

RED ALERTS!



Keeping our valued Red Cross volunteers engaged and informed



ON THE HORIZON

■ March is **National Red Cross Month**, redcross.org/about-us/red-cross-month

■ **Red Cross Giving Day**, March 25.

■ **Sound the Alarm Nampa**, free smoke alarm installation event, April 24-25, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. both days. Sign up to volunteer in Volunteer Connection by logging in and going to My Shifts --> National Sound the Alarm --> Clicking on the event you are interested in attending.



31

Volunteers joined us in January.



30

Disaster responses in January.



MILESTONES

WALT SATO, 15 years

CLARENCE HATT, 10 years

STACEY HUBBEL, 10 years



Steve Hurtig of Shelby recently donated his 120th pint of blood. Retired after four decades in law enforcement, Hurtig said he's formed deep friendships through his blood donation.

A dedication to donation

Shelby man recently gives his 120th pint of blood and builds friendships in return

In early February, a retired law-enforcement official logged in to social media to tell the world, or at least the Big Sky State, of his milestone donation to the American Red Cross.

"Donated my 120th pint of blood today," Steve Hurtig posted, alongside several photos. "That equals 15 gallons, all donated in Montana."

Now retired after nearly four decades in law enforcement across the Hi-Line, the 63-year-old Shelby man spends much of his time on his amateur photography. Photography brings him joy, as do his regular Red Cross blood donations.

He said donating blood allows him to help others while forming deep friendships with volunteers, donors and the nonprofit's employees. One of those people is phlebotomist Colleen Finch, who has been on hand for at least half of Steve's donations.



Steve Hurtig said he has overcome his dread of needles. "I don't even feel the stick now."

"Colleen has become a friend of mine," he said. "With donating three to four times over any year you really get to know someone."

He has seen the other side of blood donation,

SEE DONATION, PAGE 2

New members join our team

"Tell us about the recent staffing changes."

We have had two staffing changes recently in our region. We are thrilled to announce that Nate Gilbert is our new Volunteer Services senior recruitment specialist — a position previously held by Danielle Pozernick, who is now a human resources specialist with St. Luke's Health System. Danielle remains an important member of our team, now as a volunteer.



YOU WANT TO KNOW

Send in a question at volunteerconnection.redcross.org

A homegrown Idahoan, Nate remembers his first encounter with the Red Cross at a school blood drive when he was 16.

Nate started working for the Red Cross in 2015 as a mobile phlebotomist and became a lead tech and trainer a short time later. After three years focused on phlebotomy and community outreach, he switched roles to become a biomed account manager. As



Gilbert

SEE TEAM, PAGE 2

Let your voice be heard: Take your volunteer satisfaction survey

Red Cross Lifesaving Hero awards



The Idaho Red Cross recently presented three Boise State University lifeguards, their instructor and two others with Lifesaving Awards for helping save a man who was having health complications while swimming in the BSU recreation center pool.

Subscribe to receive Cross Connection

Beginning in March, the way volunteers receive the Cross Connection newsletter will change.

Volunteers who would like to continue or begin receiving the Cross Connection will need to subscribe through Volunteer Connection.

A Cross Connection page in Volun-

teer Connection provides general information as well as directions on how to subscribe.

The new process will better allow volunteers to opt in and out as desired. Volunteers will need to register in [Volunteer Connection](#) by March.

If you have questions, contact

the Cross Connection team at NHQListCom@redcross.org.

Note: Cross Connection is a national Red Cross volunteer newsletter and is not related to our regional RED ALERTS newsletter. RED ALERTS will continue to arrive in your in-box near the end of each month.

Volunteer Services team honors Tally

Our Volunteer Services team is pleased to announce that Carol Tally has been selected as the Volunteer Services Volunteer of the Quarter.

Carol, who lives in Nampa, joined the Red Cross in Febru-

ary 2019 and quickly became an irreplaceable member of the Volunteer Services intake team.

“In her short time with us, Carol has brought so much joy and friendship to our team,” the Volunteer Services team writes.

“Her dedication to helping find new volunteers a meaningful opportunity with the American Red Cross has not gone unnoticed.

“Thank you so much for your time and friendship.”



Donation: Hurtig receives blood

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too. After a hip replacement a few years ago, Steve began to bleed while putting his full weight on his leg and needed two pints of blood during recovery.

“And that cost me a full year of donations because there’s a rule about donating for a certain time after you receive donor blood,” he explained, adding that it was tough not being able to give.

A type A positive donor, he tells of being called in to donate his specific blood type for a specific recipient.

Steve said his wife also tried to become a blood donor, though it didn’t work out.

“She tried once in the early 1980s. But they found out her blood just ran a bit too slow,” he said. “So that was it for her.”

Steve knows that donating blood is never entirely the same for any two people, though a general fear of needle

pokes is fairly universal.

“That is the same with everybody I guess,” he said. “I hate needles, too. I have just always turned my head during donation, and it wasn’t until about the last five years that I’ve been able to watch. I don’t even feel the stick now. I sit there and watch the whole thing.”

His long history as a blood donor began as his law-enforcement career was just getting started in Plentywood.

“I was a young guy on the force, and one day my chief, an older guy, came over to me and said. ‘Let’s go have lunch,’” he said. “When we got to the destination we were going to eat, it was a blood draw.”

In addition to his nine years in Plentywood, he also worked in community law enforcement in Libby, serving as a sheriff’s department detective. He retired 15 years ago from that Lincoln County position.

Hurtig has also served as a federal border patrol officer and customs offi-

cial, working at the Sweetgrass Port of Entry in Toole County and then became a port director at Whitlash.

He jokes about how working in Sweetgrass fit perfectly with his blood donation schedule. It was a one-hour drive from his federal job back to Shelby and the donation site, and he often got there just in the nick of time.

“When the donation site closed at 6 p.m., the crew knew it was almost time to head home when they saw me coming through the door,” he said.

Schedule an appointment

A blood donation takes about an hour from start to finish, but the actual donation itself takes only eight to 10 minutes and can save up to three lives.

Schedule an appointment today by using the Blood Donor App, visiting RedCrossBlood.org or calling 800-RED CROSS.

— Story by volunteer Amy Joyner

Team: Please send us your questions

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an account manager Nate went out into the community to set up blood drives.

Nate will begin his new role as a senior recruitment specialist in mid-March.

In December, George Gutierrez joined our team as the disaster program manager for southwest Idaho, the posi-

tion previously occupied by Chris Volmer.

Prior to joining the Red Cross, George was the deputy administrator for Policy and Innovation at the Idaho Division of Medicaid.

He also worked as the bureau chief



Gutierrez

for the Crime Victims Compensation Program for the State of Idaho, where he administered a health care plan and support for victims of violent crimes.

Both Nate and George will work out of our Boise office.

Have a question you would like us to answer? Submit it [here](#).

Or you can send an email to matthew.ochsner@redcross.org.