



Today's Donor

Great Lakes Blood Services Region **Fall 2009**

NEWS FOR OUR APHERESIS DONORS

Apheresis Donor Centers

Lansing

1729 E. Saginaw

- Monday
6 a.m. to 7 p.m.
- Tuesday
6 a.m. to 7 p.m.
- Wednesday
6 a.m. to 7 p.m.
- Thursday
6 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.
- Friday
6 a.m. to 2 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 12 p.m.
- Saturday
6:30 a.m. to 3 p.m.
- Sunday
6:30 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Flint Apheresis Supervisor
To be determined

Why they give: Ryan and Dawn's story

When **Dawn Carey** found out her daughter **Morgan** had a brain tumor she did everything she could to save her. When she found out she couldn't, she did everything she could to take away her daughter's pain.

Today, Dawn and her son **Ryan** are doing everything they can to give back to the community that helped improve the quality of Morgan's life. In late August, the two made their first platelet donation through the American Red Cross, on the first anniversary of Morgan's death. Now they plan on giving every Saturday they can.

"Morgan was just one child out of so many who need this," says Dawn, reflecting on the platelet transfusions that helped Morgan endure painful chemotherapy. "That's why the whole donation process humbles me. I want people to know they can do this. I lived this and never knew that platelets were something you could give."

Everyone matters

In February 2007, 14-year-old Morgan walked out of the library and collapsed, books about ice skating and Harry Potter scattering across a thawing sidewalk. A day later, she was in the hospital, recovering from surgery, a baseball size scar on her skull.

Morgan had brain cancer. An inoperable tumor had attacked the part of her brain that held learning, memory and speech. At best, doctors gave her two years to live.



Morgan (center) with her father Kevin, sister Meaghan, brother Ryan and mother Dawn.

"We never lied to her ever," says Dawn. "She knew the tumor was one of the rarest, and that she would go to heaven early."

Her 22-year-old brother Ryan says that honesty gave Morgan strength.

"Not that she didn't have that before," he says. "She was a person who always went against the norm."

For Ryan, he remembers the girl who wore red sparkly shoes almost every day, from first through fourth grade. He remembers the middle-schooler who took on bullies and stuck up for the under-

dog. And along with his mother, he remembers the girl who lit up the seventh floor of the children's hospital, always laughing, always tending to others, never paying attention to her own pain.

"Everyone mattered to Morgan," Dawn says. "People loved talking to her. Newspapers wrote about her. Toward the end, she had teenagers writing her from all over, telling her what a difference she had made in their lives."

After more than a year of hospital care, Morgan entered hospice care. She died at home, in the arms of her family.

"When she was dying, she wanted us to know where she was going, that she'd be happy," Dawn says. "She wanted to make sure we were going to be OK."

Ryan is currently working to go back to college and study pediatric oncology. Morgan's older sister Meaghan is also pursuing the field.

About 1.5 million new cancer cases are expected to be diagnosed by the end of 2009. By donating platelets through the American Red Cross, you could give someone the hope they need to beat the disease. Your donation may give someone another day to spend with their loved ones, or even a second chance at life. Chances are, there's someone in your very community who needs the platelets you could give. The Red Cross encourages you to consider giving platelets, and to tell others about the role platelets can play in the care and treatment of people with cancer. As a platelet donor, you may be eligible to give every seven days, up to 24 times a year. Give the gift of life by donating platelets through the American Red Cross. Call 1-866-725-2140 or visit redcrossmichigan.org.

Give for one, give for all

Imagine what it would be like if someone you knew or loved was extremely sick and needed help right away. Now imagine what it would be like if help wasn't there.

Some of you don't have to imagine. You know. You see, many of our donors have given platelets after hearing of a child or adult who needs platelets. Sometimes, too, our donors want to give to help that particular person. Such **directed donations** may come from family, friends, or community members. And sometimes, too, the Red Cross may ask particular donors to give for particular patients, based on needs communicated by hospitals.

Directed donations are tagged for the specific patient, then sent to the hospital where the patient is receiving care. When the supply of directed donations is greater than the need, hospitals may transfuse the platelets to other patients.

The majority of donors through the American Red Cross give platelets that go to help **any patient in any Michigan hospital**. The need for platelets is increasing every day. As a platelet donor, your act of kindness shows you understand how critical platelets can be to emergency and medical care. It also shows you may have heard of times when patient care had to wait . . . when a life-saving transfusion or surgery was delayed . . . simply because platelets were not on hospital shelves.

