

Per Arne Kjonso


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Elisabeth City, NC 27909

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Dear Friends,

I am the father of Cristina Kjonso who you air lifted off of the *M/S Song Of America* on July 8 of this year. This letter is the update on Cristina's condition that I promised I would send.

As you might remember, Cristina was diagnosed as having an *aneurysm* in the brain, or as the doctors called it, a *left intraventricular arteriovenous malformation with intraventricular hematoma*. It sounds serious... and it was.

After three days in the hospital, she under went surgery to put in a temporary *shunt* to drain the fluid away from the brain as her natural drain was blocked. As a result of this operation she developed a *vesicular infection* of the brain and spinal fluid which took six weeks to cure and therefore delayed the surgery for replacing the temporary *shunt* with a permanent one.

This final operation, called a *serotec*, was so complicated that the doctors in Norfolk did not feel competent in performing it. Cristina was therefore, on August 22, flown to Mercy Hospital in Miami where she underwent six hours of brain surgery. The operation was performed by Dr. Sydney J. Peerless who is regarded as one of the best brain surgeons in the world!

I am happy to say that Cristina came through this operation with flying colors, the surgery being a complete success!

On August 30th, Cristina finally could leave the hospital and we flew home to Chicago, where she is now back in school. At present, the only apparent side effects of her ordeal is that her *short term* memory is somewhat diminished, however, it is slowly returning. She is expected to make a full recovery in a few months.

It goes without saying that the happy ending to this story is in no small way due to the immediate and professional response that the U.S.C.G was able to provide. The contribution that you and your crew made in getting Cristina quickly to a hospital undoubtedly saved her life, and for this, I will always be indebted to you.

Please extend my most sincere thanks and appreciation to all of those who were involved on July 8th, I will never never forget you.

Best Regards,



Captain Per Arne Kjonso
Master
M/S Song of America

cc: Lt.jg	Karen Brown
AM3	Toby Bernard
ASM3	Rich Chabers
HS2	Phil Stoddard