Rotary Blood Drive
Valentine Nebraska

Valentine Nebraska has a long history of blood donation as reported below:

Valentine - a place unlike anything you've seen

Editors: Cumlet, Haagen P., Ellen Mack

Red Cross workers have to travel 260 miles (420 kilometers), round trip, by car to come to the small city of Valentine, Nebraska, USA, when the Valentine Rotary Club has a blood drive every two months. "We are out in the sticks, a long way from anywhere," says William R. "Bob" Stetter, member of Valentine Rotary Club and serving as Governor 2007-08 for District 5630.

Valentine - nicknamed America's Heart City - has a population of less than 3,000 inhabitants. In spite of the distance, the American Red Cross sends personnel to Valentine to carry out the professional bleed of the donors and bring the blood back to the city of North Platte in neighboring Lincoln County, where the nearest blood bank is located. This was before Kimber McGinley ever needed blood. Her mother was a donor early on with no idea that her daughter at age 19 months would be diagnosed with a childhood cancer and need blood during treatment. (see related story)

Valentine Rotary Club began sponsoring local blood drives in January 2003, and by May, 2008, 2,595 units of blood had been collected on behalf of the American Red Cross since January 16, 2003, the tally showed. At the time of this writing, the next Rotary sponsored blood drive was scheduled for March 5, 2009.

The blood drive in Valentine "has almost become a social gathering. Donors love getting together with their friends and neighbors, giving blood and sitting down to visit over a cup of orange juice, and a sandwich or a cookie. It is a great way to see old and new friends," Bob Stetter explains.

Pictures:
Bob Stetter donating blood
Jessica McGinley giving blood with Kimber at her side

Parts of this story are already posted on http://www.ourblooddrive.org/