



A GRANDMOTHER'S LOVE: Loretta Zerr (right) held her grandson Tanner earlier this year. Mrs. Zerr donated part of her liver to Tanner, who needed a transplant.

Grandmother saves grandson by giving him part of her liver

By **TISHA COX**
Colby Free Press

Five months ago, a Colby woman helped save her grandson's life. Loretta Zerr said it was a miracle to her, because everything fell into place for her to donate part of her liver to her grandson, Tanner Zerr. The transplant took place on Feb. 28 in St. Louis. Mrs. Zerr gave 24 percent of her liver to Tanner. Last week, Tanner and his parents, Randy and Stacy Zerr, of DeSoto, Mo., were in St. Louis for this five-month checkup. "Everything is going fine," Mrs. Zerr said, for her and for Tanner. He will have to take anti-rejection drugs the rest of his life, she said, and has blood tests each week to check his liver function. Mrs. Zerr's doctors told her she'll have to put up with healing pain for up to a year. She says she's feeling "great," but she can't lift and gets tired sometimes. The pain, she said, was just a small price to pay for her grandson's life. Tanner and his twin sister Morgan were born premature at 28 weeks on April 30, 2004, she said. Their due date was July 30. Tanner had a hereditary condition called biliary atresia, which affects the ducts that drain bile from the liver. Morgan had no complications, but both children were in the intensive care ward several months. Loretta said doctors told his parents that Tanner would need a transplant because of his condition. While visiting St. Louis in February, Loretta was one of the family members tested to see if anyone was a match for Tanner. She and her son Randy had the same blood type but doctors decided her petite size and the fact she was a good match made her the ideal choice. Loretta's surgery was done at Barnes Jewish Hospital in St. Louis while Tanner's half took place at St. Louis Children's Hospital. The two share a campus. Both surgeries started at the same time. Her procedure took about six

hours and Tanner's lasted eight to 10 hours because more had to be done. The Thursday, Friday and Saturday before the transplant on Monday, Feb. 28, were a blur, she said. She thought about coming home and then going back to St. Louis, but because Tanner was so sick, they decided the transplant would happen soon. "The timing of the transplant was perfect," she said. The first day or two after the transplant, Mrs. Zerr said, she was confined to bed, then Tuesday she was able to walk. Wednesday, she was wheeled over to the Children's Hospital to see Tanner. Thursday, she finally got back on solid food and Friday, she left the hospital. She stayed in St. Louis until March, along with Tanner, because they both needed checkups and needed to be close in case any complications arose. Mrs. Zerr said she also stayed to help support her daughter-in-law, Stacy, whose parents were injured in a car accident. Because her mother couldn't be there, Loretta stayed and did what she could to help. She said it worked out well because it was a "bonding time" with Tanner and gave Stacy time for an occasional break. Five months later, both grandmother and grandson are doing fine. Now a happy, healthy 15 months, Tanner is only three pounds behind his sister and both are getting ready to take their first steps, their grandmother said. They each weighed just 2.3 pounds at birth. Her own recovery is going fine, Mrs. Zerr said. "I do not need to go back," she said. "So far, all is going well." She said giving up a quarter of her liver really isn't a problem because the liver can regenerate itself. About six weeks after the transplant, she said, her liver was back to its normal size. "Tanner's liver will grow as he grows," she added. Mrs. Zerr said they fortunate to

have such a successful transplant. "God truly has blessed us," she said. "We really witnessed a miracle. It was perfect for both of us."

