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LifeSouth Community Blood Centers presents awards



Accepting the certificate of appreciation for Walmart of Chiefland are Sandy Buccholz (left) and Angie Watson. Walmart of Chiefland was the sixth highest place in 2018 for donors from among the region where LifeSouth Community Blood Centers collects blood in North Central Florida.

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Story and Photos
By Jeff M. Hardison ©
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Except One Photo By
Jeff Emmonds

GAINESVILLE --
LifeSouth Community
Blood Centers presented
awards to people Friday
afternoon (Feb. 22) with a
Happy Birthday theme for
the event.



This birthday cake is in honor of all of the people who have birthdays as a result of blood transfusions saving their lives.

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Standing next to the birthday cake is Debbie Destin of Camp Valor. She shared information with people at the event about Camp Valor.

Laura Bialeck, one of the LifeSouth team of professionals at the event, explained the theme is for all of the people whose lives were saved by donated blood. This is to honor them having birthdays in the future as a result of the work of blood donors.

Coincidentally, the event was held on the birthday of George Washington (Feb. 22, 1732 – Dec. 14, 1799), the first president of the United States of America. President Washington would have been 287 years old.

Two of the many highlights of the afternoon were the recognition of Butler Enterprises and a story by a survivor who is alive thanks to blood donors.

The iconic, Butler Plaza, established in 1975, is taking on a new look, and making room for the two additional development projects adding more than a million square feet of power-packed shopping and dining, according to its website.

As for its earning special recognition, the Butler Enterprises group has been part of the network of donor sites for decades now, Bialeck said. Donors there saved more than 3,000 lives with blood this year.

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Accepting on behalf of the City of Williston are Executive Administrative Assistant Latricia Williams and Code Enforcement Officer Wayne Carson.



Accepting on Behalf of Otter Springs Park and Campground of Gilchrist County is Debbie Destin.

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The survivor who spoke about the value of donating blood works for a local TV station and she said a doctor told her that the virus she had was going to kill her.

A blood transfusion saved her life, she told the audience.

“No one knows when death will knock at the door,” she said, adding that the door did not open for death in this instance.

Meanwhile, in another aspect from the meeting, there may be some confusion about a red bloodmobile that is not red-white-and blue and does not say LifeSouth Community Blood Centers on it.

Bialeck helped listeners know that there is another bloodmobile in the area, but that blood donated there may not be going to the local hospitals. She stressed a few times that LifeSouth is the local blood supplier – meeting local patients’ needs.



People mill about before picking up their lunch from servers along a buffet line.



People accept their lunches from servers.

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There must have been at least 100 people at the Annual LifeSouth Community Blood Centers Chairperson/Media Appreciation Luncheon. It took place at the Civitan Donor Center -1221 N.W. 13th St., in Gainesville. Everyone who dined on the buffet-style salads, Italian cuisine and desserts appeared to enjoy the meal.

There was also a birthday cake, as noted to honor people who lived as a result of blood donation.

Several interests from the Tri-County Area of Levy, Dixie and Gilchrist counties were noted for their donations of blood to help local patients.

Among the many Tri-County Area donor sites were Capital City Bank, Palms Medical Group, Alliance Dairies, Florida Farm Bureau, Bell High School, Bronson Middle High School, Williston Middle High School, Trenton High School, the Cedar Key Community, the Bronson Community, Dixie County Rotary Club, Cross City Correctional Institution, the Chiefland community, the Florida Department of Transportation, and Otter Springs Park and Campground. And the list could go on for a very long time.

Walmart of Chiefland was sixth highest in the Overall Blood Drives for 2018.

Cedar Key, Bronson, Williston and the Rotary Club of Dixie County were all in the top 10 for Community Blood Drives in 2018.

Bronson, Bell, Williston and Trenton were in the top 10 for School Blood Drives in 2018.

HardisonInk.com was recognized again this year for its successful efforts in helping the people in the Tri-County Area know about blood drives, and for highlighting the blood donation center in the plaza where Winn-Dixie is located in Chiefland.



Jeff Hardison holds the framed certificate presented to him for the work of *HardisonInk.com* in helping LifeSouth Community Blood Centers. The publisher of the daily news website is seen here on the grounds of The Ink Pad, in the unrecorded subdivision known as Jemlands in Levy County. Photo by Jeff Emmonds