

# RED ALERTS!



Keeping our Red Cross volunteer workforce engaged and informed



## ON THE HORIZON

- May, [Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month](#)
- May, [Mental Health Awareness Month](#)
- May, [Military Appreciation Month](#)
- May, [Month of the Military Caregiver](#)
- May 2-5, [Idaho Gives](#). [Click here to support Red Cross.](#)
- May 6, [Nurses Week begins](#)
- May 8, [World Red Cross and Red Crescent Day](#)
- May 21, [Armed Forces Day](#)
- May 30, [Memorial Day](#)



35

Disaster responses in April.  
Clients helped: 81



## MILESTONES

- May
- DAVID COWAN, 5 years
- JUDY BARTZ, 5 years
- MIKE BOLTS, 5 years
- LYNN JOHNSON, 5 years
- SHANNON MCCALLA, 5 years

# Honoring loved one



Inspired by her brother, who lost his life while serving in Iraq, Diana Rowe has organized 45 blood drives in her hometown of Gooding, Idaho. “Every pint that I put in is for my brother and his men,” she said.

## Her mission is running blood drives

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

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 Get 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



Red Cross of Idaho, Montana and East Oregon CEO Nicole Sirak Irwin and Restoring Family Links volunteer Joan Cleary help out at a Yellow Ribbon event in Boise. The pair even got an assist from the animal visitation team. More than 1,000 military members and their families from 15 states took part.

Sirak Irwin, regional CEO of the Red Cross of Idaho, Montana and East Oregon. “Our volunteer resiliency training facilitators, animal visitation team and wonderful Service to the Armed Forces and International Ser-

vices volunteers shined as we trained hundreds of people and distributed emergency communication materials. I am so proud of our country and our

SEE YELLOW RIBBON, PAGE 3

# Two new staffers join team

It's our pleasure to announce that Scott O'Connell is joining us as our



**Scott O'Connell**

new regional disaster officer. Scott began his emergency management career while serving in the Air Force as a fire-fighter at Mountain Home Air Force Base in Idaho. After leaving the Air Force, he returned to Southern California, where he served for eight years as a 9-1-1 dispatcher and instructor.

His frontline service during that time, as well as leadership in training new employees and volunteers, deepened his interest in crisis management and volunteer collaboration. This led Scott to join the Red Cross as a disaster program manager for Ventura County, Calif., in fall 2018. Scott was promoted to regional disaster officer of the Central California region in spring 2019.

Scott is a graduate of the University of California, Los Angeles with a certificate in Emergency Management and

Homeland Security and is currently enrolled in a Master of Emergency Services Administration at California State University, Long Beach. He is a member of the International Association of Emergency Managers and the Association of Threat Assessment Professionals.

"I am so excited to be joining the Idaho-Montana team," he said. "Although I am a Southern California native, I lived on Mountain Home Air Force Base during my time serving in the Air Force. I loved being able to enjoy the beauty and nature just steps away and even told my wife when we were dating that someday I would move back to the Idaho area. I am so honored for the opportunity to get to know the IDMT team as we live out the American Red Cross saying, 'Sleeves up, hearts open, all in.'"

In his free time, Scott enjoys hiking and exploring the outdoors with his wife, Cassandra, and two daughters, Madeline, 8, and Shalane, 6.

Scott will begin this role on May 14

and relocate to the Treasure Valley early this summer.

He is replacing Ted Koenig, who is pursuing his master's degree from the University of Illinois.

Ty Franklin, the Pacific Division Disaster Director for California, will serve as our interim regional disaster officer until Scott begins on May 14.

## FLEET, FACILITIES STAFF

Dusty Shiverdecker has joined the Operations Team as a maintenance tech. He comes to Red Cross with four years' experience in maintenance and fleet management. He will be based in Missoula and is responsible for Missoula, Kalispell and Lewiston fleet and facilities.

Dusty enjoys riding BMX bikes and hiking, and he has a passion for music. He and his wife have been together for 22 years and have a large dog named Bowie.



**Dusty Shiverdecker**

# Help reach out to military families

The American Red Cross stands by our military heroes and their families, and we would like you to help us help them. Check out the volunteer opportunity 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 month of May, the Red Cross is highlighting work our volunteers do with military members and their families.

