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YOUR HEALTH | SUMATHI REDDY

The Samaritans Who Donated Organs Twice

IT'S HARD ENOUGH for most people to imagine what it takes for a living donor to give an organ to a friend, family member or stranger. What about those who have done that good deed twice?

Only 47 people in the U.S. have donated more than one organ to two different people over the past 25 years, according to the United Network for Organ Sharing (UNOS), the nonprofit that runs the nation's transplant system. (An additional 17 people have donated two different organs to the same recipient on different dates.) Of those who donated to two different people, 43 out of 47 donated a kidney and part of their liver.

A New Jersey rabbi, a California football coach and a director of a Maryland consulting firm are among those 47. Here are their stories:

Clockwise from above: Rabbi Ephraim Simon with his liver recipient, Adam Levitz, at the Cleveland Clinic; Nathan Hauser, a 39-year-old consulting firm director, donated a kidney and part of his liver to two different strangers; Sean Gomes donated part of his liver to his cousin at the University of California, San Francisco Medical Center in January.

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP: EPHRAIM SIMON; NATHAN HAUSER; MARIA GOMES

A Rabbi Gives Life

Ephraim Simon, a 51-year-old rabbi in Teaneck, N.J., says he had difficulty finding a hospital willing to let him donate a second organ. He first donated a kidney in 2009 at New York's Weill Cornell Medical Center to a father of 10 children.

The two met before the surgery and now are close friends. "I go to all of his children's weddings and he comes to mine," says Rabbi Simon, who has nine children of his own. "That was just such an incredible experience. I thought I really want to do this again, but I only have one kidney. What can I do?"

He heard about living liver donors and started looking for someone in need. But every time he heard of a case, hospitals turned him away because he was a prior donor. Then he learned that the Cleveland Clinic would accept him.

He donated part of his liver to a Long Island father of three in December.

This recovery was much more intense because it followed open surgery with a large incision, not a laparoscopic procedure like the kidney operation. It took Rabbi Simon three to four months to fully recover. He says it was worth the physical pain.

"The reward of bringing a father back to his children, of a husband back to his wife, that reward is infinitely greater than any risk that I took," he says.

"If I could do this again I would do it tomorrow morning," he adds. "But I think I'm done. There are many more different ways for me to continue to give."

Two Gifts to Strangers

Nathan Hauser, a 39-year-old director at a consulting firm in Germantown, Md., is unusual in that he donated organs twice to strangers and chose not to meet them.

After seeing a commercial about the lack of living kidney donors, he found a website that paired donors and recipients. He tested for a young woman in Long Island but they didn't have compatible tissue types. A nurse at the hospital told him about kidney donor chains, in which a healthy person donates a kidney without a designated recipient and sets off a chain of transplants.

He set off a chain in August 2008. "I ultimately decided not to meet the recipient," Mr. Hauser says. "I thought it would be more powerful to be anonymous."

In 2013 he started thinking about donating part of his liver. The first two hospitals he reached out to were against allowing him when he mentioned his kidney donation. He gave up on the idea, but last year he saw a commercial from the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center seeking living liver donors.

"Medicine advances quickly, and I thought maybe in these five years it's become more acceptable," Mr. Hauser says.

On March 7 he donated part of his liver to a woman. Again, he chose not to meet her. A couple of weeks ago she sent him a card through UPMC thanking him and telling him she was doing well.

Mr. Hauser regularly donates blood and platelets. He's on the bone marrow registry. He's a volunteer firefighter and EMT, a Habitat for Humanity volunteer, and helps low-income people prepare their taxes. He attributes his service to a strong personal belief that people should look out for each other. He also has the time as a single man. "It's a fulfilling way to keep myself busy," he says.

Only 47 people in the U.S. have given this important gift twice to two different people.

A Major Step for Family

Sean Gomes's organ donations both went to family members. The 54-year-old is an information technology manager for Monterey County, Calif., and head football coach at North Monterey County High School.

In 2003 he donated a kidney to his father-in-law, who was suffering from renal failure. "We had a good relationship before that, but after that we had an even stronger bond," he says. His father-in-law died in 2010 of a heart condition, but also had kidney failure.

At his mother's funeral in October 2017, Mr. Gomes's cousin told him about his need for a liver transplant.

