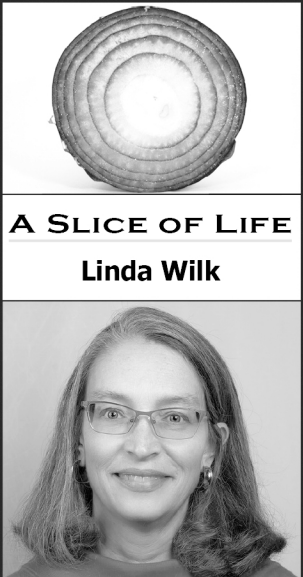


# Donating blood isn’t as hard as once thought

I admit I ignored the phone calls for months. Our land line phone would indicate it was the American Red Cross. Instead of listening to the voice mail or calling them back, I just ignored the call. I had heard that the pandemic has caused blood shortages and figured the call was asking for blood donations.

I suspected my blood type was O Positive which can be in higher demand. Donating blood is not something I have ever done and something I was not sure I wanted to start. I know it is important. I just was not sure how much it would hurt. How long it would take or how I would feel after donating. So, I justified not doing it because of my work schedule and busyness of life. Then one day I decided I could make no more excuses for not donating blood. I started to think about the importance of giving of myself



**A SLICE OF LIFE**  
**Linda Wilk**  
in a time when so many have sacrificed so much for me. Those essential workers, nurses and doctors who are on the front line, while I am able to stay safe. I decided to just see if there would be any blood donation locations that fit my schedule and found there was one to be held at the Marion Public Library on Dec. 23. Both convenient and timely.

After signing up, I felt good about myself – doing a humanitarian gesture. I even got my three daughters to also sign up. Then, the day before we were to donate, we received an email that the blood drive had been cancelled due to a lack of volunteers caused by COVID-19. Another thing robbed of by the virus. Yet not to be dissuaded I searched and found another blood drive at College Wesleyan Church scheduled for Dec. 29. While my daughters could not all donate that time, Marissa set up a time two hours before mine. The day of the donation, I followed the suggested protocol, having a healthy breakfast and lunch, a snack of yogurt a couple hours before I donated and plenty of water. As I entered the church and walked into the room where the blood drive was taking place, I felt out of place, as I was asked if I had

taken the rapid pass answering the 50-item questionnaire. Since I had not, I was asked to do it then. As I clicked through each screening question, I realized just how selective the American Red Cross needed to be with prospective donors. I did not realize all the medications that would keep you from donating blood on a particular day or at all. I remember my mom always talking about eating a steak or other iron enriching meal the night before she donated blood. And, then I realized that since her stroke and the addition of a blood thinning medication, among other medications, she would no longer be eligible to give blood. At that moment it became that much more important for me to roll up my sleeve and commit to giving blood as often as I could for my mom. It is almost as if I am re-

placing the shortage left by her no longer being able to do a deed that meant so much to her. And, as I looked away as the nurse stuck the needle in my vein and started the procedure, I realized just how selfish I had been all these years, when I could have been giving blood. That was further compounded when my neighbor Truman Stepp walked in to donate blood, announcing how he has given blood

every time he is eligible since he was 18 years old – Truman is 72 years old. So, for any of you contemplating whether or not you have the time, the inclination or gumption to give blood, I would encourage you to take the time. For me, the actual procedure took about five minutes. The pain was minimal, and the after-donation effects were non-existent. And the feeling I have of giving of myself is something I take pride in.

## Mask-Up

the beginning of the year, there was that sense of [togetherness,]” Jackson said. “But as it’s dragged on, that has waned a bit. [This campaign] gives us some renewed energy. “We’ll never know, one way or the other, if the campaign impacted people. But I think that if we change the hearts and minds of one or two people, then it was worth it.” Every business owner that Jackson approached and reached out to personally participated in the campaign. “Our business leaders understand that if we want to get back to any sense of normalcy, whatever that means, we have to be doing what we can to stop

COVID,” Jackson said. Participants submitted a high-resolution headshot and an answer to the question, “Why do you wear a mask?” Marion Boys Basketball Coach James Blackmon, Grant County Family YMCA Executive Director Steve Wright, Grant County Sheriff Reggie Nevels, and Grant County EMA Director Bob Jackson were just a few of the Grant County leaders that took part in the initiative. The campaign has been met with positive feedback, as members of the community have praised Jackson and her team for the work they have done. “I think that’s why it has taken off the way it did, because we already had the

## continued from Page 1

buy-in from those folks,” Jackson said. “We haven’t seen any negative feedback at all, really. I think people understand the importance. I’ve heard from a lot of people that they are seeing people wear masks that they hadn’t seen before.” The campaign is still ongoing, and those who want to be a part of the campaign can reach out to Jackson at her email, kylie@marion-chamber.org. As a reminder, the only requirements are a high-resolution headshot and the answer to the question, “Why do you wear a mask?” While there is no expiration date at this time, Jackson hopes that the campaign will continue on until the health crisis is over.

“We are still working on that,” Jackson said. “We are working with the commissioners. There may be some CARES Act money available to make this more widely viewed so it isn’t just a social media campaign. If we were able to expand it, we would want to make it a long-term campaign until we are through this.”

### Indiana History Answers

1. E   2. A   3. D   4. C   5. B

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## Deaths

**Barbara J. Mundt 1931-2020**  
Funeral services were held at Armes-Hunt Funeral Home, Marion, on Thursday, Dec. 31 at 11 am. Burial followed at Grant Memorial Park.

**Alfred “Butch” D. Thornburgh 1940-2020**  
Funeral services were held at Armes-Hunt Funeral Home, Upland, on Saturday, Jan. 2 at 1 pm. Burial followed at Jefferson Cemetery.

**Stephanie Rae Martin 1977-2020**  
Funeral services were held

at Armes-Hunt Funeral Home, Marion, on Monday, Jan. 4 at 11 am. Burial followed at Converse Cemetery.

**Kory “KP” Lee Pratt 1985-2020**  
Funeral services were held at Armes-Hunt Funeral Home, Upland, on Saturday, Jan. 3 at 1 pm. Burial followed at Jefferson Cemetery.

**Richard D. Wolf 1940-2020**  
A memorial service will be held on Friday, Jan. 8, at 11 am in the Chapel at Grant Memorial Park Cemetery.

**Khloe V. Martin 2002-2020**  
Funeral services were held at Fairmount Friends Church, Fairmount, on Wednesday, Jan. 6 at 6 pm.

**Kenneth Jesse Barker 1931-2020**  
Funeral services were held at Raven-Choate Funeral Home, Marion, on Thursday, Dec. 31 at 12:30 pm. Burial followed at Marion National Cemetery.

**Kenneth A. Gillespie 1957-2020**  
A Celebration of Life will be held at Raven-Choate Funeral Home, Marion, on Saturday, Jan. 9 at 1 pm.

# THE NEWS HERALD

P.O. Box 1167, Marion, IN 46952 • 260-563-8326  
[www.newsherald.org](http://www.newsherald.org)

**Don L. Hurd, Publisher**  
*president@hoosiermediagroup.com*

Ed Breen, **Reporter**  
Alan Miller, **Reporter**

Sean Douglas, **Sports Editor**  
[sports@newsherald.org](mailto:sports@newsherald.org)

**Accounting and Legal Ads** - Julie Loehmer, [accounting@thepaperofwabash.com](mailto:accounting@thepaperofwabash.com)  
**Sales** - Arlene Long, [along@thepaperofwabash.com](mailto:along@thepaperofwabash.com)

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