

LIFE

Stream

BLOOD BANK OF DELMARVA



*They witnessed our
nation's tragedy...*



*...we witnessed
their finest hour.*

Memories of September 11, 2001 at Blood Bank of Delmarva

Watching news reports of the fall of the World Trade Center towers made giving blood a small sacrifice.



“When someone asks, ‘What were you doing when 9/11 happened?’ I’m proud to say that I was working in a place where we saw firsthand the goodness of people who took the time to stop and help others while history was being made.”

*- Holly Wilson,
Phlebotomist,
Salisbury*

We witnessed their finest hour

The nation stood still five years ago this month when terrorists hijacked planes, flying into the Twin Towers, the Pentagon and a small field in Shanksville, PA.

Blood Bank staff from every department pitched in wherever they were needed.



On September 11, 2001, Blood Bank of Delmarva employees and volunteers were witnesses to a tremendous outpouring of concern and help from members, donors and the community after the unspeakable tragedy of the terrorist attacks.

People felt the need to do something—anything—to help those injured in the attacks.

So, they lined up at blood banks everywhere, including Blood Bank of Delmarva.

They hoped they could make a difference with their one blood donation.

They did.

They became heroes that day.

Here’s how we remember that day:

- Within an hour after the planes struck the Towers, long lines of prospective donors were at every Blood Bank donor center and mobile site....people wanting to help in the only way they could.
- Donors waited in line for hours—and never complained.
- Phone lines were flooded by thousands of people wanting to give blood.
- Hundreds of businesses offered to hold blood drives or help in other ways.
- Donors parked anywhere they could....the roads in and out of the Blood Bank were filled with cars.
- They gave blood in temporary quarters set up in storerooms and hallways—wherever we could find room.

Twin Towers and Pentagon photos by Reuters

How Blood Bank staff remembers September 11, 2001...

“We processed more donors than we could imagine. They were standing in our halls, and the line outside was a hundred feet long. The overwhelming majority were undeterred and unconcerned by the wait. They wanted to help. Many people had never given blood before, but this tragedy motivated them to try. Many of our staff worked in excess of 18 hours. Everyone had smiles on their faces, even though their feet and backs hurt and they hadn’t spoken with their families in many hours. Everyone rose to the occasion.”

- Robert Travis,
President and CEO

“The most poignant memory for me was a young Muslim man who was donating. He was feeling bad about the way Muslims were being viewed and he just wanted to help.”

- Chris Hancock, Donor Advocate

“We were one of the first donor centers to stop drawing blood on Sept. 12 so it would not be wasted. We were apprehensive about that decision because it upset people. But, as a result, all of the blood donated on Delmarva those days was used for patients. We’re very proud of that.”

