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Div. 8 Bus Operator Ted Neill Says He's Proud to be Lifetime Blood Donor

By Laura Kloth
Staff Writer

(Jan. 5, 2010) For those making resolutions to do something of value this year, Div. 8 Bus Operator Ted Neill proposes one suggestion – donate blood.

Neill, a 31-year Metro employee, has been donating blood since he was a high school student, and says that "it's something you can do that doesn't take a whole lot of effort and time."

Neill proudly carries his four blood donor cards – the first earned in 1974 when he was encouraged by his father, Ronald Neill, to begin donating.

Ronald Neill, who worked at Metro for 27 years, died about five years ago, but was an avid blood donor credited with giving a total of 12 gallons - or 96 pints of blood – over the span of his adult life.

Altogether, both father and son have donated approximately 25 gallons of blood to the American Red Cross. That amounts to 200 pints, and according to American Red Cross statistics, each pint could potentially save three lives.

"If you need blood, there's usually some reason behind it like surgery, or some catastrophe or sometimes cancer patients need a blood transfusion, following chemotherapy to help boost their white cell count," he said.

"My wife had major surgery that required two pints of blood, and when my daughter was born in 1990, she weighed one pound and five ounces, and they asked us to give blood," Neill said.

However, most donated blood goes to strangers, and that is the best part about donating, he added.



Div. 8 Bus Operator Ted Neill has donated 112 pints of blood over the past 37 years.

Photos by Laura Kloth

“Do it for the right reasons. If you are motivated to help people, not just because they need it, or because you are related to them,” said Neill.

Ideally, the 55-year-old operator has made it a point to donate about four times a year, usually as a walk-in and he proudly shows off the transfusion scars on his arm to remind others to give.

“When you step out of your comfort zone and you do something nice for somebody, you actually feel good inside,” he said.



Neill proudly shows of his American Red Cross blood donor cards when he encourages others to donate.