

The Battalion FEATURES

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Plasma sales pep up pint-size budgets 'Blood money' unpopular with parents

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Despite what your broke friends tell you, there's plenty of money circulation. Just ask the many AKM University students who are selling their veins for gain by selling plasma.

supplement a sparse income. Plasma Products, Inc. pays a donor \$10 for a pint of plasma and the donor can give two times in a seven day period. The procedure usually lasts between one and two hours, depending on how crowded it is. "The first time I went I was real nervous," said Ann Baker, a graduate student in soil and crops sciences. "I sat next to this old pro. I saw his chart and he had donated

around 100 times in one year. He'd been donating the past three years and had roads on his arms." Baker began selling plasma about four months ago and said she uses the money for living expenses. "I needed the money at the time because I was changing departments and was only on half an assistantship," she said. Once she gets a full assistantship, she said she will stop giving.

"I don't think it's a good idea to keep it up," she said. "I've been tapering off and I'm fixing to stop. They use really big needles and you build up scar tissue."

The process of giving plasma is relatively simple. A pint of blood is drawn from the donor into a plastic bag and placed in a refrigerated centrifuge. The centrifuge spins the blood at a high rate of speed, which causes the blood cells to settle at the bottom of the plastic bag and the blood plasma floats to the top.

The blood plasma is drawn off the top and the blood cells are returned to the donor. The entire process is repeated so the donor gives a full pint of plasma.

Most students sleep or do homework while they wait, and feel it's time well invested.

Bobby Janik, a senior animal science major, has been selling plasma since February.

"I need the money for beer and other extracurricular activities," he said. "I give according to my monetary status at the moment. If I have money I don't give. If I have \$10 I'll give once a week. If I don't have any money, I'll give twice."

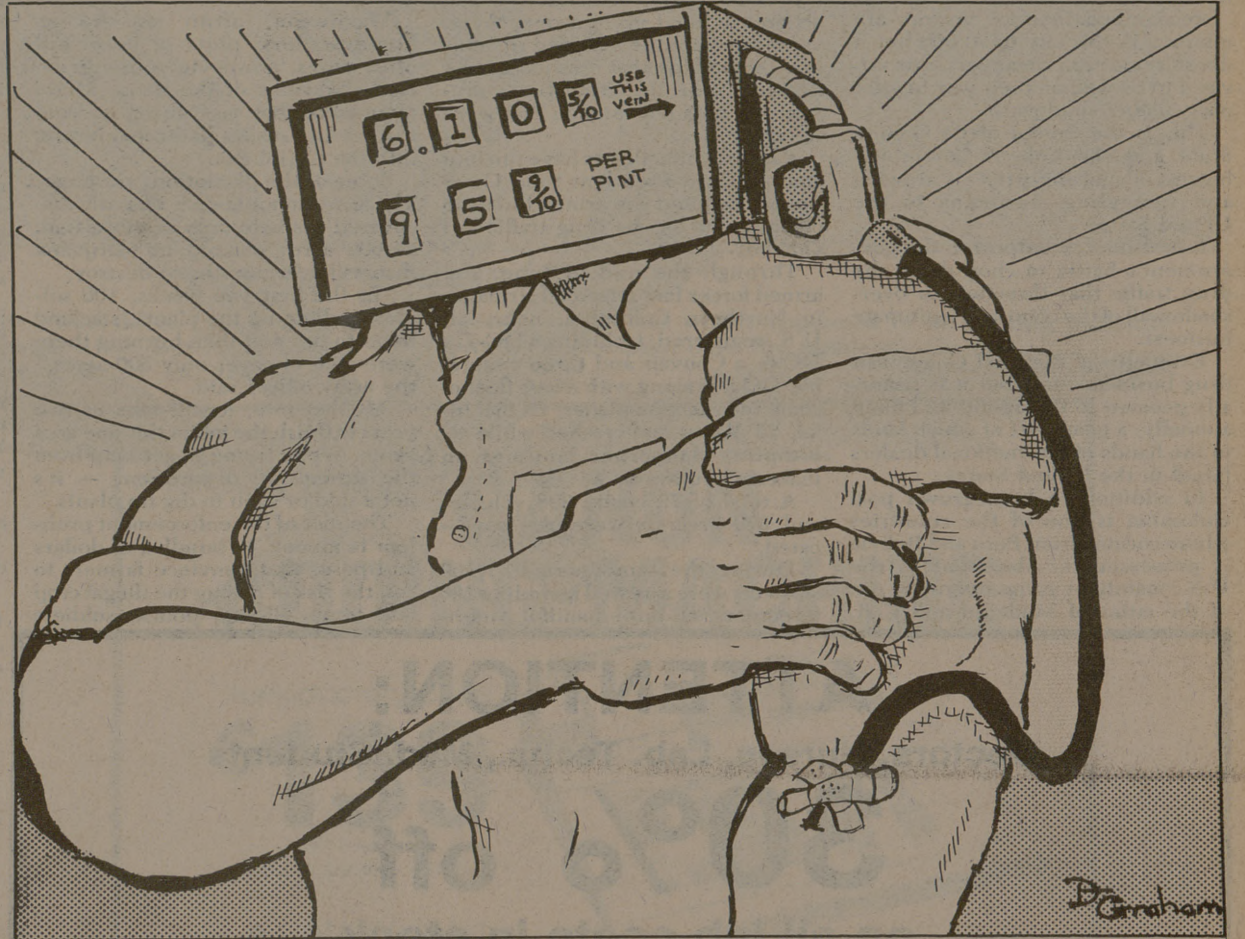
Like most students who sell their plasma, Janik said his parents don't approve of the idea.

