



"It's a Dog's Life!"

Sun Statements

The official newsletter of Sun States Animal Blood Bank

Inside this issue:

Blood Types: Why are they so important?	2
Donor Kidnapped!	3
AVHTM Meeting	4
Pet First Aid	4
Meet our Donors: Coonhounds for Christ	5
Success Stories: Plasma Saves Police Dog	6
What's in a name?	6

Sun States Secures Coveted 501(c)(3) Status

Hooray! Sun States Animal Blood Bank has become the second animal blood bank in the nation to have secured 501(c)(3) status!

What does this mean?

The Internal Revenue Service grants 501(c)(3) status to non-profit, charitable organizations that demonstrate a commitment to providing charitable, educational, and community outreach services. This status is not easy to obtain, and it is thanks to the diligent efforts of Rick Johnson in working closely with the IRS over several months that we can boast of this proud accomplishment.

From this point forward, financial sponsors of the blood



Sun States Animal Blood Bank Managing Director Rick Johnson at our blood bank info booth.

bank can make tax-deductible charitable donations to help with the mission of the blood bank.

Furthering our mission

We hope that the non-profit status of Sun States will help us in a number of ways. For example, it has allowed us to build a relationship with the

Broward County Department of Parks and Recreation (see "Pet First Aid" in this issue). We're also hopeful that the guardians of potential animals will find our non-profit status reassuring—a further guarantee that the blood bank will not profit from their generosity.

Tax-deductible contributions are now possible

Now that Sun States is a 501(c)(3) corporation, individuals and corporations can make tax-deductible contributions to help defray the operating costs of the blood bank, and to help support its programs and its educational mission. If you or anyone you know would be interested in making donations to the blood bank, please contact Rick Johnson at rick@ssabb.org or visit our website at <http://www.ssabb.org>.

Feline Blood Program Update



Feline blood remains in short supply, and we continue to get calls for this important and life-saving blood product. Sun States is still in the process of establishing standards and procedures for our feline donor program. We remain firmly committed to a feline

blood supply, but it is extremely important to us that the safety of our feline donors and their blood recipients is assured. Watch this space for updates on the feline program. If your pet would like to be a donor, please contact us at (954) 630-2231.



Meet Our New Office Assistant, Volunteers

Heather Parsons is joining Sun States as our new office assistant. When you call on the phone to schedule a class or to order blood products, it's quite likely that Heather's voice will be the one you hear.



Heather is a recent graduate of Highland High School in Mesa, Arizona. She's come eastward to think about college and to explore her career possibilities, which include art school and veterinary medicine. Heather is also a playwright. Her original play, *The Snow Faerie* will premiere February 10, 2005, in Mesa.

Please help us welcome Heather to South Florida and



to Sun States!

Shay Schwartz joins us to help with fundraising. Shay has been involved with many fundraising projects for a variety of non-profit organizations, including the American Cancer Society and the Broward County Humane Society. Her help will be invaluable in helping to secure funding for projects such as the animal blood mobile.

Mari DiMeglio, RN has come on board to help with Sun States' donor enrollment and retention programs. Mari brings a wealth of experience to the role, including work in

both human and animal health care, as well as running **Coonhounds for Christ, Inc.**, an animal rescue organization devoted to helping save abandoned and abused Coonhounds.

Jeff Frohock is taking on additional responsibilities. Jeff will be assuming the role of Research Director. He has also recently become certified to draw blood at canine blood drives.



Vet's Corner: Blood Types—Why are they so important?

Transfusion medicine was a chance affair in the early days. Sometimes patients did well, and other times they died, and no one was sure why. It wasn't till the discovery that several different (and sometimes incompatible) blood types existed, and that transfusion reactions were caused by the infusion of incompatible blood types.

Canine Blood Types

Just like humans, canines have blood of several different types. The different types are the result of different molecules on the surfaces of the red blood cells (referred to as *blood group antigens*). In human medicine, the A and B antigens and the Rh (Rhesus) factor represent the most common (and important) antigens in transfusion medicine.

