

winter 2004-2005

lifelines

the Blood Centers of the Pacific Newsletter



**Blood Centers
of the Pacific**

a member of the Blood Systems Family



Kidney and blood recipient, Joe Belarde

Keeping the Glass Half Full

by *Angela Woon*

ing his positive and upbeat outlook on life – he has to, he has been a kidney transplant patient...twice.

“The first tell-tale sign that I had started kidney failure was when I was drafted in the Vietnam War in 1963 and had to undergo a physical,” said Joe. “They found albumin in my urine and advised me to see the doctor. I didn’t know what it meant at that time.”

Protein molecules are normally too large to pass through the filtering membranes in the kidneys. If these filtering structures are damaged, protein escapes and the presence of protein in the urine becomes an important indicator of kidney disease.

In the 1980s, Joe began suffering severe headaches, high blood pressure and edema in the ankles – signs of kidney failure. “I was prescribed the steroid Prednisone and put on a renal diet,” said Joe, a father of three and grandfather to five. “A renal diet is one of the hardest to be on as it consists of very low protein, a small amount of bananas, no dairy products, chocolate, rice, flour or bread.”

At his nephrologist’s advice, Joe was put on dialysis in 1993 and after three months, he underwent his first kidney transplant from his daughter, Denise. “It was a very difficult decision for me to agree to receive a kidney from my daughter,” said Joe. “My friend who had received a kidney from his brother told me that I had to look at it as a gift of love and not to worry about the possibility of a future organ rejection.” To support Joe’s organ transplant, he also received lifesaving donated blood.

Unfortunately, three days after the transplant, Joe suffered a minor heart attack and five weeks later, a kidney rejection. He

was hospitalized and given medication to counteract the rejection and thankfully, it worked. Joe returned home.

Joe bounced back into shape over the next four years, even actively competing in sports. “I participated in the 1994 National Kidney Foundation Transplant Games in Atlanta, Georgia, where I received four medals in the track and field events,” he said. “Two years later, I took part in the Transplant Games in Salt Lake City where I received another four medals.”

“I try to be positive and think about what I can do to help others.”

-Joe Belarde

Things seemed to be looking up for Joe until he came down with a sinus infection in 1997. Joe’s body was rejecting the kidney and this meant he would have to undergo another transplant. He was put on dialysis and soon after, had his transplanted kidney removed. “I felt that I had let my daughter down,” said Joe, who was then put on the waiting list, where

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Lifelines

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

www.bloodcenters.org

Quick Bits

Every Minute Counts

If you haven't already seen it, we now have the "new and improved" volunteer brochure, "Every Minute Counts." Thank you to our volunteers, Barbara, Dora, Michael, Rose, Tony and Victor for lending their faces to the brochure.

"Every Minute Counts" brochures are available at our centers and our mobiles. Please feel free to take some and give them to friends and family, if you think they'd be interested in volunteering. We always welcome new volunteers!

