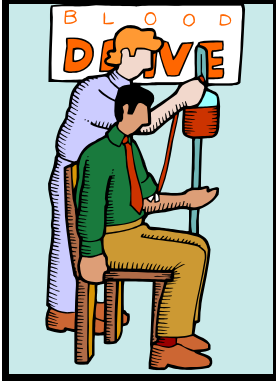


CLUB NEWS – Volunteering Saves Lives

From Escapees RV Club

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A Real Gift of Caring and Sharing



The ultimate gift is the gift of life, and Escapees have been donating this gift (their blood) for more than 11 years to the Gulf Coast Regional Blood Center.

From the time our records began, February 1998 through January 2009, Escapees at Rainbow's End, residents or visitors, have donated 1,803 units of blood. Since each unit can save up to three lives, that's 5,409 lives potentially saved—about the total population of the City of Livingston, Texas!

In addition, there have been blood drives at some Escapades and Fun Days, as well as at some SKP Co-Ops, so Escapees have been saving lives all across the U.S.

Blood donor chair Susie Gearing schedules blood drives monthly throughout the year except for the summer months (June, July, August) when there are few donors available. Drives are usually held in the multipurpose room of the Escapees CARE Center.

Some of the donors are Commit For Life donors: They commit to donate blood four times a year. In return, they earn points which can be exchanged for nice premiums, many of which are geared to the RVer's lifestyle. Our club has been recognized by Gulf Coast Regional Blood Center at their annual Celebration of Life luncheons. Look for the plaques in the office lobby when you are at Rainbow's End!

Volunteering Runs in the Family

Those of you who read last week's Escapees Club News may recognize Susie Gearing's name as wife to Ray Gearing (Senior of the Year award winner). Susie is not only the chairperson for Escapees blood drives, she was a driving force behind the establishment of Polk County Habitat for Humanity affiliate and continues to serve as secretary to the board as well as the chair of the resource development committee and a member of Cochran's Crossing Task Force. Susie also teaches a home management class for prospective Habitat homeowners.



As if that were not enough to fill her time, she also volunteers as a gardener at Escapees CARE, coordinates the Adopt-a-Highway program at Escapees national headquarters, is president of Polk County Emergency Health Board, is a member of the local Rotary Club, and meets with the local Interagency Group on a monthly basis. In addition to all that volunteering, she also holds down a part-time paid position as copy editor for *Escapees* magazine. I don't know about you, but I got tired just writing this!

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