

A LINE ON LIFE

3/26/95

Miracles from Tragedy *

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The date was January 6, 1995. Just 12 days before his eleventh birthday, Brian "Bub" Buzis was riding his bicycle. At 4:25 in the afternoon – at the intersection of 24th Street and Kennedy Lane in Yuma, Arizona – a car hit Brian and fatally injured him.

First, he was taken to Yuma Regional Medical center. Later, he was transported by air to the Intensive Care Unit at St. Joseph's Children's Hospital in Phoenix. There at 2:55 A.M. on January 7th, 1995, Brian "Bub" Buzis died. Even these cold statistics cannot conceal the tragedy of a young boy being snuffed out before his time.



Although nothing can soften the devastation of having a young child die, his story does not end here. In fact, hopefully, part of Brian will live on for many years to come. When Brian was pronounced "*brain dead*," his grieving mother, Pamela, agreed to have Brian's organs donated to others. In preparation for the lengthy process of donation, cultures were taken from the donor to check for possible infections. For the heart, lungs and liver, organs are matched with suitable recipients primarily by blood type and body size. For kidneys and pancreas, more extensive tissue typing has to be done.

Brian's heart and lungs were damaged in the accident, so they were not suitable to be transplanted. However, the valves of the heart were taken and processed for transplantation. Sixty percent of recovered heart

valves are transplanted into children under six years old.

Bones and various tissues were not used. Under the age of fifteen, these tissues cannot be transplanted, because these parts are not yet fully developed. If they are transplanted, problems are likely to occur.

Organs are placed using the [United Network of Organ Sharing](#). Potential recipients are listed with the network according to the seriousness of their disorder, their blood type and their body weight. Recovered organs are given to local (Arizona) recipients first, next within a five-state region and then nationally. All of Brian's organs were received by people in Arizona.

- Brian's right kidney went to a man in his late thirties, who had been receiving dialysis treatments and waiting for a kidney since 1993. He had to quit working, because of the severity of his illness. Married with a son in grade school, he enjoys music, sports and reading.
- Brian's left kidney was transplanted into woman in her sixties. She had been on dialysis and waiting for a transplant since mid-1994. As a homemaker with one grown daughter, she enjoys gardening.
- Both of Brian's corneas were successfully transplanted. One went to a six-year-old girl. The other went to a fifteen-year-old girl.
- Brian's liver went to a man in his thirties. He was suffering from a liver disease that leads to inflammation and narrowing of the bile ducts, buildup of toxins in the body, liver failure – and finally death. This transplant was necessary for his survival.

Although the tragedy of Brian's death should not be minimized, the generosity of his family literally saved at least three people from more pain, suffering and eventual death, as well as improving the quality of life for three others. In memory of Brian Buzis and to preserve the lives of others, each of us can take one small step. The next time you get your driver's license renewed, make sure that under the designation, **ORGAN DONOR**, you have them put **YES**. (I have already done this.)

**Beside designating yourself as an organ donor,
you need to make your family aware of your wishes.**

Even though this license change indicates that you are willing to donate your organs, you need to make your family aware of your desires, because they will have to make the final decision after you have died. Then – if the worst happens – you will still be able to contribute to bettering the lives of others. Rather than merely leaving memories, part of you will live on in others, helping them to create new and happier memories.

For additional information, call **Donor Network of Arizona** at **1-800-94-DONOR**.