

# UNC Hospitals Seeks Donors Sprint Worker Suffers Injury From Explosion

UNC Hospitals says it needs 12 pints of platelets a day to safely treat patients but is averaging about five pints.

By KAREY WUTKOWSKI  
Assistant University Editor

UNC Hospitals is receiving less than half the plasma and platelet donations it needs and, as a result, is having to treat patients with a less-safe product.

Because most students left the area for the summer, donations have dropped to dangerously low levels, and the hospitals are having trouble replenishing their reserves, said Laura Shook-Marino, donor recruiter of UNC Hospitals' Platelet and Plasma Program. Shook-Marino said the hospitals need 12 pints of platelets a day. While the program is usually able to supply that amount, lately only four or five donors are providing a pint, or unit, of platelets daily.

When the program has enough donations, it tries to match a donor with a patient so the patient is exposed to only one person's blood.

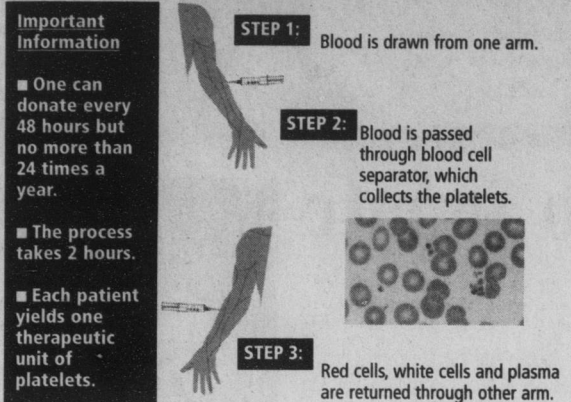
But when the program faces shortages, the hospitals are no longer able to abide by this ideal procedure. "What happens when we get down to four units of platelets is that we start splitting platelets among patients," Shook-Marino said.

Platelets, which Shook-Marino likened to an internal bandage, promote clotting, while plasma helps carry the solid cells and platelets throughout the body.

To get the number of donations back up to the needed levels, Shook-Marino

## Wanted: Your Platelets

UNC Hospitals is experiencing a shortage of platelet and plasma donations to give to its patients. Here, the process of platelet extraction is broken down.



said the program is focusing on students, who usually constitute 30 percent of its donors. The rest come from community members and hospital employees.

"(Students) have a real sense of community, and a lot of them have donated whole blood in high school," she said.

And Shook-Marino said many students would rather donate for free than go to a center like Sera-Tec Biologicals Limited Partnership, which pays donors for their plasma. "For a blood product to be transfused to a patient, it has to be a volunteer donor, and I think students realize this."

The process of platelet and plasma donation differs from whole blood donation because it is a "give-and-take process."

"We take out a little blood and spin out the platelets and plasma," Shook-Marino said. "Red blood cells are returned to (donors)."

Shook-Marino said the process only takes one hour to donate plasma and two hours for platelets. "We can't offer payments, but we can offer T-shirts."

The University Editor can be reached at [udesk@unc.edu](mailto:udesk@unc.edu).

The Associated Press

YOUNGSVILLE, N.C. — A small explosion injured a computer support worker at a Sprint administrative office building Tuesday morning, and authorities found a second suspect device a few hours later.

The explosion occurred at 7:40 a.m., before most employees had arrived for the day. Sprint spokesman Tom Matthews said it happened in a third-floor hallway, in or near the doorway of a break room.

A second device was found in the same area a few hours later by a bomb squad from the State Bureau of Investigation, Franklin County Sheriff Robert Redmond said.

The item was small, about the size of a fountain pen, Redmond said he was told by other investigators. It wasn't immediately known whether it, too, was

an explosive.

Bomb squad workers were attempting to drag the item down a hall and into an elevator to the first floor, where it would be moved by a robot to the lawn outside the building and possibly detonated, Redmond and sheriff's Lt. Nelson Ross said.

The injured man, Chris McMillan, whose age was not immediately known, had shrapnel wounds to his hand, Ross said.

