and can be equally useful to the society and country as fully healthy people.

Dr Pukar Shrestha
Executive Director of Human Organ Transplant Centre
General Secretary of Aarogya Foundation
Nepal

---

**A Tribute to the World Transplant Games 2013 by the South African Postal Authority**

To celebrate the Games and honour the wonderful spirit of the transplanted athletes who gathered in Durban last summer for the 19th World Transplant Games, the South African Postal Authority agreed to issue ten stamps and two commemorative envelopes to mark the occasion.

This was an amazing tribute to the Games being staged for the first time on the African continent and artist Peter Sibanda did a wonderful job of creating the vibrant and colourful stamps that you see below. They were issued at an official ceremony on 29th July 2013 and they represent heart, kidney, liver and lung recipients taking part in volleyball, table tennis, high jump, javelin, tennis, running, cycling, badminton and shot put.

For philatelists around the world, this was a unique opportunity to acquire these stamps and as the French Philately Magazine of the French Association of Thematic Philately announced, the stamps would appeal not only to those collecting stamps with a sporting theme, but also a medical theme.

The stamps being unveiled at the Games in Durban by Ms Getty Semilane, Director of the Board of Directors of the SA Post Office, Chairperson of the Stamp Advisory Committee and James Nxumalo, Mayor of Durban.
Trevin and Jenn met on the first day of the World Transplant Games in Durban, South Africa last year, which they attended as part of the team from the United States. They spoke at the beach walk and had an instant connection. Trevin and Jenn then became inseparable throughout the Games. Trevin is from Oklahoma and is a pancreas recipient and Jenn is a heart recipient from Pennsylvania. Trevin had his pancreas transplant nearly six years ago and Jenn her heart transplant nearly eleven years ago. At the Games both Trevin and Jenn were successful in their chosen sports with Trevin winning a silver medal in golf and gold in pétanque. Jenn participated in volleyball and lawn bowls doubles, winning a silver medal in lawn bowls. The day after returning home from South Africa Trevin booked a flight to Philadelphia to visit Jenn.

Jenn and Trevin quickly realised what a strong bond they have due to going through similar life experiences. They had grown up playing sports, had unexpectedly got sick in high school and then needed life saving organ transplants in college. After dating long distance for a little while, Trevin and Jenn knew they wanted to be together. Trevin had planned to move to Florida to attend school to be a Golf Pro and Jenn got a job in the same area so they were reunited. In December 2013 Trevin asked Jenn to marry him at a candlelit dinner on a beach in Miami, Florida. Jenn was happy to say “yes” and the wedding is next year in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania on 10th January 2015.
In 2002, we organised our first week long international TACKERS camp for transplant recipient children, in Anzère, Switzerland. Attending the camp there were 47 children from 19 countries and happily, I have had the privilege of being able to keep in contact with many of them and I have seen them grow into caring and inspiring young adults.

A highlight of 2013 for me came when I was attending the International Pediatric Transplant Association conference in Warsaw. A former TACKERS camper, Peter Murray, was there as a medical student and he also gave a presentation.

So many of our campers have gone on to become great transplant ambassadors within their own countries and I have also had the pleasure of meeting many at both the summer World Transplant Games and Winter World Transplant Games.

Two young ladies who attended the first camp in 2002 and epitomise the positive impact that transplant recipient children can go on to achieve are Lacey Woods (USA) and Cynthia Guillemin (France). Lacey is a Donate Life Ambassador at OneLegacy in the US and Cynthia is about to start her studies in the UK to become a play specialist for children in hospital.

When Cynthia came to TACKERS in 2002 she was only 10 years old. Her experiences allowed her beautiful nature to shine through as a camp volunteer this year as she helped a young Irish girl of 13 to work through feeling homesick to the point of getting her actively involved in a fabulous performance of the ‘Cup Song’ at the farewell dinner. This performance brought together children of many nationalities including 12 year old liver recipient Sairi from Japan who led the group singing, ‘You’re going to miss me when I’m gone.’

Away from the piste there is plenty of entertainment with the likes of circus school and karaoke. Ben Conway (UK) and Hubert Tuyishime (Rwanda) wowed us with their a cappella.

Our campers are always fired up by the experience and although camp finishes every year with many teary goodbyes, long term friendships are formed that the campers are keen to rekindle at national, European and World transplant sports events.

A special thank you to Astellas Transplant. Our next camp is in January 2015 and we will be extending an invitation to all our WTGF friends around the globe. www.tackers.org

Liz Schick
WTGF Councillor, Switzerland

“Every child who attends TACKERS has an opportunity to experience new things, put their illness in context and learn that they have the potential for a very bright future.”

