

# Red Cross Currents

July 2022

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American Red Cross  
Massachusetts

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## Hitting the beaches, mountains, and a local blood drive

The need for blood doesn't take a summer vacation. White Mountains getaways, Cape beaches, and the rocky shores of Maine are all part of our summer plans, but don't forget to carve out an hour or two in August to give blood.



During summertime, the Red Cross regularly sees a fall off in blood donations across the U.S. It's no different here in Massachusetts. Family fun time is important to refill the wells before kids go back to school and the days start to get shorter. With less than 8% of the eligible population donating blood in the U.S., there is always a need for blood donations.

The easiest way to start the process is by visiting [RedCrossBlood.org](https://www.RedCrossBlood.org). You can find a mobile drive by typing in your local zip code, or by visiting one of our seven fixed blood donation sites across the state.

Kristen Pedersen's story is a shining example of why a stable blood supply is so important. In January of 2020, she was nearly killed in a car accident in Amesbury. The head-on-collision left her in grave condition in a New Hampshire hospital. She received 76 units of blood during her recovery. "At face value, you can take Kristen's story and extrapolate the need for blood from the local area," said Adam Rembisz, director of trauma services at Portsmouth Regional Hospital.

We encourage everyone to find two hours in August and visit a local blood drive and donate. A stable blood supply is important for our local communities.

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## Volunteerism: Lifting spirits and your health

Ever feel overwhelmed with what is going on across the planet? A 2020 **study** in the United Kingdom found those who volunteered reported being more satisfied with their lives and rated their overall health as better. Respondents who volunteered at least one month also reported having better mental health than those who did not volunteer.

Everyday Red Cross volunteers respond

to home fires, help military members and their families, work with veterans, assist in maintaining a stable blood supply, as well as provide technical and logistics work across Massachusetts.

“The work the Red Cross does wouldn’t be possible without the volunteer work force, here in Massachusetts and across the nation,” said Ken Boyajian, a Northeast Chapter volunteer. “It’s one of the most rewarding things I’ve done in life, helping people during their worst day, when the only thing they want is the reassurance that tomorrow will be a little better.”



To find out more about the many volunteer opportunities available in Massachusetts, visit [redcross.org/volunteer](https://redcross.org/volunteer).

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## Out in the Community

Red Cross volunteers were out in the local community across Massachusetts, participating in events to raise awareness of Red Cross missions. “We want people to know who we are before they need us,” said Nia Rennix, Executive Director for the Central-Western MA Chapter.

“Engaging the local community during parades and pop-up style events show people that even though we are a national organization, it is staffed by local citizens in Massachusetts. Their neighbors!”



### Pittsfield, Mass.

Local Disaster Action Team volunteers participated in the July 4th parade. DAT volunteers in the Berkshires Region are supported by the staff and volunteers in the Springfield office.



### Gloucester, Mass.

Kyle McWilliam-Lopez, Northeast MA Chapter Executive Director, his son Cassius, and James Barber (L) and Patricia O'Brien (R) were at the Gloucester Block Party, raising awareness of the Red Cross mission in Cape Ann.



### Quincy, Mass.

Red Cross volunteer Alan Day drives one of the Region's emergency response vehicles in the Quincy Flag Day parade. Quincy is a strong local partner for many Red Cross missions, including the Home Fire Campaign.



### **Middleborough, Mass.**

Southeast Chapter volunteers welcomed new members to the chapter at a pop-up Disaster Action Team event that focused on team building and best practices for DAT response. They also had the chance to barbeque together.



### **Brockton, Mass.**

Services to the Armed Forces volunteers spent a day at the VA in Brockton brightening the day for residents at the facility. SAF volunteers regularly support veterans at all five VA facilities in Massachusetts.

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## **Partner Recognition**



Pictured in the photo (left to right) - David Hicks, Donald Walker, Donald Hicks Jr, John Sullivan, Cathy Alegria, and Alyssa Calvin.

Staff members from Biomedical Services honored the Massachusetts Freemasons July 14, recognizing them for their work to collect blood and raise awareness for its need. The Massachusetts Freemasons are a Premier Blood Partner in the state, which designates their organization as a top blood drive partner, and recognizes their tireless efforts that contribute to the community and the national blood supply.

### **How to Become a Premier Blood Partner**

Premier status is based on prior year donations collected and average drive size. Blood drive partners can achieve premier status throughout the program year, but will not lose it in the same year. The more you collect, the more ways you can make an impact and we can thank you!



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