Canine blood types are named differently, but the principle of

blood groups being defined by antigens on the red blood cells remains the same. Canine blood groups are identified by the prefix "DEA" (Dog Erythrocyte Antigen) followed by one or more numbers. For canine blood transfusions, the DEA 1 system (and in particular the DEA 1.1 blood type) are the most important to consider, as incompatibilities with this type are most likely to lead to severe, and potentially life-threatening, reactions.

But I never test blood types and I've never had a problem

Antigens are only part of the story. When blood cells with antigens that are different from those of the host are transfused into a patient, *antibodies* are produced (just like antibodies are produced in response to an infection). Because of the time required to produce a sufficient amount of antibodies to

cause a reaction, generally the first transfusion will proceed without problems, regardless of the blood type. Similarly, we get sick with a disease like chickenpox initially because we don't produce enough antibody quickly enough to stop the infection.

However, it's the second time around that's more dangerous. Just like a large amount of antibodies prevents us from getting chickenpox a second time, there will be a large number of antibodies available after the first transfusion that triggered their production. These antibodies will rapidly attach to (and help destroy) the red blood cells that are transfused. This can lead to renal failure (from hemoglobin clogging the renal tubules) to cardiac arrhythmias and death (from intracellular electrolytes like potassium being released into the

(Continued on page 3)

While most canines tolerate a first transfusion of any blood type, transfusing mismatched blood can lead to severe reactions on subsequent transfusions.

Missing! Blood Donor Nabbed from Family's Yard

Freckles Garcia was one of Sun States' favorite donors—cheerful, patient, and always willing to give a pint to those in need. But now Freckles is missing.

Linda Garcia, Freckles' mom, had put Freckles in her fenced-in yard for just a moment while she went indoors to attend to her infant son. When she returned to let him in several minutes later, she discovered he was not there. The gate was still closed, and Freckles was not inclined to run off even if it was open.

Linda and Luis Garcia have been looking everywhere for Freckles for nearly two

months now. "And the worst part," Linda told me, "is that I still have that blood donor tag you sent me. I just never got around to putting it on."



Freckles Garcia, our missing donor.

Freckles is a 4-year-old cream-colored cocker spaniel. His unique features include a bald patch at the front of his neck from a chronic skin condition, and "a really stinky left ear." Even so, he's a dog that's loved by both his family and by all of us at Sun States.

If you have any information about Freckles or his whereabouts please contact Sun States at (954) 630-2231. We'll gladly forward the information on to Linda and Luis. In the meantime, **please be sure to put your dog's donor tag on. The serial number can help us identify him or her if they ever get lost.**

Vet's Corner: The Importance of Blood Typing

(Continued from page 2)
bloodstream).

Preventing Transfusion Reactions

The first and most important method of preventing transfusion reactions is to ensure infusion of compatibly-typed blood. Sun States types all blood recipients for DEA 1.1 blood type, and can provide both rapid on-site assessment as well as kits for in-house testing. ***The use of "universal-donor" blood for all patients is strongly discouraged!*** There is a tremendous shortage of animal blood. Using DEA 1.1 negative blood for all patients, regardless of their blood type, not only exacerbates the shortage—it might prevent a DEA 1.1 negative patient from receiving a lifesaving transfusion!

Always perform a cross-match prior to transfusion. Minor antigens or previous transfu-

sions can cause the formation of antibodies in the recipient. The only way these can be detected is by performing a cross-match.

I've done a cross-match and the donor's blood is compatible with the recipient's. Do I need to type anyway?

Yes. The cross-match merely tells you that there are not antibodies in the circulation *now*, it does not tell you whether the blood types match. For example, let's say you have a dog that is DEA 1.1 negative who has never received a transfusion. You take a unit of DEA 1.1 positive blood and perform a cross-match. Most likely you'll get no agglutination reaction, since the dog is not likely to have anti-DEA 1.1 antibodies in his or her bloodstream yet. However, *infusing cells of an incompatible type will trigger the production of antibodies.* The next transfusion could be

life-threatening! You can avoid this problem by doing a "Type and Cross" - so that you are both typing for major antigens (i.e., DEA 1.1), and cross-matching to ensure that there are no existing antibodies to other minor antigens (such as DEA 3 or DEA 5).