- Dave Bonk, Director of Marketing and Public Relations

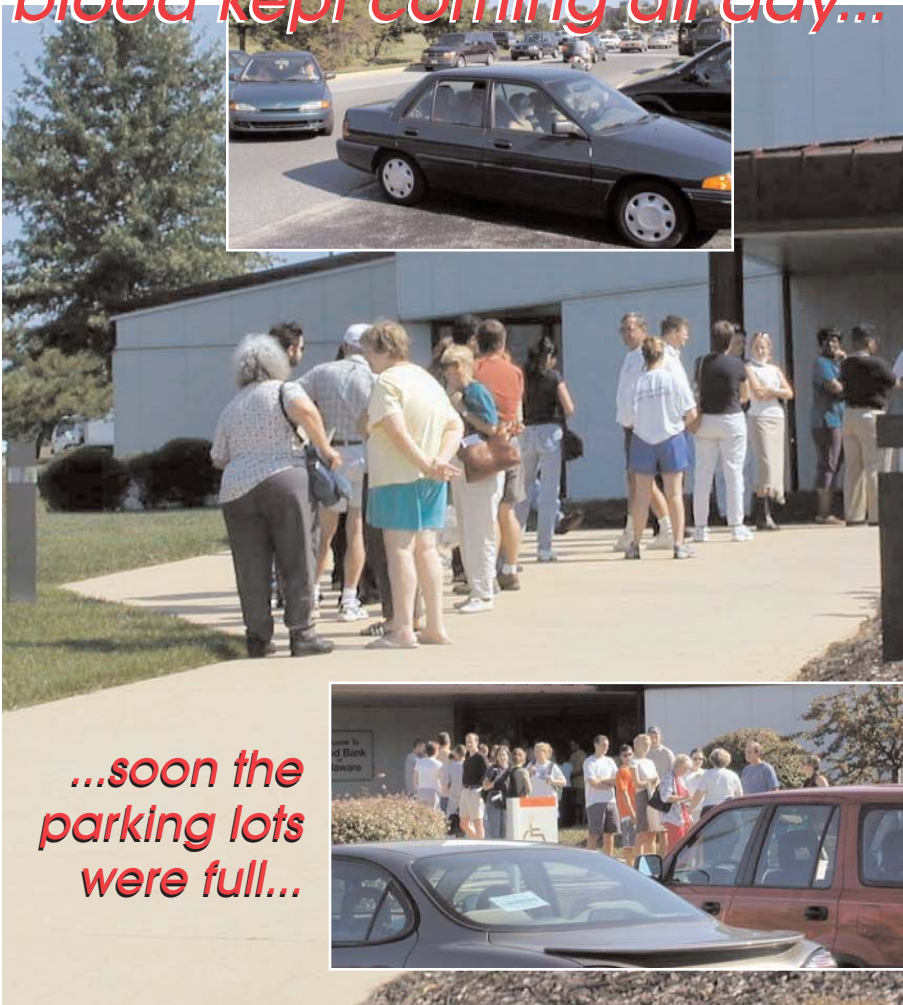


CEO, Bob Travis and driver, Wayne Holmquist

“We were glad to be able to have a shipment of blood on the road to New York before noon on September 11. It was transported by the Delaware State Police who were so proud to do so.”

- Sharon Wiseman,
Director of Donor Services

People wanting to give blood kept coming all day...



...soon the parking lots were full...



“Heroes emerged from the tragedy. Many of those heroes were blood donors.”

— Diane Sparks,
Chair, Board of Directors

...hundreds of people stood in line for hours...



...waiting to help...

“Giving blood was a way I could help instead of sitting at home watching the coverage on TV. I waited in line a long time. It was wild. But what’s more healing than waiting in line to give blood with other people who are talking about the tragedy?”

*-Noah Osner,
blood donor on 9/11
and now a phlebotomist
for the Blood Bank
of Delmarva*

“I always heard people say they remembered where they were when JFK was shot. For my generation, it will be where they were when 9/11 happened. No one complained as we all worked well into the night taking care of all the donors (many first-timers) who wanted to help.”

*- Marla Gadzick, Auto
and Directed Coordinator*

“It was a wonderful feeling to see the number of people who cared enough to reach out and help someone. There just wasn’t time to give everyone a hug and make them realize what a difference they made.”

*- Donna Reed, Regional Supervisor
Southern Delmarva*

“It’s a day I will never forget...not just because it was an awful day in history but because I felt maybe, just maybe I was helping people to make a positive difference.”

*- Linn McFarland, Phlebotomist,
Christiana Center*

“Our scheduling staff fielded over 7000 telephone calls the first two days. This doesn’t include the number of calls abandoned, because people simply could not get through. We averaged about 340 calls per hour. About 600 calls are taken on a normal day.”

