

**Under the Knife with the Armadillo #56** is brought to you by Liz Copeland of 3243 165th Ave. SE, Bellevue WA 98008. Phone number is 425-641-0209. Email is received at lizc@nwlk.com. Started in late November, 2002, for SFPA 230.

Well, maybe it should be under the laser, but I'm still not sure just exactly what tool was used so we'll just call it a knife and move on.

In mid-October, I went to see my gynecologist to try and figure out why things had gotten so much more annoying. She sent me to get a sonogram and in addition to verify the suspicion of fibroids, the sonogram doctor asked me if I found my kidney stones painful. "What kidney stones?!?"

Turns out, I had 4 large stones, 2 per kidney. I asked the sonogram doctor to send a copy of the report to my internist, and my internist then referred me to a urologist. He sent me to the hospital to get some dye injected into my arm and a series of x-rays of my kidneys done so we could tell what was really going on. My left kidney was very swollen and mostly blocked. My right kidney wasn't but there were those 2 stones getting very close to the place where they could block things. So, I spent November getting rid of the left kidney stones.

This involved 2 procedures, both requiring general anesthetic. The first one, they tried to zap the stones externally. I think they use sonic waves. My stones were too hard and didn't respond at all to this treatment. A week later (Nov 10, I believe), I went into the hospital to have a hole cut in my back and a tube stuck thru it into my kidney. The two stones were then ground away into what my urologist called gravel. The hole in my back is still healing, I'm sleeping lots, and after 2 weeks on antibiotics, I'm suffering the usual stomach upsets and yeast infections. But, I feel better despite all of that. Having 2 functioning kidneys is a nice feeling. (Of course, I had to drop out of the H&R Block course because of all this surgery.)

I get the second surgery on the right kidney in mid-January, and the hysterectomy to take care of the fibroids problem probably in February. This means I'll be a semi-invalid until April. I can only console myself with the thought of how lucky I am we caught the kidney problems

before I went into renal failure, and that I'll be so much healthier once all the surgeries are done.

I hope all of you are doing much better than I am. I will try to write some for sfa during my stints of lying in bed over the next couple of months but I'm not promising anything.

Happy holidays and remember to be thankful for your health.

