



Today's Donor

Great Lakes Blood Services Region

Winter 2009

NEWS FOR OUR APHERESIS DONORS

Apheresis Donor Centers

Lansing

1729 E. Saginaw

Monday
6:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Tuesday
6:30 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Wednesday
6:30 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Thursday
6:30 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Friday
6 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Saturday
8 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Sunday
CLOSED

Lansing Apheresis Supervisor
Amy Grant

Flint

1401 S. Grand Traverse

Monday
Noon to 6:30 p.m.

Tuesday
2 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.

Wednesday and Thursday
CLOSED

Friday
6:30 a.m. to 11 a.m.

Saturday
6:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

Sunday
6:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

Flint Apheresis Supervisor
Val Edwards

There is one New Year's resolution you can fulfill in a couple hours: donate platelets. Plus, you can resolve to give again and again. Give the gift of life by donating platelets through the American Red Cross. Call 1-866-725-2140 or visit redcrossmichigan.org

Why we give: Paul and Cammie's story

In high school, her dad spent a lot of time going to see her compete in basketball, volleyball, softball and track. *He was always there, Cammie Krueger says. That's why I want to be there for him.*

For the past year, Cammie has displayed her singular devotion to her father by **donating platelets** through the **American Red Cross**. She started, she says, because he couldn't. Cancer was standing in his way.

"Dad had donated about **45 gallons of blood and platelets** before he developed cancer," says Cammie, remembering how **Paul Peacock** made a 110-mile roundtrip twice a month, for more than two decades to donate platelets through apheresis. "He's so giving. I wanted to give in his place."

But in September 2007, Paul's sojourns from Brooklyn to Lansing came to a halt. He had gone to the doctor to talk about his chronic sinus headaches. A day later, he was having a CAT scan. Two days later, he had emergency surgery.

"When I first went in, I was ready to go back home and have lunch," says Paul of the morning he went in for diagnostic tests. "That afternoon, I was laying on a gurney in the emergency room."

Doctors discovered that Paul's headaches were caused by a golf-ball size brain tumor. Surgeons removed the tumor, then immediately started him on regimens of chemotherapy, radiation, and clinical drug trials. He responded well, and despite the recent occurrence of a smaller tumor, Paul says he has been leading a fairly normal life.



Paul Peacock displays his collection of gallon pins and his original apheresis donor card in a glass case that hangs in his Brooklyn home. Those pins, he says, remind him of the people who need platelets, and why he made his twice-a-month trek. Paul was one donation shy of receiving his 50th gallon pin when he was diagnosed with a brain cancer.

"It should be scary, but I take it like anything else," says Paul of his diagnosis with **glioblastoma multiforme gliomas**. "I work hard at staying in shape and eating the right things. I play a lot of golf, and live on a lake, so there's always a lot to do."



Paul Peacock and his daughter Cammie Krueger

Cammie says her dad's attitude reflects how he's led his life. "He's so strong and never gives up," says Cammie. "That's who he is."

To date, Cammie has kept pace with her father's 24-times-a-year donations. She's grown to understand why her dad kept on giving since his first platelet donation in 1988. *It's just awesome knowing that when you're done you've helped someone, she says. And it's so easy. It's a breeze.*

Paul has returned to the Apheresis Donor Center since his diagnosis. He accompanied Cammie on a donation once, and says the visit was akin to a reunion.

"The people who work there are almost like family now," says Paul, adding that he misses donating, but is exceptionally proud of his daughter. "The staff and I know each other by first name. We know the names of each others' kids. And I know if they weren't so nice, people wouldn't keep going back."

Maximize your donation...

You might find that you can give more than you thought.

Our staff is always encouraging donors to see if they're good candidates for giving two or three units of platelets at a sitting. It's a simple thing, doesn't take much more time, and if you are eligible, you'll leave knowing you've helped in more ways than one!

Donors with high platelet counts and a few extra minutes on the day of their donation may be in the running for **split or triple donations**.

"If you'd like to know if you can give a split or a triple, we can take a small sample of your blood and run a simple test on-site the day you come in," says Apheresis Representative **Sara Spoelman**. "If your platelet count is suitable, and if you have about 20 minutes more to spare, we welcome you to join the split and triples teams."

We typically ask donors about giving splits or triples on days when we have just one of our two centers open. In **Lansing**, we typically ask on **Wednesday** and **Thursday**. In **Flint**, we ask on **Saturday** and **Sunday**. That way, we can maximize the number of platelets we collect on those days.

