

Cancer no match for Neosho boy

Blood donors provided energy to fight fast-moving disease

It started as a small twinge in 10-year-old Brandon Townsend's back. "We were tossing the football around and it started hurting like I had pulled a muscle or something," the Neosho, Missouri, resident recalled.



Before Brandon Townsend lost most of his hair from chemotherapy, he had it cut into a cool mohawk style.

Over the next couple of weeks, the back pain would ebb and flow. His pediatrician thought it might be a virus, but when additional symptoms of nausea and shortness of breath were detected, additional tests were ordered.

Brandon was diagnosed with Burkitt's Lymphoma, a relatively rare and aggressive form of non-Hodgkin's lymphoma.

This type of cancer affects the lymph system, which helps to fight off infections within the body. Burkitt's is a treatable disease, but the tumors can spread quickly, sometimes doubling their size in as little as 18 hours.

Brandon was placed on dialysis for the next four days, clearing his kidneys. Chest tubes were inserted and Brandon started with the first of what was to be six rounds of intense chemotherapy. After many of the sessions, the oxygen levels in his blood dropped sharply.

That's when he received blood. Transfusions provide an

immediate boost in oxygen to the recipient's system.

"You could really see the difference after he received that transfusion," said Nikole Townsend, Brandon's mom. "He would look like a new kid. He went from asleep and tired to alert and talking. Every time we heard he was going to get a transfusion, I was kind of excited because I knew how much better that would make him feel."

Throughout his treatment, Brandon was one of the bravest kids you would ever see. "He never complained. He always kept a positive attitude," Nikole said. "And there's a lot to complain about when you have to spend your whole 10-year-old summer in a hospital fighting cancer. That positive attitude helped him, but I think it helped my husband and me a little more."

Three months of treatment ended with Brandon being declared cancer-free in September of 2014. He has to go for checkups, but those are dwindling now. Brandon is back to playing basketball, back to school - and back to being his normal everyday self. "It just feels great to see him feeling great," Nikole said.

See "Brandon's story" on page 4

Nikole and Brandon Townsend are thankful for donors who provided blood during Brandon's fight against cancer.



Celebrating 20 years of service to the community

2015 marks a special time in the history of Community Blood Center of the Ozarks. Twenty years ago, this blood center was formed to serve the community, committing to provide a quality blood supply in a timely manner for sick and injured area hospital patients.

With your help, we've been living up to that mission ever since.

So whether you're a new blood donor or someone who's been with us from the beginning, it's time to celebrate. In September, we're planning a special gathering, and we want you to join us. We'll also be creating greater awareness about our anniversary with special promotions and information throughout the year. We'll keep you updated on events and other details with this publication, our website, social media and other channels.

We're proud of our donors and volunteers. We're looking forward to the next 20 years of service to patients in our community.

20
YEARS

In this issue...

◆ LifePoints Lift helps blood donors help the community

◆ Another "normal" milestone in Joplin

◆ Nixa student shares common bond with grandfather

Celebrate giving to others with LifePoints Lift

Dedicate LifePoints to your choice of 10 area not-for-profits and celebrate!

There's no doubt about it. Giving blood to CBCO is one of the best things you can do to support your community. Now your donation can do even more.

Through a unique partnership with 10 area not-for-profit agencies, CBCO is introducing LifePoints Lift. Many of you already know and have benefitted from LifePoints, CBCO's donor rewards program. When you sign up for the LifePoints program at CBCO, you receive points for each blood or apheresis donation you make. Those points can be redeemed in CBCO's online donor store for gifts. But now you can also choose to give your LifePoints a lift by donating them to a cause right here in the Ozarks. When you do, we'll make a donation to your chosen organization.



Dedicate your LifePoints to 10 great area organizations, including:



Here's how to give your donation the 

- 1. Donate blood today or schedule an appointment at www.cbco.org.**
- 2. After creating an online account, you'll automatically collect LifePoints with each donation.**
- 3. Go to the LifePoints online store for a listing of LifePoints Lift partner agencies.**
- 4. Redeem your LifePoints and dedicate them to your choice of 10 Ozarks area not-for-profit**

"It is especially exciting for Habitat for Humanity to be one of the organizations invited to partner with the LifePoints Lift program."

*Larry Peterson
Executive Director
Habitat for Humanity - Springfield*

"This is a great way to give both the gift of life through blood donations and the gift of life through donating points and food to those who face hunger in Northwest Arkansas."

*Robert Gearhart
Special Events and Mktg. Coord.
Northwest Arkansas Food Bank*



A new day (and blood drive) at Franklin Tech

Since the 2011 Joplin tornado, each day gets community closer to normal

In the days and months since an EF5 tornado tore through Joplin on May 22, 2011, there have been many moments when the community could point to actions and accomplishments that represented an area healing its wounds. When a brand new high school and technology center was dedicated October 3, 2014, the stricken area had yet another symbol of things returning to normal.

A December of 2014, a blood drive at the school represented another one of those normal moments.

The new Joplin High School and Franklin Technology Center sit together in the middle of an area that is still rebuilding. Although homes and businesses are popping up here and there, empty fields and jagged trees still leave holes in the middle of town.

Franklin Tech, which provides career training for students at five Joplin area schools, has been a huge contributor to the area's blood needs for many years.