Shouldn't I do a full typing on every animal?

In an ideal world, yes. In emergency situations, though, rapid assays are not available for all blood types. Moreover, as in human medicine, the minor antigens are unlikely to cause severe transfusion reactions. In an emergency a type and cross is sometimes the best we can do. For chronic cases (who are much more likely to receive repeated transfusions), full typing may be more appropriate.

Can I call you with questions?

Absolutely! You can reach us 24/7/365 at (954) 630-2231.

*Cross-matching tells you if there are antibodies to the cells in **this** unit, but does not guarantee the transfused blood will not stimulate antibody formation in the future.*

Sun States Joins AVHTM, Attends Annual ACVIM Meeting

Sun States Animal Blood Bank is now a proud member of the Association of Veterinary Hematology and Transfusion Medicine (AVHTM), a special-interest subgroup of the American College of Veterinary Internal Medicine (ACVIM). Larry DeLuca, EdD, and Rick Johnson went to Minneapolis to attend the 22nd annual ACVIM conference and the AVHTM meeting.

What a tremendous experience it was! We were fortunate enough to meet the principals of most of the other animal blood banks as well as many other movers and shakers of transfusion medicine nationwide. Rick Johnson

received kudos for his website design. It was also incredibly exciting to meet some of the people who had, directly or

indirectly, helped save Fluffy's life at one point or another.

There were presentations on infectious diseases, transfusion medicine, and a large number of other topics. The highlight of the week, though, was the AVHTM section meeting on Thursday night. The warmth with which we were welcomed into this community, and the generosity of everyone who spoke with us in sharing experiences and advice was absolutely invaluable.

We'll definitely be attending the ACVIM/AVHTM annual meetings next year!



Fluffy, the Sun States Animal Blood Bank mascot. His hemophilia inspired Rick Johnson and Larry DeLuca to found the blood bank.

Sun States, Broward County to offer Pet First Aid Classes

Sun States Animal Blood Bank and the Broward County Community Services Department, Parks and Recreation Division have joined forces to offer "Intro to Pet First Aid" classes on a monthly basis to the Broward county community.



Cherise Williams, Parks Animal Care Specialist, has been working diligently with Sun States for several months to put the program together, and attended the first class. "It was great from start to finish!"

The curriculum for the Pet First Aid course is based upon the "Pet First Aid" curriculum developed jointly by the American Safety & Health Institute (ASHI) and The

American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA). The course includes the latest advances in first aid instruction, using a video "watch-then-practice" format first popularized by American Heart Association CPR courses. There will be ample time for practice of skills with other class participants in small groups. There's no exam, and at the end of class everyone will get a certificate of attendance.

The "Intro To Pet First Aid" will include sections on scene safety, injury emergencies, environmental emergencies, and animal CPR (time permitting). Classes are designed so that those with no medical background or prior first aid experience will be able to learn and apply the principles taught during the session.

"Basic first aid skills are important for anyone who lives with or works with animals,"

says Larry DeLuca, EdD, President and Director of Sun States Animal Blood Bank. "It's especially important in animal first aid to learn about *scene safety*. Without learning proper techniques for approaching a sick or injured animal, even a beloved pet can be a danger to itself and its guardian."

Sun States looks forward to seeing you at a first aid class sometime soon. The cost is \$15, including the course guide. First aid kits will also be available for a donation. Please contact Sun States at (954) 630-2231 for more information or to reserve your spot!



You can get the complete schedule of classes on our website at www.ssabb.org, or contact us at (954) 630-2231 to sign up!

Meet our donors: Coonhounds For Christ Rescue!

A friend in need needs a hound, indeed! So says **Mari DiMeglio of Coonhounds for Christ**, a Fort Lauderdale-based animal rescue group devoted to saving coonhounds.



The coonhounds are crazy for carrots! Heather, Mari, and Rick make sure that everyone gets their treats. From the left: George, Grace, Duke, Lady, and Princess.

