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Gift of Smiles
Community Blood Center and Children's Mercy Hospitals and Clinics unveil a special new program. **Pg3**



50 States of Giving
Al Whitney is on a mission to donate platelets in all 50 states! **Pg3**



New! Blood Drive
A coffee lover /blood donor's dream come true! **Pg2**

CBC news

keeping you up-to-date with your Community Blood Center

April-June/2010

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rare, emotional meeting joins donors and grateful recipient

The donation of blood is an anonymous gift of life and seldom are donors and recipients brought together. So when 18-year-old cancer survivor Hannah Miller recently met and thanked 13 of the more than 140 donors who helped save her life, it was a rare – and emotional – event.



hugs, pictures, tears and overwhelming gratitude

In anticipation of meeting her donors, Hannah was understandably nervous. "I am overwhelmed. I only hope I can say the right things to show them my appreciation. It means a lot," she said.

The meeting meant a lot to her donors, as well. It was an opportunity of a lifetime they did not intend to miss even though they had to travel snow-packed roads to get there.

Jo Ann Bird, a hospital medical technician, cried when she heard that her donations had helped a young, teenage girl. "I was surprised and excited when I got the invitation to attend. I got goose bumps. I wouldn't miss this for anything."

Bob Bly, a retired landscape professional, said it is quite an honor. "It's something I have always wanted to see ever since the first time I ever gave blood." He made his first donation when he was 17 to help save the life of a classmate after an auto accident and has donated more than 90 times.

Lynn Jandt, a phlebotomist, didn't start donating until she became a Community Blood Center employee. "Because I am AB positive, I didn't think my blood was really in demand. But I found out differently," she said. "So when I heard that my platelets had saved someone's life, oh my gosh, I can't explain how excited I was."

When **Barbara Osborn**, an emergency room registration secretary, received the invitation to meet Hannah, she thought "This is something I can't turn down." Barbara has donated six gallons of life-saving blood simply because "It's the right thing to do."

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Hannah was a 13-year-old athlete and winner of a gold medal for weight lifting at the Junior Olympics when she was diagnosed with Burkitt's lymphoma in August 2004. She completed 10 rigorous rounds of chemotherapy only to find out the following year that the cancer had returned. After many life-threatening infections, spinal taps and surgeries, she underwent a successful stem cell transplant in November 2005.

Throughout her treatment, Hannah received nearly 200 units of platelets and red blood cells from more than 140 donors in the Kansas City area. "Hannah's Heroes" donated their life-saving blood selflessly and anonymously, never dreaming of the role they would play in a stranger's recovery.

In celebration of National Blood Donor month, the Community Blood Center invited these generous donors to gather January 7 to meet the grateful recipient of their gift – now a college freshman at Baker University who is on the road to recovery because of them.

plan on it!

find out what is going on at community blood center



Each year CBC recognizes our newest Century Society donors, those who have reached their 100th donation, at our annual **Celebrations of Giving**. We also use this event to recognize businesses, high schools, churches and other organizations who have helped us achieve our donation goals over the year. We kick off this year's celebrations in Kansas City on **March 30th** at the Hyatt Regency Crown Center. **April 1st** is the St. Joseph Celebration and Topeka is **April 8th**.



May 5th Blue Bell Ice Cream will be our partner for the 5th Annual **Pint For Pint Blood Drive**. Look for special new flavor as they help us celebrate Cinco de Mayo!



May 29th, the Saturday before Memorial Day, is a **Save A Life Rewards Double Bonus Points Day**. CBC's

Save a Life Rewards program not only offers donors the opportunity to earn great gifts including movie tickets, but it allows you to track your wellness history information including cholesterol, blood pressure, pulse, and temperature. Find out more at www.savealifenow.org and click on the Save a Life Rewards icon.

June 26 -July 2nd will be our **Annual Battle For Blood!** All metro firefighters and police battle it out to see who can raise the most blood donations. Kick-off celebrations will be on Saturday, June 26.

Hannah's mother, DeeJo Miller, was grateful for the opportunity to personally thank the total strangers who helped save her daughter's life. "I didn't know I would be so overwhelmed. We didn't know you, you didn't know us. Yet you are part of our journey. Every day that Hannah gets to go out there and live, be normal, go to college and grow up to be who she is going to be, her donors are a part of that," DeeJo said.



"We didn't know you, you didn't know us. Yet you are part of our journey."


