



## Blood Drive Chairperson Spotlight

CBCO has thousands of volunteers just like you serving in various capacities throughout the Ozarks. There are so many things we can learn from you. This column is designed to provide that learning forum, while also thanking you for the hard work you do on behalf of area patients.

**Tracy O'Dell, Human Resources Coordinator,  
City Utilities of Springfield**



Tracy O'Dell,  
City Utilities of Springfield

### What inspired you to be a blood drive chair person?

I was asked to take the lead as blood drive coordinator for City Utilities Main Office over 10 years ago. Initially, I wondered if I was the right person for this new facet of my job. However, it didn't take long for me to learn how important this life-saving product is that we all take for granted.

### Tell us what you do to promote your blood drives.

Promoting each blood drive can be a lot of fun. Depending on what time of year it is, I start with a theme for each drive. In the spring, we have had various themes such as St. Patrick's Day and Earth Day. Each summer, we hold a drive during the "Salute A Veteran" campaign, and we recognize employees and/or family members who have served or are currently serving our country. Then we end the year with a not-so-scary Halloween drive. I try to encourage participation with door prize drawings for donors, including any first-time donors and those who will commit by making an appointment for the drive. During each drive, there is usually a light-hearted movie playing and sometimes some type of trivia game.

### What is the most effective way for you to recruit blood donors?

CU employees are some of the most giving people I know. We have a group of employees I call "regulars." I know I can count on these regular donors to participate. I have also found the most effective way to recruit is simply to ask.

### How do you overcome objections to donating blood?

It's quite understandable for someone to be afraid if you have never donated. I remember my first donation many years ago didn't go so well. However, I later learned the importance of hydrating yourself a few days before. So I share with everyone the importance of drinking plenty of water and nourishment before a donation. If I know someone has not had a good experience in the past or if it's a first-time donor, I let the CBCO staff know. The staff is great about calming fears to ensure a good experience. And also during each drive, it's my personal mission to encourage, support and thank each donor.

### Does CU encourage employees to get involved in the community?

City Utilities has a long history of making a difference in our community. From lending a hand to help a fellow co-worker in a time of need, going above and beyond for a customer, or by simply donating blood, employees are involved in many ways of volunteerism in our community.

# How will AABB and FDA changes affect your blood drives?

The U.S. blood supply is carefully regulated to ensure the safety of donors and patients. Recently, the FDA and AABB required some updates to donor eligibility.

1. Men's minimum hemoglobin requirement went up from 12.5 g/dL to 13.0 g/dL (women's remains unchanged at 12.5 g/dL).
2. Lowered maximum pulse value to 100 from 110 bpm (staff may recheck the pulse once).
3. For pulse under 50 bpm or over 100 bpm, medical director approval is required and a second check of pulse is required to be taken.
4. Added a new question to the donor history form. If donor has been outside the continental U.S. in the past 4 weeks, they are eligible to donate blood one month from date of return.
5. Registrar must verify the donor can be reached within 8 weeks at given postal address.
6. Added a new question to donor history form regarding receipt of a Xenotransplantation product.

We need your help to increase recruiting efforts for males at your blood drives, since this new hemoglobin requirement is causing blood centers across the country to lose a few male donors at each drive. Encourage male donors to begin eating iron-rich foods (such as red meat, poultry, liver, fish and shellfish, leafy dark greens such as spinach or kale, broccoli, Brussels sprouts, beans, and raisins) several days prior to the blood drive. In addition, ask them to avoid beverages that contain caffeine. They contain compounds that can substantially reduce the amount of iron you absorb from the foods you eat, and should be avoided for two hours before and after meals to optimize iron absorption.

Most donors won't notice a difference in our procedures with these newly implemented changes. However, for some donors, the changes may take a few extra minutes during the registration process. For example, in the cases of military donors or college students, we'll need to capture an address "back home" rather than a current address on a military base or at school.

Have any questions about these changes? Get in touch with your CBCO blood drive consultant.

## Garden renamed for founding board member and wife

With the closing of CBCO's Reser Donor Center on South Glenstone in Springfield, we wanted to find a special way to continue to honor the memory of Bill Reser, who was one of our founding board members. Monday, May 9, 2016, we held a dedication ceremony at CBCO headquarters, renaming our garden the Bill & Cathy Reser Garden.

Bill's widow, Cathy, was surprised by the honor and delighted to see her favorite flower, a jonquil, included on the sign.

Bill Reser, Jim McLeod, and Jerry Jared were part of the group of 14 community leaders who sat on CBCO's original board of directors when the organization was launched in 1995. The three were the signers of our Articles of Incorporation. Bill passed away in 2008 at the age of 75, survived by his wife Cathy, son Ron, and daughter-in-law Becky, who all attended the dedication.

You'll find the Reser Garden to the north of the main entrance at 220 W. Plainview Road in Springfield.



Top right: Cathy Reser and son Ron Reser (left) are joined by Don Thomson, CBCO's original Executive Director, at the Reser Garden dedication.

# Leadership Workshops develop skills for students

Each year, hundreds of students gather for our workshops, to learn how to have great blood drives. But they learn so much more than that. We challenge them to learn skills that they will use throughout their educations and even into their careers. Skills such as planning, goal-setting, recruiting, teamwork, communication, and marketing.