Mr. Gomes broached the topic of becoming a living liver donor. They reached out to the University of California, San Francisco and began the process 10 months later.

He was almost too old to donate, but he was healthy and in good shape. He ran regularly before the surgery to help with his recovery.

In January he had the surgery. He was in the hospital for five days and took off two months paid leave from work. His cousin had some complications and recently had his bile ducts reconstructed.

"I felt blessed that I could help him see his grandson grow up," Mr. Gomes says.

Mr. Gomes and his wife donate blood and platelets regularly and his wife, Maria Gomes, was a bone marrow donor. "That would be the next thing that maybe I could do if I match someone," Mr. Gomes says.

They are devout Catholics. He says religion definitely plays a role in his decision to donate two organs. "My thought was if it didn't go right and I passed, that it was God's will and that was my fate," Mr. Gomes says. "But I felt comfortable that he would take care of me and guide me through and everything would turn out OK, and it did."

Psychology of Donors

Mary Amanda Dew, a psychiatry professor at the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine, studies the mental health of organ recipients and donors, as well as their quality of life.

She says first- and second-time donors are always evaluated by a social worker and sometimes a psychologist or psychiatrist. "When somebody wants to donate again, there is very careful consideration about why they specifically want to do it," Dr. Dew says.

She says evaluations make sure that potential second-time donors understand that the outcomes for the recipient might not be the same as the first time and the surgery may be riskier, with a longer recovery.

Usually organ donors have a history of donating blood or platelets, or performing community service. If there is no such history, Dr. Dew says doctors will wonder why the donor has chosen such a drastic way to give, and whether the person understands the dangers involved.

UNOS Living Donor Committee chair Randolph Schaffer says there is no national policy prohibiting people from donating more than one organ.

When the second donation is going to someone the donor doesn't know, there may be a more thorough exploration of reasons behind the decision.

Doctors are more apt to accept organ donations going to strangers now, as the risks of kidney transplants, in particular, have decreased and the success of transplants has improved over the past few decades.

"We realize that people can have a psychological benefit by doing something good anonymously that can justify the acceptable degree of personal physical risk by undergoing the surgical procedure," he says.

Weather

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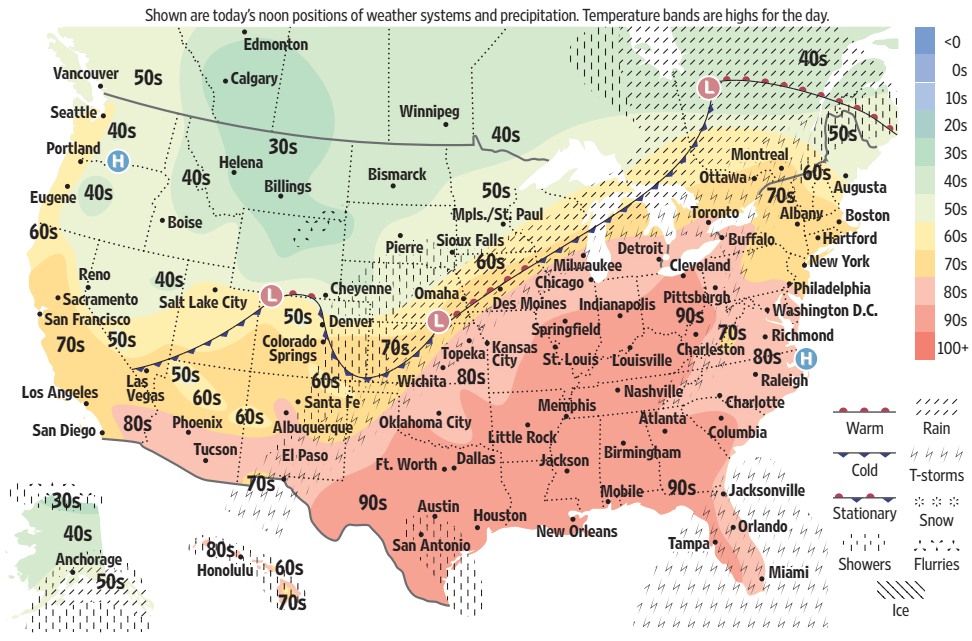
Shown are today's noon positions of weather systems and precipitation. Temperature bands are highs for the day.



