LOCAL NEWS

Calling all donors

High need for blood donations

BY EMILY GEDDE
Staff Writer

Every two seconds someone needs blood. To keep up with the need, Memorial Blood Centers is encouraging all eligible blood donors to roll up their sleeves and give blood.

Locally, donors will have their chance to help save lives from 8:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. Tuesday during a blood drive sponsored by Boise Paper, a Packing Corporation of America company, 400 Second Street.

The need for blood is constant, but the supply is not. The fact holds true locally. Eden Jackson, a registered nurse who works for Boise, was making calls Wednesday to regular donors asking for their help.

Memorial Blood Centers said its supply of O-negative blood is dangerously low across its 11 donor sites in Minnesota and Wisconsin.

Spokesman Larry Silber reported to Minnesota Public Radio the organization has been able to keep up with the demand for O-negative blood so far, but more donors are urgently needed. A combination of cold weather, vacations and the flu season has led to the decrease in donations.

The shortage is particularly critical because O-negative is a universal blood type that can be used in emergencies. And the problem is exacerbated by the fact that is O-negative donors are rare. According to the American Red Cross, only 7 percent of people in the U.S. have O-negative blood.

Make a difference

Doug Grindall said he's been involved with organizing blood drive efforts before and sees how important giving blood is.

"Although everyone hears or reads about how important this gift of donating blood is, it strikes home the best when you actually meet and talk to a person who benefited from having blood available to him/her when it was needed," he said.

First-time donors may have a common fear of being struck with a needle. Grindall admitted he is no different.

"But I donate as there is a real need and it may be helping someone in our community," he said. "You will have a good feeling both mentally and physically when it is done."

First-time donors

For people donating for the first time, Grindall said to stay hydrated and well rested. Drinking plenty of water prior to donating makes the process easier, he said. And he encouraged donors to get good sleep and eat well prior to donating.

People who have recently visited certain countries, experienced certain diseases, had a tattoo or piercing, surgery, or taking certain medication will be rejected, he noted.

"There are many local blood drive coordinators in our community who greatly appreciate all those who give when they are called as it makes the job of the coordinators a lot easier," Grindall said. "First time donors are always welcome as that increases the pool of donors that we can contact in the future."

FILE PHOTO

Darrick Johnson, International Falls, was among many volunteers who donated blood at last year's drive at Boise. Memorial Blood Center staff Vincent Cichy, left, and Kate Swantko were on hand to assist. See the center website at www.mbc.org to learn more about giving blood and for the location of future blood drives

SPRING

➤ continued from A3

speed limits. Summer months are often the most dangerous on the roads.

8. Make sure your emergency kit is stocked and ready to go for the summer season.

"You're already setting your clocks ahead one hour," Public Safety Commissioner Mona Dohman said. "Take a few extra minutes to make sure this spring and summer are safe and happy for you and your family."

More information and detail about the items on this list are available on the Department of Public Safety website.

The Department of Public Safety comprises 11 divisions where employees operate programs in the areas of law enforcement, crime victim assistance, traffic safety, alcohol and gambling, emergency communications, fire safety, pipeline safety, driver licensing, vehicle registration and emergency management. DPS is anchored by three core principles: education, enforcement and prevention.

TRAIL REPORT

All trails remain open and in good condition in Voyageurs National Park.

Due to wolf interaction, short sections of the Green and Yellow Trails on Namakan Lake near the Moose River Grade have been closed and rerouted.

The Green Trail Reroute is now staked and groomed from the closure on Namakan Lake to the connection of the Yellow Trail (Kettle Falls) and Orange Trail (Rudder Bay). The trail reroute follows the south side of Namakan Island to near Cemetery Island and the Green, Yellow, and Orange Trail junctions.

Park staff will monitor the cause of the temporary closures, and the closures will remain in place until conditions change or the winter season ends.

Due to high winds, snow drifts are widespread. Lake surface conditions are considered rough. Riders should use caution both on and off the trails.

The most up to date winter trail conditions are available at www.nps.gov/voya.

Snowmobile trails

- International Falls to Kettle Falls (Purple Trail) – Open, staked, and groomed
- Rainy Lake/Black Bay to Kabetogama Lake to Ash River (Green Trail) – Open, staked, and groomed
- Ash River to Crane Lake (Green Trail) – Open, staked, and groomed
- Chain of Lakes (Dashed Black Trail) – Open, staked, and groomed
- Ash River to Kettle Falls (Yellow Trail) – Open, staked, and groomed
- Rudder Bay (Orange Trail) – Open, staked, and groomed
- East Namakan Lake to Sand Point Lake (Blue Trail) – Open, staked, and groomed
- Trails reroutes are in effect. Rerouted trails are staked and groomed.

Ice roads

- Rainy Lake Ice Road – Open to Cranberry Bay and around Dryweed Island
- Kabetogama Lake Ice Road – Open

Ski trails

- Echo Bay Ski Trail – Open, packed, and tracked
- Black Bay Ski Trail – Open, packed, and tracked
- Tilson Connector Trail – Open, packed, and tracked
- KabAsh Trail – Open

Snowshoe trails

- Black Bay Beaver Pond Trail – Open, not packed
- Blind Ash Bay Trail – Open, not packed
- Oberholtzer Trail – Open, not packed
- Sullivan Bay Trail – Open, not packed