

RED ALERTS!



Keeping our Red Cross volunteer workforce engaged and informed



ON THE HORIZON

- February, [Black History Month](#)
- [Cancer Prevention Month](#)
- Feb. 4, [World Cancer Day](#). Learn how blood and platelet donations help cancer patients [here](#).
- Feb. 14, Valentine's Day
- Feb. 21, President's Day
- Feb. 28, begin mission card inventory.



34

Disaster responses in January. **Clients helped:** 82



MILESTONES

February

- Laurie Howell, 5 years
- Vickie Lawrence, 5 years
- Marcy Mickey, 5 years
- Jene Purman, 5 years
- Darren Rook, 5 years



Keep vaccine status current

Don't forget to log into your Volunteer Connection account and update your vaccine status.

If you have already done that, and now have received your booster shot, you can easily add this information to the existing form.

For all doses, include the brand, dates and a photo of your COVID-19 vaccination card.

Personal vaccination information will be treated as confidential and will be used by Volunteer Services and business unit managers to support mission delivery and COVID-19 exposure management.

Saving lives, one donor at a time



Beau Gibbs began organizing blood drives while he was still in college. Now living and working in Glendive for a community-minded company, he is continuing to collaborate with Red Cross colleagues to schedule and run blood drives in the area.

Man proud of blood collection work

What began as a service project in college has grown into something much bigger and much more personal for Beau Gibbs.

Beau was the president of Mortar Board, the honor society at Montana State University, during the 2012-2013 school year when he helped organize a pair of Red Cross blood drives. He recruited and scheduled donors, provided food and made sure the drives ran smoothly. Those experiences stuck with him.

"I realized it was a really easy way to have a lifesaving impact," he said.

Not long after, Beau graduated and landed a job in his hometown of Glendive as a measurement engineer with WBI Energy, a company with more than 100 employees. That's when he got an idea.

"It occurred to me one day – well shoot, it would be pretty easy to organize another drive in Glendive," he said.

Beau worked with the WBI leadership team to organize their first workplace drive in 2014, bringing 27 donors through the door. He continued to organize WBI drives before eventual-

DONATE BLOOD



We are facing a nationwide blood crisis right now, and doctors are having to make difficult decisions about patient care. Sign up today to donate lifesaving blood by visiting RedCrossBlood.org and entering your zip code or calling 800-RED-CROSS.

ORGANIZE A BLOOD DRIVE

Are you interested in organizing a blood drive in your community? Learn more at RedCrossBlood.org/HostADrive.

ly expanding to communitywide events at locations throughout Glendive. He partnered with the local brewery, Cross Country Brewing, to organize pint-for-a-pint drives. Donors

SEE GLENDIVE, PAGE 3

Troop casework a great fit

If you're looking for a meaningful way to support our troops, consider learning more about the Red Cross Service to the Armed Forces program.



Sean

Sean Fernando is a Service to the Armed Forces volunteer and is stationed at the Mountain Home U.S. Air Force Base in Idaho. Sean wanted a way to give back while being COVID-conscious. Through the Red Cross, he found volunteer work he could do that was largely online.

"I just wanted to help out, and the Red Cross is a good cause," he said. "With everything going on, I thought case work would be the perfect opportunity."

Sean helps military members get ready for deployment or transition to military life and also supports their loved ones, helping them become aware of what the Red Cross can do for them and their service member.

Meet the new manager for the Service to the Armed Forces program of Idaho, Montana and East Oregon region / **Page 2**

Sean got his start with the Red Cross while stationed in Japan. One of his favorite things about SAF is seeing the logs of all the calls of case workers across the region. He can see he's part of something bigger and "seeing everybody being helped out, which gets me motivated to help out as well."

"It's a great opportunity to help out and make the world a better place," he said. "It's a great cause. You're doing the right thing, and no matter how small or how long it takes you to make an impact, you're still helping make the world a better place. I would definitely recommend it to anyone who is even slightly curious."

TO LEARN MORE

Visit RedCross.org/volunteer OR call 1-406-493-8778
OR email IDMT.Recruiting@redcross.org

Remembering our colleagues

Red Cross lost two outstanding Montana volunteers in December, Tom Coleman and Bonnie Hash. Join us in celebrating their many contributions over the years.

Tom Coleman, of Kalispell, was a volunteer transportation specialist for more than 10 years. His dedication and passion for serving the community and his fellow volunteers was always a top priority, and he went above and beyond to help others.

A few years ago, during a particularly snowy winter, Tom was concerned about his fellow drivers using a transportation vehicle that was not winter-ready. He purchased snow tires for the van from his own money and donated them to the Red Cross so that staff and



IN MEMORIAM

volunteers could safely transport life-saving blood product through hazardous driving conditions!

