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### **Cross Recovering After Transplant**

*After being on a transplant list for three years, Krizinne Cross receives unexpected call— and a new heart.*

By Christine Smith  
Dubois Frontier Editor

For Krizinne Cross, last Thursday was like all the other Thursday afternoons this summer— she was busy helping prepare the chuckwagon dinner for the show at the KOA Kampground that evening.

Then, her cell phone rang.

The call was from the Salt Lake City organ transplant team— her long-awaited heart was waiting there.

Partially due to the fact that a call of this magnitude can't ever be completely expected and partially due to Krizinne's typical down-to-earth attitude about a procedure that is anything but, her initial reaction was, "I told them not to call me till after September."

"I thought, 'I really have better things to do,'" Krizinne said in a Monday morning phone interview from her hospital room in Salt Lake City. "I have a wedding I'm supposed to be in in a week."

The need for a heart transplant is the result of aggressive chemotherapy Krizinne received as a teenager to fight bone cancer. The chemo was successful in beating the cancer, but she also suffered the consequences— organ damage.

Now 28, Krizinne was first added to the transplant list in February 2007, which subsequently led to a move to Salt Lake City a year later in order to be nearer the hospital.

That move was expected to be fairly short, with the average wait for a heart approximately six months. With a 40 percent drop nationwide in transplants, Krizinne's wait turned into nearly two years, and she moved back to Dubois this past January.

The initial call at 5:30 p.m. on Aug. 12 pushed her— and everyone around her— into high gear. According to her mom, Amy Cross, in a short time Krizinne pulled her plan together while waiting for the confirmation call. She went home and packed, cleaned food out of the refrigerator, pulled longtime partner Jerod Jardine's dinner out of the oven, loaded up the car and "took off like she was on a mission."

Her uncle, Harold Albright, arranged for Riverton pilots Jim Hansen and Billy Bradford to fly Krizinne to Salt Lake in a plane donated by Dave Long, and by 7 p.m., she was in flight, and Jerod and the couple's twin boys, Colten and Jasper, were on the road.

Five hours later she was in surgery, and by the time dawn broke on Friday, Aug. 13, Krizinne had a new heart.

Hooked up to numerous IVs, a ventilator and breathing tube, Krizinne said, "I don't remember much more on Friday...Saturday was a little groggy..."

Sedated to help her body stabilize, doctors brought Krizinne out of the sedation slowly as to not cause overstimulation. The ventilator and breathing tube were removed Saturday and by Sunday, she was sitting up and communicating.

"I feel pretty good. I have a few aches and pains...the biggest one is in my back from being opened up," she said. "I'm doing good...I still have to hit a few mile marks before I'm released from the hospital."

Krizinne expects to remain in the hospital for one to two weeks and then will be required to stay in Salt Lake for another three months.

Three months doesn't seem like much after all that has transpired in the past four years— and Krizinne is already turning her thoughts toward coming home for a visit during that period. Due to the protocols of organ transplant programs, Krizinne knows nothing of the donor. Although she plans to write a letter to the family, it is up to the donor's family whether to make contact with the organ recipient.

Krizinne is realistic about the emotional ramifications of receiving her new heart. "Oh, I'm good so far...I think that's all still to come yet."