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Organ donation should be automatic unless vetoed

Transplants are not making front page news as they did 30 years ago, but they are saving lives.

Don Ransberry, (brother of the Stouffville Tribune reporter Joan Ransberry) turned 50 a few weeks ago. That in itself is a medical miracle, since his kidneys were ravaged by disease at the age of 21.

Back then, young Don became one of five recipients in a multi-organ transplant procedure that was highly publicized. The youngster not only survived, but has led a healthy, prosperous life ever since.

And he's ready to celebrate. The Ransberry family are getting set for their 16th annual barn stormin' square dance with none other than another Ransberry relative calling the squares.

The dance, held at Newcastle Community Hall, is a fundraiser for the Kidney Foundation.

Tickets are \$25 a couple and are available at the door (if there are any left). Advance tickets can be purchased through the family at 983-9678 or 430-3134.

It's Don's way of saying thanks but he is not only kicking up some fun with 16 years of square dancing, but is raising awareness of the good that comes from organ donation.

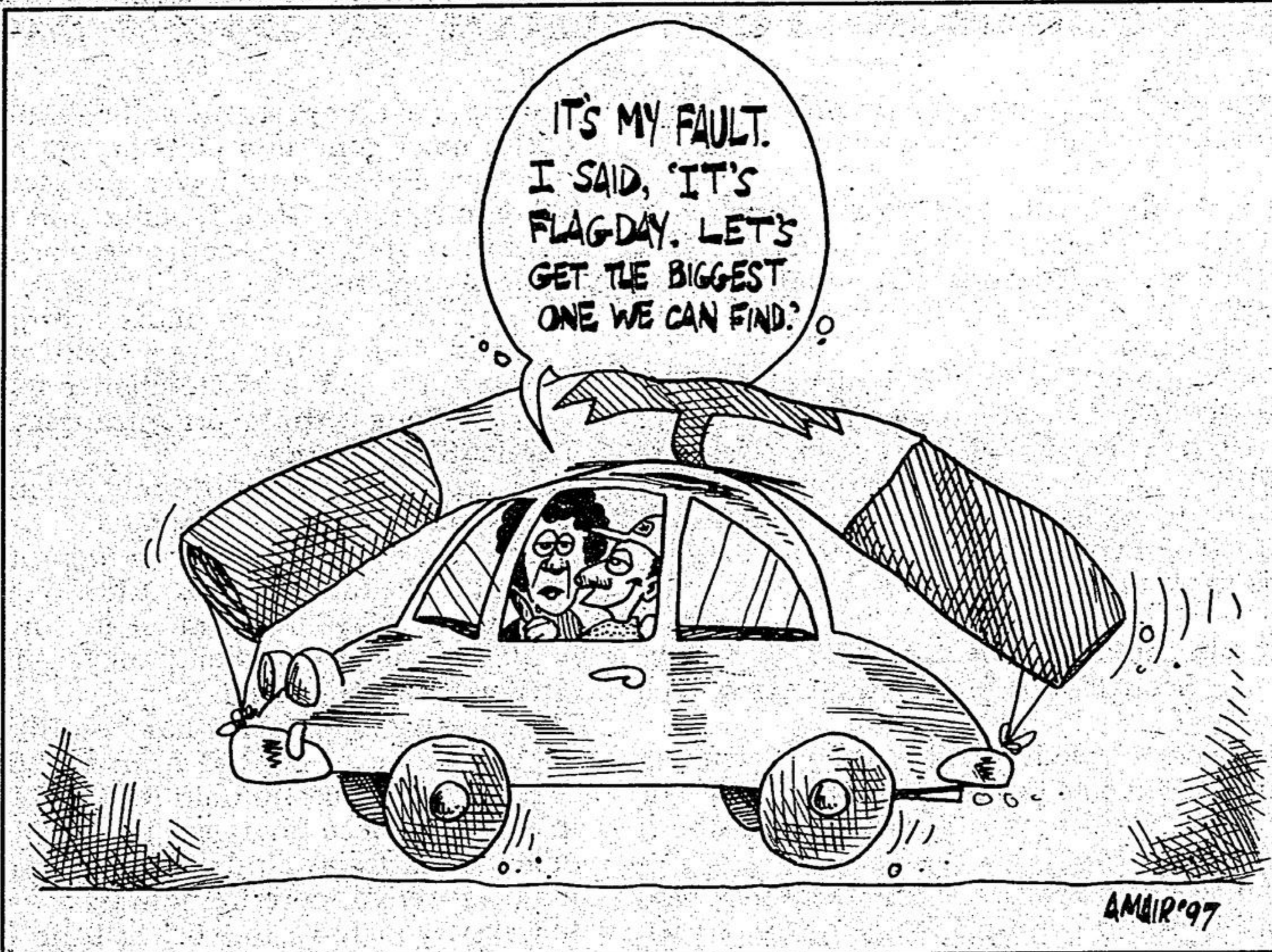
Still after 30 years of successful organ transplants, the majority of people fail to fill out the permission form on their dri-

