

Giving the gift of life through blood and organ donations

By Sue Stafford
Correspondent

Making a blood or platelet donation through the local American Red Cross in Bend is a simple, painless process that doesn't require a lot of time and costs nothing. And cookies and juice are available afterwards.

As easy as it is to be a donor, for the recipient of that blood product, it can mean the difference between life and death. Right now the Red Cross supply of blood is depleted following the holidays, when fewer drives are held, and a steady supply of donors is necessary year-round.

"Lifesaving medical treatments and emergencies never take a holiday," said Paul Sullivan, senior vice president, Red Cross Biomedical Services. "Declines in donations can affect patient care. That's why the Red Cross is encouraging eligible donors to make an appointment to give now and help those sidelined by illness and trauma."

Donors are urged to make an appointment to give now using the Red Cross Blood Donor App, visiting RedCrossBlood.org, calling 1-800-REDCROSS (733-2767), or enabling the Blood Donor Skill on any Alexa Echo device.

Every day, blood donors help patients of all ages: accident and burn victims, heart surgery and organ transplant patients, and those battling

cancer and other life-threatening illnesses. In fact, every two seconds, someone in the U.S. needs blood. One pint of blood can help up to three different recipients.

There are a number of blood drives scheduled during the month of January, both at sponsored sites throughout the tri-county area and at the Bend Blood Donation Center at 815 SW Bond St., Ste. 110. Here in Sisters, the first Friday of every month (with adjustments for holidays), a blood drive is held at the Sisters Fire Hall from 11:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Appointments are appreciated, but if they are not busy, they will take walk-ins. In 2019, the residents of Sisters contributed a total of 387 units of blood during the 12 monthly drives.

Twice a year, the Sisters Athletic Club hosts blood drives and there are several drives a year at Sisters High School. According to Jen Shaw, local market manager for the American Red Cross, back in 2012 and 2013, the high school hosted three drives a year and collected a total of more than 200 units both

years. The number of donations has dwindled since then, with only two drives a year collecting about 50 units total. Shaw is hopeful the students will re-engage and meet their previous records.

All blood types are needed to ensure a reliable supply for patients. A blood donor card or driver's license or two other forms of identification are required at check-in. Donors age 16 and over who weigh at least 110 pounds and are in generally good health may be eligible to donate blood. Parental permission is required for 16-year-old donors.

Organ, Eye and Tissue Donations
Of the almost 120,000 Americans

waiting for a lifesaving organ transplant, more than 3,000 live in the Pacific Northwest. But a growing shortage of living and deceased donors means that not all will receive their transplant in time.

By registering people in the Pacific Northwest for organ, eye and tissue donation, Donate Life Northwest gives hope to those waiting for a transplant. Besides organ donation, cornea donation restores sight to thousands every year. A single tissue donor can touch over 50 lives – healing a burn victim, saving the life of a newborn with congenital heart defects, replacing tumorous bones, and more.

Donate Life Northwest maintains the donor registry for the state of Oregon (each state has a single registry). Through community events, education programs, and an award-winning high school curriculum, they reach thousands of people throughout the Pacific Northwest annually. Together with the communities, Donate Life Northwest has registered over 2.5 million Oregonians to be organ, eye and tissue donors, one of the highest rates in the country.

The Oregon registry is for



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International Insight Meditation Center

On a quiet, peaceful 12.5-acre site between Sisters and Redmond, Yee Thanittithanand and Peter and Molly Stephen founded Insight Meditation Center.

The owner of Oishi Japanese restaurant in Redmond moved from California carrying the dream to open a meditation center, and the dream was fulfilled four years ago.

The nonprofit Insight Meditation Center welcomes people of all nationalities, religions, and walks of life to find a moment of tranquility on Saturday morning from 9 to 10:30 a.m. Sessions are free of charge.

Three or four times a year, Insight Meditation Center hosts instructors for weekend retreats. Oishi provides food for these weekends.

Taking a meditative break reduces stress and actively promotes good health and well-being. The landscaped garden setting, where herbs grow along with trees planted by monks, is peaceful and conducive to retreating from the bustle of everyday life.



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Clutter is stressful. Disorganization is stressful. We all know we need to tackle it — but often lack the time or inclination. That's where Laura Berg and Gemini Organizing steps in.

"I whole-heartedly believe that simple, efficient spaces really impact our lives in a positive way," Berg says. "I know that magic happens when a space can breathe and a mind can be free of the worry and stress of chaos and clutter."

From organizing a pantry so you don't overbuy or run out of things, to getting your whole house or office in order, Gemini Organizing implements systems that you can maintain on your own going forward — making your life more efficient, less stressful — and giving you time to enjoy the things you love.

Call to set up a house or office visit. Laura will help you determine your goals and get to work on a plan to make your environment a whole lot better.

