

The Carol H. Axelrod Memorial Blood Drive

The people who support the Carol H. Axelrod Memorial Blood Drive are truly exceptional. Our donors are incredible, but our drives wouldn't be the same without the commitment and generosity of those who help us in other ways, such as sharing information about the drives, making sure that our blood drive spaces are ready when the Red Cross truck arrives, or donating the prizes and refreshments that help us add a special touch to each event. Over the years, we have learned that many of our sponsors have deeply personal reasons for supporting the blood drives.

We connected with Monica Staszsky a few years ago through our request for guest passes to beautiful Longwood Gardens in Kennett Square. Thanks to Monica, we have been able to offer passes to Longwood in all of our prize drawings since then! But Monica's commitment to blood donation goes far beyond providing an exciting drawing prize.

Having once been the recipient of a blood transfusion herself, Monica is well aware of the lifesaving power of a blood donation, and she describes herself as "deeply grateful" for blood donors. Monica now donates blood regularly, and she achieved the 3-gallon donation milestone last year.

During a recent blood donation, Monica was told that a patient at Children's Hospital of Philadelphia was in immediate need of transfusions from a donor of Monica's blood type who had never been pregnant.* As Monica told us, "I fit the bill....I was so humbled and moved that my blood would be going to a child who needed it!"

Everyone who makes a blood donation has the power to save a life—the life of an infant or child, of an adult, of a mother or father, of a person like Monica who will go on to "pay it forward" and save many more lives through his or her own commitment to donating blood. As Monica said, "All these years, this is the first time this type of thing happened to me. It was one of the most meaningful things to happen in my life this year."

Even if you don't hear of the immediate need in the way that Monica did, we hope that you will consider your blood donations to be meaningful. There is no doubt that every recipient of a blood transfusion certainly does!

Sincerely,
Michelle, Dan, and Emily Scolnick 

* Exposure to their baby's blood during pregnancy and delivery may cause some women to develop human leukocyte antigen (HLA) antibodies in their own blood. While this is not at all dangerous for healthy individuals, transfused HLA antibodies can potentially be harmful for patients with certain conditions. Female donors who have not been pregnant will be less likely to have these antibodies in their blood, so the risk of a reaction in a particular transfusion recipient may be reduced.

The Carol H. Axelrod Memorial Blood Drive has always been about family. In that spirit, we want to take this opportunity to pay tribute to a beloved family member.

Jinxie was Carol's cat, adopted from Francisvale Home for Smaller Animals in Radnor in 2006. After Carol passed away in 2008, we were very fortunate to be able to welcome Jinxie into our home.

On March 28 of this year, Jinxie passed away. She was 16 years old. Like Carol, she was a fighter to the end, and we are so grateful for the memories we have with her. Jinxie charmed us with her fuzzy cheeks, her beautiful eyes, and her funny "squawk" of a meow. She loved to sit in a warm spot or carry toy mice from one room to another. Most importantly, she was Emily's special kitty; she watched Emily grow from age 3 to age 14, sat next to her as she played or read, and followed her around the house. Incredibly, she slept on Emily's pillow, curled around Emily's head, almost every night for 11 years.

Thank you, Jinxie, for all of the love you gave, and for providing another connection to Carol for so many years. We miss you, and we will always love you.



*Our family holds four blood drives each year.
We hope to see you at another drive in 2019!*

The Carol H. Axelrod Memorial Blood Drive

Dates and Locations of Upcoming Drives

July 17, 2019

The Reserve at Gwynedd - Lansdale, PA



October 24 & 25, 2019

**12th Annual Carol H. Axelrod Memorial
Blood Drive at Lankenau Medical Center -
Wynnewood, PA**

For more information about any of our blood drives, please
visit www.chablooddrive.org.



Follow us on Twitter and Facebook: @CHABloodDrive
and on Instagram: @cha_blooddrive

COMMUNITY CHALLENGE UPDATE

This May, our Community **CHALLENGE**
will benefit

Radnor Fire Company/Radnor Ambulance
and
Wayne Senior Center

Radnor Fire Company/Radnor Ambulance
Protecting the lives and property of the residents, visitors,
and businesses of Radnor and Tredyffrin Townships and
surrounding communities.

Radnor Fire Company
P.O. Box 485 ◆ Wayne, PA 19087
www.radnorfire.com



Wayne Senior Center

Providing community, friendship, and resources to enrich
the lives of older adults.

Wayne Senior Center
108 Station Road ◆ Wayne, PA 19087
www.wayneseniorcenter.org

Visit www.chablooddrive.org to learn about all of the organizations that
have taken part in our **CHALLENGE**!

The Story Behind Our Family's Blood Drives

Our family knows from personal experience that blood donors give hospital patients and their loved ones an incomparable gift: the gift of time. Whether a blood donation is used to save a life, to prolong a life, or to improve the quality of life, it allows families to spend more time together, making special memories. Thanks to the generosity of blood donors, our family was given another year with the mother, grandmother, daughter, sister, and aunt we loved.

Carol, a single mother of two daughters, was an elementary school teacher in Philadelphia for over 30 years. In April 2003, she was 55 years old and starting to look ahead to retirement when she was diagnosed with multiple myeloma, an incurable cancer of the blood and bone marrow. In 2004, Carol's disease progressed to the point where her doctor recommended that she undergo two autologous stem-cell transplants, the most aggressive treatment then available to myeloma patients. Although the procedures did put her disease into remission, the cancer returned less than a year later, and in an extremely aggressive form.

In July 2007, just two months before her 60th birthday, Carol was hospitalized as the result of a complication of her illness. At that point, the only thing the doctors could do to try to stabilize the situation was give her multiple transfusions of blood and platelets and hope that her body would eventually start to do what it needed to do to heal itself.

For almost two weeks, Carol received multiple transfusions each day. The doctors said that she could die at any time, especially if they were unable to find the blood products she needed. But incredibly, those blood products were always there—because of all the people who had donated the blood that the doctors were using to try to save her life.

Thanks to blood donors, Carol ultimately was able to leave the hospital. Although she could not resume treatment for the cancer, she was able to live independently and enjoy almost all of her usual activities because, for nearly a year, she received blood and platelet transfusions at least twice a week. Thanks to blood donors, she was able to celebrate her 60th birthday and see her granddaughter turn three years old. And thanks to blood donors, Carol lived until July 1, 2008, enabling her to make a year's worth of memories with her loved ones.

Our family feels that we owe all the special memories of that last year to the generosity of blood donors. Carol's doctors told us that they had never had a patient who was transfusion-dependent for as long as she was. They were amazed that she lived as long as she did, with her only treatment being transfusions of blood and platelets. We were so grateful that the blood products she needed were always available for her.

After Carol passed away, our family organized a blood drive in her memory at Lankenau Medical Center, the hospital where she had received the transfusions. Held in October 2008, it turned out to be the hospital's most successful blood drive up to that point. We decided to turn the blood drive into an annual event and hold it in multiple locations. With every blood drive we hold, we hope to be able to help even more people who need transfusions. Every two seconds, someone in the U.S. needs blood; and nine out of ten people will require a blood transfusion at some point during their lives.

Blood donors were the only people who could give our family an extra year with Carol. We created this memorial blood drive in order to help other patients and families by doing our part to ensure that blood products are always available for those who need them. Thanks to donors who are willing to take a little time out of their day to give blood, these patients are able to continue to fight their illnesses—and spend more time with their loved ones.