

Cancer Survivor Meets Her Blood Donors

On February 17, a cancer survivor had the rare opportunity to meet 12 of the people whose blood donations she received.

Before she was diagnosed with cancer, Julie had occasionally donated blood herself, but hadn't really thought about where the blood went after she donated it.

"I donated blood a few times when I was in high school and college, but at the time I never really thought about who might receive my blood or the fact that my blood could literally save a life. Honestly, in high school, I thought it was a great way to get out of school for an hour!" Julie reflected.

Years later Julie, a resident of Oshkosh, became sick near the end of 2007. She thought she had the flu, but soon learned that she had leukemia.

Julie received cancer treatments at Appleton Medical Center over a six-month period in 2008. During that time, she received 37 red blood cell transfusions and 19 platelet transfusions.

Blood recipient/donor reunions are very rare occasions, and the planning for the event began last year. Julie, the staff of Appleton Medical Center, and the blood center staff worked to trace the units of blood that Julie had received back to the donations that were given. Julie's blood donors were then invited to meet her.

On February 17, Julie was able to personally meet and thank 12 of her donors.

"Meeting my blood donors is an event that I will never forget. The twelve people that I met- and also those I was not able to meet- are my lifesavers!

I could never thank them enough for taking the time to donate. Their sacrifice played such a critical role in my leukemia treatments," Julie said.



Julie (front row, center) with some of her blood donors:
Sitting, from left: Brenda Dexheimer, Paula Lietzke, John A. Des Jardins, Fred Wolf,
Standing, from left: John Buchberger, Kevin Riehl, John Pilon, Darin Marsden, Martha Fowler,

“I think I can safely say on behalf of anyone who has ever needed blood- thank you!

There are so many situations where blood is needed... new babies, accident victims, new mothers, cancer patients.

You may not ever get the opportunity to meet someone who received your blood, but I hope that you know just how precious your donation is to the patient who receives it.”

- Julie



Transfusions & Cancer Patients

When people think of blood recipients, they often picture accident or trauma victims. But cancer patients also receive transfusions. Many of these patients receive transfusions of red blood cells and platelets, like Julie.

Doctors may prescribe blood transfusions for cancer patients if they are having symptoms that may be related to low blood cell levels. The patients usually receive the transfusions in a hospital or an outpatient clinic.

Cancer patients receiving chemotherapy may need transfusions because chemotherapy suppresses bone marrow activity, which is where red blood cells and platelets are made.

Cancer can also lower blood counts in a variety of other ways, depending on the type of cancer and the length of time a person has been affected.

Some cancer patients only need a few units of blood. Other patients, like Julie, receive numerous blood transfusions throughout the course of their treatments.

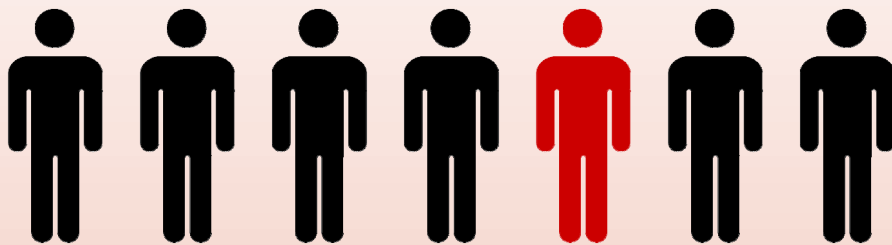
Julie's Donors

- Blood from 54 different Community Blood Center donors was given to Julie in 2008.
- Julie has an O+ blood type. Because of this:
 - She received red blood cell transfusions from donors with O+ and O- blood types.
 - She received platelet transfusions from donors with AB+, A+, A-, B+, O+, and O- blood types.
- Julie received units of blood that were donated in Appleton, Little Chute, Neenah, Oshkosh, Brillion, Wautoma, Rhinelander, and Arbor Vitae.
- On two separate occasions, Julie received platelet transfusions that had been donated by blood donor Michael Bushman.
- Two of Julie's donors, Brenda Dexheimer and Fred Wolf, work at the Community Blood Center.

Act as if what you do makes a difference. It does.

—William James, philosopher

1 out of 7 hospital patients need blood.



Thanks for helping them get it!

Students work toward “Gallon Grad” award

Each year, thousands of high school students give blood with the Community Blood Center.

Several hundred of these students are working toward the distinction of being a “Gallon Grad.” To receive this honor, a student must have given blood eight times (1 gallon of blood) before they graduate from high school.

The Community Blood Center gives each Gallon Grad a distinctive graduation cord, framed certificate, and special recognition as a graduating high school senior.

Tricia Kissinger, Recruitment Supervisor at the Community Blood Center, says that high school blood donors make a significant contribution to the blood supply.

“By giving blood, students can give back to the community in a very unique and special way,” Kissinger explained. “The act of donating blood shows compassion and altruism. We are excited when students choose to become blood donors, and want to encourage them in this lifesaving habit.”

Blood donors must be at least 17 years old (16 with parental permission), weigh at least 110 pounds, be in general good health, and bring a photo ID.

People interested in giving blood can learn more by calling the blood center at (800)280-4102 or going to www.communityblood.org.



**With your help, the
Community Blood Center
provides blood used by patients at:**

- ◆ Appleton Medical Center
- ◆ St. Elizabeth Hospital (Appleton)
- ◆ Theda Clark Medical Center (Neenah)
- ◆ Children’s Hospital of Wisconsin-Fox Valley (Neenah)
- ◆ Mercy Medical Center (Oshkosh)
- ◆ Aurora Medical Center (Oshkosh)
- ◆ Calumet Medical Center (Chilton)
- ◆ New London Family Medical Center
- ◆ Ripon Medical Center
- ◆ Berlin Memorial Hospital
- ◆ Riverside Medical Center (Waupaca)
- ◆ Wild Rose Community Memorial Hospital
- ◆ Ministry Good Samaritan Health Center (Merrill)
- ◆ Howard Young Medical Center (Woodruff)
- ◆ Oscar G. Johnson VA Medical Center (Iron Mountain, MI)
- ◆ Ministry Saint Mary’s Hospital (Rhineland)
- ◆ Ministry Sacred Heart Hospital (Tomahawk)
- ◆ Ministry Eagle River Memorial Hospital

Donor Centers

Appleton

4406 West Spencer St
*Free WiFi available!

Little Chute

1915 East Main St

Oshkosh

Lake Aire Center
2211 Oregon St

Arbor Vitae

North Country Suites
1575 Hwy 51 North

Please call for hours of operation or to schedule a donation appointment. Appointments are highly recommended, and walk-in donors are welcome.

(920)738-3131 (800)280-4102
www.communityblood.org

it's about