-DeeJo Miller, Mother of Hannah Miller - Recipient

all blood types and all walks of life

"Hannah's Heroes" are proof it not only takes a village to save a life, but it takes all types. And not just blood types, but people from all walks of life. Hannah's 140-plus donors included an advertising agency vice president, pediatric nurse, small business owner, bookkeeper and utilities lineman in addition to two Community Blood Center employees. Their ages ranged from the 20s to the 80s. They represented a variety of ethnic backgrounds and faiths.

"They are vastly different in many ways, but they are all the same in one way – they're blood donors who care enough to take an hour from their schedule to help donate life-saving blood," David Graham, the Community Blood Center's Vice President of Hospital and Donor Services, said.

In addition to personally thanking her daughter's donors, DeeJo hoped to bring attention to the importance of donating. "Hannah's isn't the only story like that. This happens all the time every day and it is happening today. There are people still needing transfusions. Here is your opportunity to do something good. It's about doing the right thing," she said.

"The satisfaction of giving blood is one of the most remarkable things a donor receives because there is no tangible reward for donating. But to connect the donor and recipient is just one of the most wonderful things you can do," Dr. Jay Menitove, the Community Blood Center's CEO and Medical Director, said. 

from the desk of Jay E. Menitove, M.D.

Our Mission: To provide a volunteer blood supply and support services that meet the needs of patients, donors, physicians and hospitals.

Jay E. Menitove, M.D., President/CEO and Medical Director



Welcome to CBC's newest forum, directed solely to those rolling up their sleeves and making a difference in another's life.

It is all about "Save a life. **Right Here, Right Now!**" Blood transfusions make a big difference for accident victims, patients undergoing extensive surgical procedures, those with complex medical problems including chemotherapy treatments, and children with hemoglobin disorders such as sickle cell anemia.


Community Blood Center's (CBC) commitment to you, blood donors, focuses on making the donation process faster, easier, and more rewarding. In this regard,

CBC introduced spot vital devices earlier this year that automate, that will quicken the blood pressure, pulse, and temperature process. Late last year, CBC signed a contract with Wyndgate Technologies to automate the donor history process. That is, within 18 months, history questions will be recorded electronically along with a link to previously requested information about travel and medications. At some point, we anticipate approval to ask fewer questions for those donating frequently.

Those participating in the "Gift of Smiles" program know that their extended blood typing matches a sickle cell anemia patient's red cell phenotype. Thank you for

generously agreeing to be a donor for a specific patient who has an on-going transfusion need.

We also recognize the importance of a proper setting for blood donations. Our "total store image" campaign addresses this need through an extensive remodeling plan for facilities enhancements. Having the right coffee is part of this; CBC now proudly serves Roasterie's "Every Vital Drop" in each of our neighborhood donor sites.

Thanks for being a blood donor and helping someone in our community. 

young sickle cell patients smile a bit more thanks to gift of smiles



Mikayla and her mom, Erika

Not long after Cameron and Ericka Perkins welcomed their daughter Mikayla into the world, she developed jaundice and other perplexing physical problems and no one could figure out why. It wasn't until Mikayla was 13 months old – and after many consultations with doctors, tests and sleepless nights – that she was diagnosed with Sickle Cell Disease.

"The diagnosis was a surprise. We knew

nothing about Sickle Cell Disease. Since then, it has been nothing but a continuing lesson," Ericka said.

Marrica and LaSalle Prewitt have been on a similar journey with their son Marcel. Because his symptoms initially were misdiagnosed, they did not find out until he was 6 that he, too, suffered from the debilitating chronic disease.

CBC is proud to be the supplier of blood for the Children's Mercy Hospital Sickle Cell Disease Program.

"We did not know anything about the disease. But we quickly got educated about the risks and complications," LaSalle said.

Today Mikayla, 8, and Marcel, 10, are leading normal, active lives. But "normal" for them means receiving life-saving blood transfusions every four weeks through a Community Blood Center program known as Gift of Smiles. This special program not only provides blood to help children who are Sickle Cell Disease patients – from toddlers to teens – at Children's Mercy Hospitals and Clinics. It also helps these children enjoy life and smile a little bit more.

Sickle Cell Disease is an inherited disease. It is passed on to children when both parents possess a hemoglobin S gene (the sickle cell trait). In the United States, about 1 in 12 African-Americans have the sickle cell trait and approximately 1 in 400 newborns have Sickle Cell Disease. Red blood cells are typically smooth and disc-shaped. But in Sickle Cell Disease, they take the form of a crescent and clump together, forming blockages in the vessels that carry

platelets across america comes to kansas



Al Whitney, a retired factory worker from Ohio, is a man on a mission. His goal: To donate platelets in all 50 states, raise awareness of the need for whole blood and platelets and save lives. His visit to Community Blood Center's Overland Park Donation Center on January 11 was the 34th stop on the tour.

