

summer 2005

lifelines

the Blood Centers of the Pacific Newsletter



**Blood Centers
of the Pacific**

a member of the Blood Systems Family



Angela Keane and Blood and Organ Recipient Morgan

The Journey to Mend *a Broken Heart*

There wasn't a dry eye in the house. Blood, Organ and Tissue Donation Advocate Angela Keane had just shared the story of her daughter Morgan's will to survive, at one of BCP's donor recognition events. Here, Angela shares her moving story with Lifelines readers.

by *Angela Keane*

I was raised to believe that whatever you give, you receive back 10 times greater. So little did I know that in my freshman year of college when I gave my first pint of blood, that gift would be repaid to my family later on, in our darkest hours.

In December 2002, our world was turned upside-down when we were told that the child I was pregnant with had several life-threatening birth defects. It was a whirlwind five months that included a move from Hawaii to California to give our daughter the very best chance of survival. We understood that our daughter would undergo several surgeries and medical procedures, and that recovery would be long and the prognosis unknown. What we didn't realize is that a village of strangers would save her life through blood donation.

When my daughter Morgan was born, we signed a release for donated blood to be used in surgery and for treatment, however it didn't hit me just how amazing blood was...until I looked at our tiny 4-pound baby fighting for life.

Morgan had her first open-heart surgery on her third day of life. I watched a line of blood go in to her body while seeing her chest rise and fall, and at that very moment, I understood the gift of life and was so grateful for it.

To date Morgan has had three open-heart surgeries, three cardiac catheterizations and a major abdominal surgery, all to

correct a condition called Ivemark's Syndrome, a rare progressive disorder characterized by the absence of a spleen, malformations of the cardiovascular system, and abnormal displacement of the abdomen and intestines. During this journey, Morgan has received an amazing number of blood and two donated heart valves.

“What we didn't realize is that a village of strangers would save her life through blood donation.”

-Angela Keane

We decided to share Morgan's story publicly shortly before her first birthday for two reasons. The first was to say “Thank you” to blood donors. We know we will never meet them, but they will forever be a part of our family. We are so grateful for them, because without them and the beautiful gift of blood donation, *continued on page 5*



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Lifelines

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Editor: Lisa Bloch

Associate Editor: Angela Woon

Graphic Design/Layout: Gregory Berger

Contributors: Lisa Bloch and Angela Woon

Irwin Center

270 Masonic Avenue
San Francisco, CA 94118

Downtown Center

250 Bush Street
Suite 136 (Mills Building)
San Francisco, CA 94104

Marin Center

4050 Redwood Hwy
San Rafael, CA 94533

Cupertino Center

19450 Stevens Creek Blvd
Cupertino, CA 95014

Peninsula Center (temporary location)

1730 S. Amphlett Blvd. Suite 116
San Mateo, CA 94402

Redwood City Center

260-C Main Street
Redwood City, CA 94063

North Bay Center

1325 C1 Gateway Blvd
Fairfield, CA 94533

Napa Center

1834-C Soscol Avenue
Napa, CA 94559

Vallejo Center

480 Redwood Street, Suite 31
Vallejo, CA 94590

Shasta Blood Center

2420 Athens Avenue
Redding, CA 96001

Ukiah Valley Center

620 Kings Court, #110
Ukiah, CA 95482

For more information or to schedule an appointment, please contact us at 1-888-393-GIVE.

www.bloodcenters.org

Quick Bits

Goodbye, dear friend

Dr. Charles Silberstein, dedicated BCP volunteer hospital driver for 16 years, passed away on April 24th. He was 91.

Dr. Silberstein served for 19 months on Saipan in WWII with the 20th Air Force. Upon his return from service, Dr. Silberstein resumed his private dental practice for 48 years. He adored children and volunteered to teach dental health in SF public schools.

Dr. Silberstein also purchased the first corvette in San Francisco in 1954 and was thereafter never without one.

Anyone wishing to make a donation in Dr. Silberstein's memory, please consider his favorite charities: Hospice by the Bay, U.C. San Francisco Cancer Research Fund or The Jewish Welfare Federation.

BCP extends its heartfelt condolences to his family. We will miss our dear friend.

Did You Know?

About 3
gallons of blood
supports the
entire nation's
blood needs for
one minute.



Going on 39!

by Angela Woon



*BCP's dedicated employee,
Rosie Lamoreaux*

This September will mark a very special anniversary for one BCP employee. Rosie Lamoreaux will be celebrating 39 years...of dedicated service to the organization!