“I can honestly say with hand on heart he came back a changed person, more mature and able to talk about his transplant (which he never did before) he has also come back with a better understanding of others owing to all the other kids he met and considers himself to be very fortunate after meeting others who had been through a lot. What he got from TACKERS is something I have been trying to do for the last 18 months and you managed it in a week. His mind set is totally changed and he is and feels more positive about everything.”
Mountaineering, Organ Donation and WTG2015

During 2013, athletes from different parts of our country, Argentina, have carried the message of life and hope up to the top of two mountains in order to stimulate awareness of organ donation and promote the next World Transplant Games in Mar del Plata 2015. In January, they climbed 4,350 meters in Mendoza province which is located on the Los Andes mountain range. This is the story of an adventure lived in Mendoza by five transplanted athletes who showed the world that organ donation is a gift of life.

Argentina Transplanted Athletes reached Penitentes summit to promote Organ Donation and World Transplant Games 2015

From 27th to 30th January, a group of five Argentinean transplanted athletes reached the summit of Penitentes Mountain to promote the importance of organ donation and transplantation. The main goal of this mountain expedition was to prove the good quality of life that transplanted athletes may enjoy, to give hope to the more than 7,500 patients on national waiting lists and to promote the World Transplant Games Mar del Plata 2015.

The group comprised of five transplanted athletes from different parts of the country: Pablo Gaiser, a kidney recipient from La Pampa, Victor Frias, also a kidney recipient, from Tucumán, Gustavo Escudero, a liver transplant recipient from San Juan, and Jairo Julián and Jorge Carrizo, both liver transplant recipients from Jujuy. Some of them, besides having experience in trekking and hiking, had participated in the Argentinian and Latin American Transplant Games and the World Transplant Games winning medals for Argentina. In addition, there were five mountain climbers, a photographer and Press agent from INCUCAI (the government body that promotes, organises and supervises transplants) and a medic with mountain experience.

The first day, after checking all their equipment and mountain gears, they walked around seven hours to reach Grajales Base Camp at 3,200 meters. The group were in perfect condition and good shape, with the exception of Jorge Carrizo who was very tired and walked very slowly. The athletes and hikers dedicated the second day to making sure they were properly rested with good food and hydration to achieve good acclimatisation at high altitude.

After a short walk around the campsite, Dr. Orlando Valdez made all the necessary medical check-ups and decided that Jorge Carrizo wouldn’t be able to continue to the summit the next day due to his bad acclimatisation. Before having a meal and going to sleep, everyone checked their backpacks and equipment for the summit day.

Summit day had arrived! At 8am the four transplant athletes and five mountaineers left the Base Camp. Fortunately the weather conditions were excellent, a little bit windy but no cloud and in many parts of the ascension the famous South Face of Mount Aconcagua could be seen.

Around 3pm the whole group reached the 4,300 meters of the summit of Penitentes. Overwhelmed by the achievement, with hugs and tears of emotion, the four transplanted athletes were carrying their flags with messages like “Organ Donation is a Gift of Life”. It was an unforgettable and epic summit, a dream come true that will remain in their minds and hearts.

WTG2015 LOC
Argentina

Jorge Carrizo:
“Climbing Penitentes was a big challenge for me. An opportunity to give hope to those who are still waiting an organ and it was dedicated to my donor’s family.”

Gustavo Escudero:
“My main goal was to give the message that a transplanted recipient can have a good quality of life and practice sport and achieve great things.”

Victor Frias:
“I’m really happy to be part of this kind of event to promote the importance of organ donation and transplantation.”

Pablo Gaiser:
“This expedition gave me the chance to enjoy my favorite sport, mountain climbing, with an excellent group all together for a great purpose.”

Jairo Julián:
“After being transplanted I am grateful for life and to my donors family. That’s why these activities are very important. Organ donation is a gift of life.”
For many people with advanced cardiac insufficiency, a heart transplant may be their only hope but waiting for a donor heart to come along is a race against time. Patients who remain active and stay in good shape psychologically can significantly increase their chances of surviving this period. Anxiety-ridden, depressive and passive patients, on the other hand, run the risk of further serious deterioration of their heart’s ability to function.

This is what health psychologists at the universities of Luxembourg, Mainz and San Francisco found in a study conducted under the direction of Dr Heike Spaderna, University of Wuppertal, and Prof. Dr. Gerdi Weidner, San Francisco State University, in collaboration with the Eurotransplant International Foundation of Leiden. The study has been published recently in the scientific magazine Health Psychology.

