

Sharing Meeting Slated

"Risk Factors of Heart diologist Henry Thomason, Disease" will be the topic of MD. will lead the meeting this month's Sharing and Thursday at 7 p.m. in the Caring meeting for heart pa- Gaston Memorial Hospital tents and their families. Car- classroom B.

Red Cross To Test Blood

In an effort to further protect the safety of the community's blood supply, American Red Cross Blood Services, Carolinas Region is conducting a new test on all blood donations to reduce the risk of post-transfusion non-A non-B hepatitis.

Hepatitis is one of the most serious post-transfusion complications, say Red Cross officials. Despite routine screening for hepatitis B, post-transfusion hepatitis develops in approximately 7 percent of blood recipients. Of this amount, 90 percent is the non-A non-B type.

The new test, begun October 7 on all blood donations given in the Carolinas Region, measures the amount of alanine aminotransferase (ALT), a liver enzyme, in the blood. An elevated ALT level could mean the blood may transmit non-A non-B hepatitis to a recipient. The laboratory test is conducted at Red Cross blood centers on the sample tube given at the same time as the blood donation.

"There is no single test to detect non-A non-B hepatitis," said Jerry Squires, Ph.D., M.D., director of Blood Services Carolinas Region. "Through this 'surrogate' test, however, we'll be able to reduce the incidence of transfusion-associated non-A non-B hepatitis by 29 percent.

The ALT test is called a "surrogate" test because it actually measures a symptom of hepatitis B, Dr. Squires said. The test is used because studies have shown that elevated ALT levels are associated with the transmission of non-A non-B hepatitis.

Because ALT levels can be elevated for other reasons besides exposure to non-A non-B hepatitis, Squires said that a number of current donors may not be able to continue giving blood. "We're expecting about 1.5 percent of donations to be unusable because of elevated ALT levels," he said. "This may upset some long-time donors who may, indeed, be risk-free of non-A non-B hepatitis.

"It's an imperfect test for measuring this type of hepatitis, but we're erring on the side of safety for the blood recipient."

Squires added that by the end of 1986, the Red Cross will implement another test, called anti-hepatitis B core as

tigen, which will be another surrogate test to protect the blood supply from non-A non-B hepatitis.

The Red Cross predicts that once both tests are in place, the risk of transfusion associated non-A non-B hepatitis will be reduced by 60 percent, and about 3 percent of donations will not be used because of positive test results, Squires said.

When positive test results are found, donors are notified in confidence by mail.

American Red Cross Blood Services, Carolinas Region is comprised of 56 counties in the two Carolinas. More than 1,100 blood donations are needed daily to meet patient needs in 90 area hospitals.

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Crystal Celebrates Birthday

Crystal Shaw Bell celebrated her seventh birthday October 10 with a Halloween birthday party.

She is the daughter of Cindy and Chris Bell and granddaughter of Betty and Jack Robbs and Mr. and Mrs. Jonas Bell, all of Kings Mountain.



CRYSTAL BELL

Todd Has Birthday October 13

Todd Johnson, son of John and Cathy Johnson, celebrated his 9th birthday on Oct. 13th with a party at Kate's Skating Rink on Saturday with friends and family.

Todd has an older brother, Shane.

Grandparents are Gene and Joyce Grigg of Shelby and Nellie Cartee of Bessemer City. Great-grandparents are Gladys Elmore of Lawndale, Carrie Grigg of Kings Mountain and Laura Camp of Shelby.



TODD JOHNSON

Christopher Lee Bennett Celebrates Fourth Birthday

Christopher Lee Bennett, son of Mike and Karla Bennett, celebrated his fourth birthday on Saturday, October 4.

Family members were served barbecue and trimmings followed by a Big Bird cake with ice cream.

Christopher is the grandson of Mr. and Mrs. Doris Bennett, Mr. and Mrs. Wayne Russell and Mr. and Mrs. Carl Bell. He is the great-grandson of Mrs. Edna Hord and Mr. and Mrs. Lloyd David.

Christopher has a younger sister, Katie Bennett.



CHRISTOPHER BENNETT

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