

# The Philanthropy of Blood Donation



by Jim  
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As I “pen” this tribute to philanthropy and to underscore my passion of blood donation, I peer at my computer screen and watch my words take shape. I peer through a thin, human tissue only 700 microns thick donated by a person unknown to me to the Bascom Palmer Eye Institute that allows me, with some high installation technology, to easily differentiate commas from periods. Without the unknown donor’s gift, I would probably be prevented from even seeing the computer screen as other than a large night light. No tennis for me, no boating, no teaching while being aided by a strong magnifying glass puck to enjoy a picture of our first great grandchild. What a difference this donor makes every day – I wish he or she could only know my immense gratitude.

There is hardly a family at Ocean Reef that can search through their history without finding that the philanthropy of donating and receiving organs, tissues or blood has played a similar role in their well-being.

## “Gallon Donor”

Blood became a passion in my later teenage years in Alexandria, Virginia and Tucson, Arizona during and after WWII. It was a time of all-out mobilization of everybody of every age – I did tinfoil collection, home-carved model wood Japanese “Zeros” for aircraft identification, war bond stamps, and my blood. Shortly after VJ day, I had become a very proud, “Gallon” donor. Oh, how I wish I had not lost that wallet that held the American Red

Cross wallet card that recorded each pint of O positive blood I donated. Pictures of medics administering blood on the battlefield made me think it was my blood.

## Seven to Ten - Who’s Counting?

I have made a strong effort to donate every year since which, if correct, would bring me to a grand total of ten gallons. But, I have missed a few years due to blood thinner use. I am still very confident that I am well over seven gallons.

Yuri Mikolay, Executive Director of the **Ocean Reef Community Foundation** recently presented me with a book, *The Almanac of American Philanthropy* whose author, Karl Zinsmeister, will speak at Ocean Reef on Monday, April 3 about the marvelous effects of philanthropy. Sadly, I do not find my name in his book for the obvious reason that blood doesn’t get counted – but it should. There are no stronger connections to be shared between humans than our blood and our love.

## Collect Your Reward

And the nice part is that blood donation is only mildly discomfiting – I generally fall asleep – and about an hour to save a life. Unlike an organ donor, with the exception of a kidney, one usually has to collect the reward in another world. Blood donation philanthropy allows you to collect that reward here in this world – a more or less instant gratification. Your blood will probably be used within three days.

Join me Wednesday or Thursday, April 5 or 6 at the Ocean Reef Medical Center. You will be accommodated without an appointment but if you need the assurance of a specific time – call 305-797-7028. Be sure to credit your favorite club as the clubs compete for bragging honors based on blood donors.

Read about the Sportsman’s Challenge on page 8.

*Philanthropy, from the Latin “philanthropia” or love of mankind.*