About 15 million people in Europe and 5.7 million in the United States suffer from cardiac insufficiency, with the trend on the way up and waiting lists for transplants getting longer.
The Venezuelan transplant sport association - Asociación Venezolana Para el Deporte y la Salud del Trasplantado en Situación de Trasplante (AVEDESTRAS) – was founded on 12th June 2012. It is a non-profit organisation driven by transplant athletes, formed to raise awareness in society about the importance of health care and to integrate recipients into physical activity and sport to improve their quality of life, as well as to promote organ donation.

We are a country with more than 30 million people. In 1967, transplant surgery began in Venezuela with kidneys, then liver, heart and tissue followed by corneal and bone marrow transplants. Venezuela has the lowest rate of organ donation amongst the Latin American countries with only 4% per million per inhabitant. According to the Ministry of Health at this time, there are 15,000 patients in dialysis treatment and more than 3,000 people on the waiting list for an organ, including around 1,500 patients requiring a kidney, 1,500 corneal transplants, 345 bone marrow and 50 people needing a liver transplant.

From 25th November 2012, the law on the donation and transplantation of organs, tissues and cells came into force and this has increased the hope of those who are on the waiting list to receive an organ. AVEDESTRAS contributes to this effort by educating the public on this matter.

We have organised, planned and developed sporting events, walks and races in order to promote the donation of organs and transplant sport. We have had a high participation in national and international championships. Today we have athletes of high performance with experience in various competitions, supported first by the Association Venezuelan de Transplantation since 1999 - 2012 and then by AVEDESTRAS, with an outstanding performance in the IX Argentine Transplant Games I and VI Latin American Transplant Games in 2012, where six athletes won 25 medals (16 gold, 6 silver and 3 bronze) and three new records were set by Ana Sequera, José Rafael Ortiz and Santiago Arrieche. These achievements helped to contribute towards Venezuela occupying second place in the Latin American ranking.

At the 19th World Transplant Games 2013 held in Durban, South Africa, the national delegation from Venezuela achieved an outstanding performance. They were proud to leave the Games with a total of five silver medals. In athletics, 40-49 age category, Ana Sequera received a silver medal in the 3km walk race and the swimmer José Rafael Ortiz, in the same age category, won four silver medals with excellent times.

The highly positive impact of the example of quality of life achievable in recipients will culminate in the 1st National Transplant Games of Venezuela in 2014, bringing together recipients, dialysis patients, donors and the public in the spirit of transplant sport and health.

Ana Sequera
Team Manager

http://es-es.facebook.com/avedestras.salud
avedestras@hotmail.com
avedestras@ twitter.com
Tel: +58 414-2007489

In the new study, published this month in Health Psychology, the researchers examined data from more than 200 European outpatients on the waiting list. It emerged that the physically active and non-depressive patients had considerably greater chances of surviving the waiting period regardless of the seriousness of their illness.

"Out of fear of straining their ailing hearts, many patients hardly get any exercise, no longer take part in everyday activities or household chores and withdraw completely. The result is isolation, depression and further deterioration of their physical condition, a veritable downward spiral," explains Prof Dr Claus Vögele, a health psychologist at the University of Luxembourg and one of the study’s authors.

The scientists therefore recommend psychological counselling to help patients increase their everyday physical activity and reduce symptoms of depression to overcome their fears and remain active, thereby increasing their chances of survival until a donor heart is found.

Britta Schlüter
Université du Luxembourg


Link to the scientific article (abstract)
http://psycnet.apa.org/index.cfm?fuseaction=search.optionToBuy&id=2014-04427-001
Jesse stepped up to the starting gate. Because he was the youngest participant, he raced first. My Mum and I hugged, shaking with excitement and fear for him. Jesse didn’t hesitate or look back at us once. The guy said “Ready Jess?” Jesse nodded.

Then he was gone. Eight years old. Sick since he was two. And here he was on skis, racing down the giant slalom course, in France, the wind under his feet, unafraid. My Mum and I turned to one another, hugged, and just cried. If I have to pick one moment of the Winter World Transplant Games that moved me most, it would be this. This was the moment it felt like we had come full circle.

When Jesse was almost three, he had ingested E.coli at our annual neighbourhood street party. Because he was this cute blond and curly headed kid, and because the party was in his backyard, he had helped the men carve the meat at this BBQ and he got the choicest first pickings of that meat. Infected meat, as it turns out, that almost killed him. He was in hospital for four months while his body fought. They resuscitated him on four different occasions. He lost a chunk of his bowel, his pancreas, his kidney, and afterwards, we realized it had also stolen the sight in his left eye.

