

FOX 5 STORY
by Mary Garofalo
Interview to Terry and Michael Jacobs, Greg's parents
MOTHER says: "They murdered my son"

18 year-old Gregory Jacobs loved life and all the adventures that came with it. But last march, while on a high-school outing at a ski resort in Pennsylvania, Gregory was involved in a serious snow-boarding accident. He was flown by helicopter to Hamot Hospital in Pennsylvania with severe head trauma.

MARY GAROFALO TO JOHN COLEMAN

"Mr Coleman, I'm Mary Garofalo with Fox News, how are you?"

This man was one of the last people to see Gregory alive - he knows all the gory details of exactly what happened to Gregory Jacobs.

"Mr Coleman, you have got to answer something, this family, you owe them some kind of explanation"

He didn't want to tell us anything but the family has plenty to say.

FATHER

"You know I see Greg going down that hallway and you know it's a nightmare"

MOTHER

"He was just a wonderful person, he was a wonderful person"

Terry and Michael Jacobs are Greg's parents. Sadly this is where they now visit their son, at his grave site here at Belleview in Ohio.

They are haunted and guilt ridden over the possibility that their son's organs were cut out of his body before he was dead.

MOTHER

"They murdered my son"

And they say 100's of pages of medical records prove it.

The Jacobs say their bad luck started right from the beginning with the EMS (Emergency medical Service) response. They are angry that their son was forced to wait an hour and 15 minutes to be airlifted to a hospital that was only 25 minutes away by ambulance. At the hospital it was another hour and a half before doctors operated on him - this while blood was flooding Gregory's brain. The Jacobs say even the neurosurgeon who worked on Gregory couldn't believe the delay.

MOTHER

"He had remarked that he had wished he had got to Gregory sooner."

The Jacobs say Gregory was given a hopeful prognosis after surgery, the pressure inside his head measured by this probe returned to safe levels but despite the good news they say they were pressured into signing a DNR, a Do not Resuscitate order. Terry Jacobs wanted nothing to do with it but reluctantly Greg's father signed it.

MOTHER

“I have recently found out that once a person does sign a Do Not Resuscitate order, and they are in a hospital, CORE is called.”

CORE stands for The Center for Organ Recovery and Education, a non-profit organization that coordinates the retrieval of organs for life-saving transplants.

After the DNR was signed, and when Greg was still very much alive, CORE writes on Gregory’s medical records - thank you for your help and for the early referral.

FATHER

“From the very first day that I was there and walked into the pre-op room, I was told that organ donation makes death easier.”

And the bad luck continued. Terry says she was asked to leave her son’s side while medical staff changed bandages around Greg’s delicate and exposed brain. But something horrible happened.

MOTHER

“They had re-wrapped his head and his left eye was now partially open and his lips were swollen”

Doctors performed another CAT scan and showed it to the parents. They say they were told Gregory was not going to make it.

FATHER

“Four strokes, half his head was stroked and the other part was stroked and they showed us on the CAT scan. No hope. There was no hope.”

That is when they say this man, John Coleman, an organ procurement coordinator for CORE came into their lives and started pestering them for Greg’s organs.

The Jacobs say they were shocked to learn from John Coleman that their son would be brain dead in 12 hours.

FATHER

“Terry was really against any kind of organ donation but then they promised there would be no mutilation”

Terry says she didn’t want to sign anything but she says that CORE went behind her back and worked on her husband instead and because they need the consent of only one parent once they broke Michael down and got his signature to turn over his son’s organs CORE had what it needed.

MOTHER

“These people just seemed to know that they could talk Mike into things - I was in with Greg.”

The Jacobs say what angers them most is that first John Coleman told them that their son would be brain dead, then later came back and told them he’d made a mistake - instead he said their son was going to die of a bad heart.

MOTHER

“Now he has a weak heart, and I find this out now - I thought he was a doctor of some sort but they’re not allowed to give prognosis - he wasn’t even a nurse”.

