



## Superhero of the Quarter: Damarco



You never know when an accident is going to happen, or when an animal is going to need blood. It is not always at a convenient time with the blood bank fully stocked, when an animal requires a transfusion. Sometimes we have to rely on donors who are willing to come in at all hours and give blood.

It was the middle of the day on a Thursday when a patient needing fresh whole blood (FWB) came into ACCES. FWB is taken directly from the donor when s/he gives blood. Because it has a short shelf life and we can get more out of the blood if it is processed, we usually spin it down and create packed red cells and plasma to

create components. However, if a patient needs a large volume of both blood & plasma, or needs platelets, FWB is the only option.

Since we do not stock FWB, we needed a dog to come in and donate. Damarco and his owner Nina answered the summons and rushed over to give blood.

The dedication and commitment to the blood bank by donors such as Damarco and Nina never ceases to amaze us. Thank you to all who come in on short notice, dedicate your weeknights and weekends to us, and are generally there for us when we need you. You are all amazing!

## 2011 Pet Events: Come Check out our Booth!

Petpalooza 10a-7p  
Saturday, May 21st  
Game Farm Park in Auburn



The Furry 5K 9a-1p  
Sunday June 12th  
Seward Park in Seattle

### Did you Know?

Fresh Whole Blood (FWB) is often only used when a large amount of blood is lost or when an animal needs platelets. The donors who provide FWB for the ACCES Blood Bank are often employee-owned and are on-call to donate 24 hours per day.

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# ACCES Blood Bank Hero Headlines

*Saving Lives One Pint at a Time!*



## The Blood Bank Teams up with Cascade Animal Clinic

This winter the ACCES Blood Bank was approached by a local day practice in Monroe about forming a partnership. **Cascade Animal Clinic** of Monroe is now screening potential blood donors in their community, and has invited us to use their facility at least once a month to see appointments and collect blood donations. For the ACCES Blood Bank this is an amazing opportunity to reach more donors in the north end of the Puget Sound, and further strengthen ties with the community. We had our first blood drive at Cascade in the beginning of February, and it was a smashing success.

I interviewed **Dani Kahn**, Practice Manager at Cascade, about why she wanted to get her hospital involved with the ACCES Blood Bank program:

### Why did you want to start a partnership with the ACCES Blood Bank?

"Cascade Animal Clinic staff were informed about the possibility of participating in a program to help save lives by something as easy as building a pool of donors in our own community. When they realized the impact we could make, everyone was more than willing to participate and excited to see this partnership be a huge success. We hit the ground running and our goal is to double the donor pool within the first year of our partnership."



Cascade Animal Clinic

### Why do you have your pets donate blood?

"I believe in giving back what is so generously given. My personal pets, all that are able, are all donors. I wanted to help in any way I could. Working in the veterinary industry for well over a decade has brought several pets into my home. Most of them are rescues themselves. The very fact that they were given a second chance in life inspired me to offer the same to others in need. If they can give back what they received, why wouldn't they?"

### Why do you think it is important for your community to be involved?

"I feel the north end of Snohomish County should be involved with the blood bank for so many reasons, but one I can think of specifically is that they are sure to have a higher donor population. There are so many families out here that have large properties in the country which allows for larger dogs. Many folks out here have multiple dogs and

certainly several cats as well. I would much rather have happy family pets be a part of a blood donor pool than to have it any other way. We have the ability to save so many lives with such a minimal contribution, if only people were aware of the need."

### What do you think people should know about animal blood donation and/or our partnership?

"I think awareness is key. As we move forward with our partnership here, I am so surprised that every time I hand a brochure to a potential donor, the client says the same thing to me: 'I didn't know there was such a thing!' I would love to someday have clients calling us to say they heard we were a north end donation site, how can they be a part of our donor bank? If we can bring the education and awareness to the community, the opportunities are endless. That is my dream, to make North Snohomish County a prime donor pool - one of the largest in the country and have Allison here collecting donations every week."

If you would like more information about our blood drives at the Cascade Animal Clinic in Monroe, please call us at (206) 364-1660, or call Cascade Animal Clinic at (360) 794-6772.