*- Mark Salmons, Director of Member
Services*



*“There just wasn’t
time to give
everyone a hug...”*

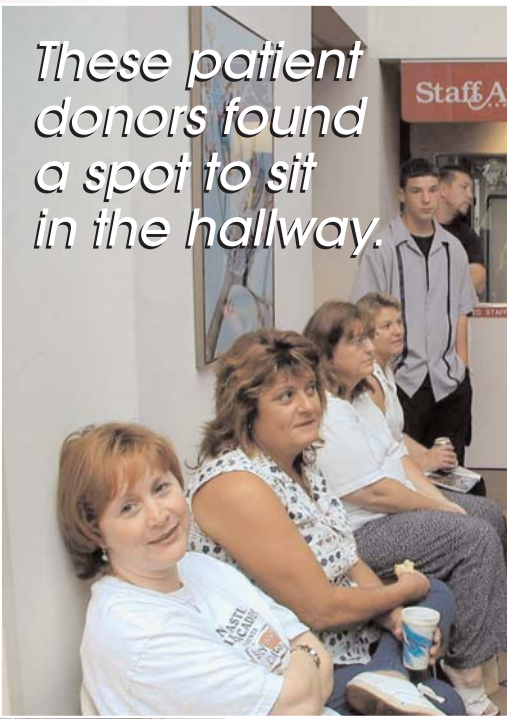


Those waiting to give blood near a television set watched the grim reports from Washington, New York, and Pennsylvania.

...eager to do something...



These patient donors found a spot to sit in the hallway.





Donor Rooms were at full capacity for over 18 hours.

...and they did do something...

“I remember, offices being used as interview booths—the building never seemed so small. Eventually we realized there wasn’t a great need for the blood because sadly there weren’t many survivors.”

- *Monica Witkowski, Medical Eligibility Coordinator*

“We brought in food for donors, because many of them had been waiting for so long. In spite of the incredible tragedy we had all witnessed, people had smiles on their faces and everyone was talking to one another.”

- *Mary Konwinski, Supervisor, Marketing and Public Relations*

“There was great disappointment when we had to stop the line and ask them to return the next day. But they were at the doors the next day when we opened.”

- *Pat Lugovoy, Assistant Supervisor, Donor Services*

“Students from the University of Delaware lined up at their blood drive that had been previously scheduled at the Trabant Center. They stood in line for hours and many were turned away, because by midday, our staff was overwhelmed.

Many of the students jumped in their cars and drove over to the Christiana Center.”

- *Marianne Lazorick, Assistant Supervisor, Donor Services*

“I remember lowering the flag to half-staff to mourn the victims. That image stays with me. I also remember UD students asking us if they could somehow volunteer in NYC and the children of Blood Bank employees passing out cookies in the canteen. Everybody helped.”

- *Doug Waun, Director of Administrative Services*

“I am still amazed at the turnout and will never forget it.”

- *Tammy Shields, Dover Center*

Donor chairs were set up wherever adequate room was available. Here, the storeroom served as a makeshift donor room.

Laboratory and Product Management staff worked into the night processing the blood given by over 1000 donors.



“I had an appointment that day to give pheresis (platelets.) It was pretty amazing to find the parking lot overflowing and all the people lined up in the waiting room. I lost a friend to lymphoma, so I know it’s important to donate all the time, but it was even harder for me that day to keep it all together. It was pretty emotional—even now just thinking about it.”

- Donna Ricchuiti, Bear,
Platelet Donor

*...they were giving
the gift of life.*

The tragedy motivated many people to try giving blood for the first time.

9/11/01 by the Numbers

1,000+ - Blood donors served on September 11 (250-350 on a “normal” day)

16,000+ - Phone calls from people wanting to give blood that week (Normal day: about 600 calls)

Up to 5 hours - How long people waited to give blood (Normal day: 5-15 minutes)

100 feet deep - How long the lines were of people waiting to register to give blood at the Christiana Center

Up to 18 - Number of hours Blood Bank of Delmarva staff worked on September 11

Fast Facts

- Donor schedules in Christiana, Wilmington, Dover, Salisbury, and Easton were all in excess of 100% of their normal capacity for several weeks following the attacks.
- In addition to thousands of calls from people wanting to donate blood, the Blood Bank fielded hundreds of calls from people wanting to volunteer and from businesses wanting to donate food or arrange blood drives.
- A 10-year-old girl and her mother stayed for many hours, helping hand out cookies and drinks in the canteen.
- A young couple, both Delaware State Police officers, showed up with pizza for staff and donors—paid for out of their own pockets.
- Many restaurants and businesses donated food for donors and staff.
- Blood Bank volunteers, most of whom are senior citizens, put in many hours pitching in to help.

It was a day like no other. Despite the tragedy, the human spirit triumphed.

9/11 Postscript:
Smaller emergencies happen every day.
Please keep giving blood.

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