

BLOOD DRIVES

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convention until just over two months before it happened. Then, after I e-mailed Kultsi to ask if he would be able to run it for us, it took almost a month to get his response because my spam filter was blocking him for some reason. Luckily he persisted and we were able to proceed with only five weeks to go before the convention.

In general it would not be possible to set up a blood drive on such short notice, but the convention committee was very helpful and supportive and made room inside for the drive even though they had to rearrange their room assignments to do so. And the Finnish National Red Cross, after talking with Kultsi and walking through the convention site, agreed to send out a team.

And the fans didn't disappoint. More than 80 people tried to donate, though unfortunately a lot of them were deferred, many for being too young. If this is the youth of fandom we have a great future to look forward to. The final tally was 37 units of blood collected — 18 of them first time donors! And though this was fewer than the Red Cross had targeted, they were still pleased with the result and are eager to come back again next year.

We are indebted to Kultsi for all his hard work and perseverance, and grateful for the enthusiastic support of the FinnCon committee and the Red Cross. And, as always, my hat is off to the fans.

Moving south, on the same day we were collecting blood in Canada, Alan Koslow was handling the first of a two-day blood drive at Dragon*Con in Atlanta, Georgia. This was



Prize winner: Dr. Amy Baxter (right) and Eleanor Wood jointly receive the first ever Heinlein Award on behalf of Virginia Heinlein.

-- Photo by Jeanne Robinson

another example of how hard work and determination can really pay off.

Though we first contacted the convention in early May, we didn't learn until July that the Red Cross had decided not to do the blood drive there this year after having done so for the last several years. A convention of this size — it's the largest SF convention in the U.S. with more than over 20,000 attendee — was too valuable to let slip away without making every effort to salvage it. We contacted LifeSouth

Community Blood Centers and they were more than eager to step in and run the blood drive. However, the Dragon*Con convention committee had become somewhat discouraged after the Red Cross dropped out, and had some reservations regarding space for the drive inside.

Enter Brad Linaweaver at the request of Bill Patterson and Peter Scott, with just six weeks to go. Brad was able to convince the board of the

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