

# Health Care Channel

A blood bank is a cache or bank of blood or blood components, gathered as a result of blood donation, stored and preserved for later use in blood transfusions. Oswald Hope Robertson, a medical researcher and U.S. Army officer who established blood depots, is now recognised as the creator of the first blood bank. The University of Louisville is also credited for the Blood Bank.

There is no other redeeming act than to save a human life. People may feel afraid or selfish when it comes to donating blood. But if everybody thinks that way, then doctors may be unable to save so many human lives. People who have never donated blood may themselves require blood at some point of their life. But think what will happen if everybody feels unwilling to

donate blood. There will be no blood available in the blood banks. So many precious lives will be wasted.

In India, blood is required in every two seconds. More awareness should be created about blood donation so that more and more people come forward to donate blood. If human lives are lost because of the dearth of blood in the blood banks it will be a shame to the human society.

The National Voluntary Blood Donation Day is being celebrated on October 1, 2009. This day assumes significance to Rotary clubs who are serious about creating awareness about blood donation and probably setting up blood banks in rural areas. Invite people who have donated blood for 50, 75,

100, 125 and more times and honour them at a solemn function on that day. It can be a mega meeting organised by many clubs in the city or in the suburbs. This message will be received well by the media if proper advance intimation is given.

Rotary has been establishing blood banks and also assisting hospitals to create blood banks within their



premises. The Vivekanand Rotary Blood Bank at Moradabad in RI District 3100 is a good example of how dedicated Rotarians can make a difference in the community and save precious lives. The project was initiated by Rotary Club of Moradabad East along with the district administration of 3100 and the foundation was laid in February 2005. The project was completed in July 2007 at a cost of US \$ 51,000. The blood bank is located in the Vivekanand Hospital and Research Centre in Moradabad and is managed by PDG Lalit Mohan Gupta, RI District 3100 with a team of office bearers which includes the serving District Governor of 3100, DRFC and President of RC Moradabad East

along with nominees from Vivekanand Hospital.

The state of art machines for component separation with allied equipments were purchased with the assistance of The Rotary Foundation. Rotary Club of Kowloon Golden Mile, Hong Kong, RI District 3450 contributed US \$ 10,000. RI District 7120 donated US \$ 2,000 from their DDF and RI District 3100 contributed US \$ 3,400 from the DDF. The Rotary Club of Moradabad East gave US \$ 13,400. The Rotary Foundation matched these contributions.

India needs at least eight million units of blood every year. Nearly five percent of this requirement is collected through voluntary donations. Setting up a very good blood bank needs at least Rs.5 crores. It is not always easy for a club or a district

administration to raise this amount of money with donations from within their community. The Rotary Foundation is just the right source for us which can fund a major portion of an activity involved in setting up a blood bank. This means that the Foundation must be supported by Every Rotarian Every Year. The Rotary Foundation becomes the health care channel for every Rotary club.



*Rtn. Ashok Mahajan  
Trustee, The Rotary Foundation*