



## Boss fires woman who donated kidney to save her: suit



Victor Alcorn

# ORGAN DOWNER

### EXCLUSIVE

Thanks for nothing.

A Long Island woman says she gave up one of her kidneys to save her boss, Jackie Brucia (above) — only to have Brucia help fire her, according to a legal complaint.

"I decided to become a kidney donor to my boss, and she took my heart," Debbie Stevens sobbed to *The Post*.

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# 'Kruger' election cost: \$1M For vanishing seat

By CARL CAMPANILE

Talk about throwing good money after bad. Taxpayers will shell out about \$1 million to elect a replacement for disgraced Brooklyn pol Carl Kruger — who pleaded guilty to taking more than \$1 million in bribes — although the eventual winner will spend no more than eight months in office.

That's because Kruger's 27th District state Senate seat will be wiped off the map by the redistricting process by the end of the year.

There still hasn't been a winner declared in the March 20 special election to replace Kruger — who resigned in disgrace in December — between Republican David Storoobin and Democratic Councilman Lew Fidler.

Storoobin unofficially won by a mere two votes. So now, officials will recount all 22,000 ballots by hand — a lengthy process that could take months and hours upon hours of overtime at the Board of Elections.

But the Legislature will adjourn for the year in June, which means the eventual winner may never cast a vote in Albany.

"It's the political equivalent of 'The Twilight Zone.' Nothing is rational. It's crazy," said Baruch College

political-science professor Douglas Muzzio. "On so many levels, it's a waste of money. It's a seat that's going bye-bye. There's no tenure to the seat."

Kruger tearfully pleaded guilty late last year and will be sentenced Thursday. His deal with prosecutors calls for between nine and 12 years in the slammer. His co-conspirator boyfriend, Dr. Michael Turano, also pleaded guilty and will be sentenced this week.

Adding insult to injury is that the cost of the special election keeps increasing.

Board officials said the initial cost to hold the election was \$750,000.

That figure covered the cost of poll workers and monitors, transporting the optical-scan voting machines to poll sites, advertising, mailings and other planning and administrative costs.

But overtime costs to deal with the recount are piling up.

Between March 17 and March 31, the board reported paying \$125,000 in overtime — most of it to handle the recount, sources said.

Even if only half of the overtime costs are attributed to the recount, the price for the race would be \$825,000 through the end of March and nearly \$900,000 for the first half of April.

ccampanile@nypost.com



KRUGER District wiped out.

## Fans lose hunger for 'Games'

The box-office competition finally overwhelmed "The Hunger Games," as the romantic comedy "Think Like a Man" beat expectations with a chart-topping \$33 million in US and Canadian ticket sales over the weekend.

"The Lucky One," too, outdid forecasts to finish second, with \$22.8 million. "The Hunger Games" with \$14.5 million.

# Fired after donating

**GIVE AND TAKE:** Debbie Stevens says she kindly donated a kidney so her ailing boss could move up a list for her own transplant.



# CRUELEST

**EXCLUSIVE**

By KIERAN CROWLEY

Yeah, but what have you done for me lately?

A "kind and generous" Long Island mom donated a kidney to save the life of her boss — who then turned around after she got what she wanted and helped fire the poor woman, according to an explosive new legal complaint.

"I decided to become a kidney donor to my boss, and she took my heart," Debbie Stevens, a 47-year-old divorced mother of two, sobbed to The Post.

"I feel very betrayed. This has been a very hurtful and horrible experience for me. She just took this gift and put it on the ground and kicked it."

In papers filed Friday with the state

Human Rights commission, Stevens charges that she was clearly set up by Jackie Brucia, 61, her once-ailing boss at the billion-dollar Atlantic Automotive Group, which operates several new-car dealerships.

Stevens said she first got to know Brucia, one of the West Islip company's controllers, while toiling as a clerical worker for the firm starting in January 2009.

Stevens then left the company in June 2010 to move to Florida. But when she returned to Long Island for a visit that September, she stopped by the office and talked with Brucia, a discussion that included Brucia's health problems and "her need for a kidney transplant," the papers state.

Stevens told The Post that Brucia told her she'd located a possible donor, a family friend.

But "because she was naturally a kind and generous person, Stevens

told Brucia that, if necessary, she would be willing to donate a kidney," the document says.

"Brucia . . . told her, 'You never know, I may have to take you up on that offer one day,'" the papers say.

Soon after, Stevens decided to move back to Long Island for good and asked Brucia if she could return to work there. She had a job with the company again within weeks.

Then, two months later, in January 2011, Stevens told The Post, Brucia "called me into her office and said, 'My donor was denied. Were you serious when you said that?' I said, 'Sure, yeah.' She was my boss, I respected her. It's just who I am. I didn't want her to die."

Brucia had been "apparently grooming her to be her 'backup plan,'" according to the papers. But while Stevens was a close health match for Brucia, she wasn't a perfect one. So the doctors agreed to allow Stevens to do-