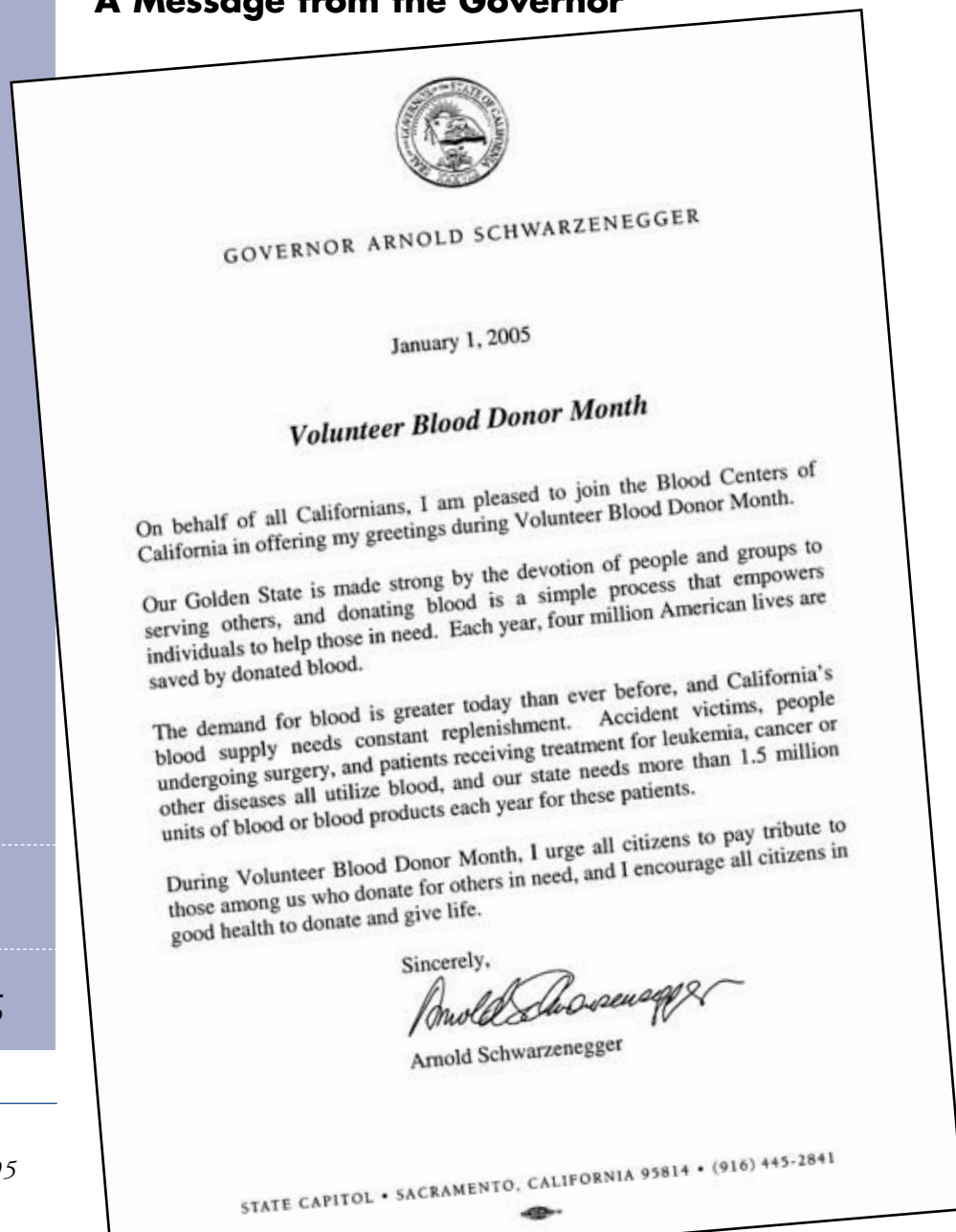
A Message from the Governor

Getting Pampered!

Last fall, Bay Area volunteers were treated to a manicure and/or a hand and arm massage at the Irwin Center!

We thought it would be a great way to thank our volunteers for their dedication and hard work to BCP.

Thanks to Laurie Biagi and the Skyline College Cosmetology students for providing complimentary services. And while they were at the blood center, three students donated blood!



U.S. Representative Lynn Woolsey Visits Marin Blood Center

by Lisa Bloch

United States Representative Lynn Woolsey visited the Marin Center - San Rafael to thank blood donors and to highlight the need for more of these community heroes during National Blood Donor Month and all year long.

The Congresswoman's visit – on Wednesday, January 12th – came at a critical time, as blood centers' supplies were running dangerously low. Following the winter holidays, blood supplies are greatly depleted.

Bay Area hospitals require more than 800 donated pints of blood each day for area patients, yet less than 4 percent of those eligible to give blood actually do.

The Marin Center has been providing the critical link between those who donate blood and the patients who require this life-saving gift for more than 43 years.

“We're thrilled that Congresswoman Woolsey is helping to encourage much-needed blood donations,” said Dr. Nora Hirschler, President of BCP. “Her visit served to highlight the important cause of blood donation and will inspire many to roll up their sleeves and give the gift of life.”



BCP Chief Operating Officer Roger Svoboda greets U.S. Representative Lynn Woolsey.

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he was told it would be another three years before he would receive a kidney.

In 2001, Joe got the call he had been waiting for and received his second kidney transplant, this time from a cadaver donor.

