Since 2008, Diana Rowe has organized 45 Red Cross blood drives in her hometown of Gooding, Idaho, encouraging her community to roll up their sleeves and come out like clockwork every few months. Her drives have brought in 1,800 units, enough blood to potentially save 5,500 lives.

But it’s not the overall total that inspires Diana, but rather the individual stories of those who are helped each day by a steady and stable blood supply, including one story that’s extremely personal.

In 2004, Diana’s brother, Marine Capt. Alan Rowe, was inspecting a bridge in Fallujah in northern Iraq when an improvised explosive device detonated, killing Rowe and severely injuring several of his men. Alan’s fellow Marines needed countless units of blood during their treatment and recovery, blood available because of the generosity of donors.

“Blood saved their lives,” Diana said. “Every pint that I put in is for my brother and his men,” she said.

Her mission is running blood drives

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SEE HONOR, PAGE 3

Military team sparkles at recent events

Our Service to the Armed Forces team had a busy April as they continue to deliver support to active military members, their families and our veteran communities across Idaho and Montana.

In early April, the team supported one of their biggest events ever as the Idaho National Guard hosted a Yellow Ribbon event with more than 1,000 people in attendance from 15 states. Yellow Ribbon events connect military families with civilian and military services and information to help them manage the challenges of deployment.

The animal visitation team welcomed visitors while our volunteers taught resiliency workshops and provided Got to Know Us Before You Need Us information. More than 1,000 military members and their families took part in the resiliency workshops and 211 received contact cards educating them about our services. We even got a shoutout on the national American Red Cross Facebook page.

“Please join me in congratulating and thanking our team for pulling off a huge Yellow Ribbon event,” said Nicole Sirak Irwin, regional CEO of the Red Cross of Idaho, Montana and East Oregon.

SEE YELLOW RIBBON, PAGE 3
Help reach out to military families

The American Red Cross stands by our military heroes and their families, and we would like to help you help them.

Check out the volunteer opportunities below. Also, follow the survey link below to tell us how best to communicate with you.

POSITION OF THE MONTH.
In honor of Military Appreciation Month, the Red Cross of Idaho, based in the Lame Deer area in southeast Montana, is offering a special position with the Red Cross to help those in the area.

Check this out: Reliable phone and internet service.

Tasks: Our Hero Care Network provides emergency communications and critical services. As a Hero Care volunteer, you provide confidential assistance and connect individuals with local, state, and national resources.

Requirements: All necessary training is provided.

Time Commitment: After completing online EDGE training, volunteer will spend an average of 5 hours a week managing the case load. Households are flexible with a committed schedule.

Questions? Contact Gini at 406-848-7758 or by phone/text at 406-493-8778 for more information.

WE ARE LISTENING. We know the world is constantly changing right now, and we want to make sure we are communicating these changes and updates with you in the ways – and at the pace – that you prefer. Below is a link to a survey asking how we should best communicate these breaking news updates with you – i.e. through Volunteer Connection, RED ALERTS, email, etc. – and how often you would like to receive this information.

We stress this survey is focused on those big breaking news items – like changes to the mask policy.

Please take a few minutes and fill out this quick survey.

https://volunteerconnection.redcross.org/?nd=mva&form_id=10598

SOUND THE ALARM. As part of our effort to keep our communities safe from home fires, the Red Cross of Idaho and Montana and in partnership with the Nez Perce Tribe in Idaho to install alarms throughout May.

On May 6, we will work with the Gooding Fire Department to install free alarms in Gooding, Idaho, and teach families how to keep their home safe.

On May 20-21, teams will install free alarms in Philipsburg, Drummond and Hall in Granite County in western Montana and work with the Northern Cheyenne to install alarms in the Lame Deer area in southeast Montana.

On May 21, Red Cross and its partners will install alarms in Parma in southwestern Idaho. Our teams are also working with the Nez Perce Tribe in Idaho to install alarms throughout May.

If you are interested in volunteering at any of these events, please email IDMT.Volunteer@redcross.org.

On average, the Red Cross of Idaho and Montana responds to a home fire every 8 minutes in our region and helps those families impacted with their most immediate needs including food, clothing, and shelter. Working smoke alarms cut the risk of death in a home fire by 50 percent.

KETCHUP WITH FRIENDS. Please join fellow volunteers at our social time, Tuesday, May 10, from 7:30 p.m. to 8 p.m. On this call, we will work with the 911 call center to train volunteers. We hope you will have a great time! You can also help get you connected.

We hope you can join us this month. See you all there! There is a link to a video if you need help joining the meeting: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=...
Continued from page 1

and everybody else’s loved ones whose lives are saved. I just happen to think of my brother’s. This is my way of giving back to those who saved their lives.”

Four years after Alan’s death, Diana was a senior in high school when she got the call from Red Cross telling her they needed a blood drive coordinator in her area and asking her if she would be interested.

