

[News](#) > [Airmen donate blood, save lives at Hurlburt drive](#)

Airmen donate blood, save lives at Hurlburt drive

Posted 12/16/2009 Updated 12/16/2009 [Email story](#) [Print story](#)

[SHARE](#)

by Airman 1st Class Joe McFadden
1st Special Operations Wing Public Affairs

12/16/2009 - **HURLBURT FIELD, Fla.** -- Dozens of Airmen and civilians rolled up their sleeves, braved needles and received complimentary aprons and cookies while participating in a blood drive outside Hurlburt Field's commissary Dec. 15.

The event, held in a specialized bus called "Old Glory," was coordinated by members of the 1st Special Operations Medical Operations Squadron and Northwest Florida Blood Services.

Staff Sgt. Sanchez Thomas, 1st SOMOS, was in charge of setting up the drive and making sure it did not conflict with base exercises or existing drives at other locations.

She called donating blood another way for Airmen to serve their community.

"We're used to looking out for each other and giving back to those who support us," she said. "Many of these donations will go to local hospitals and those who most need them."

Sergeant Thomas said the drive was a success and exceeded the goal of 35 units well before it ended.

Latina Sabb, Northwest Florida Blood Services, oversaw the operations on Old Glory, which is used on more than 60 drives a year.

She described the act of giving blood as being a "silent donor," meaning that many people do not see the immediate impact of their donation. She said a single pint of blood can save the lives of three adults or nine newborn infants.

"We really depend on servicemembers to donate because they often are the ones who contribute the most," she said. "This is a volunteer effort. People are not paid or obligated to do this. This is a great opportunity to help out and it's always appreciated."

The donation process was about 20 minutes long, with filling out the medical questionnaire taking the most time. On average, the actual blood drawing took between five and seven minutes.

One of the donors was Senior Airman Troy McKee, 1st Special Operations Logistics Readiness Squadron. He said he was glad to help out any way he could.

"I'm in a giving mood this time of year," he said.

Staff Sgt. Errol Catanes, 25th Intelligence Squadron, said he donates often but had more reasons for donating than the free cookies and juice.

"Early as a child, I lost a lot of blood in an accident and depended on donations. This is sort of my way to give back and help someone else who needed it like I did then," he said.

Photos

1 of 4



Senior Airman Troy McKee, 1st Special Operations Logistic Readiness Squadron, donates blood to Northwest Florida Blood Services during a blood drive held at Hurlburt Field Dec. 15. The NWFBS exceeded their goal of obtaining 35 units of blood. (Air Force photo by Senior Airman Julianne Showalter)

[Download HiRes](#)

Inside Hurlburt

Search

[Find it](#)

[Advanced Search](#)

[View All RSS](#)

Comments

No comments yet.

[Add a comment](#)