The ability to manufacture two to three platelet products from a single donation will help meet increasing demand for platelets by hospitals. Every day, more and more patients are prescribed platelets for the treatment of serious disease or trauma. Your donation helps.

Questions? Contact Sara Spoelman at 517-318-7292 or spoelmansn@usa.redcross.org.

A donor's story: Paul Streby

Donating platelets is probably one of the few things you'll see **Paul Streby** doing that doesn't involve having a book in his hand or at least one nearby.

"When I was giving whole blood, I would bring a book and hold it with my free hand," says Paul who works as a librarian and web master at the **University of Michigan-Flint**. "But now that I'm giving platelets, I take advantage of being able to catch up with something on TV or watch a movie."

Paul began donating platelets through the **American Red Cross** close to three years ago. He started, he says, because Red Cross staff called him and asked if he would like to try another way of giving. Plus, the site was convenient, centrally located within his hometown of Flint.

"I'd been a whole blood donor for about 14 years," he says. "I enjoy doing things that are



The Streby family. Kim and Paul, Jude and Ronan.

good for the community, so it sounded like something worth trying."

Paul tried it and liked it. It was different, he says, from donating whole blood, but he still walked away with the good feeling of knowing he had helped save a life.

"It's satisfying to know my donation is helping a specific person," says Paul, who often hears his donation will be transfused within days to someone very sick or injured. "It's one of the most rewarding things I do in any given week."

Most of the time, Paul rolls up his sleeves on Sunday morning after church. He tells his wife, **Kim**, and two kids about donating platelets, and how it's a little different from donating whole blood. He's somewhat confident his eldest son, **Ronan**, may want to give when he's of age—that is, if he can get past his current childhood fear of getting poked or having shots.

"I might take Ronan and **Jude** with me when they're a little older," Paul says. "I'd like them to see what it's like, and to see it's not something to be scared of."

Your questions, your answers

Why are platelets so fragile compared to red cells, plasma and other components of whole blood?

Unlike red blood cells, platelets collected for transfusion do not circulate if refrigerated, and need to be stored at **room temperature**. That storage at room temperature, however, causes a gradual loss of hemostatic function (essentially the ability to clot), and also increases the risk of **bacterial growth**. Because of these factors, the shelf life of platelets is just five days, which contributes to chronic shortages as well as our constant need to recruit and collect platelets.

I give platelets regularly, but I want to know how to schedule my regular blood donations around them. What are the waiting periods between platelet and blood donations?

Volunteer donors through the American Red Cross may give whole blood, double red cells or single-donor platelets. Eligible donors sometimes give a combination of different blood products, and must wait appropriate calendar intervals between each type of donation. Typically . . .

. . . if you donate **whole blood**, you can donate whole blood 56 days later, platelets three days later, and double red cells 56 days later.

. . . if you donate **platelets**, you can donate whole blood three days later, platelets three days later, and double red cells three days later.

. . . if you donate **double red cells**, you can donate whole blood 112 days later, platelets 112 days later, and double red cells 112 days later.

Got a question? Send it to Today's Donor c/o Ann Kammerer at kammerera@usa.redcross.org or call us at 1-800-968-4283, ext. 360

On the campaign trail...

Updates on perks, programs and personnel

Get in the game. Football kicks into high gear this time of year, and so do we as we unite to keep platelet donations strong and steady. We're inviting you to get in the game, and participate in our newest **frequency campaign.**



12 Points

You'll receive a punch card for 24 donations (what you may be eligible to give in a year!), and you'll have the opportunity to accumulate points toward special prizes. Every time you present to donate platelets, we'll punch your card, and give you a point. For every three points (or three attempts to donate), you'll be eligible to receive a special giveaway. So, for



15 Points

those of you good at stats, you'll have 8 chances in 12 months to receive 8 prizes! Sounds like good odds, and a sure thing to help save lives.



6 Points

The prizes, and the intervals, are: 3 points: mug • 6 points: thermos • 9 points: towel • 12 points: sports duffel bag • 15 points: cargo cooler • 18 points: ground lounge chair • 21 points: chill and grill outdoor kit • 24 points: \$50 gift card to a restaurant of your choice.

Remember: you can give platelets every three days, up to 24 times a year! Be sure to join our newest frequency rewards program so we can say thank you.



21 Points

Got our number? We've recently changed our phone number for information and setting your appointments. Make a note of it! Our new toll-free number is **1-866-725-2140.**

Staff profile: Bevin Kirsch

Bevin Kirsch has met hundreds of people since she started working at the **American Red Cross.**

Her goal is to remember at least one story about each person she's met.

