



"It's a Dog's Life!"

Sun Statements

The official newsletter of Sun States Animal Blood Bank

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Special Event!

- Thurs. April 29, 1 PM**
 "Why Not Whole Blood?"
 Sharon Glass, DVM and
 Larry DeLuca, EdD will
 present a talk on the
 advantages of compo-
 nent therapy. **Lunch**
will be provided for
veterinarians and
technicians. Call 954
 630-2231 to RSVP. It's
 FREE! Location: La
 Bamba III, Federal High-
 way, Fort Lauderdale.

New Animal Blood Bank Opens its Doors in Wilton Manors, Florida

Greetings! We are **Sun States Animal Blood Bank**, Florida's first animal blood bank devoted exclusively to banking and distributing blood products to veterinarians throughout Florida and the rest of the US.

All Donors are Volunteer Donors

Different animal blood banks have different policies regarding the recruitment of donors.

Some blood banks keep a stable of donors, often greyhounds, whose sole purpose in life is to provide blood. All of our donors are companion animals who live in the community and donate of their own free will. We believe that one animal's quality of life should not be improved at the expense of another.



Sun States Animal Blood Bank volunteers collecting blood donations at Doggie Palooza in Plantation, FL.

How can you tell a donor is volunteering?

"So how do you know an animal is volunteering?" is a question we frequently hear. It has been our experience that most animals sense intuitively that they are doing a good thing by donating, and are calm and cooperative throughout the process. Any animal that seems fearful or

uncooperative is telling us in its own way that "I know you're trying to do a good thing, but I just don't want to participate today." We do not take donations from these animals, though if they change their mind we'll gladly welcome them in the future.

Community Blood Drives

At the heart of our donation program are our community blood drives. Veteri-

nary offices, dog festivals, bark parks, pet stores—anywhere volunteer donors and their guardians are likely to drop in to donate a pint and stay for a treat afterwards! You can visit our website at www.ssabb.org to find out where upcoming blood drives are, or contact us if you would like to host a blood drive at your facility.

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Gearing up for Feline Blood Donations

Feline blood is in very short supply. However, collecting blood from cats poses unique challenges that are different from those of dealing with canine donors. The feline's small size, cats' lesser tolerance for procedures in general, and a host of different

diseases and concerns all have been taken into consideration to develop a cat donor program that allows us to maintain the essential spirit of volunteerism on the part of pets and their guardians while ensuring the safety and comfort of our feline donors. Spe-

cialized feline collection equipment has been obtained from our sister blood bank—Midwest Animal Blood Services. We plan to hold our first trial run on May 2. Watch this space for further updates as we look to expand our donor pool!



Meet Our Staff and Volunteers

Sharon Glass, DVM, is our medical director. Dr. Glass has been a practicing veterinarian for 20 years in both Illinois and Florida, and is the owner of Family Pet Medical Center in Fort Lauderdale, FL.

Larry DeLuca, EdD is an exercise physiologist as well as a third-year medical student at University of Miami School of Medicine. Along with Dr. Glass he manages the technical aspects of the blood bank, sets policy, and conducts educational and training programs.

Rick Johnson is our managing director. Rick brings an extensive background in hos-

pital administration, purchasing, and accounting. Rick is in charge of operations at the blood bank. Among the many hats he's worn are business manager, animal holder, and head of the advertising department, to name a few.

Ed Boornazian is the blood bank's treasurer. Ed is a successful real estate entrepreneur based in Pennsylvania. He and Rick are working together to help ensure the financial future of the blood bank so it can continue its lifesaving work.

Greg Johnson, Jeff Frohock (see Jeff's picture on page 1), and **Megan Harris** are three of

our most dedicated blood drive volunteers. They work tirelessly to ensure that animals are properly screened before donating, that all the paperwork is together, and that the donors are comfortable and feel safe and reassured during donation.



"There is really only one indication for the use of whole blood for transfusions—the acute loss of massive amounts of whole blood."

Why not whole blood? Blood Banking and the Veterinarian

In the earliest days of transfusion medicine, whole blood was transfused directly from donor to recipient. While this approach may still be common in veterinary practice today, modern transfusion medicine has been transformed by the concept of blood banking and the availability and use of blood components. According to the University of Rochester Blood Bank Manual, "There really is only one indication for the use of whole blood for transfusions—the acute loss of massive amounts of whole blood." The manual goes on further to state that the vast majority of transfusions should be custom-tailored to the needs of the patient using blood component therapy.

Advantages of Blood Banking

The use of blood banks offers several advantages over the practice of on-the-spot transfusions from in-house donor dogs. *First and foremost, there is the safety of the blood*

supply. Banked blood is screened for blood-borne diseases prior to being released into the blood supply, minimizing the possibility of blood-borne disease transmission. *Blood banks also ensure proper blood typing, reducing*



the possibility of sensitization of recipients or transfusion reactions, which can be fatal in the critically ill patient. Finally, there is the issue of efficient use of the blood supply - a single donation can be divided into red cells, platelets, plasma, and clotting factors. Each of these can go to a different animal, making blood banking a much better way of allocating a scarce resource.

Benefits to the Patient

Ultimately it is the patient for whom optimal benefit must be achieved. Transfusing whole blood is not without risk. Recipient sensitization to minor antigens and volume overload from massive transfusions can be detrimental to the compromised patient. Component therapy allows for the tailored use of specific blood components to address particular patient problems. If a patient ingests rat poison and is bleeding internally, for example, clotting factors and red cells can be titrated separately to stop the hemorrhage without putting the patient into heart failure.