"You have three million people in this area. Of those three million, a little over a million are eligible to donate. Of those one million, less than 5% donate. We need to get more of the people who are eligible to donate. It is very important," he said.

Al, 71, has been a blood donor since the mid-1960s. He has given more than five gallons of whole blood and about 575 platelet donations. He helped organize many blood drives with the support of his local community blood bank, LifeShare Community Blood Services.

In the fall of 2007, he said "I can do more than this." And he came up with the idea of donating platelets in every state, naming his effort "Platelets Across America."

"What greater charity can you give to?"

Platelets are blood cells that help control

bleeding. People going through many life-saving treatments require platelet transfusions – including cancer, burn, heart surgery, bone marrow and organ transplant patients. Platelets only last for five days so the need for new donors is ongoing.

"The platelets I give today will be used by the end of the week. A patient will benefit," he said.

With his tour, Al hopes to overcome the main reason more people don't donate platelets. "They just don't know about it. People understand donating whole blood. They don't understand the process of donating platelets. It's easier to get someone in to donate whole blood and then switch them over," he said.

As he shared his story with employees at the donation center, he explained the donation process. "You go on a machine and they draw about two tablespoons of blood. They spin it down, pull off the platelets and return it. They keep going back and forth until they get a unit which is approximately three tablespoons of fluid. Your body replaces those platelets in 24-48 hours. Your body is a fantastic machine," he said.

Why is donating platelets so important to Al? "Go to a cancer ward and you'll see. Take one hour every eight weeks and donate a pint of blood. That's like volunteering six hours a year. What greater charity can you give to?"

To learn more about becoming a platelet donor, please visit www.savealifenow.org Or call the Community Blood Center at 816-968-4055. ☪

"You can give platelets 24 times a year. Platelet donors are very loyal. It would take a snowstorm to keep them from coming."

~Al Whitney



oxygen-rich blood to limbs and organs. Blood transfusions help benefit Sickle Cell Disease patients by reducing complications including recurrent pain crises and risk of stroke.

Mikayla suffered her first stroke when she was only 4 and a second stroke last year. "After the first stroke, from that day forward she has been getting regular transfusions," Ericka said.

Marcel suffered a stroke soon after he was diagnosed, spent 30 days in the hospital and struggled with complications that included seizures and hallucinations.

"He started getting transfusions shortly after the stroke. Since the transfusions started, he has not had any complications from the disease," LaSalle said.

Despite the hospitalizations, needles, ongoing visits to doctors and constant probing by medical staff,

Mikayla and Marcel continue to demonstrate an attitude of acceptance. "I am just different from everyone else," Mikayla said.

"The hard part is getting the shots. But I am getting used to it," Marcel said.

Children who have Sickle Cell Disease typically require ongoing and regular blood transfusions throughout their life. Through Gift of Smiles, CBC encourages donors who have the precious and rare gift to help these deserving children.

"There is a lot that is unknown about Sickle Cell Disease. Gift of Smiles definitely brings out the need for giving blood," Ericka said.

"We really appreciate people who give blood. A small percentage of people are

matches. It is a blessing for people to donate. If there weren't donations, we probably wouldn't be here today," LaSalle said. ☪

