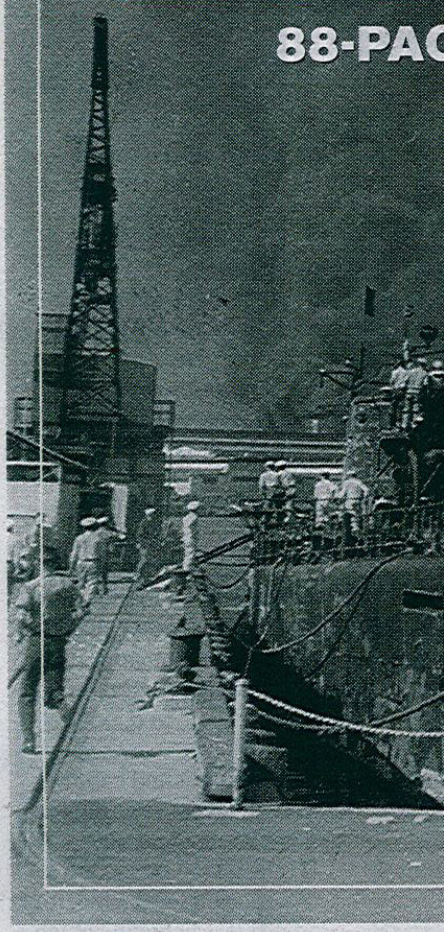


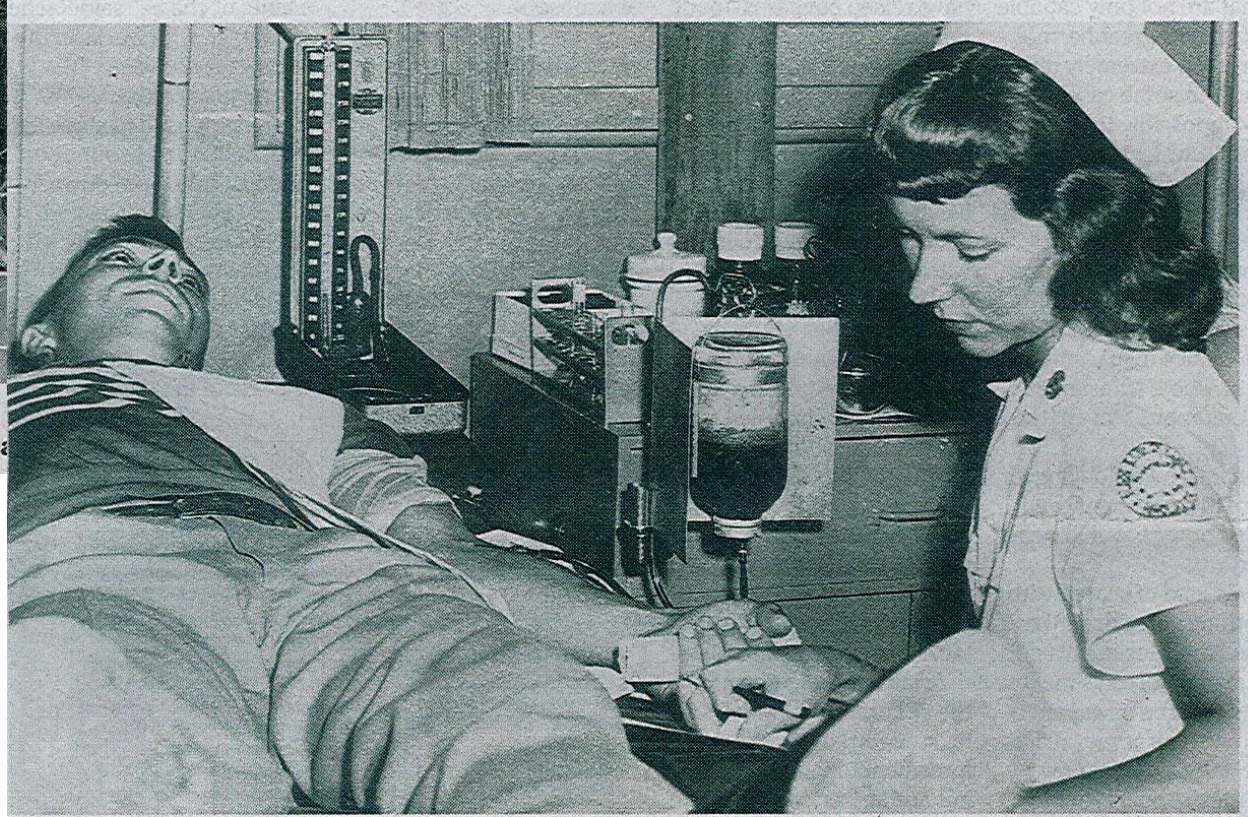
DAY OF INFAMY

88-PAGE COMMEMORATIVE EDITION COMING WEDNESDAY

Star Advertiser
The Pulse of Paradise



Sailors watched Pearl Harbor burn



COURTESY BLOOD BANK OF HAWAII

The Blood Bank of Hawaii celebrates in its 75th anniversary this year. Above, a soldier donates blood at the facility when it was on Queen Street.

BLOOD BANK HISTORY

Visionary doctor gave isles lifeline just in time for war



By Susan Essoyan
sessoyan@staradvertiser.com

>> Traffic on Kamehameha Highway to worsen as Pearl Harbor ceremony nears. B1

DONATE
The holiday season is a critical time for blood donations. To make an appointment, visit bbh.org or call 848-4770. Walk-ins are welcome.

The first time Dr. Forrest J. Pinkerton proposed creating a blood bank to prepare for a natural disaster or war, his colleagues at the Honolulu Chamber of Commerce ridiculed him. "I personally was accused of being a war-monger and alarmist, and trying deliberately to create hysteria," Pinkerton, a member of the National Defense Committee, wrote in his memoirs, recalling the November 1940 meeting. Still, the physician persevered, and in May 1941 the

Honolulu Blood & Plasma Center opened and did brisk business through the summer. But interest dwindled, and it shut down for lack of donors that November. Just 22 days later Pearl Harbor was attacked. The history of the blood bank is entwined with "that fateful day," a day that awoke the community to the need for a ready supply of the lifesaving substance. Thankfully, on Dec. 7, 1941, the 253 doses of plasma collected by the center were still usable. Please see **HISTORY**, A6

INSIDE



Elena Oglivie is the first freshman to be named All-State Player of the Year

SPORTS / C5

A Kauai cattle company purchase Oahu's only slaughterhouse

BUSINESS / B4

HISTORY

Continued from A1

safely stored at the Hawaiian Electric Cold Storage Plant, known as the "Ice House," on Bishop Street.

"Since that day the blood center has never closed its doors," said Todd Lewis, chief operating officer of Blood Bank of Hawaii, which is marking its 75th anniversary this year. "It's a fascinating history. What a visionary our founder was."

On the morning of Dec. 7, 1941, Pinkerton's phone rang with urgent news from headquarters that the island was under attack, asking him to get whatever plasma he had to Pearl Harbor and Hickam Field.

Before jumping into his Dodge to pick up and deliver the blood, he put in a call to the radio station, asking for doctors, staff, volunteers and donors to head to Queen's Hospital.

At its summertime peak the blood bank had drawn eight donors a day, four days a week. With Pearl Harbor that soared to 50 donors an hour, 10 hours a day, seven days a week, he wrote.

"Men and women waited in line for hours," Pinkerton recalled. "Sailors gave their few precious hours of liberty to wait their turn. Mothers asked strangers to hold small children and took their turns on the donor tables."