U.S. Forecasts

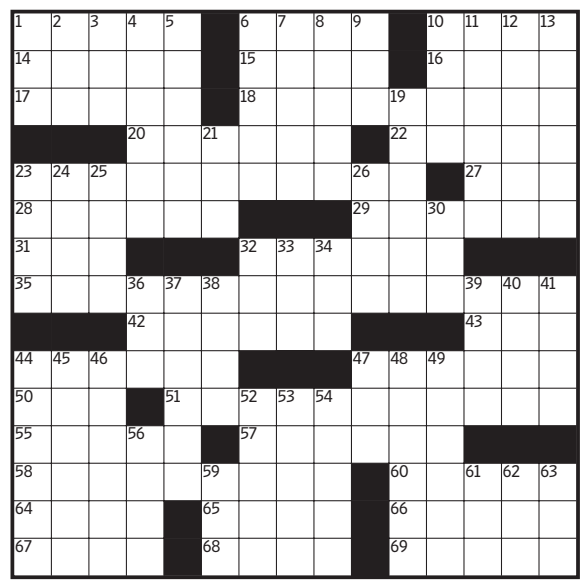
s...sunny; pc... partly cloudy; c...cloudy; sh...showers; t...t'storms; r...rain; sf...snow flurries; sn...snow; i...ice

City	Today Hi	Lo	W	Tomorrow Hi	Lo	W
Anchorage	52	43	r	49	40	s
Atlanta	92	73	s	94	75	s
Austin	96	73	pc	96	70	pc
Baltimore	85	69	pc	96	70	s
Boise	57	34	pc	63	40	s
Boston	74	66	pc	74	52	r
Burlington	72	55	c	59	41	c
Charlotte	89	69	pc	95	70	s
Chicago	84	67	pc	69	59	r
Cleveland	91	68	pc	83	64	pc
Dallas	94	75	pc	94	75	s
Denver	62	40	c	65	38	s
Detroit	87	67	pc	73	59	r
Honolulu	87	77	sh	87	76	sh
Houston	91	72	pc	92	73	s
Indianapolis	91	71	s	90	70	pc
Kansas City	86	64	t	73	49	r
Las Vegas	79	57	s	80	59	s
Little Rock	93	72	s	93	72	s
Los Angeles	76	58	s	84	59	s
Miami	88	79	pc	89	79	pc
Milwaukee	80	58	r	62	56	r
Minneapolis	58	48	r	54	46	r
Nashville	98	71	s	98	72	s
New Orleans	94	78	s	94	76	s
New York City	77	70	pc	90	60	pc
Oklahoma City	87	71	pc	87	59	s
Omaha	72	54	r	60	46	r
Orlando	89	74	pc	90	71	s
Philadelphia	82	69	pc	93	65	s
Phoenix	89	65	s	90	67	s
Pittsburgh	88	69	s	87	68	pc
Portland, Maine	64	60	c	66	40	sh
Portland, Ore.	65	41	s	61	48	c
Sacramento	75	44	s	79	46	s
St. Louis	93	74	s	91	63	c
Salt Lake City	60	39	s	60	41	s
San Francisco	70	50	s	74	54	s
Santa Fe	78	45	c	75	39	pc
Seattle	62	44	s	59	49	c
Sioux Falls	54	45	sh	52	41	r
Wash., D.C.	85	72	pc	96	74	s

