



Late WVU Student To Be Honored In Rose Parade Float

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Point Pleasant , Mason County , West Virginia



West Virginia will be represented at the New Year's day Rose Parade in California with an emotional tribute to an organ donor.

Kevin Boyles was a West Virginia University senior when he died from viral myocarditis -- an undetected cardiac condition -- in 1997. Sixteen years later, Boyles continues to give the gift of life through organ donation. It is because of his generosity that Boyles was chosen along 80 others to have his likeness created on the Donate Life float.

Dozens of people, including organ donors and recipients, gathered at Pleasant Valley Hospital in Point Pleasant Thursday morning to watch as the 22-year-old's memorial floragraph portrait was displayed. Boyles' mother, father and twin brother helped put the finishing touches on the portrait, which is made of dried flowers and seeds.

His mother, Annette Boyles, said the event was emotional, but she hopes it will help spread the message about the importance of organ donation.

"Those who donate their organs and tissues help others who have a need for a better life, " she said.

"You don't need those organs when you're gone, so leaving them behind helps somebody to live on, helps their family to be able to enjoy them."

Kevin Boyles' cornea donation has helped two people with their vision and his tissues could help up to 50 people. There are currently 800 West Virginians awaiting an organ transplant.

The floragraph be shipped off to Pasadena in preparation for the Rose Parade on Jan. 1, 2014. Be sure to look for Kevin Boyles' face on the Center for Organ Recovery and Education's Donate Life float. It will be decorated with colorful lanterns and 81 florographs.

http://www.wchstv.com/newsroom/eyewitness/131205_21353.shtml