“I have had the wonderful experience of meeting my donor family. It was an emotional moment for both of us that I will never forget,” said the 64-year-old. “The gift of life that I received from them will be with my family and me the rest of my life.”

As a result of his experiences, Joe volunteers a lot of his time at the National Kidney Foundation, California Transplant Donor Network and the Transplant Recipients International Organization where he participates at health fairs, shares his

story at events and gives talks to fifth and sixth graders on preventing diabetes and kidney loss. “I try to be positive and think about what I can do to help others,” said Joe, who currently lives in San Jose. “I also educate people that they have to let their families know they want to donate their organs.”

Joe also recognizes the importance of blood donation. “It's a small thing but it can be a great lifesaver,” he said. “It is in itself, very rewarding.”

To learn more about organ donation, visit www.ctdn.org.

Breakfast at the American Legion Post #585

by *Angela Woon*



Every quarter, the San Carlos neighborhood community can look forward to a hearty breakfast compliments of the American Legion Post #585... if they donate blood!

"We're not talking coffee and doughnuts here," said Fred McFadden, BCP's Account Representative. "I mean a good ol' fashioned American

breakfast of pancakes, bacon, sausages, eggs, fresh fruit and more. I mean, the works!"

According to Commander Cliff Crowley, the American Legion Post #585 has been serving breakfast for many years. "It's a way for us to give back to the community," said Commander Crowley, who is also the cook. "And this year will be our 25th Anniversary in holding blood drives!"

The American Legion Post #585 draws an average of about 26 donors at their drives. "We advertise by posting flyers throughout the neighborhood," said Commander Crowley, a Vietnam War veteran. "And of course, we also encourage our friends and family to give blood."

Commander Crowley, a member of the American Legion Post #585 for the past 16 years, finds the role of a blood drive coordinator rewarding. "I've been doing this for the past 12 to 13 years," he said. "I get a kick out of it plus, people are very, very nice."

The American Legion Post #585 in San Carlos, which currently has more than 365 members, holds its blood drives at 1159 Bush Street, San Carlos and invites the community to come and help save lives by donating blood.

The American Legion is the nation's largest veterans organization, supporting present active duty military personnel along with its commitment to all veterans and their families.

Blood Donation Education in the Air

by *Angela Woon*

If you flew Continental Airlines this past winter, you may have seen a video segment promoting a lifesaving topic - blood donation!

America's Blood Centers (ABC) produced a two-minute video segment, as part of a 20-minute program focusing on health-related issues. The video was shown on domestic and international flights after or in-between the movie feature. The segment was viewed by an estimated 5.6 million passengers while it aired during the months of January and February.

The project was underwritten by Ortho-Clinical Diagnostics, Inc. through a gift to the Foundation for America's Blood Centers.

ABC is a national network of nonprofit community-based blood centers, of which Blood Centers of the Pacific is an affiliate.



Continental Airlines is doing their part to help encourage blood donation.

BCP's "Community Quarterback"

by Lisa Bloch



Blood donor Don Franklin and 49ers Community Relations Manager, Darla Maeda.

Lighthouse for the Blind, Hospice of Marin and St. John's Educational Threshold Center.

Don, a big 49ers fan, was one of 11 finalists for the award. He and two of his friends, along with BCP Communications Director Lisa Bloch, were invited to a special brunch at Monster Park and to attend the game against the Washington Redskins later that day. At the event, Lisa spoke about the impact Don's staggering 240 blood donations have made for local patients and the example that he sets for so many. Later, Don and the other nominees were honored on the football field before kickoff.

When word came last fall that the San Francisco 49ers were looking for nominations for their annual "Community Quarterback" award to recognize "the tireless devotion and compassion of a Bay Area community volunteer," we knew instantly here at BCP who we'd like to win the title...longtime blood and apheresis donor Don Franklin.

Not only is Don an Apheresis Ambassador and platelet donor but he also volunteers his time with a myriad of other organizations and causes like the

While Don wasn't selected as the ultimate winner that day, he did bring back a donation of \$1,000 for BCP and a special Community Quarterback Finalist trophy. But in our book, Don is our Community Quarterback. Go Don!

The San Francisco 49ers have been a longtime supporter of the blood center, hosting blood drives, donating special items to be raffled off to blood donors, and helping us get the word out about blood donation. Thank you Niners!