Closing thoughts

Blood banking benefits everyone. Why not send your donor dog to Sun States so that the benefits of their gift can be maximized?

Meet our donors: YZ Sitarz, King of Factor VIII

[Editor's note: *Sun States plans to regularly feature stories about our donors and their lives, as well as the animals whose lives they save.*]

YZ Sitarz, blood donor ID #1001, was the very first donor of Sun States Animal Blood Bank. YZ is an 8-year old Australian cattle dog. A four-pint donor so far, he's patient and loving and one of our best-behaved. Whenever there's a need for blood, YZ steps up to the collection bag.

His guardian, Roxanne Sitarz, works at Family Pet Medical Center in Fort Lauderdale. She met YZ as a puppy and she instantly bonded with

him. Unfortunately, she couldn't afford to purchase YZ, and she thought she'd never see him again.

Fate works in mysterious ways, this time in the form of a red-headed woman who had seen the two. "Is that your dog?" the woman had asked



YZ Sitarz chilling on the sofa at Sun States Animal Blood Bank's office.

when she saw Roxanne and YZ together. "Why no, he's not," Roxanne replied. "Well, it seems to me he is," said the woman, "or he should be."

The next day Roxanne was in for quite a surprise. The mysterious woman showed up at her place of employment and had purchased YZ for her. It was destiny after all!

YZ's not only famous for his entry into Roxanne's life—he's also the dog with the highest Factor VIII level we know of—200% of normal! He's helped out his friend Fluffy, who has hemophilia. Thanks, YZ!

New Animal Blood Bank Opens in South Florida

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Blood Testing—Keeping the Blood Supply Safe

It is vitally important to Sun States and the community we serve that the blood supply be not only readily available, but safe as well. All donors are screened at their initial donation and periodically thereafter for Heartworm, Lyme disease, *Ehrlichia Canis* and *Ehrlichia Platys*, and *Babesia*. Blood is typed for DEA 1.1 blood type. Every unit is also screened for anemia and blood protein. Once blood has passed all screening tests, it is released into the pool of available blood.

Veterinary Support Services

Sun States' role in the support of patients in need of transfusion therapy does not end with the shipment of products to the veterinarian. We are available to answer questions and assist with

transfusion-related issues. Cross-matching, blood typing, and consultation services are all available to veterinarians from Sun States Animal Blood Bank.

Commitment to the Highest Standard of Care

Unlike human blood banking, which is closely regulated by the FDA, there are no federal regulations that govern animal blood banks. Sun States is a member of the American Veterinary Hematology and Transfusion Medicine (AVHTM) section of the American Veterinary Medical Association. We comply with what standards are available for veterinary blood banking, and adopt human standards where appropriate from the American Association of Blood Banks.



Brandy receives a life-saving transfusion to combat her severe anemia. The blood was donated by Duke, one of Sun States' donors.

Education and Community Outreach

From Pet First Aid classes for the general public to one-on-one support for transfusion-related issues, Sun States is committed to helping veterinarians and the general public. Contact us for more information on our educational programs.

Consider hosting a blood drive at your clinic, park, or community center!

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BLOOD BANK

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*We're on the web!
Come visit us at:
www.ssabb.org*



"It's a Dog's Life!"

As the temperatures rise, blood collection is slowing down...a blood mobile would allow animals to donate in an air-conditioned, dry environment.

Blood Bank Sets Sights on Blood Mobile

Summer is fast approaching and Sun States is trying to find alternate ways to ensure that blood donations continue throughout this hot season. Presently, blood donations have been obtained outdoors from donors at various dog events, dog parks, etc. We have been fortunate because the weather has been relatively cool which has allowed our companion donors opportunities for successful donations. But as the temperatures rise, blood collection is



slowing down. We are concerned that the supply of blood will decrease and only add to the shortage. Sun States hopes to overcome seasonal temperatures by procuring a blood mobile that can be used throughout the year, during times of high temperatures and inclement weather.

Sun States is setting our sights on obtaining a used RV or ambulance that can be retrofitted to become an animal blood mobile. Plans are currently in the works to raise money to fund this purchase. The benefits of a blood mobile are numerous: animals will be able to donate in an air-conditioned, dry environment; fewer distractions will enable safer donor collections; the blood mobile will operate more efficiently

Our Mission

Sun States Animal Blood Bank is dedicated to providing safe and high-quality canine and feline blood products to the veterinary community. Sun States only accepts blood from volunteer donors — we believe that the quality of life of one animal should not be enhanced at the expense of another. We are a non-profit organization, as we are the custodians of the gift of life — something from which no one should achieve financial gain. Sun States is committed to ensuring the safety and availability of the animal blood supply, and to helping veterinarians, technicians, and the general public to best make use of the advances in modern transfusion medicine.

at a larger number of venues; and in-house screens and tests can be completed on-site, ensuring better pre-donation health assessments. We will also be able to expand our area of collections into Miami-Dade, Palm Beach, Monroe (and other) counties. This is a huge undertaking and a commitment the blood bank is willing to make to the veterinary community. Relying 100% on charitable financial contributions, we hope to continue expanding our services and outreach helping to save the lives of dogs and cats, one life at a time. If you or others you know would like to donate money or to help support this important effort, please contact Sun States for more information.