

Honor, remember, help save lives

Donating blood through the American Red Cross can be a wonderful way to honor or memorialize a beloved family member, friend or co-worker. What better way to pay tribute to someone than asking others to donate the gift of life to honor that special person?

Who is deserving of such an honor? It's really up to you, the blood drive coordinator or sponsor, or the individual donor. The entire drive could be designated to honor one person. You could also ask donors at your drive if they would like to designate their next donation in honor or in memory of someone.

For instance, an entire blood drive might be held in memory or in honor of someone who has been a great supporter of past blood drives. Or your drive could honor a current or past blood drive volunteer at your place of worship, workplace, or organization. Some sponsors coordinate drives for a friend or family member who has received blood transfusions. Still other blood drives might be held in memory of a loved one.

Your donor recruitment representative can help with ideas to promote the drive. Promotions could include posters, e-mails, and newsletter articles. We can also provide cards that donors can complete to indicate who they are donating in honor of.

Interested? Contact your donor recruitment representative today, then e-mail DriveTime Talk and tell us about your drive.

As a blood drive coordinator or sponsor, you know people who take pride in giving of themselves – literally. Each time your donors answer the call and give blood, they give of themselves to help save the lives of others.

Blood supplies often take a downward turn during the holidays. Is it possible to schedule an additional blood drive? If not, how about encouraging blood donors you know to give the gift of life this season at a blood drive or one of the Red Cross donation centers?

Donating blood truly is among the most precious gifts any of us can give. The selfless act of giving blood can do so much good and all it takes is time. Call today for more information or an appointment at 1-800-GIVE LIFE or 1-800-448-3543.

Why we give: Barry's story

Barry Davis thought of his wife. Then he thought of his kids. Then he thought of the blood donors who were helping to save his life.

Barry had entered the hospital two days earlier for routine surgery. No one expected complications, or that he would need nearly 40 emergency transfusions of blood. No one expected he might die.

"Quite frankly, the possibility of dying didn't bother me as much as the idea of leaving my wife and kids behind," says Barry, who is now fully recovered two years later. "But when I looked around, I knew I had a chance of making it because the blood I needed was there."

Giving thanks

Barry has donated blood through the **American Red Cross** as long as he can remember. He grew up in Rudyard, a town of fewer than 2,000 people in Michigan's Upper Peninsula. His dad was a school teacher, his mother a homemaker. Both were strongly involved in their church and community, and encouraged Barry to be active, too.

Giving blood was one way Barry knew he could give back. He gave at community drives, and through drives at his school. After college, he began a career with the state's correctional system, and started giving at the workplace. And most recently, he volunteered to help coordinate and recruit for the drive at **Newberry Correctional Facility**.

"I've found that people don't often realize how important it can be to donate blood," says Barry, who works as the facility's warden. "When it becomes very personal, it brings home why we do it."

That's why Barry is open to sharing his story about being a blood recipient, and to supporting blood drives at Newberry. His experience, he says, made him philosophical. He wonders why others

have died from lesser medical conditions, and why he didn't. He thinks of people who survive disasters, and of others who don't.

"Maybe by sharing this story, others will give blood and somebody who needs it will live," Barry says. "I always say you never know when your donation may help someone who later goes on to do great things in their life—like save the planet."

Barry lives in Rudyard with his wife, Lori, and two teenage children, Eric and Lindsey. Both Lori and Eric give blood, and Lindsey hopes to when she's age-eligible.



Barry Davis

Newberry Correctional Facility holds blood drives for staff and community members twice a year. The drives in June and December typically collect an average of 33 donations. Since 2005, donors have given nearly 266 units of blood to help patients in more than 100 Michigan hospitals.

Diversity and donation

Donors from diverse backgrounds have a lot to give. You see, donors within many ethnic groups have rare blood types which are distinctive to their community. And those blood types can serve specialized purposes, particularly to patients who need transfusions for ongoing or emergency medical care.