Again and again, we watch the student groups who attended our workshops become the most successful in terms of meeting their goals, seeing new blood donors, and having a positive experience.

Don't let your student group miss out. Plan to attend one of these half-day workshops.

- September 13 – Joplin, MO at Freeman Business Center
- September 14 – Lebanon, MO at Laclede County Library
- September 15 – Bentonville, AR at Northwest Arkansas Community Collage
- September 20 – Springfield Day 1 at CBCO
- September 21 – Springfield Day 2 at CBCO
- September 22 – Mountain Grove, MO at First Freewill Baptist Church

Register at [www.cbco.org/leadership-workshop-registration](http://www.cbco.org/leadership-workshop-registration). Be sure to include the total number of students and adults, along with T-shirt sizes.



## Maintaining room temperature is vital at blood drives

During all blood drives, the FDA requires room temperature to stay between 61 and 77 degrees. This is for donor safety and for the viability of the blood drawn.

"We are a manufacturing environment, and we're producing a biologic product for human transfusion. As a result, federal regulations require certain conditions," said David Montgomery, CBCO's Senior Director of Donor Recruitment, Marketing, and IT, adding that ideal donating temperature is between 70 and 72 degrees.

CBCO staff members monitor room temperature throughout each blood drive, and your blood drive could risk being shut down if the

temperature falls outside of the acceptable range.

What can you do to make sure proper temperature is maintained?

- Check with your maintenance crew several days in advance of the blood drive to make sure your heating/cooling system is in operation. This is especially important for buildings not frequently used, or when seasons change and the okay may not have been given to turn on the air.
- Ensure that the air conditioner is turned on well in advance of CBCO staff arrival time so the room will be able to reach appropriate temperature.
- To maintain the correct temperature, keep doors and windows closed during the blood drive.
- Have an alternate location in mind, in case the air conditioning system is in need of maintenance. If a problem arises with the room's climate control, be sure to contact your blood drive consultant as soon as possible so that other arrangements may be made.



Dave Smith

## Donor's inspiration fueled by two blood recipients

Known as @superdasmith on Twitter, Dave Smith makes a point to tweet a photo when he donates blood at CBCO's Bentonville, Arkansas, center. In his case, that's a lot of tweets, because his dedication leads him back to CBCO as soon as he becomes eligible again.

That dedication began when Dave and wife Daphne's 4-year-old daughter was diagnosed with dermatomyositis, a rare inflammatory disease. Taking Erica to nine doctors within a two-week period led to the frustration of several wrong diagnoses along the way.

"Treatment was drugs that suppressed her immune system, one being prednisone. We were told the treatment drugs could cause cancer and killer her, or that if we didn't accept treatment her immune system would weaken and she could be dead," David said.

Erica, who is now 26 and in full remission, needed blood during her treatment. Motivated to donate because of her illness, Dave began donating blood in 1992. He started donating with CBCO in 2016, and recently reached the 65-pint milestone. That's just over 8 gallons.

In 2010, a second blood recipient in his life had an emotional impact on Dave. Just 10 days after running buddy Darryl Scroggins placed second with a time of 42:24 in Bentonville's Run for Hope 10K and Dave finished three seconds later, Darryl underwent a quadruple bypass.

Dave rushed to the hospital, not realizing he was wearing a CBCO T-shirt that would be the topic of conversation later. "Post-surgery, I was allowed to visit Darryl within the ICU," Dave said. Two nurses were taking care of Darryl. As one nurse hooked up another bag of blood, she looked at my T-shirt and said, "You know he's alive because of you."

Dave, puzzled, glanced down and realized he was wearing a CBCO T-shirt. "She told me, 'The blood you've given is helping him right now.'"

Dave still gets emotional telling this story. "That really hit home with me, that I am helping my friends, neighbors, and family in a big way."

Darryl has recovered from his surgery, and Dave encourages others to donate blood to help their friends, neighbors, and family, as well.

"If people would give two or three pints a year, what a difference that would make," Dave said.

## Get the competitive edge to boost your blood drive

Looking for a way to get better results and have more fun at your blood drive? Create a friendly competition.

- Bank vs. bank, high school vs. high school, rotary vs. rotary, chamber vs. chamber, sorority vs. sorority. How about your branch vs. your other location within CBCO's territory? You could even have departments within your building compete.
- The "Racin' to Save Lives" competition has taken place for several years. It pits Mercy and Cox hospitals (and their satellite locations) against each other to see which can bring in the most donors.
- For something different, compete to see who can get the most first-time donors, or friends and family as donors.
- Missouri State University's annual competition, known as The Bloody Cup, awards traveling trophies to both the sorority and the fraternity with the biggest percentage of donors.
- High school juniors and seniors can go class vs. class for the most donors from their classes, and recruit first-time donors from the sophomore class by persuading them to "vote" for juniors or seniors with their donations.



MSU student Kara Varner of Gamma Phi Delta Nu poses with the the Bloody Cup competition trophy.

Need help thinking of your own form of competition? Contact your blood drive consultant today!