In June, Tom was named Montana biomed volunteer of the year at the annual Montana Red Cross board meeting.

He passed away on Dec 22.

Longtime volunteer **Bonnie Hash**, of

Bozeman, helped out the Red Cross in several capacities through her many years of service, including pitching in at blood drives, teaching CPR and first aid and serving on the local disaster action team.

“Bonnie was a strong advocate for the client,” Gallatin County Disaster Action Team Coordinator Linda Racicot said. “She went the extra mile to take care of the clients. It seemed like she was always on call and dropped everything to take care of those who needed her help.

In her earlier years, Bonnie spent much of her time overseas helping others. That included time as a school nurse in Ethiopia and Kenya and with the Peace Corps in Nepal.

Bonnie passed away on Dec. 29.

Read Bonnie’s full obituary [here](#).

Join vital transportation team

Hit the road and help Red Cross transportation specialists deliver blood to its next destination in its lifesaving journey.

Also, help us by evaluating our virtual volunteer thank you event that took place on Jan. 11, and join fellow volunteers for the Ketchup With Friends call in February.

POSITION HIGHLIGHTS. Transportation specialists make a difference by delivering blood donations from collection locations to the processing center and out to hospitals where it can be used to save lives. As a transportation specialist, you are a vital part of saving millions of lives each year by simply driving blood products where they need to go in our region. It is a fun job, with an opportunity to meet a lot of new people and get out and explore your state.

Location: Missoula, Bozeman, Helena, Great Falls and Kalispell.

Job Requirements: Valid driver’s license and a clean driving record.

If you’re interested or want to learn more, contact Gini at IDMT_Recruiting@redcross.org or by phone/text at (406) 493-8778.

Want to add this position to your volunteer profile? Do you know someone that would be a great fit? Let us know.

IN THE KNOW



RED CROSS NEWS & HAPPENINGS

Volunteer Recognition Event



VOLUNTEER EVENT SURVEY. The planners of the recent Virtual Volunteer Recognition Event are seeking feedback from both staff and volunteers.

Please take a moment to take the Feedback Survey. We would love to hear from those who might have ideas or feedback about the event, the set up, or anything else.

Please [CLICK HERE](#) to take our approximately five-minute survey.

We tried many new things for this virtual event, and we want to see if there are ways to improve. We know this will never compare to a live event but special times call for special measures.

The video recording can be seen here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cimM2RL5kl8>. We did play the Voices of Volunteering video before and after the event so you will want to skip to 32 minutes into the recording to

get to the actual event itself. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cimM2RL5kl8>

Finally, we would like to recognize the superb efforts of volunteer **John McGrew**, who assembled the Voices of Volunteering video into a powerful, flawless presentation.

Thank you for your body of work for the Red Cross, and for this video in particular.

KETCHUP WITH FRIENDS.

Please join fellow volunteers at our next social time together, Tuesday, Feb. 8, from 7:30-8 p.m. No agenda, no training. Just fun times with fellow Red Crossers. You can win a lovely Red Cross prize, but you must come to win. If you join and are having trouble getting access, please send an email to Nathan.Gilbert@RedCross.org and we will see what we can do to help.



Also, we would love to have more event team members to help us plan fun events like this one. Consider connecting with this team! If you would like to be part of the Virtual Event Team, please contact Nate Gilbert at the email address above.

Warner new military program manager

The Red Cross of Idaho, Montana and East Oregon welcomes Sheila



Warner

Warner as its new Service to the Armed Forces program manager. Warner will help the Red Cross deliver services and support to military members and their families across Idaho and Montana.

Warner has a master’s degree in social work, and for more than 15 years, has helped provide services to Idaho families who are experiencing mental health crises, employment issues and education challenges. This includes working with the military community, and helping people become stronger and overcome obstacles is her passion.

“I am excited to reconnect with military families and veterans,” Sheila

Man finds casework with military families to be the perfect fit for a volunteer looking to make a difference / *Page 1*

said. “I have served this population for over 10 years and can’t wait to see what the next 10 years bring with Red Cross. Our communities have experienced many hardships these last two years, and we have all had to adapt to a new normal. I am excited to get out into those communities and support our volunteers working hard to make a difference.”

Last year, Red Cross provided services to more than 2,800 military families and veterans across Idaho and Montana. That includes helping servicemembers return home for a funeral or the birth of a child; supporting fami-

lies during a military deployment; and delivering recreational therapy items to VA hospitals.

She also will assist with Red Cross International Services programs and help to reconnect families separated by international crises such as conflict, nature disaster or famine.

Sheila will work closely with Sara Cease, the Red Cross of Montana and Idaho Service to the Armed Forces director who lives in Helena.

