

Make a difference by donating blood

BY TIMES STAFF

NORTHWEST INDIANA | The power to make a difference is confirmed every day through people who roll up their sleeves and give back to their communities by donating blood.

"You have the power within you to help change a life," said Sharyn Whitman, CEO for the Indiana-Ohio Blood Services Region of the American Red Cross. "Make a Difference Day is just one more reason to consider donating blood as a worthwhile and positive volunteer experience."

Nearly 4 million people donated blood through the American Red Cross last year. That strength in numbers, Red Cross officials say, reflects an innate desire of Americans to help others, and can be reinforced through nationwide efforts like Make a Difference Day.

In 2008, 3 million people participated in the national day of neighbor helping neighbor, and accomplished thousands of projects in hundreds of towns. Now in its 19th year, Make a Difference Day takes place the fourth Saturday of every October, with this year's events slated for Oct. 24.

"By donating blood on or around Make a Difference Day, you can do your part to help someone in need," said Whitman. "Every day, the American people show us they're here to ensure that patients across the country have the blood they need, when they need it."

The American Red Cross recently launched several social media sites to build awareness and encourage discussion about the need for blood and blood donors.

To join the conversation, search for American Red Cross blood donors at facebook.com. News and information on Red Cross volunteers and other activities is also available by visiting YOUTUBE.COM/AMREDCROSS.

HOW TO DONATE BLOOD

Individuals who are at least 17 years old (16 with parental permission in some states), meet height and weight requirements (at least 110 pounds based on height) and are in general good health may be eligible to donate blood. Red Cross donor card or positive ID required. Call 1-800-GIVE LIFE (1-800-448-3543) or log

on INDIANAOHIOREDCROSS.ORG for more information.

PORTER COUNTY BLOOD DRIVES

- From 2 to 7 p.m. today at First Christian Church in the Fellowship Hall, 1507 Glendale Blvd., Valparaiso.

- From 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturday at Wilowcreek Middle School in the cafeteria, 5962 Central Ave., Portage. All presenting donors will receive a T-shirt. This is a Sharefest blood drive. Go to GIVELIFE.ORG and enter sponsor code "sf" to schedule your blood donation appointment.

- From 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturday at Kouts Schools in the cafeteria, 302 College Ave. All presenting donors will receive a T-shirt. This is a Sharefest blood drive. Go to GIVELIFE.ORG and enter sponsor code "sf" to schedule your blood donation appointment.

- From 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturday at Trinity Lutheran Church in the social hall at 201 Washington St., Valparaiso. All presenting donors will receive a T-shirt. This is a Sharefest blood drive. Go to GIVELIFE.ORG and enter sponsor code "sf" to schedule your blood donation appointment.

- From 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturday at First United Methodist Church in the Social Hall, 434 S. Second St., Chesterton. All presenting donors will receive a T-shirt. This is a Sharefest blood drive. Go to givelife.org and enter sponsor code "sf" to schedule your blood donation appointment.

- From 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturday at Washington Evangelical Free Church in the gymnasium, 3805 LaPorte Ave., Valparaiso. All presenting donors will receive a T-shirt. This is a Sharefest blood drive. Go to givelife.org and enter sponsor code "sf" to schedule your blood donation appointment.

- From 3 to 7 p.m. Monday at YMCA, 1201 Cumberland Crossing Drive, Valparaiso. Call (219) 462-4185 to schedule an appointment.

- From noon to 6 p.m. Oct. 15 at St. Paul Lutheran Church in the meeting hall at 106 E. County Road 1100 North, Chesterton.

LAKE COUNTY BLOOD DRIVES

- From 10:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. today at



Post Tribune, 1433 E. 83rd St., Merrillville. Call (219) 648-3007 to schedule an appointment.

- From 3:30 to 6:30 p.m. today at Indiana Wesleyan University, 8415 Georgia St., Merrillville. Call (219) 769-5101 to schedule your blood donation appointment.

- From 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Sunday at First Presbyterian Church in the Fellowship Hall, 218 S. Court St., Crown Point. Call (219) 663-2255 to schedule your blood donation appointment.

- From 1:30 to 6:30 p.m. Monday at VFW Post 717, 10400 W. 93rd Ave., St.

John.

- From 1:30 to 6 p.m. Tuesday at First Baptist Church, 1309 Central Ave., Lake Station. Call (219) 962-1691 to schedule your blood donation appointment.

- From 2:30 to 6:30 p.m. Tuesday at Jean Shepherd Community Center, 3031 Mahoney Drive, Hammond. This blood drive is sponsored by Regional Federal Credit Union.

- From 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Oct. 15 at **Brown Mackie** College, 1000 E. 80th Place, Merrillville. Call (219) 381-2240 to schedule your blood donation appointment.