



Hospital honors families of organ donors
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BECKLEY - Staff at a Beckley hospital thanked and honored families of organ donors Tuesday at a flag raising ceremony.

Nurses at Raleigh General and representatives from the Center for Organ Recovery and Education raised a flag outside of the hospital for people who give the gift of life.

At the ceremony was Ty Smith, whose spouse, Lynn, died in January. The couple decided they would be organ donors after Lynn had a kidney and pancreas transplant in 2011.

"After being through that transplant process, we could both be organ donors," Ty Smith told WOAY. "It's a really hard step to take, but when you do it, it begins a giving process. It's what she wanted. I know it was."

Holly Mitchell of CORE said almost 1,000 West Virginians are waiting for transplants. She thinks at least 140 are waiting for kidneys in Charleston.

"I really encourage anybody -- if they really want to sign up to help save a life -- to think about that," Mitchell said. "Today is a great day, the sun is shining. Real positive thing to do to kind of pass on your legacy."

Ty Smith and his wife donated her lungs and liver to two recipients. He said he spoke with the man who received her lungs just two weeks ago.

"Things like this just get the awareness out," Ty Smith told WOAY. "There are a lot of amazing people that are waiting for their organs, and a lot of families that are hoping against hope."

Anyone wishing to become a donor or wanting more information can check out the state's website at

www.donatelife.wv.gov.

<http://woay.com/News.aspx?nid=6479>