Blood type, like hair or eye color, is an inherited trait, and can be a common characteristic among particular communities of people. For instance, ethnic minorities have a higher percent of people with type O blood than other populations. And since type O blood is routinely in short supply and in high demand by hospitals, ethnic minorities have a unique contribution to make to America's blood supply.

People of diverse backgrounds may also experience a larger incidence of debilitating blood disorders or diseases. Patients with these conditions may require regular blood transfusions in order to live. Sometimes, the best chance patients have for successful transfusions come from blood donors with similar ethnic backgrounds.

It's vital that our blood supply reflect the diversity of our population to best meet the needs of all. Whether you're African American, Asian American, Native American, Hispanic American, or from one of the many other ethnic populations that make up the rich mosaic of our country, your donation matters. People take pride in many aspects of their lives. Family, work, friends, religious worship—all these things give people a great sense of accomplishment, every day. Think of the pride that could come from saving another person's life. Please give blood. You could make a difference to someone in need by simply rolling up your sleeve.

New eligibility requirements: young donors

Blood donors 19 and under started receiving some extra TLC this fall when the American Red Cross introduced **new height and weight requirements** for whole blood donations.

The Red Cross initiated these new safety measures based on research indicating that **young donors** are more likely than older donors to experience a reaction after giving whole blood.

Most reactions, Red Cross officials say, are minor, and include symptoms such as dizziness or lightheadedness. Although sometimes, fainting or more serious injuries can occur.

Young donors are more likely to have a reaction if they have a **low blood volume**. A person's blood volume depends on their sex, height and weight. The new Red Cross policy attempts to ensure that eligible donors will only lose a relatively small amount of their total blood volume.

Even if students donated successfully in the past, they will no longer be allowed to give if they do not meet the new criteria for height and weight. While the precaution may disappoint some donors, the measures are necessary to improve overall safety for young donors.

The Red Cross recommends that individuals who cannot donate blood can help in other ways like helping to organize a blood drive.

The new height and weight criteria will apply to:

- All high school students, regardless of their age, who come to donate at high school blood drives
- All donors younger than 19 who come to donate at blood drives outside the high school setting

Criteria will vary for male and female donors:

- Males donor 5 feet or taller must weigh at least 110 pounds
- Female donors 5 feet 6 inches or taller must weigh at least 110 pounds
- Boys must meet different weight criteria if they are shorter than 5 feet; girls must meet different weight criteria if they are shorter than 5 feet 6 inches

A sponsor's story: The Smith family

Last year while watching TV, 8-year-old **Desi Smith** saw a commercial for the American Red Cross. She instantly had an idea. Turning to her mother, Pam, she asked, "Mommy why don't we do a blood drive?"

And that was the start of **Desi's Heroes Blood Drives**.

Desi suffers from **Sickle Cell Disease**. Sickle cell is a genetic blood disorder that alters the shape of red blood cells into a crescent shape. The sickle-shaped cells have difficulties passing through smaller blood vessels and can cause blockage, resulting in less blood traveling to that area of the body. Without proper blood flow to an area, the tissue becomes damaged and results in serious bodily complications.

To help her daughter and other people with sickle cell disease, **Pam Smith** started coordinating blood drives. Her first drive in July 2008 attracted a large number of donors and volunteers, including more than a dozen first-time donors.

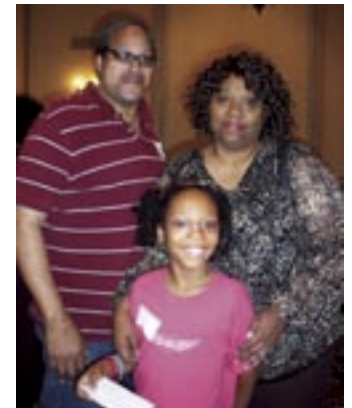
To date, Pam has coordinated three blood drives bearing her daughter's name. Before the last blood drive, she threw an "O" party to remind people about the upcoming blood drive and the importance of donating—particularly for people

with type O blood. The party featured O-themed refreshments, donuts, and red fruit punch, and was held at the Salvation Army in Farmington Hills, where Pam works.

