

RED ALERTS!



Keeping our Red Cross volunteer workforce engaged and informed



ON THE HORIZON

- **June** – [Pride Month](#)
- **June 2-3** – Sound the Alarm Browning. Visit soundthealarm.org/montana to volunteer.
- **June 3** – Sound the Alarm Idaho Falls. Visit soundthealarm.org/Idaho to volunteer.
- **June 4** – [Cancer Survivors Day](#)
- **June 9-10** – Sound the Alarm Nampa. Visit soundthealarm.org/Idaho to volunteer.
- **June 10** – Sound the Alarm Billings. Visit soundthealarm.org/montana to volunteer.
- **June 14** – [World Blood Donor Day](#)
- **June 18** – Father's Day
- **June 19** – [World Sickle Cell Day](#).
- **June 19** – [Juneteenth](#)
- **June 20** – [World Refugee Day](#)



22

Disaster responses in May. Clients helped: **101**



MILESTONES

BARBARA DRISCOLL,
20 years

MIKE RYAN,
15 years

ROB PANGARO,
10 years

VOLUNTEER SURVEY

Celebrating your Red Cross anniversary this quarter? If so, watch for a Volunteer Satisfaction Survey. The most recent round went out April 12 and arrived via email with the subject line "We need your feedback." It helps us understand where we can improve. Send feedback to IDMTE-ORE.teamwork@redcross.org.



More than 90 volunteers and staff from across the region attended this year's Training Academy in April in West Yellowstone.

Laughing & learning

About 90 volunteers and staff from across the region gathered in West Yellowstone in April to laugh and learn together at our Training Academy. Attendees took courses in sheltering, logistics and much more over four days, preparing them for future disaster responses and deployments.

— Photos by Red Cross volunteer John McGrew



ABOVE: Lewiston, Idaho, volunteer Max Nuxoll takes part in a Pillowcase Project activity at the Training Academy. TOP RIGHT: Rajiem Seabrook and Heidi Wallace with Empower MT present a session focusing on diversity, equity and inclusion. ABOVE RIGHT: Baker, Mont., volunteers Tammy Reetz and Traci Bruha, Disaster Program Manager Shellie Creveling, talk about the challenges of volunteering in a remote, rural area during a question-and-answer session.



Volunteers practice setting up a shelter using LEGOS as part of a sheltering class and simulation course instructed by Red Cross volunteer Sue Hawthorne of Helena.

'Blood means the world to us'

Twenty-month-old Caroline Vance is quite the climber.

"She can climb anything in the world," her mom Kendra said from their home in McCammon, Idaho.

And in her short lifetime, Caroline has had plenty of mountains to overcome. But she's had an army of helpers along the way – including generous blood donors.

In 2021, Caroline was born with an anal-rectal malformation. Her medical team was closely monitoring that situation, when six months later,



When she was 6 months old, Caroline Vance of McCammon, Idaho, was diagnosed with cancer. Since then, she's needed 10 transfusions.

Check out volunteer appreciation video

Remember to complete your volunteer satisfaction survey, help us celebrate our nurses and volunteer to Sound the Alarm below.

VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION: It was great to see everyone who attended April's Volunteer Appreciation events. Amanda Schmierer, our region's biomedical volunteer engagement specialist, created this awesome video that includes highlights from each stop in the tour <https://youtu.be/yrS-simAciU>. Check it out!

TOWN HALLS: Thank you to everyone who attended our May All-Region Town Hall virtual meetings. We will host these meetings each quarter. Be on the look out for invitations to our July meeting. July is the start of the new fiscal year and we will share an overview of the previous fiscal year's achievements as well as focus areas for the new year.

We will also have an "ask anything" component to our meeting. If you have a question or would like to share feedback please send a note to ldmteor.teamwork@redcross.org.

POSITION OF THE MONTH: The duty officer is the point-of-contact who helps coordinate Red Cross disaster

IN THE KNOW



RED CROSS NEWS & HAPPENINGS

response, primarily home fires. These volunteers take the initial call, collect basic situational information and dispatch the Disaster Action Team members to respond in person.

Volunteers need to be able to work independently, have basic computer skills to manage online case files and have reliable phone/internet service.

Time commitment: After initial training, the commitment is four to nine six-hour on-call shifts per month. *Preferred length of commitment (after training) is at least six months, and a year is greatly appreciated.

To learn more and sign up, visit redcross.org/volunteer.

