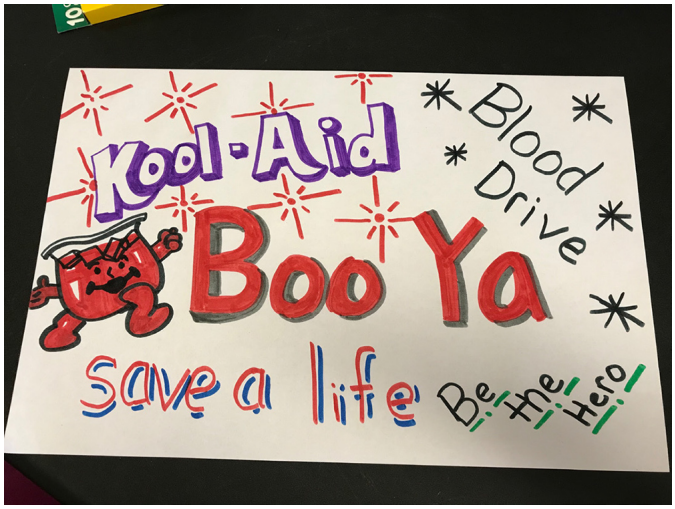
# RMCHCS challenges community to give ‘til you bleed

Written by By William Madaras
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## The Auxiliary Blood Drive seeks to draw 60 pints of blood

For the first time RMCHCS is inviting Gallup’s civic and business organizations such as teachers, police officers, fire fighters, members of the Chamber of Commerce, retail organizations, union members and other groups to challenge its employees to a blood donating competition. A prize will be awarded to the winning team.

“This challenge will help separate the city’s wimps from winners,” Eileen D’Orazio, chairperson of the Auxiliary Blood Drive said, “We are throwing down the gauntlet to Gallup’s employee organizations, large and small, and challenge them to a blood--letting. Bring us your best vampires and fang bangers to help deliver every drop of their blood to our drive. Big prizes await.”

RMCHCS is also allowing employees to donate blood during work hours which correspond with blood drive hours. “Our employees will lead by example. We want to give our community the gift of life,” D’Orazio said.

**Children’s Art Requested**

In addition to the drive, D’Orazio requests donors’ children and schools with teacher donors to bring student drawings of people giving blood to demonstrate why it is important. “We want children to learn the importance of giving blood and encourage their participation when they reach age 16 and weigh 110 pounds,” D’Orazio said. “This is a practice they can get used to while learning the value of volunteering.”

D’Orazio is asking children’s artwork contributions be dropped off at the hospital’s information desk in the lobby of RMCHCS where they will be picked up by members of the auxiliary. Posters should be sized 8–1/2 x 11 or 8–1/2 by 14 and can be created with any coloring instrument. The best drawings will be displayed in the solarium where the drive will be held and awarded first, second and third place.

RMCHCS CEO David Conejo emphasizes the need for volunteers to give blood. He points out that one pint can save three lives. “All it takes is one catastrophe – a plane crash, an earthquake or mass shooting and hospitals can run out of blood and people die. The lives you might be saving could be your own or loved ones.”

Donors are urged to drink plenty of water and eat a full meal, must be 16 years of age, weigh 110 pounds, be in good health and free from colds. The challenge is being sponsored by the RMCHCS Auxilians and Vitalant, a nonprofit organization that collects blood from volunteer donors and provides blood, blood products and services across the United States. The blood drive began in 1943 and is one of the oldest in Gallup.

The drive will be held between 2 pm and 7 pm on Oct 17 and between 8:30 a, and 1 pm Oct. 18 at the RMCHCS Third Floor Solarium, 1901 Red Rock Dr.

During the June 2019 drive, the auxiliary raised 55 pints, but this year the hospital’s goal is to raise more than 60 pints of blood and will require donations from 100 volunteers or more. The drive is also looking for donations of double red cells which carry oxygen to organs and tissue. This type of blood is needed by patients having surgery, organ transplants or cancer treatment. People with life-threatening conditions often need many transfusions. By giving double red cells, volunteers can safely donate enough for two red cell transfusions.

***Volunteers can call Mary Ann at 505–863–3098 or Eileen at 505–879–5576 for an appointment or sign up online at bloodhero.com and enter the sponsor code: Gallup. Walk-ins are also welcome.***

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