Edson gym opening delayed a month

The doors of the old Edson school gym will stay closed for another month as the California man who purchased the building has been delayed again. Jeff Soper, who paid the Goodland School District \$50,000 for the gym in an eBay online auction, said he was forced to put off the opening of the new Flea and Farmers Market slated to go into the gym. "I had a little setback," he said, explaining that his step-mother, Mary, fell and broke her hip last weekend. He said she suffers from Alzheimer's disease and his 81-year-old father, Lou, can no longer take care of her himself. "I'm doing the best I can," he said. "My family comes top priority." Mr. Soper said he has set the new date of arrival for mid September. He said the accident will delay him about two weeks from Aug. 5. Instead of following his original plan to open the gym ready or not, Mr. Soper said, he will wait and set up before opening. He bought the gym to use as a market to sell items he buys from auctioned off storage units. Mr. Soper decided to wait to open the

gym because he wants to be the representative of his business. "I want to represent what I'm trying to do," he said, adding he is interested in helping the community grow and have a place for commerce. "I do have an attitude," he said. "It's not a bad attitude; it's an 'I'm gonna succeed attitude.' There's nothing negative about me." He had planned to leave the business in the hands of others while he traveled back and forth to California. Now he wants to fill the gym with items from his storage lockers and set up before opening. "We'll wait until we have it right," he said. "I just want to represent the gym positively." Mr. Soper is planning to bring his parents to Kansas to live with him, but will wait to make solid arrangements. With the extra time, he said, he has made arrangements to add carpeting to protect the gym floor. He said he bought a commercial grill and stove and chairs for an outdoor concession stand. Mr. Soper said he is still excited to check out the gym and the area. "I just feel bad because I know everyone's waiting for me," he said.

Improve family meals by following suggestions

Here are some suggestions for improving family meals:

- Aim for three or more family meals a week.
- Children and teenagers who eat with their family three times or more a week do better in school. If you do not eat together now or not as often as you'd like, look at your schedules to see if family meals can replace other activities. Start with just one meal a week and add more later. Children value meals with their family.
- Make family meals a priority. Adults can make family meals a priority and expect children, teenagers and other adults to eat together. They may complain at first, but if meals are pleasant, children and teenagers will begin to value the time together.
- Keep a sense of humor and laugh a lot. It's not "what" but "how" you feed your family that counts. Simple foods served with love and laughter will outshine gourmet food.
- Cook it quick but eat it slow. Though you may hurry when preparation, allow time to enjoy the meal and talk with each other.
- Work toward happy, relaxing conversations at meals. Allow time for everyone to talk — children as well as adults. Save arguments for later.

Here are some conversation starters:

- Describe something new you learned today.
- Share a positive thing that happened today.
- Describe something that made you feel really happy.
- Imagine that someone gave you \$1,000. You have to spend some of it on your family before buying anything for yourself. What would you buy for your family?
- If you lived in a different time and place, where and when would you live?
- If you could spend an afternoon with a famous person (living or dead), who would you pick?
- If everyone in your family wants to talk at once, borrow the "talking stick" idea from Native Americans. Only the person holding the stick can talk. You might use any special item that gets passed around.
- If time's an issue, make meals quick and easy. Food does not have to be hot to be nourishing and healthful. Tuna sandwiches, an apple and milk can be just as healthful as hot food you worked for hours to fix. For quick meal ideas, see <http://www.nutritionexplorations.org>
- Shop for food and cook together. Shopping and cooking together can be fun and promote family to-

getherness.

- Take telephone calls later. How often does the phone interrupt your meals? If you can't ignore a ringing phone, unplug it, turn off the ringer, use an answering machine or voice mail, or tell people you will call back after dinner.
- Turn the television off. Encourage family members to star in their own lives and relate to each other rather than an image on the television screen. If there is an absolutely must see show that's on during dinnertime, tape it.
- Respect each person's right to decide how much to eat. Serious family conflicts can occur when children are forced to eat. Forcing children to eat food they don't like makes them dislike the food or learn to ignore feelings of hunger and satiety. A parent's role is to offer a child safe, healthful food. Offer food on a regular schedule, as much as every two hours for young children. A child's role is to decide to eat the food or not and how much to eat. If a child does not eat the food in a reasonable amount of time, take it away. Healthy, active children eat about the same amount of food every day — enough to meet the needs for growth and play.