Following the tornado, those participation levels took a hit, as students were bused to different locations while the new school was being built. This first blood drive at the new school saw nearly 200 donations given for the benefit of area patients.

"Getting back to doing what we always try to do – giving back to the community – really provides us with the sense that we're back to normal," Dr. Thomas Strait, teacher, said during the drive. "We're teaching students life skills and those skills always involve a leadership component. Outstanding community service is part of that, and the effort our students put into blood drives certainly reflects that."

Franklin Technology Center is part of the new Joplin High School, dedicated in October, 2014.

Welcome back, Franklin Tech. Welcome back to normal.



Training the blood donors of tomorrow

High schools are an important part of the blood solution for Ozarks area patients. CBCO holds drives at more than 140 area high schools. Most hold multiple events over the course of the school year. Around 30 percent of the total blood donated to CBCO comes from our area high schools.

Just last year, CBCO said thank you by offering over \$65,000 worth of scholarships and grants to students and schools. We also provide leadership training during our yearly high school Leadership Workshops for dedicated blood drive volunteers. But more than anything else, we're proud to show the amazing things that can happen when a person wants to give a little of their time and a little of themselves.

A family tradition

Nixa student fulfills promise made to her grandfather

Hannah Long had always noticed that her grandfather, Thomas Coay, was a blood donor. "As long as I could remember, he wore those T-shirts," she said. "Giving blood was something I thought I'd never do. I've been afraid my whole life of anything medical. That especially goes for anything about blood."

When Hannah was in the 8th grade, she watched her mother wage a successful fight against breast cancer. That changed her attitude. "I saw what a difference blood made. I told her that I would donate as soon as I could."

That opportunity came just after Hannah's 16th birthday. She and her grandfather both gave in December at the Thomson Donor Center in Springfield. While Hannah was giving her very first donation, Thomas Coay was giving his 100th.

"I'm so proud of her," Coay said. "It's a special moment for me to be with her. A real blessing. I never pressured her to give. She's always heard how helpful giving was to other people. Then she got to see it firsthand."

Hannah's donation went well. She is now ready to carry on a family tradition of saving lives.

Around 15 percent of CBCO blood donors are giving for the very first time, just like Hannah. Perhaps you have a friend or relative who would start a lifelong habit of blood donation with some gentle words of encouragement or the suggestion that they come along to your next donation. In this time of New Year's resolutions, we hope you'll take a moment to commit to encouraging those close to you to share their good health with others.



Hannah Long donates blood for the first time, with her grandfather, Thomas Coay, giving alongside.



“Brandon’s story” continued from page 1

The Townsends became acutely aware of the power of blood as they saw their son spring back to life after receiving it. They wanted others to share in the experience. “Family members would ask what they could do to help. I told them they could give blood. They do now, and I’m proud of them,” Nikole said. “I’m also very thankful for the donors who gave directly for Brandon. If I could meet them, I’d give them big hugs. This story wouldn’t have had a happy ending without blood and the donors that provided it. Thank you.”

Brandon sums it up best. “Thank you a million times for giving, because your blood helped me get better.”



The Townsend family was usually closeby to support Brandon during his fight. Pictured is Nikole, father Wayne, and sisters Addison and Isabel.



Did you know?

If a person began giving whole blood at age 16 and gave every time they could, by age 60 they would have given blood more than 260 times. That’s a lot of lives saved!

Our mission is to provide a quality blood supply, in a timely manner, at the lowest reasonable fee, while remaining accountable to the local community, blood donors and health care providers.

Circulator is published quarterly by Community Blood Center of the Ozarks and is available upon request.

January is National Volunteer Blood Donor Month

Resolve to make a difference for others this year!

In 1969, President Richard M. Nixon proclaimed, “Genuine concern for his fellow man has always distinguished the American citizen... No manifestation of this generosity of spirit is more expressive, and no gift more priceless in time of personal crisis, than the donation of one’s blood. The voluntary blood donor truly gives life itself.” January has been declared National Volunteer Blood Donor Month ever since.

You can start your year off right by resolving to give blood at least four times this year. CBCO donor centers are convenient and you can preschedule your appointment online.

CBCO donors represent an army of deserving heroes. On behalf of patients at our area hospitals, thank you for giving!



Five convenient CBCO Donor Centers near you!

Springfield
Reser Center - 2230 S. Glenstone
(417) 227-5025
Monday through Friday, 7 am to 1 pm

Thomson Center - 220 W. Plainview
(417) 227-5000 or 800-280-5337
Monday through Wednesday, 9 am to 5 pm
Thursday, 9 am to 6 pm
Saturday, 7 am to 1 pm

Joplin - Northpark Mall
101 N. Range Line Rd.
(417) 626-8323 or 866-401-5143
Monday through Friday, 11 am to 6 pm

Springdale - 3503 S. Thompson
(479) 927-1200 or 866-401-5144
Monday through Thursday, 11 am to 6 pm
Friday, 8 am to 2 pm

Bentonville - 1400 SE Walton Blvd.
(479) 464-2506
Monday through Thursday, 11 am to 6 pm
Friday, 8 am to 2 pm

Give at a CBCO Donor Center!
Go to www.cbco.org and sign up to save lives!