By Jan Rahn
Managing Editor

The American Red Cross was in Grant on Tuesday—a timely collection—since January has been designated as National Blood Donor Month.

The donors who participated in Monday's bloodmobile have joined millions across the U.S. who have helped and continue to help ensure a stable blood supply for patients in need.

Tuesday's quota was 65 donors.

The bloodmobile is held five times during the year at the New Life Fellowship Church in Grant and is manned with nearly 18 volunteers who help coordinate it, set up tables and equipment, clean up the fellowship hall where it's held, and provide nutritional snacks/meals for donors.

For over 40 years, Grant has taken part in this important lifesaving event.

Two cookbooks were to be given away in a random drawing by the Area 14 CattleWomen during Tuesday's bloodmobile.

According to coordinator Sandy Glenn, some donors with appointments for this week's bloodmobile had called on Monday to cancel. Glenn joins coordinators Mary Kent and Bonnie Taubenheim in setting up appointments and seeing to it that the bloodmobile in the community comes together and progresses smoothly.

Last minute cancellations are typical this time of year. January is a difficult time for donations because of weather conditions and due to people being sick and unable to donate.

Criteria that must bellowed in giving blood include being 17 years of age (16 with parental permission in some states), weighing at least 110 pounds, and being in generally good health.

Facts About Blood Supply

• The number of blood donations collected in the U.S. in a year: 16 million (2006).
• The number of blood donors in the U.S. in a year: 9.5 million (2006).
• The number of patients who receive blood in the U.S. in a year: 5 million (2006).

• Share of the U.S. population eligible to give blood: Less than 38 percent.
• Blood cannot be manufactured–it can only come from generous donors.
• Type O-negative blood (red cells) can be transfused to patients of all blood types. It is always in great demand and often in short supply.
• Type AB-positive plasma can be transfused to patients of all other blood types. AB plasma is also usually in short supply.

Facts About Donating

• The actual blood donation typically takes less than 10-12 minutes. The entire process, from the time of arrival to the time a donor leaves takes about an hour and 15 min.
• The average adult has about 10 pints of blood in their body. Roughly 1 pint is given during a donation.
• A healthy donor may donate red blood cells every 56 days, or double red cells every 112 days.
• A healthy donor may donate platelets as few as seven days apart, but a maximum of 24 times a year.
• All donated blood is tested for HIV, hepatitis B and C, syphilis and other infectious diseases before it can be released to hospitals.
• Information given to the American Red Cross during the donation process is confidential. It may not be released without permission except as directed by law.

About the Red Cross

• The American Red Cross blood program started in 1940.
• The American Red Cross supplies approximately 40 percent of the nation's blood supply.
• The Red Cross provides blood for patients in nearly 3,000 hospitals across the U.S.
• The Red Cross makes blood available to any patient who needs it—patients are not required to find donors to replace the blood they use (a practice common in Europe and some U.S. blood banks) allowing the patient and their family to focus on recovery.
• Eighty percent of the blood donations given to the Red Cross are collected at mobile blood drives set up in communities.
• The American Red Cross works with more than 50,000 blood drive sponsors each year to hold more than 200,000 blood drives.