32nd Anniversary of the Carnival!

July 26	PRE-FAIR ACTIVITIES Clothing Construction, Buymanship, & Fashion Revue Judging
August 6	4-H and Open Horse Show
August 8	All decorated bales must be in place by 8:00 p.m.
	TUESDAY, August 9
9:00-Noon	Enter all 4-H and Open Class Exhibits (except Floriculture)
Noon	All Booths to be in place
6:00-10:00 p.m.	Exhibit open hours
6:30 p.m.	4-H Food Auction
7:00 p.m.	Carnival open to the public
7:30 p.m.	Mutton Busters, participants check in at 6:30 p.m., grandstand
	WEDNESDAY, August 10
8:00 a.m.	Bucket Calf Show
8:00-10:00 a.m.	Open Class and 4-H Floriculture entered, judging to follow
9:00 a.m.	Dairy/Beef Show
5:00 p.m.	Sheep Show
5:30 p.m.	Kids Peddle Pull, Sponsored by Farm Bureau, register at 5 p.m. by barns
6:00-8:00 p.m.	4-H Centennial BBQ- free, by 4-H building
6:00-10:00 p.m.	Exhibit open hours
7:00 p.m.	Carnival open to the public
7:30 p.m.	Local Talent Show
	THURSDAY, August 11
9:00 a.m.	Swine Show
11:00 a.m.	Media Interviews with owners of Grand and Reserve Champion Livestock Senior & Intermediate Round Robin Showmanship Contest
4:30 p.m.	Exhibit open hours
6:00-10:00 p.m.	Live Broadcast of Livestock Auction from Oberlin Livestock, KFNF
6:30 p.m.	Carnival open to the public
7:00 p.m.	Colgate Country Showdown sponsored by Coyote Country

Decatur County Fair Days August 9 - 13

	FRIDAY, August 12
8:00 a.m.	Clean up livestock exhibits.
1:30 p.m.	Pet Parade at Good Samaritan Center
5:30 p.m.	Public Fashion Revue and Centennial Celebration, Alumni Tea at the Gateway
6:00-10:00 p.m.	Exhibit open hours
7:00 p.m.	Carnival open to the public
7:00 p.m.	Demo Roller Derby
9:00-10:00 p.m.	Release of all exhibits
10:00 p.m.	Bale decorating contest winner announced on the Midway
	SATURDAY, August 13
7:00 p.m.	Carnival open to the public
7:00 p.m.	Tractor Pull sponsored by the Decatur County Fair Board

Carnival Rides Start at 7 p.m. each evening!

Tickets Only 25¢

50¢ Sinko ALL WEEK

Twist-Over, Train, Ferris Wheel, Swinger, Octopus, Tilt-A-Whirl and Moon Walk (3 tickets)

Merry-Go-Round & Small Children Rides (1 ticket)



See Exhibits throughout the Fair 6-10 p.m. Tuesday thru Saturday

Come One, Come All, to the Grandstand to see:

Tuesday, Aug. 9, 7:30 p.m.

Mutton Busters

Participant check in 6:30 p.m.

Thursday, Aug. 11, 7:00 p.m.

Colgate Country Showdown

Grandstand

Saturday, Aug. 13, 7:00 p.m.

Tractor Pull

Decatur County Fair Board

Hay Bale Decorating Contest

(Company / Club / Family / Group / Individual)

1. \$50 cash prize to winner
2. \$15 entry fee (1 entry per family or club)
3. Bale must be in place by 8 p.m. Mon. of Fair Week
4. Enter at Extension Office Monday of Fair Week from 8 a.m.-5 p.m.
5. Bales released on Saturday 8 a.m.
6. Winner will be announced on Friday at 10 p.m. at the Midway
7. Maximum 3 bales as exhibit
8. Must supply own decorating supplies (Please do not use lead-based paint.)

Decatur County Fair Board 785-475-8121

This Carnival was developed by and is operated by residents of Decatur County!