ver's licence. Many readers will know of someone alive today because of a transplant operation. Perhaps it's someone who can see

with new eyes, or pump oxygen with a new heart valve or filter toxins through new kidneys.

So mainstream are transplants becoming that the legis-

lation would be more effective if the driver's licence permission form was used to indicate non-agreement rather than agree-



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The Ultimate Alley holds time honored position

While perusing the back aisles of the local convenience store looking for no-fat snacks last week, I came across a dusty old bag of marbles. The shopkeeper had stuck a green price tag of \$1.49 on it, but it had been on the shelf so long, the tag had faded to a neon yellow. It was obvious that the product had been in the store for years.

This made me a little sad and I was very tempted to buy the little plastic bag, just because it was obvious marbles have fallen out of favor with the techno-wired kids of today.

When I was growing up, marbles, or 'alleys' as we used to call them, were my life. Everyday, I would race to school an hour before the bell rang with my velvet Crown Royal bag filled with my weapons of choice. I would practice as much as I could, then make my way to the tournament area for the first big match of the day.

Alleys, for the uninitiated, involves digging a shallow bowl in the earth, then a line six feet away from which competitors took turns throwing marbles. The winner was the one who knocked all the marbles into the bowl. As in eight ball, trying to knock the marbles into the bowl involved calls like "Just a shot," but also "Potsies," which meant if you knocked it in, you won all the marbles. If you missed, you lost everything.

I usually lost, but being an inveterate gambler at heart, I would come back day after day with more alleys. We had many



different types - cat's eyes were regular marbles, "beauts" were colored ones and "croaks" were those jumbo marbles. In every bag you bought at the store, there were two or three croaks,

If longevity means longer menopause, no thanks

Avert your eyes, fellas, this one's for the broads.

Being on the threshold of L, I have an invincible excuse for behaving like an anarchist on angel dust. It's called menopause and it's the fashionable subject du jour among women of a certain age. In fact it's all over the place like a rash these days, because it's a Women's Issue affecting senior boomers.

Pre-Menopausal Manifestation, or PMM, (I made that up, but it sounds like something you'd find in the Life section of The Star) is undoubtedly the reason I have been crabby, unpredictable and insolvent for the last 10 years. It also accounts for my inability to get excited at the mention of RRSPs, tax shelters and the notes of Gordon Pape on CBC-AM.

My insanity always peaks in February because a) February is the month that God forgot to

which increased their value significantly. The reason for my lack of success was that growing up in a mining town, many kids whose fathers worked underground had access to the ultimate marble - the Steely.

Steelies were simply vehicle ball bearings, but their extra weight and heft made them almost impossible to beat. We would often have eight or 10 competitors building up a huge pile of marbles and then some

eliminate, and b) it has not escaped even my notice that the end of the seemingly endless, shortest month of the year is the deadline for the aforementioned acronyms with R-words in them.

You've hardly finished picking the pine needles out of your hair before you find yourself knee-deep in brochures, flyers and advice columns on how to save money for your retirement to an adult lifestyle condominium. This is tough on a refugee from the generation that always lived now and fervently hoped we wouldn't have to pay later, because we were banking on dying before we got old and thus failed to ponder the wisdom of purchasing an adult lifestyle condominium in which to end our days.

