



THE DISPATCH
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TOP STORY: A shot in the arm for blood supplies

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By PAT JENKINS

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Blood flowed for a good cause last Friday at Eatonville High School. The school's Honor Society students organized and hosted a blood drive for Cascade Regional Blood Services. Students and community members trooped to a gymnasium, rolled up their sleeves and donated as part of line Cascade's ongoing effort to supply blood for hospitals in the South Sound area, including Good Samaritan in Puyallup.

Cascade personnel and student volunteers started setting up the donor stations and check-in table at 7:30 a.m., said Danielle White, vice president of the Honor Society. The first donors arrived about an hour later. And by the time the drive ended at 1:30 in the afternoon, 67 people had given.

"That is, by all accounts, a successful blood drive, providing much-needed blood to hospitals in our community," said Megan Johnson, a donor resources consultant for Cascade.

Students had to be at least 16 years old, weight a minimum of 110 pounds and have their parents' written permission before they could give blood.

Hailey Van Buskirk, a sophomore, was a first-time donor. "I just wanted to help the cause," she said.

Other donors among the students, such as Kyle Edwards, had given blood before and were back again. Edwards said his motivation is that he has a rare blood type he's willing to share.

That's the spirit that makes blood drives in Eatonville special, said Rita Wells, a community relations specialist for Cascade who helped run last Friday's event.

"The people in this town are wonderful," she said. "Whenever they know we're here, they're always happy to help." Twice-a-year drives at the high school are successful because the students "work really hard" to register donors in advance, Wells added.

In addition to the school events, Cascade sends its bloodmobile to three community events each year -- the Independence Day festivities on July 3, the Eatonville Arts Festival and the Relay for Life cancer fund-raiser.

"I love coming out here. It's such a great town," said Wells, who has worked for Cascade for four years.

The need for blood never ends, Cascade officials note. Hospitals rely on donors of all blood types for a consistent supply for patients.

Donors can schedule appointments to give blood at Cascade's offices by calling the agency at 1-877-24BLOOD or online at www.crbs.net.

About 37 percent of the general population meet health and age criteria to be donors, but less than 5 percent of people who can give blood actually do, according to Cascade.

A person can safely donate blood once every eight weeks and platelets every two weeks. Platelets help blood clot and are transfused during surgeries, cancer treatments or severe bleeding. There is less than one ounce of platelets in a pint of blood.



While giving blood at his school last Friday, Eatonville High School senior Jacob Moody passed the time by doing some text messaging. The blood drive was one of two that are hosted at the school annually for Cascade Regional Blood Supply. (Jim Bryant/The Dispatch)

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