

# The Bandera PROPHET

July 31, 2020

## Blood drive first of many

Bandera newcomers Barbara and J.C. Harris scheduled their appointment to donate blood for early Saturday, July 25, at the Silver Sage Community Center.

“We used to give blood often through our employer... a mobile van was at our building nearly every month,” J.C. said as he completed medical paperwork.

His wife, Barbara, came prepared with a great novel to read and “glad to do our part.”

They were part of nearly 40 Bandera County residents who scheduled via telephone or on-line to donate blood. The South Texas Blood and Tissue Center (SWTBC) team of four technicians quickly set up inside the auditorium at the Silver Sage and continued the process of medical check-in and drawing blood until 3:30 p.m. Donors provided whole blood meaning that all components are collected at the same time (red blood cells, platelets, plasma). Later, in the laboratory, the blood is separated into those three components. Each donation could help save three lives – and can be given every 56 days.

The need for blood products is great and critical to the Hill Country based on the distance to emergency medical facilities. Despite the population growth in South Texas, donations are at their lowest levels in 30-plus years, and they are down 19 percent in South Texas since 2013, despite our population growth. The Brothers in Arms program provides specially screened type O positive whole blood for transfusion in emergencies. It is carried primarily on emergency evacuation helicopters and limited ground ambulances in Bandera County.

Anyone who is 16 years old and weighs 120 pounds (with parental consent), or at least 17 years old and weighs 110 pounds, and in good general health can donate blood. There is no upper age limit: your

medical history and condition will determine acceptance. Donors should be well hydrated, recently had something to eat, wear comfortable clothing and a list of any current medications. A government photo identification is required at the time of donation. After signing in, a private screening will be conducted to include health history and vital signs, such as pulse, temperature, blood pressure and iron-level check. A technician will swab your arm inside the elbow, and insert a needle into a vein. After the donation, the needle is removed and a sterile bandage applied. There is no risk of disease transmission to the donor. After the donation, you will remain in the facility while to enjoy refreshments to begin replenishing bodily fluid levels. Results of the free simultaneous test for the COVID-19 antibody will be sent to donors. On Saturday, the iron level was an issue for several prospective donors; from age 30 to 75: both appreciated the new knowledge, committed to “healthier eating” in order to donate soon.

“All 42 appointments for the July 25 blood drive were filled within two weeks of posting flyers and on Facebook, so we knew we had to schedule more... the need and the desire to give are there,” Susan Junker, coordinator and Commander, Bandera American Legion Post 157, said.

Blood drives are scheduled as follows: Aug. 12 at the Medina Community Center, Sept. 7 at the Silver Sage Community Center, Oct. 16 at the Anton Haner Community Center (Tarpley), Nov. 14 at the Silver Sage Community Center. The dates for Lakehills will be announced soon.

To schedule an appointment at any of these locations, call 210-731-5555  
[https://donor.southtexasblood.org/donor/schedules/drive\\_schedule/113557](https://donor.southtexasblood.org/donor/schedules/drive_schedule/113557)