“I was like absolutely… where do I sign up?” she said.

Her daughter was her helper until she graduated high school and went off to college and then it was her two sons, who were 7 and 8 when they stepped up.

Rallying Community

Diana started with high school groups and other stay-at-home moms in her network and the enthusiasm grew from there. Three drives a year have turned into four as Diana has rallied her community to come down to the local veterans’ hall every few months to give the gift of life.

“These are my friends and neighbors, she said. “Those are people I will see tomorrow at the store or I’ll see at church or I work with.”

Diana’s drives have become a community get-together and social occasion, and before the restrictions that came with COVID, she would have cinnamon rolls on hand to thank donors and fill the air with their sweetness.

“I love it,” she said. “While I was working at home during the pandemic, the blood drives were my happy outside contacts with people.

“I feel like it’s a family.”

Diana’s employer — Northwest Farm Credit Services — has been extremely supportive and gives Diana and other workers three days off a year to use for volunteerism. That means she doesn’t have to use vacation days for three of her four blood drives a year.

She’s very appreciative.

“They are amazing,” she said. “Their support really makes a difference in my ability to volunteer. They are very, very big on volunteering.”

Understanding the Need

And because Northwest Farm Credit Services works so closely with the agricultural community, they understand how critical a stable and steady blood supply is, especially to those who have suffered a farming accident.

“They are very tickled that this is what I do,” she said.

“Volunteerism is ingrained in their culture, and they’re committed to improving lives.”

Like Diana’s daughter, her sons have now graduated and moved on.

“They’re no longer my worker bees,” she said.

But with 45 drives under her belt and her community firmly onboard, Diana’s drives are in a good place.

She finishes most drives these days in the donor chair herself. And she knows that she’s making an impact.

After her brother’s death, Diana went to the hospital to visit one of Alan’s buddies injured during the blast.

“I know my brother would have been so glad he made it, and that’s because people donate blood,” she said. “That’s just what it comes down to. It’s just that simple.”

— Mark Ockner

Red Crossers! Are you seeking a virtual opportunity to support our mission? If so, the compliance and monitoring team wants you to know how good stewards of our donations. Please consider these positions.

Title: Compliance reviewer

Tasks: All disaster cases require a background process to ensure the case aligns with Red Cross standards. Compliance reviewers go over our cases and ensure we’re meeting our obligations. Approximate time commitment: 1-2 hours per week, with some variations.

Title: Event reviewer

Tasks: In situations where there are not two Red Cross responders to verify an event occurred, such as a single-family home fire, the event reviewer uses alternate methods to obtain event confirmation. This may include locating information about the event in traditional media or contacting a fire department or local emergency government. Approximate time commitment: 2 hours per week. If interested, contact Gini Kay at IDMT.Recruiting@redcross.org.

Time to report status of your client assistance, mission cards

The final quarterly inventory of client assistance and mission cards for the current fiscal year is underway.

This quarter is particularly important for accounting requirements to close out the fiscal year. The reporting window is now through May 8 for cards.

Red Cross emails: videos/20210319235638

Mission43 provides service members and their spouses opportunities to succeed in Idaho after the military through education, employment and community engagement.

Two weeks later, a Boise drive with the Wyakin Foundation collected 47 units and saw 10 first-time donors.

Wyakin helps wounded and injured veterans achieve success through education, development and guidance. The Boise VA is also now doing quarterly blood drives.

To learn more about how you can get involved with our Service to the Armed Forces program, see our volunteer position on the month feature on Page 2 of RED ALERTS.

Honor: Recruiting lifesaving donors

Continued from page 1

RED ALERTS!

Our Service to the Armed Forces team recently delivered hundreds of items like clothing and art supplies to the Boise VA to support Idaho’s veterans.

Recruiting lifesaving donors

Red Crosses! Are you seeking a virtual opportunity to support our mission? If so, the compliance and monitoring team wants you to know how good stewards of our donations. Please consider these positions.

Title: IDMT address document reviewer

Tasks: In providing financial assistance, we must establish the client is who they say they are and live at the disaster-affected residence. This step helps us be good stewards of resources and ensures that assistance is directed to those who need it most. The IDMT address document reviewer provides a second set of eyes on uploaded documents such as driver’s licenses and utility bills, and confirms they meet our standards.

Approximate time commitments: 7-4 hours per week.

Title: Event reviewer

Tasks: In situations where there are not two Red Cross responders to verify an event occurred, such as a single-family home fire, the event reviewer uses alternate methods to obtain event confirmation. This may include locating information about the event in traditional media or contacting a fire department or local emergency government. Approximate time commitment: 2 hours per week. If interested, contact Gini Kay at IDMT.Recruiting@redcross.org.

Please note this is a new email address for Angela as she has now transitioned to her volunteer role.

To successfully report, you will need the following information from the envelope in which you received your cards: batch number, envelope number, and proxy number.