Currently the manager of special donations and red cell automation, Rosie began her career at BCP (then known as Irwin Memorial Blood Bank) as a volunteer nurse's aide in 1966. "I was going to a nearby dental assistant school at the time and my friend told me soldiers from the Oakland army base

were donating blood here," said Rosie coyly. "So I volunteered my time and after six months, I was offered a nurse's aide position."

Born and raised in San Francisco, Rosie has had several roles at BCP in the donor collections department over the decades, from secretary (and being the youngest in the department!) to office clerk, apheresis recruiter, special donor recruiter, special donations supervisor and yes, even an...Easter bunny! "I was the Easter bunny at Irwin for three in a row, with eyelashes that were about two inches long," recalled Rosie. "All the staff used to bring in Easter candy and we'd make baskets, take them to San Francisco General Hospital and give them out in the children's ward." According to Rosie, she even had a brush with fame during her Easter stint one year when she was pregnant— she was interviewed by Gene Nelson on radio station KSFO as the 150-pound "Pregnant Easter Bunny!"

Not only did Rosie begin her career at BCP but she also met her husband here. "Bob was one of the soldiers whom I met in 1967," she said. "He went on to serve in the Vietnam War and during that time, we wrote letters to each other. Three years later we married." Bob also worked at BCP as the first mini mobile driver for a few years upon his return from the war. And to complete the family affair, Rosie's son also worked at BCP as a telerecruiter in the 1990s.

Like a treasure trove of historic BCP facts and trivia, Rosie remembers a time when staff had to make their own band-aids. "Band-aids now come pre-cut and packaged," said the Pacifica resident. "Back then, we had rolls of them and we had to take the

time to cut each strip." Rosie has also witnessed many advancements in blood donation as well as BCP's growth from a small center to an organization that serves 12 Northern Californian counties today. "We've gone from flat beds to comfy donor chairs, two needles in the automated procedures to one, and from less than a handful of mobiles to hundreds of blood drives," she said. "Our demand for blood then wasn't as it is now. Technology has also progressed tremendously in making blood donation a more 'comfortable' procedure for our donors, and ensuring the safety of our blood supply for patients."

"We've gone from flat beds to comfy donor chairs, two needles in the automated procedures to one, and from less than a handful of mobiles to hundreds of blood drives."

-Rosie Lamoreaux

One of the longest-serving BCP employees (second only to Senior Medical Scientist Dr. Herbert Perkins who's been with BCP for 46 years), Rosie has received several awards over the years as testament to her dedication, hard work and commitment to the organization, yet, she has no plans of slowing down. "I enjoy working with the public," said Rosie, who also takes pride in being a rare blood donor. "When anyone has problems, I like fixing those situations and helping them out."

Currently, Rosie manages a staff of five and oversees BCP's double red cell collection program, in addition to the autologous and designated donation programs and the maintenance of apheresis donor records.

Thank you Rosie, for all your years of service to BCP and for many more to come!

Eat an Iron Rich and Low-Fat Diet

Say the word “diet” and many think of weight loss, food deprivation and hunger pangs. At BCP, we encourage our donors to eat well, as one of the criteria for blood donors is that they are healthy. That’s why we ask our donors to maintain an iron rich and low-fat diet (the reward comes later!).

Iron makes up an important part of your hemoglobin, that part of the blood (red cells) that carries oxygen throughout your body. Sometimes blood donors are deferred due to low iron levels, but that can be easily remedied by eating the right foods.

Iron rich foods include:

FRUITS

All berries
Grapes & raisins
Grapefruit
Oranges
Plums
Prunes
Watermelon

VEGETABLES

Beets
Broccoli
Brussel sprouts
Green beans
Lima beans
Tofu
Tomato juice

MEATS

Hearts
Kidneys
Lean beef
Pork
Poultry

SEAFOOD

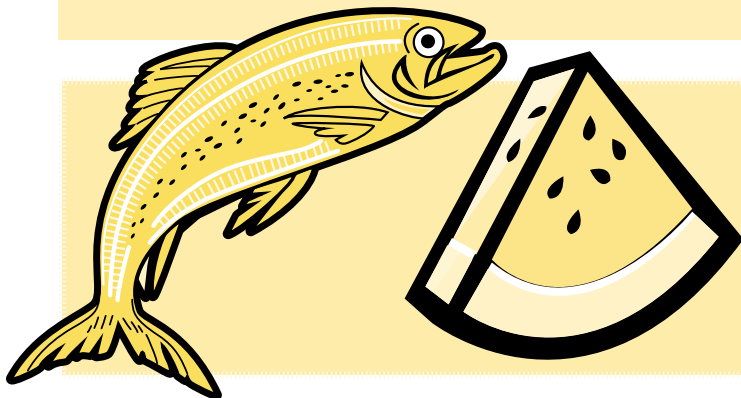
Clams
Crab
Fish fillets & steaks
Oysters
Sardines
Shrimp

WHOLE GRAINS

Whole grain bread
Enriched pastas
Tortillas
Soy bean flour
Brown rice
Wheat germ
Bran

LEGUMES

Dry peas
Peanut butter
Dry beans
Lentils



It is also extremely important to eat low-fat meals during the 24 hours prior to your donation. Fats in the plasma of your blood may interfere with the testing of blood specimens and if tests cannot be performed accurately, we cannot send your much-needed blood donation to hospitals.