International

City	Today Hi	Lo	W	Tomorrow Hi	Lo	W
Amsterdam	65	48	r	57	49	pc
Athens	86	67	s	82	66	s
Baghdad	104	76	s	108	74	s
Bangkok	92	79	t	92	79	t
Beijing	88	62	pc	87	61	s
Berlin	62	46	sh	53	44	pc
Brussels	67	48	r	57	43	pc
Buenos Aires	59	48	sh	62	44	pc
Dubai	101	85	s	102	86	s
Dublin	53	38	pc	52	42	pc
Edinburgh	53	34	pc	55	37	pc
Frankfurt	69	54	sh	58	42	pc
Geneva	76	52	t	63	44	sh
Havana	89	72	pc	87	72	t
Hong Kong	91	80	pc	90	79	s
Istanbul	81	65	s	80	67	s
Jakarta	93	76	pc	93	76	pc
Jerusalem	80	62	s	80	61	s
Johannesburg	66	44	pc	68	47	s
London	65	42	r	56	40	pc
Madrid	81	50	pc	76	49	pc
Manila	90	79	t	90	76	t
Melbourne	71	54	s	76	61	pc
Mexico City	74	55	t	73	54	t
Milan	78	62	pc	73	53	t
Moscow	62	42	pc	55	51	r
Mumbai	90	77	t	88	77	pc
Paris	69	54	r	61	41	pc
Rio de Janeiro	82	65	s	84	68	pc
Riyadh	105	83	s	106	83	s
Rome	78	62	pc	78	58	t
San Juan	89	78	sh	89	78	t
Seoul	85	67	c	79	68	r
Shanghai	78	73	r	81	69	sh
Singapore	88	80	c	88	79	t
Sydney	68	54	pc	75	57	s
Taipei City	91	73	r	93	74	s
Tokyo	83	70	pc	81	71	pc
Toronto	82	59	t	60	47	r
Vancouver	57	45	s	58	47	r
Warsaw	61	56	pc	64	44	sh
Zurich	72	53	t	63	39	sh

The WSJ Daily Crossword | Edited by Mike Shenk



LEAD INSTRUMENTS | By Gary Larson

Across

1 Elbowroom
6 Short run
10 Fleece-lined boots
14 Choreographer Alvin
15 Ski resort near Salt Lake City
16 Reduce, as expenses
17 Flyers in V's
18 It can be moving
20 Buffy, notably
22 They're verboten
23 Troublesome situation
27 Serpent's victim
28 Take to the sky
29 Supervised
31 Football Hall of Famer Dawson
32 Do some pillaging
35 It's carbonated, in a way
42 Like churros and corduroy
43 Hors d'oeuvre topping
44 Distress call
47 Tone down
50 Tool for Paul Bunyan
51 Long-eared pooch
55 Beach souvenir
57 Yearbook
58 Creator of Atticus Finch
60 Say
64 Sparkle
65 Quad building
66 Humble
67 Solidifies
68 Bee's nephew and Opie's dad
69 Serpent

Down

1 Droop
2 Domino's delivery
3 Hoppy beverage
4 Big name in small planes
5 Place for a lace
6 Crockett and Jones
7 Sci-fi visitor
8 Warehouse
9 "2001" computer
10 Involved in
11 Made progress
12 Place for a needle
13 Detected
19 Pay
21 Didn't go hungry
23 Luminous circle
24 At an end
25 Cabal
26 Pretense
30 Hue and cry
32 "Terminator Salvation" director
33 Royal flush component
34 Angling aid
36 Dada artist Jean
37 Light-footed
38 Noodle concoction?
39 Language of Pakistan
40 One might be proper
41 Doing
44 Works (out)
45 Sigh, say
46 Check out creepily
47 Disco ___ ("The Simpsons" character)
48 Rented trucks
49 Crooner Michael
52 Beauty parlor
53 Edgar Bergen dummy Mortimer ___
54 Hostile force
56 Hosp. workers
59 Nutritional fig.
61 Onetime Pan Am rival
62 Moose's kin
63 Reuben base

▶ Solve this puzzle online and discuss it at **WSJ.com/Puzzles.**

Previous Puzzle's Solution

D	U	S	T	S	■	A	P	E	S	■	S	N	I	T
I	N	T	R	O	■	M	U	C	H	■	C	E	D	E
T	H	R	O	W	I	N	T	H	E	T	O	W	E	L
T	I	E	D	■	M	O	T	O	R	H	O	T	E	L
O	P	T	■	C	A	T	■	■	B	I	T	■	■	■
■	■	C	R	O	C	■	B	E	E	R	■	S	U	N
■	T	H	A	T	S	J	U	S	T	D	U	C	K	Y
A	H	O	Y	■	■	I	R	A	■	■	G	R	E	G
H	O	U	S	I	N	G	B	U	B	B	L	E	S	■
A	R	T	■	T	O	S	S	■	R	A	Y	E	■	■
■	■	■	G	A	L	■	■	S	A	Y	■	N	E	E
O	V	E	R	L	O	O	K	E	D	■	G	N	A	T
M	A	K	E	S	A	B	I	G	S	P	L	A	S	H
I	S	E	E	■	D	O	L	E	■	R	O	M	E	O
T	E	S	T	■	S	E	L	L	■	O	P	E	D	S