MARY GAROFALO

“So the CORE person is telling you now what is wrong with your son?”

MOTHER

“Yes”.

Gregory’s case was changed to a controversial procedure in the world of medicine; it is called a non beating heart protocol. That is when a patient is taken off all medications and the doctors wait for the heart to stop beating. Once the patient is pronounced dead, they then remove the organs. The Jacobs say they should have stopped everything the minute they were told their son wasn’t brain dead but they didn’t know what they know now. According to medical records given to FOX 5, this is where the case takes a morbid turn.

On the hospital record it indicates that Greg was wheeled into the operating room at 5.15 am very much alive. He had brain activity and a heart beat. Greg was pronounced dead at 6.19. But look at this - the first incision time is noted at 5.50 am.

Now if you believe these records, Greg was still alive and under no anaesthetic while they were cutting out his organs.

MOTHER

“They cut on my son at ten to six, 29 minutes before they pronounced him dead”

FATHER

“Just what I was afraid of happened, it did, he wasn’t dead.”

Strangely, the CORE medical records are different - the first incision time is noted at 6.21 am, 2 minutes after Greg was pronounced dead.

So we travelled to Pittsburgh, looking for John Coleman, the man who knew all the answers to Gregory’s gruesome fate.

MARY GAROFALO TO JOHN COLEMAN

“His family is inconsolable and they believe that you pressured and coerced them into giving up his organs when he was brain dead when in fact he was not brain dead. Can you say anything about what happened that day?”

JOHN COLEMAN

“No, I have no comment right now”.

MARY GAROFALO

“Why is that? I mean, his family is terribly distraught - these are the medical records, it indicates that the time of death was 5.50; your records indicate that it was 6.21, which one is it? Because if it was 5.50 he wasn’t brain dead and he had a heart beat, so those organs were taken out of him while he was still alive. Can you talk about what happened?”

John Coleman wasn’t about to reveal anything to us but the details of this disturbing case didn’t sit well with the coroner, Lyle Cook.

CORONER

“I wrote in my report that I found out after the fact that this was not a brain death protocol but a non heart-beating protocol which I have never been very comfortable with. I wrote in my report that in fact I’m not comfortable with this and was going to discuss it with the District Attorney.”

He says as a coroner he has always been afraid that the non beating heart protocol would lead to something like this.

CORONER

“I’m afraid with this type of thing there’s a perceived lack of accountability when there’s nobody looking over someone’s shoulder.”

It is now being investigated by District Attorney Bradley Falk.

DISTRICT ATTORNEY

“I plan on personally reviewing it and discussing it with people that I think it would be appropriate to discuss it with”

THE JACOBS ATTORNEY

“Only God knows and Greg what this child endured”.

The Jacobs attorney is calling for a criminal investigation.

THE JACOBS ATTORNEY

“They were duped into authorizing the killing of their child for body parts, that is what they feel”

MOTHER

“I know he suffered and I know he suffered severely to the very end”

And Michael Jacobs believes he will never be forgiven for being pressured into doing this to his son. He says it’s hard to feel like he’s part of his family anymore.

FATHER

“I don’t fit no more; I don’t fit in my family”

We offered both Hamot Hospital and CORE the opportunity to interview on camera. Both declined and sent us statements.

Hamot Hospital tells us that the incision time on one of Gregory’s medical documents was wrong.

HAMOT STATEMENT

“Based on the information now available to Hamot, Hamot has determined that this single time entry is erroneous... If an official review of Gregory’s case is undertaken by appropriate authorities, Hamot intends to fully cooperate.”

CORE wouldn’t answer our specific questions but says

CORE STATEMENT

“Only after death is determined can organs be recovered by the transplant teams. We hope his family finds solace in knowing that while his life could not be saved he provided the gift of life to several recipients and has made a significant difference in many lives.”

Transcribed from video

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