

Suite de la demi-page intérieure de la couverture
Continued from inside half-cover (IHC)

Jean-Pierre Hamel MD

Jean-Pierre was only 11 years old when he woke up one morning and noticed blood in his urine. His father, a doctor, exclaimed, "Let me see!" This was the beginning of a story marked by second chances.

"This was definitely not a good moment to become sick, as at the time my brother was suffering from leukemia, a disease that would take his life just a few months later. As for me, we would find out several years later that I was afflicted with Alport disease." Unavoidably, renal failure would occur progressively.

Unaware of what was awaiting him, he applied to medicine at Université de Montréal. Refused in the first round, he made an important decision: to take his chances in France. He was fortunate and was

accepted into medicine at Université de Nancy. Six years later he would become a French doctor. He was terribly homesick; he missed his family and friends and so he tried to return to Quebec. Once again he was lucky; the Dean of the Faculty of Medicine at Université de Montréal accepted him as an extern, therefore allowing him to practise in Quebec.

In the meantime, his illness continued to ravage him. He became more and more tired. It was impossible to do physically demanding sports. Even playing a round of golf was hell; after 13 holes he could no longer continue, so he had to be content with riding in the cart to stay with his friends. This too required an immense effort. It was difficult to practise family medicine. "I would go to bed at 7:30, exhausted." Dialysis and a kidney transplant were his only hope. In 1999, his wife gave him a kidney. "Accepting one of her kidneys was a very difficult decision for me. I will be eternally grateful. I regained my health and vitality. You cannot imagine how wonderful ... it is like a rebirth." This changes our priorities and our appreciation of others.

"If I had only one piece of advice to give it would be, sensitize your patients to organ transplant; one cannot imagine what this means to those who are waiting desperately for a breath of life, a glimmer of hope."

When Jean-Pierre takes a holiday, he escapes to his property on a lake in St-Michel-des-Saints. Apparently the lake is filled with gray trout—this big—which he throws back into the water. "This isn't a fish tale," he assures me. "You believe me, don't you?" It's impossible not to, with his luck! 🍁



Dr Hamel is a family physician in the family planning clinic at LaSalle General Hospital in LaSalle, Que, and has an office at the Centre de santé Newman nearby.

Dr Hamel est médecin de famille à la clinique de planification familiale de l'Hôpital général de LaSalle à LaSalle, au Québec, et a un cabinet au Centre de santé Newman qui se trouve à proximité.



Photos (de gauche à droite)

With his wife, Carole Champoux-Hamel.

Dr Hamel is an accomplished sculptor.

Dr Hamel with his wife and daughters.

Dr Hamel celebrates with family and friends (from left to right): Marie Hélène, his older daughter; Pascale, his younger daughter; Carole, his wife; Dr Hamel; Sylvie Blais, a friend; Jean Francois LaBarre, a friend.

(Photos, from left to right)

Avec sa femme, Carole Champoux-Hamel.

Dr Hamel est un sculpteur accompli.

Dr Hamel, avec sa femme et ses deux filles.

Dr Hamel porte un toast (de gauche à droite): Marie Hélène, sa fille aînée; Pascale, sa fille benjamine; Carole, sa femme; Dr Hamel; Sylvie Blais, une amie; Jean Francois LaBarre, un ami.



Photos: Andrée Lanthier, Longueuil, Que

Story/Texte: Roger Ladouceur MD MSC CCMF FCFMF, Verdun, Que