Bob’s Story: Carrying On

Bob Williams was weeks away from going on dialysis when the call came that a new kidney was available to him. The donor? Fellow Roxbury resident Kim Roumes, who knew that donation would be an experience like none other in its opportunity to give life to another person.

Their journey began when Williams’ wife, Kathleen, posted a plea on Facebook in November 2018: Her husband, a Roxbury Scoutmaster and band leader, was in dire need of a kidney donor.

Eight months later, in June 2019, Williams—in great health and with donor Roumes at his side—walked 3.1 miles at NJ Sharing Network’s 5K Celebration of Life.

“I’ve been feeling great ever since,” says Williams, who returned to work at NJ 101.5 about one month after the transplant.

He remains infinitely grateful for his good fortune and the generosity of his friend Roumes. “I can’t put it into words,” he says.

Roumes insists that donating one of her kidneys turned out to be among the best things she’s done with her life. “Right from the beginning, I never had any hesitation,” she says. “I said I was going to try to be a donor, to see if I was a match. It all worked out that I was,” she says, adding that the procedure was “a simple process.”

Williams and Roumes now work together to promote and advocate for kidney donors through radio, TV, social media and events like the 5K.

The 2020 Donate Life Transplant Games will give them an even bigger platform from which to tell their story, where an expected 12,000-15,000 will assemble in New Jersey to participate in six days of competitive and non-competitive events as the biggest celebration of organ donation and transplantation.

“My goal is to tell people, if you have any inclination, any interest in doing something like this, find the information,” Roumes says. “Do the research.”