

# The Progress

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## A NEW LEASE ON LIFE

*Despite the need for organ transplants, donations continue to fall seriously behind demand. In North Carolina, 1,368 people are on a waiting list.*



**HOLDING ON TO HOPE**—Lil Shumaker, a former waitress at Prestonwood Country Club, suffers from a rare disorder that has damaged her lungs. While she waits for a lung transplant, she

uses oxygen and takes a battery of breathing treatments and medications.

## Lil Shumaker awaits news of lung donor

**By Roxanne Powers**

Two years ago, Lil Shumaker, then a waitress at Prestonwood Country Club, was serving dinner to club member Rosalind Thomas, when Thomas, who is a nurse, stopped Shumaker and told her that she was concerned about her shortness of breath. Shumaker shrugged it off with explanations that she was "just so busy...so rushed." But Thomas wouldn't be pacified until Shumaker promised to see a doctor.

Sure enough, Shumaker's doctor referred her to a pulmonary specialist who diagnosed her illness as alpha-1 antitrypsin deficiency, a hereditary disorder similar to emphysema. He urged her to advise her eight siblings to be tested for the disorder. Two of her siblings tested positive, though one as yet is asymptomatic and the other is only mildly symptomatic.

Following the diagnosis and the subsequent decision that she would

need a lung transplant, Lil Shumaker's life quickly spiraled into one of constant change and adjustment, the first being the necessary use and side effects of the drug Prednisone. For instance, when diagnosed, the 5'8" Shumaker weighed a mere 98 pounds. After beginning treatment with Prednisone, she says her weight "has continued to increase at such a dramatic rate that I'm constantly having to replenish my wardrobe...and that's not easy." The medication also causes her to have difficulty sleeping, mainly due to nightmares.

Then there are the bronchial medications: she has four inhalers, each with a different medication; the blood product (ProLasin) transfusions she receives at home every other week, and the oxygen tanks she stays connected to. (She has a back-pack type unit for when she leaves the house.)

As if the constant scheduling of appointments (tests at UNC, home transfusions, refilling of oxygen tanks, visits with a pulmonary specialist, etc.) didn't make it difficult enough, the 39-year-old Apex resident never knows how well she will be from one day to the next. Her health can be affected dramatically by simple things that most people take for granted: heat, humidity, second-hand cigarette smoke, detergents, perfumes and aerosol sprays, among others.

While Lil Shumaker lives alone and only has one sister living in North Carolina, she makes it clear that she is not alone in her daily struggles. "I have a tremendous support system of friends, co-workers, my pulmonary team and my bosses," she says. "I don't know what I would do without any of them...the people at Prestonwood have been wonderful. When my health got so bad that I could no

longer wait tables, they moved me to office work, and even gave me the flexibility to come in when I'm able or to work from home. Once I had to call Sarah Wasson (friend and Prestonwood co-worker) in the middle of the night. She came over and called the doctor, filled a portable oxygen tank, and got me to the hospital...all within half an hour of my calling her."

With every aspect of her life — indeed every room of her house — affected by her disorder, you would think Lil Shumaker would find it difficult to keep her spirits up, yet she laughs often and never complains. She says, "I look at the positive side of things. Besides my friends and spirituality, I meditate and read a lot. I am always increasing my knowledge of this illness and the necessary treatments. That helps me to remain feeling in control. I feel that's important because

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## Kara Thio's donor liver a lifesaver

**By Roxanne Powers**

Like any other child, five-and-a-half-year-old Kara Thio wants to do everything her big brother (Glen Thio, a first grader at Morrisville Elementary School) does.

Unlike most other children, she asks her parents questions like: "Why do I have scars across my tummy?", "Why do I have to keep getting boo-boos?", and "How come other people don't have to get a new liver?"

Just two weeks after her birth on Oct. 15, 1991, doctors requested that she be readmitted to the hospital. Because she was jaundiced at birth, tests had been performed to reveal or rule out the presence of enzymes in her urine which could indicate more serious problems with her liver. It was because these initial tests came back inconclusive that Kara's doctors wanted her to be readmitted.

When tests came back inconclusive a second time, exploratory surgery revealed that Kara had a condition called biliary atresia. Simply put, her common bile duct was missing. So on Dec. 10, 1991, when Kara was less than two months old, doctors at UNC performed a surgical procedure in

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**KARA THIO**

## Company challenges fire code

**Owner says new move will go as planned**

**By Ron Page**

CAD Plus-Plain Paper Solutions, Inc. will move into its new \$2 million 26,000 square-foot headquarters near the Airport Boulevard-Interstate 40 intersection unless a last-minute dispute with the Town of Morrisville interferes with the time plan.