Desi has not let her disease slow her down. With the help of regular blood transfusions, she leads a happy and healthy life. Desi attends 4th grade and *Kids Kicking Sickle Cell*, a therapeutic Karate class.

Desi is highly involved in the blood drives, particularly since the drives bear her name. She's created special stickers for all of her heroes that come to donate. Even Pam's husband, **Eric**, donates at all their drives.

"The whole family is involved in my escapades as a Red Cross blood drive coordinator" chuckled Pam.



The Smith family: Eric, Desi and Pam

'Round the Region

This section highlights high achievers and innovators from our recent quarter.

Onaway VFW. Celia Stutesman lost her husband 23 years ago to disease that affected his body's ability to make blood cells. A year later, she started organizing blood drives. "I never would have had as many years with him as I did if it weren't for blood donors," she says. Ever since, Celia and the **Ladies Auxiliary** of the VFW have worked together to help ensure a safe and adequate blood supply.



Celia Stutesman (bottom left) and her team

King Nursing and Rehabilitation. In late summer, this Houghton Lake facility combined an open house with a blood drive, and ended up with more than 20 first-time donors. After giving, several donors said they will give again.

Walmart Supercenter. A Lansing-area family invited community members to give blood in memory and in honor of their sons. Two-and-a-half years ago, **Zachariah Seidenstucker** received daily transfusions as an infant to extend his life. A year later, his new-born brother, **Zebediah**, received blood. Zebediah will celebrate his first birthday soon, and is happy and healthy thanks to blood donors.

MSU Veterinary Teaching Hospital. The first annual **Pet Lover's Blood Drive** provided an opportunity for people to donate in honor of their four-legged companions. Donors also received information on MSU's animal blood services program and left with a doggie goodie bag. Sixty pints of blood were collected.



Pet Lover's Drive

St. Luke's Lutheran Church. For two years, the Turner family in Vassar holds a blood drive in honor of their infant son. **Hudson** was born with hypo-plastic left heart syndrome. Hudson received many blood transfusions that gave him hope, as well as time to be held and loved by his parents, **Brooke** and **Luke**. "We feel it is our duty to give back as much as possible," says Brooke. "It not only helps others, but lets us know that people have not forgotten baby Hudson."



Hudson Turner

Ride for Red. More than \$2,000 was raised at the 2009 **Melissa Legacy Ride for Red** this fall for the Mid-Michigan Chapter of the American Red Cross in Lansing. The first annual ride was held in memory of **Melissa "Peachie" Noonan** who passed away from ovarian cancer in 2007 at the age of 27. The event involved a 70-

mile roundtrip motorcycle ride, followed by an afternoon of food, friendship and blood donation. Proceeds will provide a scholarships for people who need financial assistance to take health and safety courses for employment or family situations. The scholarship was created by Melissa's parents, **Thom** and **Ruth Church**.

News from Skylar. She's sprouted nearly 1/4 inch a month since ending chemotherapy in February. And she's growing her red hair out. According to her mother, **Christine Stevens**, "tween-er" **Skylar Stevens** is tearing up the playground since becoming cancer-free. Skylar received numerous blood transfusions during her two-year bout with leukemia. Christine sponsored a blood drive last February to celebrate Skylar's return to health.



Skylar in Florida

Higgins Township Fire Department. This 2nd Annual **Firefighter's Memorial Blood Drive** collected to goal and nearly doubled collections from last year. A handful of other township fire departments directed donors to the drive, including Gerrish, South Branch, Lincoln, Lyon, Addison, St. Helen, Ingham and Kingston. Many businesses, restaurants and media supported the drive. McDonald's, Walmart and BC Pizza supplied food and refreshments.

50 years of service. **Bunny Reder** has been coordinating blood drives for so long it's hard to know exactly how many lives she has helped save. Bunny first volunteered at the first Red Cross blood drive in **Tawas** in the 1950s at **Christ Episcopal Church**.