But wait...there's more!

Don, a longtime account representative for Pacific Gas & Electric (PG&E) was also honored with PG&E's prestigious Frederick W. Mielke, Jr. Award for Outstanding Community Service. With more than 20,000 employees, just five were selected for this award and our Don Franklin was one of them!

As a part of this award, the nonprofit that the recipient volunteers with receives a donation of \$5,000 but since Don volunteers with so many, he had to split the money. Because of Don, BCP was able to receive a \$1,000 donation from PG&E!

Thank you to PG&E for your generosity in not only donating money but for hosting regular blood drives, enabling large groups of employees to donate the gift of life!

And most of all, thank you Don for being an inspiration to us all!



Did you know?

The average adult has 10 pints of blood in his or her body

First National Blood Donation Ad Campaign Launched

by Lisa Bloch

The Advertising Council has joined blood banking organizations, including Blood Centers of the Pacific (BCP), to launch the first-ever national public education and awareness campaign about blood donation. Geared toward young adults, the public service advertising (PSA) initiative is designed to raise awareness on the importance of blood donation and to foster a new generation of lifelong blood donors.

Each year, nearly 5 million Americans need a lifesaving blood transfusion and critically low inventories nationwide frequently result in public appeals for donations. In the Bay Area, about 60 percent of the population is eligible to donate blood, but only 4 percent do. As additional donor restrictions are implemented and the population ages, the country could lose more and more willing donors, which could cause an even greater threat to our national blood supply.

“We need to move away from the culture of blood donation under crisis appeals because it is the blood that’s already on the shelves that helps save lives.”

—Peggy Conlon, President and CEO of The Advertising Council

This thought-provoking campaign was developed to catch the attention of young adults, especially 17- to 24-year-olds, to increase awareness of the need for regular blood donation and to set the foundation for lifelong donor behavior. Created pro bono by advertising agency Euro RSCG Worldwide New York, the campaign includes television, radio, outdoor and Internet advertising. It also directs young adults to visit a new and comprehensive website, www.bloodsaves.com, where they can learn more about the need for a robust blood supply and obtain information and resources to help them donate blood in their community.

According to Nora Hirschler, M.D., President of BCP, the Bay Area needs to collect more than 800 pints of blood each day to meet patients’ needs. “We have some of the latest and best medical technology and know-how here in the Bay Area, yet with that comes a need for a robust blood supply.”

BCP encourages media across California to support this campaign by running the PSAs often to inspire young adults to become regular blood donors.

“The percentage of Americans that are eligible to donate blood, but don’t, is astounding. We need to move away from the culture of blood donation under crisis appeals because it is the blood that’s already on the shelves that helps save lives,” according to Peggy Conlon, President and CEO of The Advertising Council. “I am confident that this provocative, empowering advertising will show our nation’s young adults how easily they can save up to three lives and encourage them to become lifelong regular blood donors.”

Titled “Save the World,” the new campaign features young adults discussing the extreme lengths they have gone to try to make a difference in the world in an effort to show how donating blood is an easy way to positively and significantly make an impact. Each PSA concludes with the tagline, “Saving the world isn’t easy. Saving a life is. And just one pint of blood can save up to three lives.”

Per the Ad Council model, the PSAs are being distributed to more than 20,000 media outlets nationwide. They will run and air in advertising time and space that is donated by the media.

“We know that young people today feel a certain futility in their ability to affect the world they live in, and we wanted to use that as a leverage point in advertising to show these young adults that giving blood is an easy way to make an incredibly important difference – saving lives,” said Kevin Roddy Partner, Executive Creative Director, Euro RSCG Worldwide New York.

THE ADVERTISING COUNCIL

The Ad Council is a private, nonprofit organization with a rich history of marshalling volunteer talent from the advertising and media industries to deliver critical messages to the American public. To learn more about the Ad Council, visit www.adcouncil.org.