"The building is 85 percent complete," says President Adele Fine, "and now we are told by a fire marshal that we need a sprinkler system that will cost \$50,000 and cause us to tear the building apart."

Fine said a fire marshal inspected the building last October and signed off, saying everything was in order. "Then a new fire marshal came in recently, saying a new fire hydrant was needed which will cost \$5,000, and the sprinkler system—which is not required by code." She describes the new state-of-the-art building as meeting all requirements for fire exits for employees and having automatic doors. "To install a sprinkler system entails a massive redo. They claim a fire wall is also needed which is not required for buildings with our square footage and single tenants," Fine points out.

"If the sprinklers were to go off, tons of electrical equipment in the building will be ruined," she emphasized. The firm uses 72 computers. "When we moved into our present offices we had two tons of equipment and two computers. We'll move 30 tons of equipment into the new building, not including furniture," she said.

Town Manager David Hodgkins said the issue of sprinklers is a decision the company has control over. "We have several inspectors and one of the regulations, which was noted originally, is one that mentions the size of rooms, saying anything over 2,500 square feet and housing stored combustibles in piles more than 15 feet high requires a sprinkler system. That is something faced everywhere," he said.

"If the piles are less than 15 feet, sprinklers are not required." That's a decision the company will have to make. It's a state code," Hodgkins said.

CAD Plus-Plain Paper Solutions will double its floor space when it moves from its current facility in Morrisville's Aerial Park. The company caters to the printing needs of architects, engineers, advertising firms and a number of Fortune 500 companies.



**RELIC HUNTERS**—Ira Rushing, left, and his son, Allen Rushing, look over a Civil War saber, pistol and shell found in wooded areas near the Morrisville Town Hall. The Rushings are among history buffs who have contributed relics to the town board.

## Town's collection of Civil War relics growing

**By Ron Page**

Was the last artillery battle of the Civil War fought in Morrisville?

Thanks to the efforts of several history buffs, the town will be able to display a lot of evidence supporting that claim.

Hundreds of Civil War bullets, buttons, breast plates, a 3-pound cannon ball, shells, mini-balls from front-loading muskets, knapsack hooks, Union and Confederate money, even a sword and a pistol have been unearthed in the area around Town Hall over the years. Now, a portion of the findings has been donated to the Morrisville Board of Commissioners and will be given a special glass display case designed to show it at Town Hall.

Among the contributors are relic hunter Ira Rushing of Clayton and his son, Allen, a detective with the Morrisville Police Department, Charles Dreher of Cary, and the Triangle Treasure Quest and Historical Preservation Association. Along with Thomas M. Smith of the Sons of Confederate Veterans, they described their findings at the commissioners' first May meeting.

The significance of these findings is underscored by a Union soldier's diary uncovered in the Library of

Congress. In it, the soldier wrote: "Morrisville, N.C., April 13th, 1865...This was the last cannon firing of the Civil War \* April 13, 1865 \*."

It was the daily diary of Lt. Joseph Kittinger from New York's 23rd Battery whose personal writings were found recently by Mark Bradley of Raleigh while researching details for his book "Bentonville," the elder Rushing said, adding that he himself has discovered many items, "so many that you know you were in a battlefield."

It was two years ago when two youngsters playing at Cedar Fork District Park found three shells with Civil War era Hotchkiss fuses. A few days later, Army specialists in explosives found another two. But the discovery of war-related relics has been going on for decades.

Charles Dreher, a 64-year-old retired federal poultry inspector who lives on High House Road in Cary, found six bullets in December of 1974 while tramping through an area about 150 yards west of where Town Hall now stands. He said he first became interested in the war while attending Indiana State University. A Marine Corps

veteran who served in Korea, Dreher said it wasn't until years later, in 1961, when he moved to North Carolina and got a job in Durham as a food inspector that he began to look for relics. "Thirty-five years later and I'm still looking," he said.

Dreher said he used to drive along Morrisville-Carpenter Road and knew from his studies in college that soldiers had battled in the area he passed daily. "The Eighth

Texas Cavalry was a part of a force under General Joe Wheeler. They had about 30,000 Confederate soldiers based in an area along Morrisville-Carpenter Road near where the new Town Hall is now located," Dreher explained. "The Yankee forces, with about 60,000 members, included a unit called the Eighth Indiana Infantry, which was located off what is now N.C. 54 at the site where Bristol Myers stands

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