

***By Jan Schultz***

***The Imperial Republican***

New Year's resolutions are often made to form good habits and reach new goals.

This year, the American Red Cross encourages people to resolve to help patients in need through regular blood donations.

Area residents will have two chances to do that next week, when the Red Cross Bloodmobile is in Imperial Thursday and Friday, Jan. 24-25.

Chase County Schools will host next Thursday's blood drive from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Contact coordinator Angie Paisley at the school, 308-882-4304, to schedule an appointment.

On Friday, Jan. 25, the Bloodmobile will return to Imperial and set up at the Zion Lutheran Church from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Coordinator is Karen Hayes, and she can be contacted at 308-882-5645.

This year, organizers said appointments can be made with either coordinator for either day.

Donation goal for the school's drive is 70 units, which is rather high, Paisley noted, with the area in the middle of influenza season, but she encourages healthy people to show up.

"Kids are really pushing the students to donate in honor of Makenna (Wallin)," she said.

For the Jan. 25 drive, Hayes said the goal is 55 units. Pizza and sandwiches will be served at lunchtime.

Hayes said they are encouraging O-neg donors willing to give double red cell donations.

As the winter season continues, blood donations are especially needed, Red Cross officials say, since donations typically decline this time of year due to the weather and illness.

January is designated as National Blood Donor Month to educate Americans about the importance of regular blood donations.

Every day, about 44,000 pints of blood are needed in the U.S. to help treat trauma victims, surgery patients, organ transplant recipients, premature babies and cancer patients.

There are nearly four million declared blood donors in the U.S. Individuals who are at least 17 years of age (16 with parental consent in some states), weigh at least 110 pounds and are in generally good health may be eligible to donate blood.