Maggie's Gift – A Family Circle Reader Saves a Life

By Judi Dash, Excerpts From *Family Circle*, November 30, 2004

Every year more than 30,000 Americans are diagnosed with leukemia and other blood diseases. For many, bone-marrow donation can be a lifesaving gift. In October 1998, Family Circle ran a report on marrow donation and asked readers to consider getting involved. With the National Marrow Donor Program (NMDP), the Marrow Foundation and the United States Postal Service, we offered to pay the costs of tissue typing for readers who joined the NMDP donor registry. Some 3,400 people responded, and at least nine became donors. Meet one woman and the boy whose life she saved.

Michael McCormick of Aston, Pennsylvania, was diagnosed with a deadly form of leukemia on September 12, 2000. He was 12-years-old. His parents Mike and Michele, were told that without a bone marrow transplant he could die.

Marrow produces the body's red and white blood cells. A person's tissue type is determined by proteins called antigens found on the surface of the white cells. For a transplant to be feasible, a donor's and recipient's antigens must match as perfectly as possible.

By March 2001, six months after Michael's diagnosis, no donor had been found. "We prayed for a donor every night," says Michele, 40. They didn't know it yet, but their prayers were being answered.

A BOY'S LAST HOPE

Margaret Smith was moved to register as a donor after the report in Family Circle. Her husband Bob, had lost his twin sister, Becky, to a malignant brain tumor about a year before. "There was nothing we could do to save her," says Margaret, 39. The thought of doing something in Becky's memory to help save a life appealed to her. The next day she made an appointment to be tested. "They said it is rare to match," says Margaret, who goes by Maggie. "In my heart, though, I knew I would be a donor. I just didn't know when."

When the call finally came two years later, on January 21, 2001, Maggie immediately went in for further testing. "I matched five out of six antigens perfectly. The sixth was off by a digit. You can't get much closer unless you're a twin."

The next step was for Maggie to sign an "intent to donate" form. She was urged to think carefully before signing the form because once she did, the recipient would begin aggressive treatments to prepare him for the transplant and would be left with no immune system at all. "If I changed my mind," says Maggie, "he would die." On March 21, she signed the form.

When the McCormicks returned from vacation, they were told a donor had been found. On April 6, Michael checked in to the

Children's Hospital of Philadelphia to prepare for the transplant. A week later, Michael's doctors injected the donated marrow. As they did, Michele said a silent thank-you to her son's donor and prayed that this gift would make him well. The transplant took only seven minutes.

Now the battle inside Michael's body began. Michael's new white cells attacked his skin, lungs and the lining of his esophagus and intestines. Says Mike, "It was terrifying." Finally, after five weeks, Michael's condition stabilized and his healthy white cell count climbed high enough for him to go home. Then in July, doctors diagnosed a bacterial infection and prescribed new medications to fight it, but Michael had such a severe allergic reaction that he had to be briefly rehospitalized.

Slowly, Michael regained strength. A test three months after the transplant had found no traces of leukemia. A second test three months later had also come back negative. Three negatives in a row would mean he was cured. On February 4, 2002, Michael received the results of his third test: negative. He was officially disease free.

In March, the family began looking forward to the first anniversary of Michael's transplant. As Michele considered how to celebrate, she knew one thing: she wanted the donor to be there. On March 29, Maggie received an envelope in the mail from her blood bank containing a copy of the McCormick's consent-to-contact form. A few days later, she dialed the McCormicks' number. Michele cried and laughed as she spoke for the first time to the woman who had saved her son's life. "I asked if she could come for Michael's anniversary." Maggie's answer: "Of course I'll come."

The Smiths and the McCormicks have gotten together often since. "We are one big family now," says Michele. Now 16, Michael is a healthy, hardworking, high-school junior. For his senior-year project, he intends to educate his classmates about the importance of marrow donation.

To the McCormicks, Maggie is a hero, but she doesn't see herself that way. "My life was disrupted so little by being a donor," she says. "It was nothing compared to what they went through. I was raised to just try to be a good person. I believe when you give to others, good things come back to you – and they have."

To sign-up for the NMDP registry, please call BCP at (415) 567-6400 and ask for the Bone Marrow Department.



Blood Centers *of the* Pacific

270 Masonic Avenue
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lifelines

“Everybody can be great... because anybody can serve. You don’t have to have a college degree to serve. You don’t have to make your subject and verb agree to serve. You only need a heart full of grace. A soul generated by love.”

Martin Luther King, Jr.