"I honestly enjoy the conversations I have with our donors," says Bevin of her day-to-day interactions with platelet donors at the **Flint Apheresis Donor Center.** "I don't consider it a job to remember the stories they share."

Bevin started drawing platelets through apheresis just two years ago. She had worked for the Red Cross before that, in fact, for almost seven years.

Just a few years out-of-college, Bevin had married, started a family, and wanted a job that would accommodate staying home with her new baby during the day. She found that career through the Red Cross.

Her work in the **Components Lab**, she says, line-up well with her degree in laboratory science. Working as a lab technician involved performing some of the essential steps in



The Kirsch family. Left to right: Sydra, David, Bevin and Gretchen.

manufacturing blood products from donated blood and platelets.

"After a while, I really wanted to do something where I was with donors," says Bevin. "When you work in the lab, you see the same four walls and the same people. Sometimes, I found myself losing track of why I was doing my job."

Bevin made a seamless transfer to the "front-of-the-house." She received extensive on-the-job training, and was quick to adapt to the ins and outs of platelet donation. Her technical skills blended well with her natural curiosity of people. The result, she says, are days filled with variety and insight from talking to and listening to dozens of donors, and a personal pride in knowing she is working for a life-saving organization.

"Donors have made my life better," Bevin says of the countless people she's met who give up hours of their day to help save a life. "I go home realizing my kids are going to be OK in this world because there really are good people out there."

Our horizons...

Apheresis Recruiter Sara Spoelman shares her experiences in-the-field and at the Apheresis Donor Center as she encourages people to help save lives by giving or supporting donations of platelets.



Earlier this year, I had an opportunity to speak to many students who were studying different aspects of science at **Olivet College.**

Many of the students I met were pre-professionals who focused on pre-medical and pre-veterinarian disciplines. Because of their backgrounds and interests, I was able to speak to them on a more scientific level to help them better understand how transfusions of single donor platelets might help their future patients.

Susan Lewis, an assistant professor of chemistry at Olivet, was my co-presenter, and was instrumental in coordinating this presentation. All students who attended the seminar were encouraged to come and donate platelets as part of their educational experience.

Olivet is about 30 miles southwest of our Lansing Donor Center, so for many of these students, it represented a 60-mile roundtrip. Despite the drive, many students accepted our invitation. In fact, the majority were very eager to come to Lansing and donate so they could get a complete, thorough and personal understanding of helping to save a life by giving platelets through apheresis. All-in-all it was a memorable experience for everyone, and was of great benefit to patients and their families who desperately need platelets for ongoing or emergency care.

Are you a member of a group, organization or student club? Want to schedule a presentation on platelets? Or do you have an idea for recruiting platelet donors and volunteers from within your group? Contact Apheresis Recruiter Sara Spoelman at 517-318-7292 or spoelmansn@usa.redcross.org



American Red Cross

Great Lakes Blood Services Region

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Today's Donor

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You're needed...

While our collections look strong, we're actually just keeping pace with the **ever-increasing need** for platelets.

Your donation is valued any time of the year. When you give platelets in the next few weeks, you'll help offset that **5 to 10 percent drop in donations** we often see in the winter, and you'll help save a life. If you can, consider making just one extra donation. Not only will you up your chances for incentives through our frequency program, you'll walk away with the greatest prize of all: knowing you helped save someone's life.

Every day, someone's child struggles to endure chemotherapy . . . someone's friend has heart surgery . . . or someone's mother needs immediate treatment for cancer. All these people, and more, may need transfusions of platelets. And those platelets can only come from eligible donors like you.



**Would you like to tell us why you give platelets?
Call or e-mail Ann Kammerer at 1-800-968-4283, ext. 360 or
kammerera@usa.redcross.org**

By the numbers: Great Lakes Region

Fast facts on our collections

**Fiscal year 2007:
July 1, 2007 to June 30, 2008**

Platelet products

Our goal	12,368
What we did	14,230 (115%)

**Fiscal year 2008:
July 1, 2008 to June 30, 2009**

Platelet products

Our goal	13,780
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Procedures

Our goal	7,965
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**Where we're at:
End of first quarter July 1 to Oct. 31, 2008**

Platelet products

Our goal	5,830
Actual	6,526 (111%)

Procedures

Our goal	3,370
Actual	3,425 (102%)