Two outstanding Red Cross volunteers received awards at our annual Idaho meeting in August. For the second year in a row, Barbara Weber is the winner of the Dane Watkins Exceptional Volunteer Engagement Award. This award is given to the Idaho volunteer who logged the most hours in the past year. Watkins is a longtime Red Cross board member and supporter from Idaho Falls. Barbara logged an amazing 1,818 hours last year, serving as a Disaster Action Team volunteer, and a regional training lead and a deployment and disaster action team coordinator, to name just a few of her many titles.

Two families tell how Red Cross responders delivered critical help, solace following fires

Entire Stearns was on her lunch break from work when she got a call from her fiancé with news no one wants to hear—her apartment building was on fire. Stearns rushed home in time to see smoke billowing out of her apartment window in the wee hours of the morning as he gasped for air, Kyle Ramon is back on his feet. The Great Falls veteran recently moved into a new house and started his own business, huge steps forward that might not have been possible without the help he received from the Montana Red Cross. “It was a miracle. The Red Cross is a godsend,” Ramon said. “Without having that support and that room to digest and create a plan, I don’t know where I would be.”

See Hope, Page 2

Honored Red Cross volunteers

Two outstanding Red Cross volunteers including Beverly Beem, Kathy Franck and Sandy Harnar meet with families displaced by an apartment fire in Twin Falls. “It was amazing to know what the Red Cross did,” Jentrie Stearns said. “It gave us relief to know we had help.”

See Awards, Page 2
Hope: ‘Gives me faith in humanity’

Rural Red Cross volunteer helps in fire recovery

Kyle Ramon speaks with Red Cross Disaster Program Manager Shelly Creveling after a fire at the Glacial Apartments in Great Falls in April.

“Five-year plan quickly became my 15-day plan,” he joked. Ramon had no idea Red Cross does so much but is forever grateful.

“Red Cross went above and beyond what I ever could expect,” he said. “It makes me happy and gives me faith in humanity.”

Montana Red Cross recently created an annual award honoring former board chairman and current board member Tom Wozniak. The Tom Wozniak Volunteer Award for Excellence recognizes innovation, leadership and exceptional service in support of the Red Cross mission and will be presented to an outstanding Montana volunteer each June at the annual meeting.

Wozniak has played an important role with the Red Cross by securing funding, recruiting leaders to the board and using his influence to raise awareness of its work in Montana. He has been a blood donor for more than 20 years.

“Tom is the kind of leader who is willing to roll up his sleeves and devote lifesaving blood or install smoke alarms to help save lives,” Montana Red Cross Executive Director Diane Wright said. “He takes time to personally thank other Red Cross volunteers and is a shining example of what it means to be ‘sleeves up, hearts open, all in.’”

The recipient of Wozniak award also will be nominated for the American Red Cross Presidential Award, a national award presented by the American Red Cross each summer.

Fires cues us to prepare

Thanks to all Disaster Cycle Services volunteers for making our June quarter client assistance card inventory a success. With your help we’ve greatly improved our accuracy and efficiency.

Every volunteer who logged at least 20 years in the past year was entered into a drawing to receive a prize. Check out our Facebook pages in the month ahead as we honor these winners.

SPREADING THE WORD: Nicole Sirak Iwin, our regional CEO, and medical director Dr. Walter Kelley recently talked to Idaho Matters about our urgent need for convalescent plasma for people seriously ill with COVID-19. Hear them talk about this important program here:

https://bit.ly/H0Z8hK

SEASONAL READINESS: We continue to have an urgent need for volunteers to respond to disasters here in our region and across the division. If you are willing, able and interested in deploying, please contact Recruitment Specialist Gini Kay at 406-495-3778 or email IDMT.Recruiting@redcross.org.

PREPARATION: As part of National Preparedness Month in September, our region is offering some virtual courses open to staff and volunteers. Additional courses will be available to the public in the months ahead, so watch our Facebook pages for details and share with friends and family.

PREPARE WITH PEDRO Sept. 11, noon (MST), staff and volunteers

Participants will learn about our preparedness education program for grades K-2.

Zoom: https://zoom.us/j/93314664489
ID: 933 1466 4489
Passcode: 704744
Call in: 1-253-215-8782

BE RED CROSS READY Sept. 17, 7-8 p.m. (MST), staff and volunteers

This presentation teaches individuals how to be ready for an emergency or disaster by following three simple steps: 1) Get a Kit, 2) Make a Plan and 3) Be Informed.

Zoom: https://zoom.us/j/96934304307
ID: 969 3430 4307
Call in: 1-253-215 8782

Hope: ‘Gives me faith in humanity’

Red Cross responders put families up in individual rooms at a local hotel, provided food and emotional support and jumped-started their road to recovery. Many of those families have since returned to those apartments while others like Ramon and his young daughter charted a new path.

He became board chairman in 2015 and held that position for four years and continues to serve on the board. Wozniak has played an important role with the Red Cross by securing funding, recruiting leaders to the board and using his influence to raise awareness of its work in Montana. He has been a blood donor for more than 20 years.

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Wozniak award recognizes excellence

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

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MILESTONE WINNERS: In September, Idaho and Montana board members will announce our 20-hour and 100-hour milestone winners on Facebook.

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