"They told me to quit," he said. "They don't like it. My dad said if I needed money they'd give it to me, but I hate asking for it."

"My dad said it was like some derelict selling blood for money. He also thinks it might make my veins collapse. He doesn't know I'm giving right now. I usually let my arm heal up before I go home and I wear long-sleeve shirts."

Dr. Claude B. Goswick, director of University Health Center, said giving plasma is not harmful and there is no chance of veins collapsing.

"I have yet to see anyone harmed by giving plasma," Goswick said. "If



you give repeatedly you might get bad looking veins like a drug addict. Also, a blood clot can form in the vein but this isn't serious in the arm. In time it bores itself out."

One good long-term effect of giving plasma is that it stimulates the bone marrow to produce more blood, Goswick said.

Short-term effects may include a feeling of faintness, nausea or sweating.

The biggest problem with selling plasma is the remote chance a student might not get back his own blood cells, Goswick said.

"I know they're very busy over there and have a big centrifuge," he said. "I know they check and recheck and have the students check to make sure they get their own blood back. But it seems like sooner or later there might be a slip-up."

"I know of no instances where this

has happened, though." Receiving the wrong blood cells could cause a reaction like fever or chills, Goswick said. The foreign red blood cells would probably be destroyed.

Angus Brown, a senior biomedical science major, has been selling plasma twice a week since the beginning of summer. He said the money comes in handy for dog food, cigarettes and a little change.

Aerospace technology used to improve guitar

United Press International
PHILADELPHIA — Robert Vaccaro is an experienced guitarist, but even he would admit that the aerospace industry has as much to do with the quality of his music as his talent.

Vaccaro, an engineering student who was graduated recently from Drexel University, has taken some of the materials being tested in fighter jets and created a substitute for the wooden front, or "top," of a folk guitar.

The result is an instrument that will not warp and rarely goes out of tune, and has the potential of revolutionizing guitar-making.

Vaccaro's search for a strong substance that would provide the tonal quality of wood led him to the same combination of materials going into the Navy's advanced F-18 fighter.

It's a combination of graphite, a strong fibrous material, and epoxy. The graphite fibers are molded layer-by-layer and held together with the epoxy.

Vaccaro, 23, used stress analysis and other tests to come as close as possible to duplicating the grain in wood. After all tests were completed, "our top was as strong as the wood top," Vaccaro said.

Vaccaro, in a telephone interview from his home in Centerport, N.Y., said he became interested in learning whether graphite-epoxy could be used because wood and experienced guitar craftsmen are becoming increasingly rare.

"There are a lot of things working in this material's (graphite-epoxy) favor," he added. "It's being exten-

sively investigated by the Air Force and large automotive companies. And a lot of research is being done on how to make it more inexpensive."

John J. DeLuccia, one of Vaccaro's former professors, said further experiments could "lead to the world's finest sounding guitar."

He said continued improvements in such technical areas as height of the resonance frequency and degree of high frequency response could give the instrument a fuller and more brilliant sound than the best wooden guitars.

"And the real beauty of that is Robert's guitar could be mass produced, with each one having the same outstanding sound," said DeLuccia, whose family has been making guitars and string instruments for 150 years.

Vaccaro said if more research is done, a guitar with a graphite-epoxy top could be mass-produced for about \$100, and be able to compete with "medium-quality" guitars now on the market.

Vaccaro, who has been playing guitar for eight years, said only \$80 was spent for the 10 layers of graphite-epoxy used to modify his experimental guitar. But he noted that if he counted everything put into the guitar, including engineers' salaries, the guitar cost \$23,000. "That's the (cost of) the prototype with research behind it."

"A lot of people have talked to me about patenting it because we did so some original research and I am taking steps in that direction," he added.



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