

You never know when...

Dear editor:

You never know when you might need a blood transfusion to save your own life or the life of one of your loved ones.

This did happen to me last February. Five days after I had an uneventful colonoscopy I started passing blood repeatedly throughout the day from internal bleeding. Not recognizing the gravity of the situation, at 5 p.m. I mentioned it to my wife and passed out soon after. The ambulance arrived and they took me to the Headwaters Hospital in Orangeville. Passing in and out and having a very low blood pressure, I was taken to intensive care very quickly. Now I understand the need for triage.

The nurses on duty that evening/night were just super keeping me awake as much as they could and helping me to keep my morale up. I was immediately hooked up to intravenous meds and they managed to keep me semi-conscious until 2 a.m. when the resident doctor ordered a blood transfusion before deciding if he would have to operate to find out what was causing the internal bleeding.

By 8 AM the bleeding was under control thanks to the two units of blood and the other meds.

I was told that those taking care of me during the night were not sure that they would save me and relaxed when finally they and the doctor saw a turning point.

I am appreciative that when I was younger and able to, I did give blood 32 times. Not a record by all means but I am glad that I did participate in contributing to save lives of others. I am also happy to be one of the Shelburne Rotary Club members who for the last 11 years have volunteered serving refreshments at our local bi-monthly clinics at the Shelburne Arena.

So, it is not that I invite you, I beg you to consider contacting the Canadian Blood Service to make an appointment to give, to save a life. It could be your own or the life of one of your loved ones. You are eligible to give when you are 17. It only takes one hour of your time every second month to give the gift of life. Some of our repeat regular donors in Shelburne have given more than 100 times. Many are around the 50 times mark and keep coming. We thank all who take the time to be a donor and encourage first time donors.

Although I do not remember the names of the nurses, the doctor and other staff who were there that night, I want to say a big thank you for the super care I received in saving my life. And thank you to blood donors and the Canadian Blood Service.

The next blood clinic in Shelburne is Wednesday, December 17. Your participation would be greatly appreciated.

For all information or make an appointment you can contact the Canadian Blood Service organisation at 1-888-2DONATE (1-888-236-6283) or at www.blood.ca

Réal Gagnon Rotary Club Member Volunteer to the Canadian Blood Service