

Press Release

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GIG HARBOR FRIENDS HAVE DONATED TOGETHER FOR NEARLY TWENTY YEARS



From left: Judith Rossi, 11 gallons, Pauline Lovrovich 12 gallons, Pat Jerkovich 15 gallons (whole blood & pheresis platelets), Marie Jurlin 8 gallons

Every two months, four Gig Harbor friends make appointments to donate blood and then go to a new or favorite restaurant for lunch. Today they are off to Ricardo's on 6th Avenue and Pine. This 'ritual' has been going on for nearly twenty years. "We also have coffee together every Friday – no matter what," said Patricia (Pat) Jerkovich, the group's founder. They call themselves the 'lunch bunch.'

Each member has her own story about why she donates blood or pheresis platelets: a sick parent, an ill spouse, a friend's sick child. Pat Jerkovich was the first to donate over twenty years ago. The other three members were encouraged by her commitment. All four belong to the Galloneer Club at Cascade Regional Blood Services (a status that donors reach after donating a gallon or more of whole blood or pheresis platelets).

"We really appreciate their consistency and dedication. Donors like these make our job easy," says Maureen McCarthy, Director of Donor Collections at the blood bank. Cascade Regional Blood Services' staff added up the four women's total commitment to the blood bank, area hospitals and the community. Total donations: 412 or over 51.5 gallons. "That's a lot of community service and the blood products go directly to area hospitals, which in turn helps countless patients."