

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Fred Jones Devotes Time to Dispel Myths About Donating Blood **Fred and Friends Campaign to Increase African-American Donor Population In Our Community**



Founder of the Memphis Southern Heritage Classic and Lifeblood MythBuster, FRED JONES, pictured above as he donates blood for the second time.

(Memphis, Tenn.)— Once hesitant about donating blood, founder and producer of the Memphis Southern Heritage Classic Fred Jones is now a true Lifeblood “MythBuster” and blood donation advocate for his community. **After donating to Lifeblood just once, Jones decided to encourage others to give blood by helping dispel some of the most common myths that prevent African Americans from becoming Lifeblood donors.** His first blood donation event – “Fred and Friends” – took place March 29 at Lifeblood’s Paul W. Barret, Jr. Donor Center in Midtown Memphis and collected a total of 50 units of blood to help patients in our community hospitals.

“This event is only the beginning – and one of many to come,” said Jones. “There is so much potential in the African-American community to educate and excite each other about the truth and importance of giving blood – and with events such as this, we can begin this process.”

Nearly 60 percent of the blood collected in our community is used to treat African-American patients. Because African Americans have rare blood types traits found only in their population, they provide – in most instances – the best match for other African Americans in need of blood. **That is why the local need for African-American blood donors is so great.**

Fred Jones hosted “Fred and Friends” as part of Lifeblood’s focus on educating the community about the myths surrounding blood donation. Because patients in our area hospitals and treatment centers rely on blood from Lifeblood’s volunteer donors, the need for volunteer donors who know the real facts about blood donation is crucial. Some of the blood donation myths Lifeblood and Fred Jones continue to dispel include: (1.) Donating blood is extremely painful. **In fact, donors feel only a slight pinch and just for a few seconds.** (2.) Blood donors who are paid for donations are still helping patients in need. **Actually because of FDA regulations, only blood collected from volunteer donors can be used for transfusion purposes.** (3.) Donating once a year maintains a stable community blood supply. **Realistically, because our community uses blood at twice the national average, blood donors are eligible and urged to donate every 56 days.**

“Becoming a Lifeblood MythBuster is easy,” said Jones. **Individuals interested in donating blood and saving lives should contact Lifeblood at 901.522.8585.**

About Lifeblood:

A nonprofit organization, Lifeblood is our community’s only volunteer, full-service blood center, and is this area’s leading provider of blood and blood components to local hospitals. Each year, hospitals in our community require about 104,000 units of blood to treat patients in their care, and Lifeblood’s volunteer donors provide just more than half that amount. The rest must be imported from other volunteer blood centers throughout the country. Only dedicated individuals donating more frequently can help our community close that gap and stabilize the local blood supply.

Individuals who are in generally good health, at least 17 years old and weigh at least 110 pounds may donate blood at any of Lifeblood’s 12 donor centers or during numerous mobile drives hosted throughout the area. Please call **1.888.lifeblood** or visit **www.lifeblood.org** to find out more about donating blood and saving lives in our community.

give blood. give life.
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Photo Captions

"Fred and Friends" Blood Donation Event – March 29, Lifeblood's Paul W. Barret, Jr. Donor Center



(LEFT) – Midtown Memphis resident and Peabody Memphis employee Phoebe Walker is assisted by Lifeblood's Pat Lang as she donates blood with Fred Jones March 29.



(LEFT) – Downtown resident E. Duke Herenton watches Lifeblood's Barbara Bowen as she begins preparation to draw blood. "I highly support Mr. Jones' efforts, said Herenton. "It's as simple as the sign outside – it really is 'Life' blood."



(ABOVE) – Memphian Kathy Winston is all smiles as she donates blood for her community with Fred Jones March 29.

(RIGHT) – Midtown resident Darrow Calhoun relaxes and reads about Lifeblood as he donates. "The need for blood is there," said Calhoun. "And we must do our part as African Americans and donate blood for our community."



(ABOVE) – A full donor room March 29 at Lifeblood's Paul W. Barret, Jr. Donor Center as community members come to donate with Fred Jones as part of a blood donation initiative to dispel the common myths surrounding blood donation.