"Civilian defense workers from Pearl Harbor and



workers from Red Hill, red-eyed from long hours of work and welding, stopped by to donate before snatching a few hours' rest," he continued. "The whole crew from a Dutch ship came in a body to help their American allies, then hastened back to journey across a perilous sea."

"A crew of husky iron workers in their oily black work clothes came en masse. ... Dock workers and society folks waited in line to do their part. Sugar and pineapple plantation employees came direct from their work in the fields."

The Blood Bank of Hawaii today draws from a similar cross section of the community, with donors of all shapes, sizes, ages and ethnic groups, according to Maura Dolormente, director of marketing.

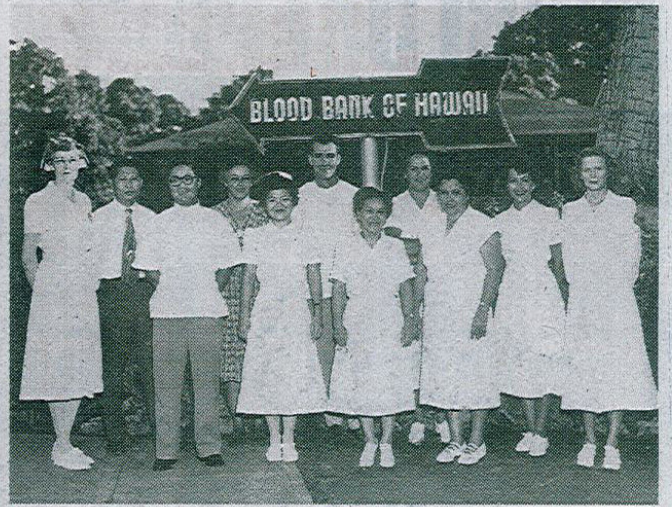
"You see every walk of life coming in and all with the same intent: saving lives," she said. "Our mantra is 'It's the blood on the shelves that saves lives.' It's not just for routine surgeries. You never know when there's going to be an emergency or a disaster."

The challenge is to keep that flow of donors constant, because blood is a

perishable product. Heading into the holiday season, a ready supply is critical. The need remains strong but donors get distracted.

"The holidays in particular are really tough to get those donors to come in because we are all so busy," Lewis said. "We've got the shopping, the parties, the actual holiday itself. But patients don't take a holiday when it comes to needing blood."

The blood bank, initially a wartime agency, soon transitioned into an independent nonprofit. Pinkerton, its founder and first director, was lauded by military



PHOTOS COURTESY BLOOD BANK OF HAWAII

At left, soldiers watched as a fellow soldier donated blood in the early years of the Blood Bank of Hawaii. Above, staffers lined up in front of the blood bank location on Queen Street.

and civilian authorities for his foresight.

"There is no question but that many Navy men are alive today who would have died but for the Blood Bank," Navy Secretary Frank Knox wrote in a letter to Pinkerton published in The Honolulu Advertiser in 1942. "Many more were spared great suffering. The Navy thanks you — and I want to add my own personal expression of gratitude for your activities. Well done!"

Pinkerton, who came to Hawaii in 1917 as an officer in the U.S. Army medical corps, died in 1974 after a long career as an eye, ear, nose and throat specialist, serving patients in Honolulu as well as those with Hansen's disease at Kalaupapa.

The blood bank he helped launch, one of the oldest in the country, has

served as a model for many others. It had 21,500 donors last year but must constantly recruit new ones. Just as Pinkerton did more than 75 years ago, when he chaired the Chamber of Commerce's public health committee, the staff of the blood bank needs to keep reaching out to be ready.

"A lot of times, people don't think about where blood comes from until they or a loved one needs it," Dolormente said. "They think it's just in the hospital. No, it comes from one source and one source only. You can't create it in a lab, can't grow it on a farm. It comes from volunteer donors."

"Every single day," she said, "we need nearly 200 donors to roll up their sleeves to meet Hawaii's patients' needs."