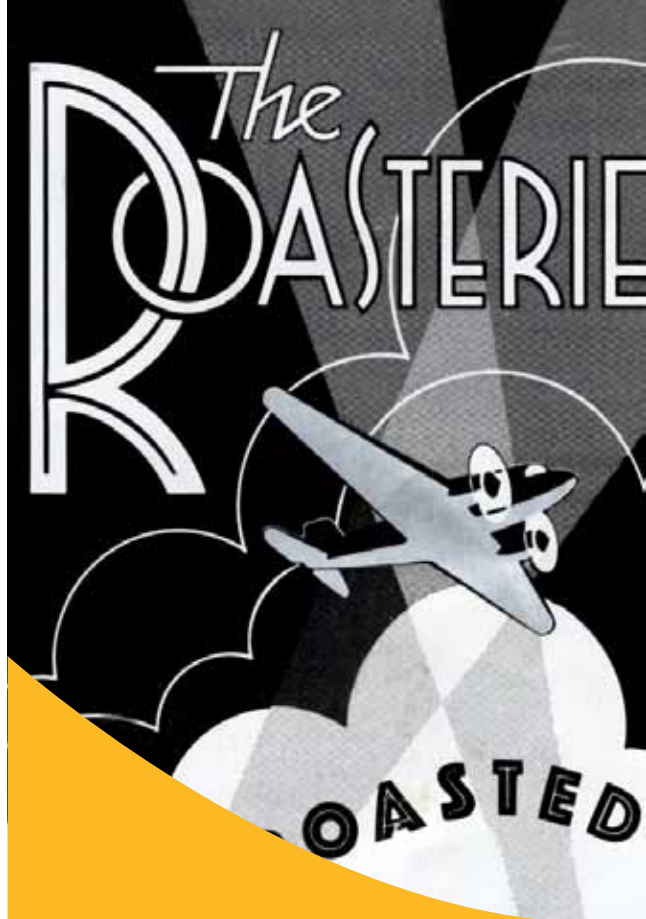


Marcel and his dad, LaSalle

How can you help?

Sickle Cell patients need regular and ongoing transfusions of blood that closely matches their own blood. There are rare blood antigens unique to each ethnicity and it is difficult to find blood types for recipients. Often the best match is found in someone with the same ethnicity.

You can help by donating blood at a CBC Neighborhood Donation Center. If your blood closely matches one of the Sickle Cell patients at Children's Mercy, we hope you will consider being a regular donor in the program.



Give Blood. Get Beans.

CBC and The Roasterie® launch a **NEW** drive!

On January 19, Community Blood Center and Kansas City's premiere gourmet coffee brand, The Roasterie, teamed up to help save lives and let donors enjoy "life on the rim."

The first annual Give Blood. Get Beans. blood drive was held at all CBC Neighborhood Donation Centers. All registered donors received a complementary 2 oz. bag of CBC's custom blend of coffee. The blend, which was created through a tasting by CBC staff members and donors Trish Beauchamp and John Harmon, is a combination of four beans from Costa Rica, Ethiopia, Sumatra and Colombia.

The drive proved to be quite successful with more than 700 guests taking advantage of the delightful and delicious coffee that is now being served at Neighborhood Donation Centers in Kansas City, Blue Springs, St. Joseph, Gladstone, Overland Park, Olathe and Topeka.



CBC also held a Name-the-Blend contest in conjunction with the drive. **CONGRATULATIONS TO OUR WINNER**, Sara Brown of Independence, Mo. Sara came up with the name, **Every Vital Drop**. To learn more about how the coffee was created, visit our Facebook page to see photos and video from the "cupping." ☪


when you donate blood with CBC, you are helping someone in your community

Airica Tyler arrived a bit early—three and a half months early, in fact. And, at two and a half pounds, she was a real lightweight. Still, in the neonatal unit she was one of the biggest babies in the bunch. But Airica's story starts a few hours before she was placed in "a big Petri dish" according to her dad Sean, hooked up to monitors and machines to help her too young lungs function. It begins when Sean got home from his job as the midnight-to-6:00 a.m. disk jockey at a Kansas City radio station. His wife was waiting for him at the front door.

"We have to go to the hospital," she said. "I'm having pains." At the hospital, doctors tried to stop the birth. When they were unable to stop it, they transferred Sean's wife to another facility where more specialized care was available. By this time it was afternoon. With his wife stabilized, Sean went home for some much needed sleep.

A phone call woke him early in the evening. The baby had arrived. Sean rushed to the hospital where he was allowed to see his tiny infant girl. Still frightened, Sean was also full of questions. What would happen to his new child? What could he expect over the next days and weeks? How could he help care for this new life? One thing he learned right away was that his daughter needed blood and a call had gone out to the Community Blood Center to supply it.

Sean was no stranger to the Community Blood Center. As a committed donor, he had donated nearly four gallons over the years. But never once did he imagine that his own precious baby would be saved by the very blood center he chose to support. The reason for giving came home to Sean Tyler that night in a way that touched him deeply.

Airica understands the significance of what happened when she was born. She also knows that one day, when she's old enough, she'll give blood, too. She'll do it, she says, "to save someone's life," just the way her own was saved the night her father fully realized how important donating blood can be. 



www.facebook.com/cbckc

Community Blood Center is always working hard to improve and enhance your donor experience. In the past six months CBC has created partnerships with the following businesses which directly benefit our donors... We hope you will support these partners that support your Community Blood Center.