-Allison Dietz, LVT

Spring 2011 · March-May

### Our Core Values:

- **QUALITY**-OUR BLOOD WILL BE SCREENED, COLLECTED AND PROCESSED USING THE MOST RIGOROUS STANDARDS TO ENSURE THE SAFETY OF BOTH OUR DONORS AND THE ANIMALS WHO RECEIVE TRANSFUSIONS
- **VOLUNTEERISM**-OUR PROGRAM WILL ALWAYS BE COMPRISED OF COMMUNITY DONORS AND THEIR COMMITTED OWNERS. THEIR WELFARE AND A FUN DONOR EXPERIENCE IS A TOP PRIORITY
- **COMMUNITY**-WE WILL SUPPORT AND COLLABORATE WITH ORGANIZATIONS THAT WORK TO IMPROVE THE QUALITY OF LIFE FOR DOGS AND CATS IN PUGET SOUND.
- **KNOWLEDGE**-WE WILL EDUCATE THE LOCAL PET AND VETERINARY COMMUNITY ABOUT BLOOD BANKING AND TRANSFUSION MEDICINE. WE WILL SEEK NEW OPPORTUNITIES TO LEARN AND BE ON THE FOREFRONT OF NEW DEVELOPMENTS IN OUR FIELD.
- **RELIABILITY**-WE WILL PROVIDE CONSISTENT SERVICE TO DONORS AND CLIENTS, AND HIGH QUALITY BLOOD PRODUCTS THAT ARE AVAILABLE WHEN NEEDED.



11536 Lake City Way NE  
Seattle, WA 98125  
206-364-1660  
www.criticalcarevets.com/newbloodbank

## A Blood Bank Story: Bernie Palmeri

Last November an eight year old cat named Bernie transferred to ACCES for kidney failure. He had slowly been eating less and becoming more lethargic over the previous month, and his regular veterinarian recommended that he be transferred for IV fluids and an ultrasound.

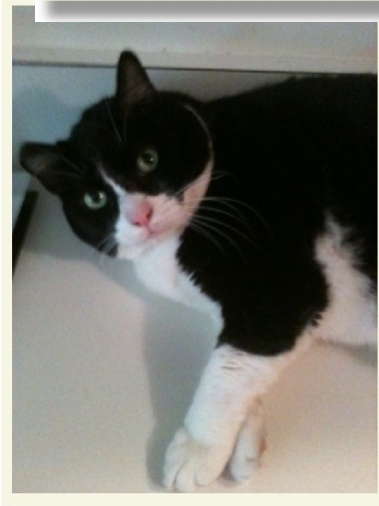
When Bernie was admitted to ACCES, he was dehydrated and his blood work showed that he had high renal values and he was anemic. Renal disease is common in cats, and the anemia it causes is often a reason cats receive transfusions of packed red blood cells. The kidneys make a hormone called erythropoietin that stimulates the bone marrow to produce more red cells in the body. When the kidneys stop functioning properly, they may fail to produce erythropoietin, causing anemia.

This is what Bernie was experiencing. He was checked in and put on fluids to help flush his kidneys. Fluid supplements were started to correct his electrolyte imbalance and his blood pressure and vital signs were routinely monitored. Bernie had also developed a heart murmur secondary to the anemia and did not want to eat.

After three days in the ICU, Bernie's renal values had started to improve, but

his anemia was getting worse. His owners approved a transfusion, and he received blood from donor Panda. After the transfusion, Bernie became more active, and showed interest in food. His anemia improved and stabilized. Bernie stayed in the hospital on IV fluids and medications for two more days to continue decreasing his kidney values.

Bernie went home and did well for the next two



Panda

Bernie

months. He continued to need constant monitoring of his kidney values and was on a number of medications. Unfortunately Bernie experienced a urinary blockage at the end of December, and his owners had to euthanize him because his prognosis was poor. Although Bernie's life was shortened by his renal disease, he was able to have quality time with his family because of the care he received at ACCES and the blood transfusion from Panda.

-Allison Dietz, LVT

## Welcome Sandra!



Please welcome our new assistant Sandra. She will be assisting Allison with blood donations on Saturdays.

Sandra Becka has a BS in biology and anthropology from Northern Illinois University. She has worked as a zookeeper, wildlife biologist and veterinary assistant in Illinois, New Mexico and Washington

state. Sandra has two dogs and a cat; her younger dog and cat are both blood donors with the ACCES Blood Bank. When Sandra is not working at ACCES, you can find her walking dogs and pet sitting in Seattle.