GREEN TEAM: Our new Green Team needs you! Facilitated by Chief Operations Officer Wendy McGrew and Regional Disaster Officer Scott O'Connell, the Green Team will come up with ways to make our organization more eco-friendly.

The Green Team is looking to round out the group with new members –

either paid staff or volunteers.

Wendy foresees the group meeting once a quarter to go over initiatives and vet ideas.

Those who want to learn about or join the Green Team can email wendy.mcgreg2@redcross.org.

NEW NAMPA SITE: A new blood donation center is set to open on June 5 in Nampa. This donor center, at 5820 E. Franklin Road, is in addition to our Boise center and will help support patient care across Idaho. We currently supply blood products to more than 30 hospitals and medical centers across the state.

The site will begin with eight beds but will expand to 17 and will also collect platelets. A grand opening event is planned for the Nampa center at 10 a.m. on July 11.

The region has also secured a location to open a blood donation center in Twin Falls.

Currently, our teams travel from Boise to the Magic Valley for blood drives, so this will improve efficiency and help save money. More details on that facility to come.

We are one of only a handful of sites across the country to undergo an expansive of this magnitude.

Blood: Father also diagnosed with cancer

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doctors at Primary Children's Hospital in Salt Lake discovered she also had cancer. A tumor about the size of a pop can reached from her right kidney all the way onto her heart, and she was diagnosed with neuroblastoma, a rare type of cancer that starts in the nerve cells. Doctors also discovered she had a tethered spinal cord, a disorder of the nervous system that limits movement.

Caroline would undergo a rigorous treatment regimen including six rounds of chemotherapy and required blood transfusions between each treatment.

"Her blood counts got so low that it increased the risk of bleeding," Kendra said. "The next chemo isn't an option without blood transfusions."

To only complicate things further, Caroline's port got severely infected during treatment, which required surgery and additional blood transfusions. In all, little Caroline would receive 10 units of lifesaving blood.

"Blood donation means the world to us," Kendra said. "You don't really realize how important it is until it's your kid laying on that bed."

Even Caroline's entry into the world didn't come without an uphill struggle. Her battle with cancer was not the family's first.

While they were stationed at Camp Lejeune in North Carolina and trying to get pregnant with Caroline, Austin Vance was diagnosed with cancer himself and had to undergo several rounds of radiation. That made having Caroline much more difficult, and the family eventually turned to invitro fertilization.

"We definitely had a struggle getting her here," Kendra said. "But she was definitely worth it."

Austin is in remission now, and in July, shortly after her first birthday, Caroline got to ring the hospital bell, signaling she was done with treatment. Her tumor had shrunk by about 57 percent.

"Chemo saved her life but so did



"She always gives hugs and kisses to everyone she meets," Kendra Vance said of her daughter Caroline. Caroline completed chemo shortly after her first birthday.

blood donation," Kendra said. "Without it we wouldn't have been able to celebrate Christmas with her or any of the things we do now."

And now Kendra and Austin, who have been blood donors themselves, are working to pay it forward and thank those blood donors who gave Caroline a chance to climb. Kendra, an urgent care nurse, worked with the Hall Foundation to organize three Red Cross blood drives in Idaho that collected 75 units of lifesaving blood.

The Hall Foundation, which is based in Idaho Falls, supports local nonprofits and organizations through service activities, volunteering and donations. They have been dedicated Red Cross supporters.

"Our motto is Show Love, Give Blood," the Hall Foundation team writes. "This year, we will be showing love by honoring Caroline. We are so thankful to those who selflessly give blood to help others in their time of need."

The Hall Foundation even created a heart-warming video sharing Caroline's amazing story, which you can watch

here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5qDQpX2V6_8

While Caroline's battle is far from over, she's doing well right now and spreading joy wherever she goes.

"She's always giving hugs and kisses to everyone she meets," Kendra said. "If someone is having a bad day, she will absolutely blow them a kiss."

And in her job as a nurse and while watching Caroline go through her treatment and recovery, Kendra sees other children who depend on lifesaving blood as well.

"We would always do anything for our children, but this wasn't something we could do alone," Kendra said. "We are so thankful for everyone who donated the blood that helped Caroline. They gave us the chance to hold her, to love her."

DONATE LIFESAVING BLOOD

To find a blood drive near you and make an appointment to donate, visit RedCrossBlood.org and enter your zip code or call 800-RED-CROSS. Donating blood takes less than an hour and can help save more than one life.