**Title:** Hero Care Network Regional Caseworker

**Location:** Virtual from anywhere in the region.

**Requirements:** 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.

**Training Requirements:** All necessary training is provided.

**Time Commitment:** After completing online EDGE training, volunteer will spend approximately 5 hours a week managing the case load. Hours are flexible with a committed schedule.

Questions? Contact Gini at [IDMT.Recruiting@redcross.org](mailto:IDMT.Recruiting@redcross.org) 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

## IN THE KNOW



RED CROSS NEWS & HAPPENINGS

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=vms\\_load\\_form&form\\_id=10958](https://volunteerconnection.redcross.org/?nd=vms_load_form&form_id=10958)

**SOUND THE ALARM.** As part of our effort to keep our communities safer from home fires, the Red Cross of Idaho and Montana and its partners have several Sound the Alarm smoke alarm installation events coming up in the month ahead.

On **May 6-7**, we will work with the Gooding Fire Department to install free alarms in Gooding, Idaho, and teach families about fire safety.

On **May 20-21**, teams will install free alarms in Philipsburg, Drummond and Hall in Granite County in western Montana and will partner 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.VolSvc@redcross.org](mailto:IDMT.VolSvc@redcross.org).

On average, the Red Cross of Idaho and Montana responds to a home fire every day 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 7:30-8 p.m. One winner will receive a fun spring prize, but you must attend to win. Click [here](#) to join the meeting.

If you join and don't have access, please send Nate Gilbert an email at [Nathan.Gilbert@RedCross.org](mailto:Nathan.Gilbert@RedCross.org) and we will see what we can do to help get you connected.

We hope you can join us this month. See you all there!

Here is a link to a video if you need help joining the meeting: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?>



# Schedulers, screeners work from comfort of home

Are you interested in finding a remote position with the Red Cross to support our region during a disaster?

Consider training to be an Event Based Volunteer Screener or Scheduler.

Both positions help those in the community to become part of the disaster relief operation.

If either of these positions appeals to you, please contact Wendy McGrew to

learn more.

[Wendy.McGrew@redcross.org](mailto:Wendy.McGrew@redcross.org)

**Title:** Volunteer Intake Center Screeners

**Tasks:** The Volunteer Intake Center Screeners help event-based volunteers complete their volunteer intake steps including initiating a background check, providing the Disaster Operation Orientation Video and reviewing iden-

tification and/or printing of EBV identification badges.

**Title:** Volunteer Intake Center Scheduler

**Tasks:** The Volunteer Scheduler supports event-based volunteers who come to the Volunteer Intake Center through signing up for a shift on the *DRO Shift Tool* that aligns with their skills, interests, and availability.



# Yellow Ribbon: Support pours in

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

team who supports them.”

Later in the month, our teams delivered more than 1,000 items total to the VAs in Boise and Helena to support our veterans. This included things like sweatshirts, sweatpants and shoes to support veterans experiencing homelessness, and art supplies and vegetable seeds for the VA’s recreational therapy programs.

“This is just another way we can support the VA and the incredible work they do in the state of Idaho,” Idaho Red Cross board member Melinda Merrill told media outlets during the Idaho event.

Our biomedical teams also partnered with two Idaho veterans’ organizations last month for a pair of successful blood drives. The Mission43 drive in Boise brought in 73 units and 28 first-time donors.

Watch a short video from that drive here: <https://www.facebook.com/RedCrossIdaho/videos/521737119363685>



**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.**

[RedCrossIdaho/videos/521737119363685](https://www.facebook.com/RedCrossIdaho/videos/521737119363685)

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 of the month** feature on Page 2 of RED ALERTS.

# Honor: Recruiting lifesaving donors

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

Four years after Alan’s death, Diana was a stay-at-home mom 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 from high school and left home. 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 neigh-

bors,” she said. “These 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 contact 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 pretty 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.”

— Matt Ochsner

# Compliance jobs require attention to detail

Red Crossers! Are you seeking a virtual opportunity to support our mission? If so, the compliance and monitoring team wants you to help us be 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:** ID/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 ID/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 commitment:** 2-4 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 official.

**Approximate time commitment:** 2 hours per week.

If interested, contact Gini Kay at [IDMT.Recruiting@redcross.org](mailto: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**

**in hand on April 30 (one day only).**

By now you should have received an email with the link to the online form and helpful FAQs. If you do not have the link or have problems reporting, contact [angela.james2@redcross.org](mailto:angela.james2@redcross.org).

Please note this is a new email ad-

dress 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.