Some low-fat foods eat include:

Low and non-fat
dairy products

Lean meats
Fish
Bread
Pasta

Grains
Vegetables
Fruits
Legumes
Potatoes

Some high-fat foods to avoid:

Whole fat dairy products
Fried food
Mayonnaise
Fast food
Chips

Cream soups and sauces
Cookies, cakes, chocolate
Fatty cuts of meat
Butter

So remember, be healthy, eat right, give blood... *then* you can have your well-deserved reward - guilt-free canteen goodies!



It's Summer and that means...

Summer is here! Schools are out while festivals and vacations are in. Unfortunately, this time of year also means blood shortages are more likely to occur. So before you make your holiday getaway, make the blood center your first stop and donate blood!

To help stave off the summertime blood shortage, BCP participated at the "Alice Summerthing," a free music and art event sponsored by local station Radio Alice in Golden Gate Park, San Francisco. The BCP booth featured a fun prize wheel giving anyone who pledged to give blood an opportunity to spin and win great gifts like Giants T-shirts, Six Flags Marine World tickets, Hornblower tickets, Paramount's Great America tickets, Baskin Robbins coupons and Sports Basement coupons.

Once again, BCP and the Giants teamed up in June - Make a Giant Difference Month. Donors who gave blood during the month were given a one-of-a-kind Giants T-shirt! And for the coming months ahead, look out for other great giveaways if you give the gift of life. Donate blood in July, and receive Marine World tickets. And during the month of August, it is "A Pint for a Pint,"

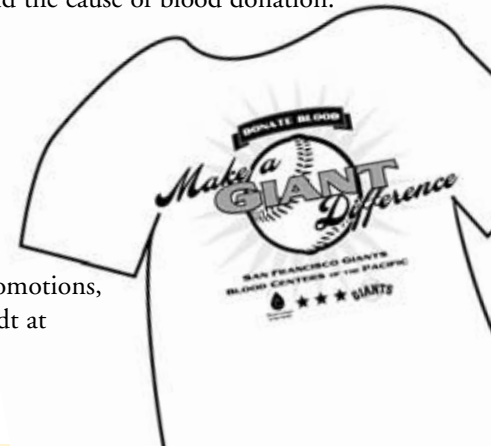
give blood and receive a coupon for a pint of Baskin Robbins ice cream!

In an effort to further boost blood donations, BCP ran several advertisements during the summer months on Bay Area radio stations. So tune in and let your family and friends know about them too.

BCP extends its gratitude to the following organizations who support their community and the cause of blood donation:

Baskin Robbins
San Francisco Giants
Six Flags Marine World
Paramount's Great America
Sports Basement

If you or your organization would like to help support BCP in future giveaways/promotions, please contact Don Burghardt at 415-567-6400.



The Journey, continued from page 1

we wouldn't have our Morgan. The second reason was to encourage more people to give blood. We hoped that by watching Morgan grow and thrive, more people would be encouraged to "pay it forward" and give blood for life.

Today, Morgan is a typical sassy 2-year-old! Her personality is contagious and you can't help but fall in love with life all over again after watching her smile light up a room. She has more surgeries in her future and her prognosis is still unknown. We never take one single breath or one heartbeat for granted, each one is one more than we thought we would get on that unforgettable December day two and a half years ago.

Although we may never meet our donors, I love them just the same. Their one hour spent to give a pint of blood has meant a life not only for Morgan, but for me and for my family too. Thank you!

To see how Morgan's doing, visit:
www.caringbridge.org/ca/morganfaith.



The Keane Family

BCP's Recognition Events 2005

by *Angela Woon*

It has become an annual tradition to recognize our whole blood and apheresis donors, as well as our blood drive coordinators, who continue to help save lives in Northern California. This year was no different.

Peninsula Center Blood Drive Coordinators, May 5

Blood drive coordinators from the peninsula region were wined and dined, and honored at the Sheraton Palo Alto Hotel. Blood and organ recipient Steve Okonek moved the crowd with his personal story of his use of blood and his two liver transplants. Later on, blood drive coordinators shared their experiences and tips on how to motivate donors to give blood at their organization drives.