When Mari heard about Sun States Animal Blood Bank, she contacted us to find out if the coonhounds could donate blood. In exchange for their generous donations, they receive free blood typing and periodic disease testing. Also, the rescue organization earns one free unit of blood product for each unit donated, which can be used for any animal under their care who is in need of blood products.



Heather hanging out with Bashful. Bashful was severely abused and is very timid. She's learning some people are OK and she needs a good home. Could that be yours?

The results have been tremendously helpful to both groups. To date, the blood bank has helped identify

The blood bank has also benefited—the hounds are gentle, loving, cooperative dogs who are more than happy to donate! Except Ricky, that is. Ricky was just a bit anxious about the whole process. He donated once, and then decided he didn't

"It all got started by accident," Mari says. "We were on our honeymoon in North Carolina, and there by the side of the road we saw an emaciated dog."



A bird's eye view. Left to right: Ethel, Lady, Duke, Princess, and Grace.

"She was so thin you could see the bones of her spine," adds Anthony, her husband

three of the rescued coonhounds who tested positive for *Ehrlichia Canis* (a common blood parasite among coonhounds). All of the animals are now being treated and are expected to do well. Plasma from the blood bank has also helped to save one of the group's parvo puppies.



Jeff and Reeba take a break together after she donated a unit of blood.



Rachel Wood is Mari's neighbor. When Genevieve and Boomer heard the coons were donating, they wanted to get in on the act, too!

want to the next time. He got plenty of cookies anyway. We're hoping he'll change his mind in the future, but we're still grateful for his contribution.

and co-rescuer.

"We took her home and she became our dog Lady. We loved the coonhounds so much that we started finding out more about them, and realized how many are abused or neglected or in need of good homes."



Lady DiMeglio donates while Rick holds her and Larry holds the needle.

If you think you'd like to adopt a coonhound, please give Mari and Coonhounds for Christ a call at (954) 536-7859.

*Adopt a coonhound!
Coonhounds for Christ
can be reached at
(954) 536-7859.*

SUN STATES ANIMAL BLOOD BANK

2927 NE 6 Ave
Wilton Manors FL 33334

Phone: 954 630-2231
Fax: 954 567-2070
Email: admin@ssabb.org



"It's a Dog's Life!"

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

What's in a name? An animal blood bank by any other name...

This May, Sun States got a rather unusual piece of fan mail. We could tell by looking at the envelope that it wasn't likely to be a pat on the back for doing such a good job.

Instead, it turned out to be a notice telling us that we could not use the words "Animal Blood Bank" in our name, nor the letters "ABB" in our web address! Apparently, they were trademarked by someone else. And that someone demanded we change our name and internet address!



While we're one of over twenty blood banks that use the words "Animal Blood Bank" as part of their name, we're nonetheless in the unenviable position of having to defend our right (and that of

all animal blood banks) to use this generic term which does not identify any one animal blood bank so much as describe what it is we all do—namely, store and bank blood for animals.

This is a terrible distraction from our mission! The mounting legal fees also threaten the future of the blood bank itself. If you'd like to help the blood bank, please send a tax-deductible contribution to Sun States Animal Blood Bank. Your help is greatly appreciated!

*Here's your summer
2004 issue of **Sun
Statements**, the
official newsletter of
**Sun States Animal
Blood Bank!***

Success Stories—Plasma Saves Police Dog!



K-9 Officer Oscar was hard at work for the Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office when he collapsed from heat stroke and was rushed to American Animal Emergency of West Palm Beach, FL. Along with expert emergency care there he received one unit of blood plasma supplied by Sun States Animal Blood Bank. Thanks to the fine work of AAE's veterinarians and technicians and the generosity of our blood donors, Oscar recovered his good health and is now back at work.

Our Mission Statement

Sun States Animal Blood Bank is dedicated to providing safe and high-quality canine and feline blood products to the veterinary community. We only accept 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; we are the custodians of life -- something from which no one should achieve personal or corporate financial gain. We are 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.