

# Blood donations down, need is critical

By Casey Hans  
staff writer

**A**MERICAN RED Cross officials in Southeast Michigan are crying out for help, as blood levels continue to fall well below what the organization keeps on hand daily for emergencies. Although permanent donor centers have received steady business, support at area blood drives has decreased at an "alarming rate," officials said. The organization tries to keep a minimum of 2,500 pints on hand daily; as of last week, they were down to 1,183 pints. "Summer's always bad anyway, but this summer's worse," said Dolores Sakowski of Livonia, head nurse at a Red Cross blood drive at the Farmington Community Library's Farmington Hills branch last week. "I don't know if it's the heat, or what."

Red Cross personnel said they were expecting 25-30 people at the Hills drive, including those scheduled plus walk-ins. One hour after the drive began, several donors from the neighboring post office had already arrived. Postal carrier Nancy Kirkendoll of Detroit said she hadn't given blood in several years and "wasn't aware of the severe shortage. 'I just want to be helpful,'" she said.

**AT RIGHT:** Red Cross volunteer Helen Geer labels bags for blood storage. She is one of 30 people from the Westminster Church of Detroit who volunteer their time.

Staff photos  
by  
Thomas Arnett

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— Dolores Sakowski, nurse

**OTHERS OFFERING** help at the Hills drive were several members of the Westminster Church of Detroit, which has a 30-member "blood team" that regularly donates time to the Red Cross. "We do whatever's necessary — everything but take the blood," said longtime volunteer Helen Geer, whose husband organized the church's team years ago.

But despite these efforts, blood drives at business sites throughout the area continue to be cancelled. At those which are held, blood donations are way down. One business that projected a collection of 450 pints cancelled its drive, and at an auto plant only 20 pints were collected from a scheduled 110 pints. Bob Batchler of the Red Cross urged companies to set up blood drives, to reinforce the message re-

garding the need for blood, and to allow employees time off the job to give.

**DONORS CAN** give blood every eight weeks, up to five times each year. "There's really nothing to it," said nurse Sakowski. "Giving blood is actually good for the body. It stimulates the body to make more red cells."

There are 12 Red Cross trucks out at drive sites daily, and 10 permanent sites where people can give blood. Any company or group interested in sponsoring a blood drive can contact the Red Cross at 494-2700.

There are permanent donor centers in Bloomfield Hills, Dearborn, Detroit, Livonia, Oak Park, Southgate, Sterling Heights, Roseville, Ann Arbor and Port Huron.



Farmington Hills postal carrier Nancy Kirkendoll applies pressure to her arm after donating at a blood drive last week.



# Homearama starts today with change in plans

By Carolyn DeMarco  
staff writer

Ask a builder if everything for Homearama is going according to plan and you get a resounding "Yes!" But the plans for Homearama have changed considerably since the concept first went to the West Bloomfield Planning Commission in late March. Details such as times, dates and places for parking have all been altered, but the changes are news to some key people.

Homearama, a showcase for 18 new luxury homes at Orchard Lake and Walnut Lake roads in West Bloomfield, is sponsored by the nonprofit Builders Association of Southeastern Michigan. Originally scheduled for a 26-day period beginning June 29, the date was later changed. Homearama will now open Thursday, Aug. 4, for a 15-day run. Delays in construction were the reason given by the builders. Politics was suggested by a few residents. The opening comes only two days after the primary election in which development and Orchard Lake Road traffic are key issues.

Originally builders association vice president Irvin Yackness told planners Homearama hours would be noon to 10 p.m. Monday through Friday and 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. Saturday and Sunday. Those hours have been reduced and will not conflict with weekday rush hour traffic. Revised hours are 7-11 p.m. Monday through Friday and 11 a.m. to 11 p.m. Saturday and Sunday.

**SHOW COORDINATOR** Rosalie Lamb said parking arrangements have also been changed. Yackness told planners back in March that 1,120 spaces would be available on the undeveloped lots at the southern end. Lamb said only exhibitors and staff will now park on site. Visitors

will park at West Bloomfield High School and be shuttled the short distance south to the Autumn Ridge entrance on Orchard Lake Road. Lamb said by her count there were 700 parking spaces at the high school, sufficient for the 70,000 people expected over the 25-day stint.

School officials say the parking lot count is actually 567, and as of Tuesday superintendent Seymour Gretcho was unaware of any agreement signed by the district with the builders. "Admittedly I have been on vacation," Gretcho said. "And an agreement could have been made." The evening and weekend hours would not conflict with any activities at the school, he said.

As of Tuesday, Lt. Greg Roberts of the West Bloomfield Police Department, the officer in charge of traffic control, was also unaware of the

plan to park at the high school. "That's news to me," Roberts said, "though it's something we suggested. We suggested they use both sites, the high school and on-site. I think I'd better make a phone call."

**ROBERTS SAID** unworking officers would be working during Homearama as overtime at the builders' association's expense. "They want to start with three for the first few days and see what works," he said.

Lamb said the association has hired 10 other people to take tickets

and direct parking. Ten portable toilets will be placed on the site, a builder's spokesman said, and one person will be hired to clean up the grounds.

Kathy Haack of Organizations United to Save our Township said her group is not delighted to see Homearama in the township. Haack said the slow-growth proponents are not opposed to single family housing or the homes themselves, "but this is just another example of the township placing the interests of the builders before the citizens."

"What bothers us is the location in

the most congested area of the township. Usually Homearama is in more rural areas. It's going to be a mess."

Haack said the lots on which the luxury homes are built are too small for the large homes, the result of the planned-subdivision option. "We're trying to revise that (for future development) along the lines of the cluster option."

**OUST, SHE SAID,** was also upset

that the builders association could hold Homearama without a permit since it was on private property and that it was never a township board agenda item up for discussion.

Recommendations were made to the township board by the planning commission concerning parking, traffic control, lighting, signs and sanitary disposal, but no official board action was required on the project.

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