St. Ann's Church. This two-day drive in Cadillac sponsored by **Crystal Flash Energy** and **Save-A-Lot Foods** resulted in 92 whole blood and five double red donations on day 1, and 63 donations on day 2. Eleven donors received gallon pins, and six donors gave for the first time.

Alpena Regional Medical Center. This long-time supporter of the Red Cross hosts four blood drives each year. Drives are staffed by the medical center's Ladies Auxiliary. Coordinator **Marlene Pear** signs up volunteer donors, and engages the auxiliary to take care of all the details, including registration, refreshments, tables and donor aids.



Alpena volunteers Standing: Yvonne Rondeau, Irene Rouleau, Helen Buszka. Sitting: Mary Goss, Mary Schaedig.

Red Cord Honors Program

The Red Cords Honors Program recognizes students who have made the choice to donate blood through the American Red Cross at least three times their senior year.

Students in the Red Cord Honors Program are awarded red honor cords that they may wear during their high school graduation activities with their school's permission.

Any student at a high school holding a blood drive with the Great Lake Blood Services Region is eligible to participate. Eligible students must come to donate three times during their senior year.

Students ineligible to donate blood may be able to fulfill requirements for the program by actively participating as a volunteer with their school's drive, or another in the community.

Interested? Talk with your donor rep about how you can identify and recognize your seniors for the life saving work they do!

Our board of directors

Eighteen individuals from medicine, media, government, education, business and other community organizations serve as advisers for the Great Lakes Blood Services Region. As members of our Board of Directors, these community volunteers commit their leadership and professional experience toward helping to strengthen the blood supply.

- Regina Bell • Tim Booth • Brian Calley • Juliet Dragos • Natan Espinosa • James Flickema • Jeffrey L. Green • Ron Haas • Candy Helmbold • Webb Martin • Bruce McAttee • Julie Novak • Zack Ripley • Kati Saul • David A. Seaman • William Sharp • Kimberly Stoutenberg • Joy Thrun



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Great Lakes Blood Services Region

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Drivetime Talk

Newsletter for you...
Our Blood Drive Sponsors and Coordinators

Drivetime Talk is a publication for our Blood Drive Sponsors and Coordinators.

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10/09AP1236

**CALL 1-800-GIVE-LIFE
(1-800-448-3543)**

**TO MAKE YOUR
APPOINTMENT TO
DONATE!**

News from cyberspace National Red Cross launches new website

We've all gotten lost in cyber space. One click leads to another. You end up virtually half-way across the world, gazing at a website that's not exactly what you intended to find.

At the American Red Cross, we're working hard to simplify our presence on the Web. This fall, we will launch a new site devoted to our Biomedical Services, one that provides you fresh, up-to-date information on blood donation programs and services in your community, your state and across the nation.

We've consolidated numerous websites from our Red Cross divisions and regions. And while we're bringing everything under one umbrella, you'll still have access to valuable local information. Our **One Website** is easy to find and easy to navigate. Most important, it brings you the content you've come to want, need and expect from your American Red Cross.

Be sure to check us out soon at **redcrossblood.org**. Thank you again for all you do, and for sharing your life with others in need.

Why she gives

A blood drive sponsor reflects on why she coordinates blood drives through the American Red Cross

"I am a retired family physician who practiced for 38 years in Albion. Now that I am retired, I have been coordinating blood drives in Albion for the past 15 years. We have nine to 11 regularly scheduled blood drives in Albion. We hold them at churches, the VFW and at industrial plants.

I know the need for blood because I saw many patients who needed blood to save their lives. Those patients included accident victims, surgical patients, women with complications at childbirth, newborn babies, children with blood diseases and cancer patients.

I have always appreciated the people who want to give their blood to help others. Many people in Albion come to our drives every two months when they can. I consider them real heroes." **Miriam Daly, M.D., Albion**

Do you know of a sponsor or volunteer deserving of recognition? Would you like to tell us why you sponsor blood drives?

Call or e-mail Ann c/o Drivetime Talk at 1-800-968-4283, ext. 360 or kammerera@usa.redcross.org.