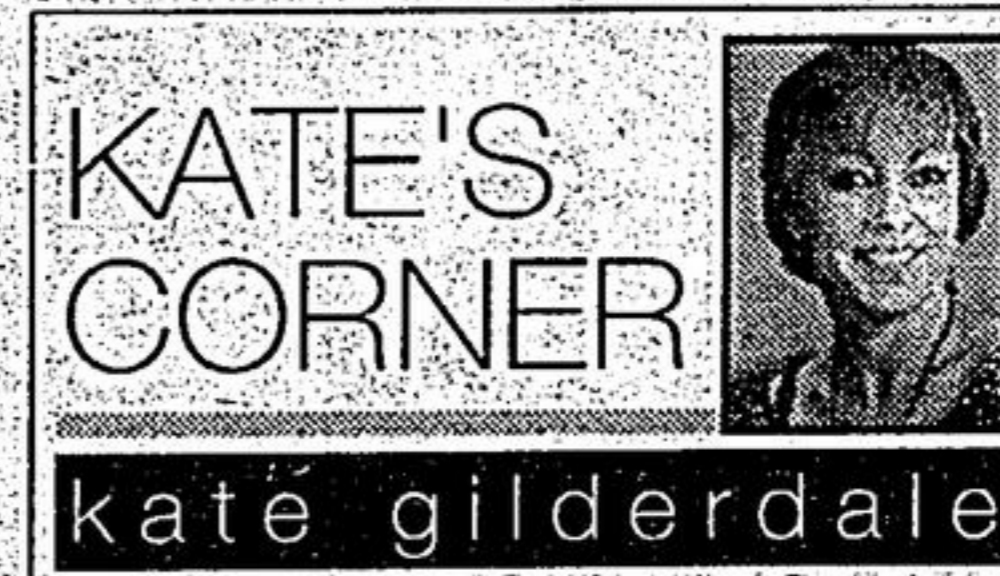
So now we are old - although continuing hotly to deny the fact - and suffering from PMM with hardly two RRSPs to rub together. Meanwhile, many of us have children who are filled with ado-

smart alec would whip out his Steely and yell "Pot!" With a single easy roll, this cheater would skunk the rest of us of dozens of marbles.

My parents were always furious when I'd get skunked, coming home sheepishly, with my limp purple liquor bag in hand. They disapproved of the whole process, citing it as gambling of the worst sort, but like the Barbies and Power Rangers of today, it was hard to deny a kid

what everyone else had. Their solution: Pay for them yourself.

I saved my allowance for weeks to buy bags of marbles by the gross. But I didn't need to. I'll remember that day as one of the greatest in my life. The epiphany came when I walked into the local sporting goods store that day, and there it was - The Ultimate Alley. I take that old shot-put out from time to time and polish the knicks made by a thousand tiny marbles.



lescent angst and rage against the machine, which goes with PMM like curry and ice cream.

Our children just don't understand us. In fact, they hardly notice our existence except when they are seeking sustenance, a set of wheels or money. Just when you begin to welcome the thought of your debt-filled, child-free dotage however, a Southam News report comes up with the really bad news.

"Scientists say they are getting closer to substantially increasing human life expectancy, even raising the possibility of an anti-aging pill that could help people live to 120 years old." This could mean that you will be around to suffer through

not only your children's, but your grandchildren's PMM.

It means 120 endless Februaries and even less money for the vital things in life like megamusicals, performances at Sky-Dome by the Three Tenors and tickets to Maple Leaf Gardens for a century's-worth of hockey seasons in which the Leafs languish forever in the basement of the NHL.

In other words, if PMM doesn't get you, you'll be driven to depression by the anti-aging pill. Luckily for everyone, especially generation-Xers, it seems that even the boring boomers may be pushing up daisies before the pill takes its toll, however, since tests on the effectiveness and safety of this dubious invention are still in their infancy.

Thus, by future standards, we will die before we get old, which will allow us to prove our point that adolescence doesn't have to end at fifty.