## Goodbye, Hello

We welcome the newest members of our Blood Bank family, and bid farewell to those leaving us:

### Goodbye:

- Navy Irish
- Gotti Griggs
- Shug Symbol

### Hello:

- Madam Poofy Vandenburg
- Amy Toquinto
- Kooper King
- Hashbrown Rollness
- Bo Posch
- Bernie Ford
- Cody Schroeder
- Molly Walstad
- Marley Cruz
- Pandora Gill-Meleo
- Little Man Kahn
- Luther Kahn
- Gump Kahn
- Meli Heckel
- Gunner Pigott
- Lexi-Lou Tamburello

### Donor Count 2011

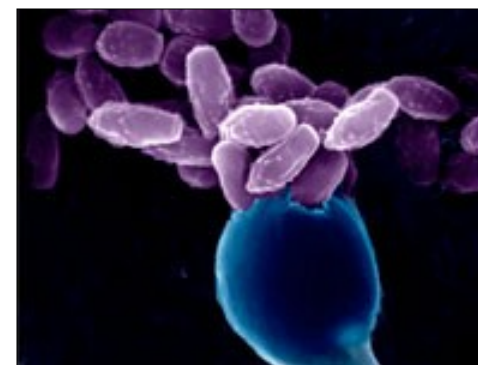
Dogs: 68  
Cats: 52  
Total: 120

## Helping More Than Just Animals:

New Partnership with the CDC aids in human medical research

The ACCES Blood Bank is excited to announce our new partnership with the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), helping to track an emerging fungal disease relevant to both humans and animals. In accordance with our core values of community and knowledge, we most often work within the local community to educate people about veterinary transfusion medicine and support relevant animal causes. By supplying plasma samples to the CDC, we can support national scientific research, which will lead to better medical information for everyone in the Northwest.

Starting in 1999, a type of fungi that can infect both humans and animals began to appear on Vancouver Island in British Columbia. Previously *Cryptococcus gattii* was only found in tropical and subtropical regions, so its sudden colonization of the Northwest was unprecedented and potentially serious. In 2004, the fungus began to



*C. gattii* spores. Picture source: Joseph Heitman, Duke University Medical Center.

show up in human patients on the mainland of British Columbia and has since spread south into Washington. By 2010, there were many confirmed cases of *C. gattii* in Washington and Oregon and one confirmed case each in Idaho and California.

The CDC has created a surveillance program to track this disease. In addition to receiving reports from area hospitals when a patient is diagnosed with *C. gattii*, the CDC also collects samples from the environment to see how prevalent the fungus has become in the ecosystem, and tracks reports from the veterinary community. By 2010, 52 veterinary cases had been reported to the CDC from many different species of animals including cats and dogs.

The ACCES Blood Bank has teamed up with the CDC to help track exposure to this emerging pathogen. People and their animals can be exposed to *C. gattii* without ever developing an infection. Even though they never got sick from the fungus, their immune systems will create antibodies to *C. gattii*. This way the body is prepared to battle the pathogen if it is encountered again.

The blood bank is donating canine and feline plasma samples to the CDC for testing. The CDC will be performing antibody titers to see if the plasma donors created antibodies to *C. gattii*. The presence and amount of antibodies measured can give scientists information about whether the animal was ever exposed to *C. gattii* and how strongly their immune system reacted.

The plasma samples sent in are from units that could not be used for transfusion. Sometimes, an animal may have too much fat in their blood stream, causing the plasma donated to be lipemic. Some

dogs are carriers for a genetic disease called von Willebrand's syndrome and the blood bank cannot guarantee that their plasma has adequate clotting factors. Occasionally, plasma from a donation has hemolyzed (or broken up) blood in it which cannot be separated adequately. In all of these instances, the plasma previously had to be discarded. Now it can be put to use helping government scientists track an emerging disease that could affect anyone living in our area.

For more information please visit the CDC's website at [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov) and search for *Cryptococcus gattii*.

-By Allison Dietz, LVT

## What is *Cryptococcus gattii*?

*C. gattii* is a kind of fungus. It belongs to the same genus of fungi as *Cryptococcus neoformans* a pathogenic fungus that usually attacks people with HIV. *C. gattii* is a concerning pathogen because it can cause disease in people and animals with healthy immune systems.

### What happens when someone is infected with *C. gattii*?

Although infection with *C. gattii* is rare, it usually colonizes the nose, then causes lung infection, with secondary respiratory symptoms. Sometimes it can also invade the nervous system or cause a skin infection. It causes similar problems when it infects other mammals.

### How did *C. gattii* become endemic to the Northwest?

*C. gattii* was only found in Papua New Guinea and Australia before 1999. No one is sure how it traveled to Vancouver Island, B.C. but some scientists believe that its ability to colonize the Pacific Northwest should be blamed on global warming. *C. gattii* spores can generally be found on trees and in the soil of colonized areas.

### Can I get *C. gattii* from my dog or cat?

No. There is no evidence to suggest that an infection of *C. gattii* is transmissible between two people or a person and their pet. People who have a *C. gattii* infection picked up the fungus from the natural environment.

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