Almost two years later to the day, on 10th June 2010, Jesse received a perfect kidney from his Dad. He was riding his bike up and down the hospital hall a week later. As hard as it might be to believe, in all that time, we never heard him complain.

During all this heartache, it was difficult to imagine Jesse’s future. A great kidney would allow him a good shot at a normal life but would it be a limited life? When we discovered the Winter World Transplant Games, we could not believe such a thing could exist. Tim and I had met skiing in Europe many years before. Skiing was our favourite thing to do as a family. It seemed like a tailor-made gift for us all.

Two years of waiting later: the Winter World Transplant Games delivered so much more than we could have imagined. To meet other transplant patients; to hear their stories; but more - to see them really living. Healthy people, living life voraciously; celebrating everything, and thankful people. Very very thankful people. Every one of them had a story.

There they were on the podium as overjoyed as Jesse. At age 8, he was the youngest person participating, which meant he was also the only one competing in his age group. So it was Gold for Canada! Three times.

The first time Jesse stood on the podium to receive his medal, everyone cheered. So he stayed up there. So they cheered some more. He stayed on that podium a long time. His smile couldn’t have been bigger. I turned to my husband, our two girls, and my parents, all cheering as loudly as me: we were all crying. Tears of joy, of gratitude to these people for making our son feel not only special, but successful.

Every one of the competitors around us had known what it was like to be sick in a bed. And yet here they were, overflowing with vitality, gratitude and hope. It was so moving.

While we can’t speak for Jesse, as his parents, these Winter Games gave us a sense that those stolen years were being repaid; our son’s unbelievable courage was rewarded; and all that pain and loss was somehow - inexplicably - worthwhile.

I don’t believe you can give your children self-confidence. What you can give them is opportunities to build it. For a week, in the mountains of France, the 9th Winter World Transplant Games empowered our son to start building what I think will be a magnificent castle.

We are so thankful.

Kimberley Parker,
Canadian Transplant Association
We all know that sport activities have positive effects. Studies have shown that important functions like cardiovascular, pulmonary, musculoskeletal and metabolism, improve as a result of regular physical activity.

Physical activity is even more important for the transplant recipients because it is useful not only to prevent and cure metabolic disorders generated by immunosuppressive drugs, but also to induce universal feelings of wellness, serenity and optimism, which are often endangered by renal diseases.

I had a kidney transplant in September 2009 in Verona, Italy. Before that day I had been on haemodialysis for five years at Cles Dialysis Centre in the Trentino region. Here I got the opportunity to read informative leaflets published by Aned (National Association of Haemodialysis, Dialysis and Transplantation) about the benefits of a regular physical activity for CKD patients and recipients and also the various sports events organized by Aned itself.

I longed to know more about competitions open to dialysis and transplant recipients and about the start of the “Transplant & Sport” project set up by the National Transplant Centre, Isokinetic, University of Bologna and Aned. The purpose of the project is to promote physical activity among transplant recipients in order to support the psychophysical recovery after transplantation.

I’ve always been a sportsman so I decided to attend ski competitions, achieving the title of European Champion of Alpine Ski four times in 2000, 2007, 2008 and 2009. My competitive drive has also lead me to cycling and I attended the Maratona Dles Dolomites, the Novecolli in Cesenatico, the Marcia Longa Cycling and various time trials road races.

The participation in such events, in addition to the rehabilitative purpose, demonstrates that transplanted patients retrieve after surgery such a quality of life that they are able to compete in sport events. It is important for recipients to move to stay alive and vital – enjoying again the pleasure of having an efficient and reliable body and recovering that feeling of physicality and the muscle tone that we had lost. Challenges between transplanted recipients are also a useful way to promote to the general public the benefits of organ donation and transplantation.

Sports activity also offers a chance to meet new people and to share moments of deep emotional strength, it contributes to team working, our relationships with others, our social abilities in cooperation and collaboration.

I encourage all transplant recipients to attend all the sport events for the transplanted they can find, either organised by their national associations or by the World Transplant Games Federation. This year I competed in the Winter World Transplant Games in La Chapelle d’Abondance, France winning three gold medals and a silver medal.

In Aned Sport, the main transplanted sport team in Italy, I’ve found new friends to share my experiences with, to have fun, to joke, to inspire self confidence and to encourage one another to do our best.

Erminio Rigos
Italy
(Nicola Scalamogna – Secretary Aned)

Erminio competing in La Chapelle this year