Acton crash victim's organs give new life to four others

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Hamilton General Hospital where she succumbed to her injuries Thursday evening.

Police said road conditions appeared to be a contributing factor in the collision, and at least two other collisions had occurred in the area minutes before the crash.

DeBruyn said the collision occurred about one kilometre from their home.

"The road conditions were black ice and she lost control," he said.

He said his daughter was going to school Thursday for the last day before Christmas vacation.

"She was on the way to the school with individual cards she had written for the children and loot bags— they were having a Christmas party," said Abby's mom Kim.

Abby began a contract teaching position at Hitherfield in September— her first teaching job after graduating from Teacher's College at Nipissing University in the spring. She taught social science to students in Grade 4 and up.

Ann Scott, principal at Hitherfield School, said they interviewed six or seven candidates for the contract position, but "the enthusiasm for teaching and the light in her (Abby's) face when she spoke about children clearly made her our first choice."

"She was just wonderful with children, especially the little ones. She will be really missed by everyone in the school," said Scott. She added Abby's death will be devastating for her students.

She has three huge bags of Christmas presents for Abby her students planned to give her the day of the collision.

Abby had a "tremendous future as a teacher," said Scott.

Prior to attending Nipissing University, Abby graduated from the University of Western Ontario, Christ the King Secondary School and St. Joseph's School in Acton.

DeBruyn said his daughter was an air cadet in Acton from the ages of 12 to 17.

"She was a happy child. Everyone would say she had the biggest smile," said DeBruyn.

Abby met her boyfriend, Dan Rankin, at Western, DeBruyn said.

The family was also coping with the death last Monday of Kim's mother— Abby's grandmother— when Abby died. Abby is the DeBruyns' only child.

Memorial visitation will be held Wednesday (Dec. 28) at Meadowvale Visitation Centre, 7732 Mavis Rd., Brampton, from 2 to 4 p.m. A Celebration of her life will begin about 3 p.m.

The family is urging people to sign their organ donor cards. More information on the Gift of Life program can be found at www.giftoflife.on.ca.

Police continue to investigate the accident. Any witnesses are asked to call the Collision Reconstruction Unit at 905-878-5511 ext. 5065. The fatality was the 17th to be investigated by Halton Police in 2011— the fourth in Milton.

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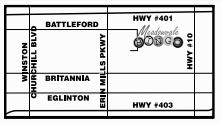

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