He was speaking to investigators at WakeMed hospital in Raleigh, about 20 miles to the south, where he was in satisfactory condition.

Redmond said the item that exploded "appears to be a piece of metal tubing" that looked like copper.

The explosion was small, Ross said. "Witnesses have described it as sounding like a gunshot. It's not something that would not even break windows."

Redmond said authorities had no theories as to a motive. He said he would contact police in Chapel Hill, about 40 miles west of Raleigh, to investigate any possible link with a suspected pipe bomb found Monday on the UNC-Chapel Hill campus.

About 600 people work at the Sprint facility, handling marketing, public relations, human resources and similar tasks primarily for Sprint's operations in North Carolina, and to varying degrees for Virginia, South Carolina and Tennessee.

McMillan works in computer support, said Steve Parrott, Sprint's state executive for North Carolina and South Carolina.

Several hundred employees arrived for work after the explosion and were kept outside the building by police. After a few hours, they were sent home for the day.

## Charges Filed in Deaths of 2 Pilots

The Associated Press

HOPLAND, Calif. — A man was arrested on suspicion of murder Tuesday in the deaths of two pilots whose firefighting planes collided while battling a blaze that may have broken out at an illegal drug lab in the woods.

Frank Brady, 50, of Redwood City was jailed without bail. A second, unidentified suspect also was arrested.

The two planes collided Monday evening near Hopland, about 100 miles north of San Francisco, while dumping fire retardant on the 250-acre wildfire, killing retired Navy veteran Larry Groff, 55, and Lars Stratte, 45.

Murder charges filed in connection with a wildfire are extremely rare.

"We are investigating whether this

fire was started as a result of a drug lab operation," Bob Ceriani of California Department of Forestry told The Press Democrat in Santa Rosa. The Mendocino County Sheriff's Narcotics Task Force was called to investigate, the newspaper reported Tuesday.

The pilots were flying alone in the Korean War-era Grumman S-2 planes when they clipped each other during a pass over the fire.

One plane broke apart and plummeted to earth, exploding on impact, said Jeff Anderson, who lives near Hopland and saw the collision from the deck of his home. The other crippled plane continued on briefly and crashed less than a quarter-mile away.

The cause of the collision was under investigation.

The blaze has destroyed at least 12 structures and threatened more than a dozen others. It was 60 percent contained Tuesday.

The two pilots were employed by San Joaquin Helicopters of Delano.

The National Transportation Safety Board lists six accidents since 1995 involving aircraft operated by the company. Of those, a 1998 crash resulted in the death of an air tanker pilot.

A call to San Joaquin Helicopters was not immediately returned.

In Southern California, authorities were investigating whether an arsonist started an 1,800-acre brush fire that destroyed at least one house in the hills north of Los Angeles and burned within a few feet of several luxury homes. The fire was largely contained Tuesday.

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### Campus Calendar

**Today**

6 p.m. — **Campaign to End the Death Penalty** will hold a candlelight vigil in the Pit for soon-to-be executed Ronnie Frye.

7 p.m. — **Kappa Psi Pharmaceutical Fraternity** is holding a pharmacy information session with pharmacy faculty in Beard Hall Lounge.

Refreshments will be provided.

8:30 p.m. — **Bounce**, UNC's humor magazine, is having an interest meeting for potential writers, artists, cartoonists, photographers, graphic designers, online techies and advertising recruiters in Union 206.

There also are openings on the editorial board for the advertising editor and distribution manager.

Bounce also is accepting submissions for the September issue. The deadline is Sept. 6.

**Thursday**

5 p.m. — **Blank Canvas** will have a general interest meeting in Union 205.

8 p.m. — **Campaign to End the Death Penalty** will hold a general interest meeting in Union 206.

The Daily Tar Heel

P.O. Box 3257, Chapel Hill, NC 27515  
Katie Hunter, Editor, 962-4086  
Advertising & Business, 962-1163  
News, Features, Sports, 962-0245  
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