

Blood shortage hasn't hit area hospitals

By Philip A. Sherman
staff writer

A blood shortage called "the worst in the past 10 years" by the Michigan Red Cross apparently has scarcely affected the three largest hospitals in Oakland County.

Jenell Joiner, associate director of the donor resource department for the Red Cross, said the agency usually collects 1,100 units of blood on

weekdays, 300 on Saturdays and 200 on Sundays in southeast Michigan. Current collection levels have dropped to 600-800 units per week with weekend collections dipping further, Joiner said.

"It's the worst blood shortage we've had in the past 10 years," Joiner added. "And when you think of the caliber of the hospitals in Oakland County, you realize they're heavy blood users."

Joiner said if the shortage continues at current levels, "we might even be closing emergency rooms" in addition to canceling elective surgery.

HOWEVER, COLETTE Stimmell, a spokeswoman for William Beaumont Hospital, said blood levels are adequate. "We are not canceling any surgeries. We have asked our doctors to be conservative in their use of

blood," she added.

Carol Jensen at Southfield's Providence Hospital said "we are doing all right at this point. We are not canceling any elective surgeries."

A spokeswoman for St. Joseph Mercy Hospital in Pontiac said they are planning a blood drive in September to help stem the shortage. "But our blood bank says we're not affected as of yet," she added.

Pam Mueller of Oakland County's Health Department said she was unaware the shortage was ahead of schedule until she heard about the shortage through the media. Mueller said typically there is a blood shortage in August, not July. She had no idea why the shortage manifested itself now.

Joiner cited several possible reasons for the shortfall.

"Students are gone, people are on vacation, plants are going through model improvements or changes (which means work forces are not at peak levels, decreasing units collected at company sponsored blood drives), business are running short of staff and good weather," she said.

However, Joiner had no actual explanation for the shortage. "That's the thing that's so upsetting and so scary. We really don't know."

"O-TYPES ARE the worst in trying to keep an adequate supply, and when I looked on the shelf I didn't see one B," Joiner said.

She said unit collection in the

county was up 8 percent from July 1, 1988, through last July 1, with 28,811 units received.

While that might sound like a lot on the surface, the Red Cross notes:

- Open heart surgery can use up to 50 units of blood.
- A bleeding peptic ulcer can require up to 30 units.
- Hip joint replacement, which the Red Cross said is the biggest volume user because the population is aging, uses up to 20 units.
- An organ transplant, particularly a liver transplant, can use several hundred units.

The Red Cross has opened several donor centers on Sunday to make collection more convenient. For additional information, call 494-2850.

Name that tune DSO is talking about Lansing bailout

By Tim Richard
staff writer

Lansing's ears should be burning. People at the nearly bankrupt Detroit Symphony Orchestra are talking about state government as the leader in an \$18 million bailout.

"I've talked to the budget director, and they agree something should be done so they don't have problems," said state Sen. Jack Faxon, D-Farmington Hills, the Legislature's chief supporter of the arts.

"I intend to do something again," said Faxon, who despite his minority party status has a major role in getting state money for the arts.

A SPOKESMAN for Senate Majority Leader John Engler, R-Mount Pleasant, said there was no plan to consider more DSO money until the next budget year.

Another Appropriations member, Sen. R. Robert Gend, R-Northville, said "I haven't heard any discussion" of more money for the DSO.

Faxon said he met two weeks ago with Deborah Borda, DSO's executive director and chief staff person. "I indicated my concerns and gave her some suggestions. She has a lot of energy. She knows her business."

pressure from two black legislators and hired a second black musician.

"She (Borda) believed if this wasn't done, they (the DSO) weren't going to get their (state) money. It just wasn't true," said Faxon. His unspoken message was that Miller should touch bases with him on legislative protocol.

"If someone were holding a gun to me, I'd want to find out who my friends are," Faxon said.

DSO LEADERS announced Monday there is "no way" they can meet this week's \$200,000 payroll. They are asking 97 musicians and 58 staff members to accept half pay.

Board chairman Steve Miller said the orchestra needs \$18 million in pledges over four years to remain solvent. A source close to the DSO was quoted as saying the state had been asked for half or more of that sum.

Faxon, an Appropriations Committee member, said the state provides DSO \$2.5 million currently.

"There is also lurking in the Senate and House a 'supplemental' appropriations bill," said Faxon. The \$500 million bill has yet to be acted on by a joint Senate-House committee. It would supplement the current year's budget.

BUT FAXON said that except for brief social encounters he hadn't met with Miller, the Chrysler executive who took over the reins at the DSO board last year.

"I don't know him that well. I don't know where he's going," Faxon said.

The Oakland County senator said Miller brought DSO "tremendous adverse publicity — national and international" — when he caved into

FOUNDED IN 1914, the DSO has been in trouble several times.

During World War II, it suspended activities. In 1949-51 it suspended its entire season.

In 1982 the musicians went on a nine-day strike. In 1987 there was a 12-week work stoppage when management sought to impose an 11-percent pay cut.

Last year board chairman Walter McCarty and president Oleg Lobanov resigned, and music director Gunther Herbig announced he will leave for the Toronto Symphony.

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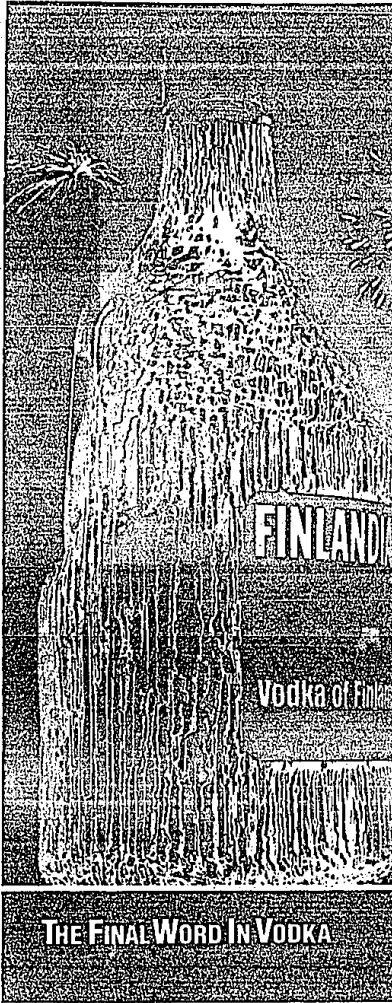
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