

Foster's Online

Dover, New Hampshire

Rochester bone marrow donor meets the man she helped

Monday, July 2, 2007

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ROCHESTER — Alissa Landry and Mike Hoskins like to joke that they are long lost relatives.

They've just discovered they both are left-handed, they like to say the expression "in a minute," they have the same birthday — October 25 — and they have a similar genetic makeup.

In November 2005, Landry of Rochester donated bone marrow to Hoskins, who lives in Hartland, Mich.

Hoskins had been battling Hodgkins lymphoma, which attacks the lymph nodes, since 2001, and Landry's donation ultimately caused his cancer to go into remission.

Neither of them knew anything about the other until recently because of hospital regulations that prohibit donors and recipients from communicating for a year.

Landry and Hoskins have been getting to know each other by phone, but that wasn't quite enough for either of them. Hoskins insisted on meeting the 23-year-old Frisbie Memorial Hospital nurse so he could thank her in person.



Mark Avery/Democrat Photo Alissa Landry of Rochester donated bone marrow in 2005 to a man in Michigan. She recently met the recipient, Mike Hoskins, who wanted to thank her personally for her donation.



Courtesy photo. Enjoying their visit in Hartland, Mich., are, from left, Hoskins, Landry, Landry's father, Gerry, Landry's aunt, Cindy Cunningham, and Hoskins' wife, Kathy.

In early June, Landry traveled with her father and aunt to visit with Hoskins and his wife, Kathy, in Michigan.

"We went to rent a car, and I notice a man just sitting there, waiting, and I thought, 'It just has to be him'," Landry said at her home recently. "We ran up to each other, and I gave him a big hug, and he said, 'It's about time.'"

Hoskins showed her the manufacturing plants he oversees as vice president of an automobile supply company and took her to an open house, where she met many of his family members.

Landry said she found herself asking more detailed questions about Hoskins' battle with cancer.

"There are things you don't think to ask on the phone," she added.

She is still amazed by Hoskins great attitude despite dealing with cancer in his life and with several family members, including his wife, who is in remission from breast cancer. He continues to golf and stay active.

"I truly believe the attitude he's had has brought him through this," Landry added.

Landry said she and the Hoskins have a bond that makes them feel like family. She told them she would be their adopted child. They are trying to have children but have had difficulty because of the chemotherapy procedures they received.

"I definitely believe we'll be together for quite a long time," she added.

She also said that if faced once more with the choice of donating her bone marrow, she would do it again in an instant. Such a simple procedure can give someone a chance at life, she also said.

Mike and Kathy Hoskins have promised to visit the Seacoast and coastal Maine when they are on vacation in August.

"He's never had lobster so that will be fun," Landry said.

They also plan to attend her graduation from the University of New England in Maine when she completes her bachelor's degree in nursing. Landry will return to Michigan this winter as well to snowmobile near the Great Lakes with Hoskins because they both love this activity and the outdoors.



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