



The Director's Digressions

By Bill Taylor

In my October article, I did mention that four-letter word, and sure enough, quite a few flakes did hit the ground mid-October. The way this 'fall' is going, by the time you read this, there will probably be a whole lot more than 'quite a few'. And our neighbors up north, looks like they have already been dumped on quite a bit.

And then I changed direction.

I decided to take a different direction on this article. I thought I would describe a method to donate to the Red Cross that does not cost a dime and does not involve any manual labor – in fact, you are required to stay still and watch a movie the entire time you are donating!

Yes, I am talking about Apheresis – the process of donating your platelets. Every other time I donate, they also take some plasma. And this time, they are trying to get the word out because they need additional supplies to help all the people impacted by the last couple hurricanes. Not only is the demand up, but lots of people that would have normally donated are busy doing other things. The change of direction happened because tonight was one of those nights I donated. And I decided to take a picture of the whiteboard that describes some of the people that have recently received platelets from the Red Cross. By the time you read this, chances are good that the hurricanes will just be faint memories and you might think the need is not really there anymore. And you'd be wrong. The need is always there. So if you're looking for a cheap, lay on your back and do nothing way to donate, this is for you. Or, if you are looking for a way to donate that actually saves lives – this is for you. I have only donated 13 times so far this year. The maximum is 26 times per year, which gives you an indication of how quickly your platelets are replenished by your system. Amazing, huh?

So, if you'd like to know more about Apheresis, let me know – or call the Red Cross. And see the next page for that photo I mentioned.

Patients Getting Platelets

- 78-year-old man with leukemia, needs platelets prior to needle drainage of fluid in hip joint
- 17-year-old girl with long-term kidney disease now receiving dialysis a few times per week and requires plasma & platelets
- 12-year-old boy requires red cells, platelets & plasma after a car accident
- 64-year-old man awaiting liver transplant needs platelets prior to frequent procedures to remove abdominal fluid
- 63-year-old man used multiple platelets to stop bleeding after surgery to remove kidney cancer
- 71-year-old man with severely low platelets due to chronic leukemia

Patients Using Red cells

- 52-year-old woman receiving a heart transplant
- 27-year-old woman requires red cells after giving birth
- 74-year-old woman requires red cells after blood loss due to procedure

Thanks for reading,
bill