



News from the Office of  
**Adam J. Bello**  
Monroe County Executive



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## **MONROE COUNTY EXECUTIVE ADAM BELLO AND VETERANS OUTREACH CENTER TO HOST AMERICAN RED CROSS BLOOD DRIVE ON SATURDAY, JUNE 11**

*The event, held in honor of Medal of Honor recipient Gary Beikirch, will help address a critical shortage of donated blood and raise awareness that new eligibility rules allow more veterans to donate blood*

**ROCHESTER, NY** — In partnership with the Veterans Outreach Center, Monroe County Executive Adam Bello is sponsoring an American Red Cross Blood Drive on Saturday, June 11 at the Eastside Family YMCA, 1835 Fairport Nine Mile Point Road, Penfield. The blood drive runs from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. and is being held in honor of Medal of Honor recipient and Vietnam War veteran Gary Beikirch, who died in December 2021 after a long illness.

“Giving blood saves lives,” **said County Executive Bello**. “Right now, blood supplies are critically low. I encourage everyone who is eligible to roll up their sleeves and help – that includes many of our area veterans who were previously prohibited from giving blood because they had been stationed in certain parts of Europe.”

In 2020, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration lifted a ban prohibiting blood donations by veterans who spent more than six months on military bases in Europe between 1980 and 1996. The ban was meant to prevent transmission of the brain disease “mad cow disease,” which is believed to be transmitted by eating tainted beef. However, the FDA lifted the ban after finding there have been no reported cases of the brain disease associated with time spent on U.S. military bases in Europe.

“VOC is proud to be co-hosting this blood drive in honor of Gary Beikirch, a founder of our agency, with County Executive Bello,” **said Laura Stradley, executive director of the Veterans Outreach Center**. “We encourage members of the Veteran community to participate so as to help alleviate the effects of the current blood shortage. Gary used to say that it was more important to lead a life of significance than a life of success, and so we hope that this blood drive is a small way we can be significant in the lives of others.”

Blood donors must be at least 17 years old, weigh at least 110 pounds and not have donated blood within the last 56 days.

To make an appointment, call 1-800-RED CROSS or visit [redcrossblood.org](https://www.redcrossblood.org)



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