You can help ensure that platelets are there for patients who need them. Please. Become a regular platelet donor. You can give platelets **every seven days**, up to 24 times a year. That's a lot of life to give.

Why we say thank you: Nancy Uppal

When **Nancy Uppal** heard she only had an outside chance of living for three more years, she started making lists.

"When you get that kind of news, all kinds of things run through your head," says Nancy of last February when doctors told her she had a rare form of lymphoma. "I paid the bills. I wrote lists to my husband. Then I handed things to him and said, *here, if I don't make it, here's what you need to do.*"



Nick and Nancy Uppal

Then she and her husband **Nick** went hiking. She felt great. She was in the best shape of her life. She and Nick had been married 44 years. She had two grown sons and a handful of beautiful grandchildren. It didn't make sense to let something unexpected like **mantel cell lymphoma** hold her back.

"About halfway through our hike, I began singing," says Nancy. "And I never do. I told Nick I wasn't going to say goodbye anymore. I told myself I would enjoy each moment, rather than feel sorry for myself. Enough is enough."

Your questions, your answers

I gave platelets for the first time after giving whole blood for years. Recently, I have been getting lots of phone calls from your Apheresis telerecruiters, asking me to give. Why am I being called more frequently?

We're guessing that you may be a **universal donor** for platelets—which means you have **type AB blood**. Just like Type O red cells can be transfused to patients with different blood types, Type AB platelets can be transfused to any patient with any blood type, and with fewer complications. Hospitals frequently transfuse AB platelets in emergency situations when care providers don't have the time to determine the blood type of the patient.

Another reason you may be receiving frequent calls to donate is that you have a high enough

Now, a little under a year later, Nancy is cancer-free. Her chemotherapy and treatments were intense. She was hospitalized for months. And along the way, she received transfusions of blood and platelets to help her through.

"I was determined to stay strong, and to live one day at a time," says Nancy, who would walk rounds through the hospital, sometimes navigating an IV and pole. Friends and family brought in pictures. Her husband gave her books. She equipped her room with a stereo, and listened to imagery tapes. She watched birds and gazed at flowers and trees through binoculars.

"I just enjoyed being alive," she says.

In June, the family business, **DTN Management**, held a blood drive in Nancy's honor. The drive was so successful that friends are looking to do a second. In the meantime, Nancy continues to express her gratitude to those who help others by donating blood and platelets.

"I don't know how you say thank you to someone you'll never know for helping to save your life," says Nancy. "But I'm here, I'm smiling, and I'm so thankful for the many people who cared enough to take the time to give."

platelet count to do a **split or triple donation**. Donors with **high platelet counts** can typically donate more than one bag of platelets every time they give. That means they're able to help out multiple people by donating more than one unit in one appointment. Also, the chances of a patient having a reaction are reduced when he or she receives multiple units from a single donor.

Essentially, we're calling because someone needs what you can give. As always, our recruitment team can work with you to establish a donation schedule that best accommodates you.

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

Health fair. There's still a lot left of 2009, but that doesn't stop us from looking ahead to 2010. Mark your calendars for **January 7, 2010**, then plan on bringing your family and friends to our first **platelet health fair** here in Greater Lansing! We see it as a chance to share what we do with the community, and to educate others about platelets and how platelet donations help hospital patients. **WLNS TV-6** is our media partner, and we're teaming up with the **Gift of Life Donor Program** and **National Marrow Donor Program** for a truly life-saving event. Watch for updates on the location coming soon, as well as more details.

Get in the game. Don't wait until the last minute to get all your donations in for the year. Our **Platelet Pals campaign** is winding down, and is ending soon. So be sure to make and keep your appointments to give. When you do, we'll add punches to your card, and give



Platelet pals card

you the chance 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 join our frequency rewards program! We'd like to thank you for helping to keep platelet donations strong and steady year-round.

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

Staff profile: Becky Beaugez



Becky Beaugez

When **Becky Beaugez** talks about her job at the American Red Cross, her husband's 13-year-old cousin thinks it's awesome.

"She had leukemia when she was 5," says Becky who works collecting platelets at the **Lansing Apheresis Donor Center**. "But

now she's cancer-free. That's just one of the things that make my job worthwhile."