San Francisco/Marin Blood Drive Coordinators, May 12

The recognition event for the blood drive coordinators for San Francisco/Marin was held at the Grand Hyatt Hotel – Union Square. A hundred were in attendance at the evening reception. Blood Donation Advocate Angela Keane (see cover story) spoke about her daughter's, Morgan, need for blood, which was accompanied with a slideshow presentation of family photos. This year's Nancy Ramsey Award recipient was Jackie Howitt, a dedicated blood drive coordinator at Del Monte Corporation. The Nancy Ramsey Award is given annually to a blood drive coordinator for their outstanding service and commitment to the community.

Shasta Blood Center, May 20

More than 180 came to the Win River Event Center, Redding, to honor Shasta Blood Centers donors. Angela Keane was also the

guest speaker at the event and once again, moved the audience to tears with her story. The Pat Karch Trio provided music from a variety of genres. BCP board member Mark Patterson, M.D., was also in attendance at the event, which was emceed by Director of Recruitment Don Burghardt.

San Francisco/Marin Whole Blood and Apheresis, June 25

This year's recognition event was held in a new location, the Cathedral Hill Hotel. More than 130 donors and their guests came for brunch and an awards presentation. Steve Okonek touched the audience yet again with his story.

Peninsula Center Whole Blood and Apheresis, July 9

Last but not least, peninsula donors and their guests partook in a brunch and awards presentation at the Embassy Suites Hotel in Burlingame. For the third time this year, Angela Keane was guest speaker, but her story was just as powerful in motivating the crowd.

Thank you to all whole blood and apheresis donors, and blood drive coordinators who are committed to the blood donation cause. And of course to our speakers, Angela Keane and Steve Okonek for sharing their stories.



*Thank you
Blood Donors
and Blood Drive
Coordinators!*

Take Part In a Research Study!

BCP is conducting a clinical trial of a new, unlicensed test for *Trypanosoma cruzi* (*T. cruzi*), the parasite (found mostly in Central and South America) that causes Chagas disease.

What is Chagas Disease?

Chagas disease is spread to humans by an insect called the Reduviid bug, also known as the kissing bug. Although most individuals infected with *T. cruzi* have no recognizable symptoms, the parasite may cause damage to muscle, especially in the esophagus, intestine or, most damaging, the heart. These medical conditions can be treated but there is no known cure for Chagas disease.

Why is this study being done?

The goal of this study is to see if the trial blood test for Chagas is able to truly show if the donor has been exposed to the parasite. It may help increase the safety of blood and blood components used for patients.

What will happen if I take part in this research study?

Your blood will be tested for the antibody to Chagas disease. With your permission, blood samples collected on the day of your donation will be used. A positive test is not a definitive diagnosis of Chagas disease. If you test positive, you would not be able to donate until the test was confirmed and we would request additional testing and health information.

Are there any benefits for being in this study?

While you may not benefit directly from taking part in this research study, your participation may help increase the safety of blood and blood components used for patients. And in the unlikely event that your blood tests positive for Chagas, and you actually have the disease, it may give you the chance to see proper medical care.

What are the possible risks for taking part in the Chagas testing?

The major risk is learning that your blood tested positive for Chagas exposure. And if you have a positive screen test, you will be deferred as a blood donor.

Will my results be confidential?

BCP will keep your participation private and confidential.

Whom do I contact if I would like to participate, or have any other questions or concerns about the study?

Please contact BCP's Medical Office at (415) 567-6400.

Thank you for helping BCP improve the safety of our blood supply!

The Donate Life California Registry Has Arrived!



Donate Life California invites you, your family members, friends and co-workers to register online to become an organ and tissue donor at www.donateLIFeCalifornia.org (or www.doneVIDAcalifornia.org for Spanish-language registration).

This safe, secure database is needed to help the thousands of people waiting for organ transplants – 18,000 are Californians. As an

organ donor, you may help to save up to eight lives. As a tissue donor, you can enhance the lives of up to 50 others.

The Donate Life California Organ & Tissue Donor Registry is the first of its kind in the state. You may register if you live or work in

California and are age 18 or older; those between 13 and 17 may register but their parents will make the final decision at the appropriate time.

Make a difference in someone's life by registering your preference to donate at www.donateLIFeCalifornia.org or in Spanish at www.doneVIDAcalifornia.org.

It takes only minutes to sign up – minutes that could mean years of life to someone else. Take another minute and forward this article to others you think might be interested.



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* Donate blood in August at any **BCP** location
or blood drive and you'll receive a free pint of ice cream