Sheila lives in Boise with her two young children. In her spare time, she loves escaping to the family cabin in the mountains and enjoying the outdoors with her children.

To learn more about the Red Cross Service to the Armed Forces program, including how you can get involved, visit <https://www.redcross.org/about-us/our-work/military-families.html>.

Board drive huge success

The Montana Red Cross Board of Directors rallied friends and co-workers to come out and donate lifesaving blood at a board-organized blood drive in Missoula on Jan. 19.

Thirty-one donors – including nine first-time donors – showed up at the drive, which collected 35 percent over goal.

Board chairman Craig Stahlberg and board member Dave Roberts were among those donating.

“Sleeves up, hearts open and all in is a fitting description of the Montana Red Cross Board of Directors,” Montana Red Cross Executive Director Diane Wright said. “They rallied their friends and co-workers to make their first board-sponsored blood drive a huge success, and I am grateful for their leadership and commitment to the mission of American Red Cross.”

The drive took place during National Blood Month, a great opportunity to recognize generous blood donors and encourage others to raise their hands, roll up their sleeves and donate the vital blood so many families depend on.

The board drive also occurred as the American Red Cross experiences a nationwide blood crisis, with hospital demand exceeding the number of donations coming through the door, making successful drives like these so important.



TOP: Montana board member Dave Roberts supports a successful blood drive in Missoula that exceeded goal by 35 percent.

LEFT: Montana board chairman Craig Stahlberg settles in to donate lifesaving blood.

Glendive: Fueling the mission

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

received a coupon for a free pint of beer. And his mom got in on the act, too.

“My mom is quite a baker, so she started making these big monster cookies and that was something that brought people back,” he said.

Glendive hosted its fourth drive of the year in December, up from three drives in previous years. Drives that once had a goal of 20 donors now aim for more than 40.

Considering a single donation can save up to three lives, Beau is hoping to collect enough blood to save a life for each day of the year. They’re well on their way, he said, and credits much of that to his employer and the generosity of his community.

“If it wasn’t for WBI taking a chance this might not have ever happened,” he

said. “The giving spirit of WBI and the Glendive community have been great.”

The impact of lifesaving blood became even more real for Beau in 2018 when his grandfather was hospitalized with a bleeding ulcer, requiring 23 units of blood and another seven units of platelets and plasma.

“That continues to inspire me to really ramp up what we can do in Glendive,” he said. “If it wasn’t for those 30 donations, he would have passed away much sooner. It gave us a lot more time to spend with my grandpa, and we’re eternally grateful for that.”

Besides bringing blood donors through the door, Beau also came to the rescue when the Red Cross team was in a bind.

They were scheduled to travel from Glendive to Circle for a blood drive, but a heavy snowstorm knocked out power to the whole town, disabling gas pumps. The team had some fuel in the tank but

didn’t want to chance it on a treacherous day in a remote area.

Luckily, WBI had a mechanical gas pump and a storage tank. Beau made a few phone calls and within 15 minutes the Red Cross team was gassed up and on the road, making it to Circle and the blood drive in time to collect 37 units.

“That little bit of gas helped save as many as 100 lives that day,” Beau said. “I felt pretty good about that one.”

In October, the Dawson County Healthy Communities Coalition recognized Beau’s giving spirit with its Community Champion Award. Beau, who often serves as the greeter at the Glendive drives and also donates blood himself, said the time he puts in is well worth it, especially considering the number of families like his own who are helped by blood donations.

“Whenever it crosses my mind, it brightens my day,” he said. “It’s such an easy way to save someone’s life.”

Client card assessment Feb. 28

Please mark your calendars now. Our next quarterly inventory of client assistance and mission cards is coming up for cards in hand on Feb. 28 (one day only). The online form will be open to report that information March 1–8. Cardholders will receive an email with a link to access the online reporting form on March 1.

Please take a look at your calendar now. If you will not be able to access your cards during the March reporting window, please do one of the following. (However, be sure to keep the information current so you can accurately report cards in hand on Feb. 28 only.)



- **Take a photo** of your card envelopes or make a note of your card info in your phone so you can report from anywhere with a cell or wifi signal. You will need the batch, envelope, and proxy numbers for each card, all of which are on the envelope.
- **Provide your card info in advance** to your DAT lead or DPX who can report on your

behalf on March 1.

We will once again have a drawing for ARC swag for those who report on March 1. Reporting cards in hand on February 28 on March 1 or as close to that as possible is a best practice to prevent reporting errors associated with cards you use during the reporting window. Discrepancies will result in time spent by you and staff sorting this out before the regional report can be submitted to national. No one wants to get “that call”.

Thank you very much for your advance planning to make this accurate and easy for everyone.