Becky started working on an on-call basis at the Red Cross in March 2008, and quickly worked her way into a **part-time post**. She balances her day with coursework at **Lansing Community College**, with hopes of entering and graduating from the nursing program.

"A big reason I wanted this job was related to my going into the medical field," says Becky. "Another was because I love working with people."

Becky's days are filled with interacting with team members and donors alike. She says

she typically sees about three donors a day. In between those appointments, she rotates "behind-the-scenes" tasks with other apheresis technicians.

The donors, Becky says, make her day, every day. Not only are they concerned about hospital patients, she says they're interested in things going on in her life.

"At one time, my husband was laid off," says Becky. "One donor, in particular, was worried about me. It was so nice for him to care and to think about us."

Her husband **Trevor**, Becky says, recently got a new job working for the city of **St. Johns** where they live. Married just a year, the two live in a hundred-year-old home in the downtown district with their Jack Russell terrier **Chloe**.

Sometimes, Becky says, she's amazed at all the complex little steps involved in her work, but she realizes they all add up to a big outcome.

"I love that I can make a difference in helping to get platelets to cancer patients," says Becky. "It's such a rewarding job."

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... and now, blood!*



It's hard to believe how quickly time has flown. I have been with the American Red Cross now for a little over a year. And I've enjoyed every minute of it.

Some of you may have heard that I am moving on. I am. But I am moving on to a new role within the Red Cross. While I won't be located at the Lansing Donor Center, I will be within Michigan, working to recruit blood donors in the **Grand Rapids** area. While I'm excited about a new horizon, I have to say I accepted the post with a mixture of happiness and regret. One side of me is happy that I'll be closer to home (you see, I live in Grand Rapids and have been commuting to Lansing!); another side of me is sad that I'll be leaving the place and the donors I've grown to love.

But I'll still be with the Red Cross. That's the good news. I'm very proud of what we've accomplished together. By virtue of all the informational meetings we've had, we've recruited more donors than ever to join our family of donors. We've grown. And we'll continue to reach out. I know, simply because of the passion you all have to give and to give again.

I'm looking forward to what my second year with the Red Cross will bring, and to keeping in touch with all of you. You've taught me a great life lesson about what it means to give. Thank you for being who you are, and for all you do for patients in Michigan hospitals.

Want to send a note to Sara? Or do you have an idea for recruiting platelet donors and volunteers? 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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The way we give

Here's what one donor says about why she gives . . .

When I was young, I remember my dad coming home with his arm wrapped and a sticker on saying something like 'Be kind to me, I gave blood today.' As soon as I turned 17, I started to donate whole blood because my dad did and I wanted to help someone in need. However, in 1992 when I was 21, I was diagnosed with **follicular thyroid cancer** and couldn't give blood anymore. Although I have been cancer-free since 1993, I always assumed I would never be able to donate blood again. So, I went for almost 17 years without donating.



Shandra Schoonover and Ian

In March 2009, I saw a TV show about blood donation and how it is desperately needed. So I checked out what the Red Cross website said about cancer and eligibility. I was shocked to see that it looked like I could donate blood again! That same week, I went and donated whole blood for the first time in almost 20 years. After my second whole blood donation in May '09, I took a second look at the Red Cross website and found the section on platelets. I had no idea I could donate anything but whole blood. Boy, was I excited!

I scheduled my appointment in Flint and gave platelets in early June. Even though I travel three hours roundtrip to donate, I'm so happy to help someone, even if I will never know who they are. It is such a good feeling to know I am setting the same example for my 13-year-old son **Ian** that my dad set for me. Hopefully, when he's old enough, he'll start to donate blood, too. **Shandra Schoonover, Adrian**

By the numbers: Great Lakes Region

Fast facts on our collections

Where we were
Fiscal year 2009:
July 1, 2008 to June 30, 2009

Our goal	13,780
We collected	16,228
We finished	116 percent of goal

Where we are going
Fiscal year 2010:
July 1, 2009 to June 30, 2010

Our goal	18,171
We've collected	2,500 (end of August)

Every time you donate platelets, you help save someone's life. Your dedication can ensure that platelets are there to help patients in their fight to beat serious diseases and survive trauma. Give platelets. Give often. You can make a difference.

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.