

# RED ALERTS!



Keeping our Red Cross volunteer workforce engaged and informed



## ON THE HORIZON

■ **National Fire Prevention Week**, Oct. 4-10. Learn more [here](#).



20

**Disaster responses** in September. **Clients helped: 79**



## SUPPORT HOTLINE

The support hotline for paid staff and volunteers offers emotional support during COVID-19. It's staffed by experienced mental health volunteers from 7 a.m. to 11 p.m. EST, seven days a week. Call 571-353-1161.



## MILESTONES

**SALLY AMADOR**, 15 years

**SHERMAN AMADOR**, 15 years

**KATIE LANE**, 10 years

**TAMMY REETZ**, 10 years

**RICHARD BERSEN**, 5 years

**BARBARA GUMBERT**, 5 years

**GABRIEL MAXWELL**, 5 years



A wildfire burned Nancy and Mark Correa's mountainside home to the ground in September. A Red Cross team was there to offer them comfort, lodging and even help catching their chickens.

# 'A place to put your head'

*Lenore couple who lost home to wildfire finds unexpected relief from Red Cross responders*

Sitting in her truck, Nancy Correa saw the smoke turn from gray to black and immediately realized the worst had happened. "I knew it was our house," she said. "It's just really hard."

Nancy and Mark Correa were one of more than 10 Lenore and Orofino-area families who lost their homes earlier this month in the Sunnyside Complex wildfires that burned more than 4,600 acres in Clearwater and Nez Perce counties. Less than an hour earlier, they had been



Mark and Nancy Correa

sitting at their table enjoying lunch in their mountainside home when Mark spotted smoke not far from their neighbor's house. "He went out there and said 'oh my gosh,

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# Recognizing Red Cross stars

Congrats to Kathy Mellinger, the Montana Red Cross volunteer who logged the most hours last year. A duty officer and Beaverhead County Disaster Action Team member, Kathy logged an amazing 1,799 hours, marking the second year in a row she's brought home this honor. Last month we announced that Barbara Weber logged more hours than any other Idaho volunteer. (Read more about Barbara and her new position on page 3). Way to go, Kathy!



Kathy Mellinger

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Earlier this month, we announced our 20- and 100-hour milestone winners on our Idaho and Montana Face-

book pages, with special videos created by Idaho and Montana Red Cross board members. Every volunteer who logged at least 20 hours last year was entered in a drawing to win a \$50 Zorch gift card. Our 10 winners were: ● **Randall Linn**, Cascade County (MT), 666 hours ● **Carol Tally**, Canyon County (ID), 252 hours

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# ‘They were wonderful’

*Volunteers help woman reeling from loss regroup, move forward*

Wearing Tyvek suits and respirators, Kathy Quigley and her family spent hours digging through what little remained of her Bridger Canyon home. The search unearthed little more than heartbreak.

“We got absolutely nothing,” she said. “That was a lot of emotion and a lot of disappointment.”

Quigley’s house was one of more than 25 Bozeman-area homes destroyed by the Bridger Foothills wildfire. She moved into the house when her daughter was just 5 years old. Allyson is now a 26-year-old third-year veterinary student at Washington State University.

“It’s just such an amazing loss,” Quigley said. “Not just the structure, that part’s fine. All the things that were in it, all the memories; like years of measuring how tall your kid is and putting it up on the doorjamb. And the photos of all the adventures you have shared with family and friends. The things that make up who you are.”

## A peaceful morning

The day her home burned, Quigley spent the morning mowing her lawn. The Bozeman veterinarian knew there was a fire on the westside of the Bridger Mountains but there was no indication her neighborhood was in imminent danger.

At about 2 p.m. she was on the phone with her brother Jeff, who lives in Billings, and he asked if he needed to come help her, but she said there was no need. The wind wasn’t blowing, there wasn’t a lot of smoke, and no one had told her to evacuate.



**Red Cross helped Kathy Quigley after her Bridger Canyon home burned.**

Twenty minutes later, the fire was in her backyard.

“That’s how fast it came,” she said.

“Across the whole skyline of the foothills all the trees were bright orange. They weren’t on fire yet, but you could see the fire was right behind them.”

With the help of her neighbor, she loaded her horse, three dogs and a cat, rushed back into her house to grab her wallet, a few clothes, her passport and her computer and left with the flames now just 50 yards away. That was the last time she would see her house intact.

## Relief with the Red Cross

A day later, Quigley arrived at the Red Cross temporary evacuation shelter at Christ the King Lutheran Church in Bozeman, her head still spinning.

“We were lost,” she said. “We were just scattered. Nothing was clear.”

There she found a team of caring Red Cross volunteers, and the compassion and support she needed to finally catch her breath and begin to think about the future. They gave her water and toilet-

ries, helped replace her medications and found her lodging at a local hotel, where she, her daughter Allyson and her brother Jeff would spend the next eight nights. The Red Cross also provided them three meals a day, as well as grief counseling.

“They were wonderful,” she said. “It was all so derailing, that touchstone was incredible.”

## Finding her footing

The same day she and her family sifted through the ruins of her old home, they also moved furniture into the townhouse she is now renting in Bozeman. Using vouchers provided by a Red Cross community partner, they went to local thrift stores and got beds, a kitchen table and chairs for free. Her daughter, on a short leave of absence from veterinary school in Pullman, Wash., is living with Quigley, and her brother Jeff is in town as well. Each day is tough, Quigley said, but it’s getting easier.

“Honestly it really depends on the moment,” she said. “Sometimes we’re laughing and joking and everything is perfectly fine, and then the next thing you know you’re just crying.”

Quigley thanks the Red Cross responders who were there when she needed them most and says they’ve inspired her.

“They just had big hearts, and many that I talked to had had events like this that changed their lives, and they want to give back,” she said.

“I’ve spent a lot of my life giving back but what this has taught me is ... I need to do more.”

— By Matt Ochsner

# Place: Team rounds up 35 chickens

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this is not good,” Nancy said.

They called the sheriff, grabbed a few things, hooked up their fifth-wheel and began to evacuate, the last time they would see their two-story log home with the panoramic view of the Clearwater River standing. A second home they were renting out just up the mountain from them also was destroyed.

“It’s just shocking,” Nancy said. “I had never been put in a position before literally being homeless.”

Still trying to grasp what had just happened, the Correas were directed to a hotel in Lewiston, where the Idaho Red Cross was providing free food and lodging to those forced to flee the fire. There they found a team of volunteers ready to help.

“They were all very compassionate, ready to listen to what you had to say, helping guide you in the right direction,” she said. “Even walking into to that lobby and have them say ‘do you need some water? Here’s a water bottle.’ For them to be there makes a huge difference.

“Just having a place to put your head.”

Three days after checking into the hotel, the Correas were allowed to return to what was once their home of five years to see what remained. Four Red Cross volunteers met them there.

The Correas’ chicken coop had burned, but 35 chickens were alive and well, now wandering loose and in need of a home. Half joking, Nancy told the



**Red Cross responders Don Geertz, Jim Thornton, Steve Dalmas and Gordon Simpson helped families forced to flee because of the Sunnyside Complex fires.**

Red Crossers they were going to round up the chickens and take them to the neighbors and asked if they wanted to help.

“My eyes got really big when they said yes,” she said.

Using nets, dog crates and a lot of teamwork, they had the chickens captured in about an hour.

“There were two chickens underneath some metal,” she said. “I’m not kidding, those guys got underneath that metal to get those chickens. They were on a mission.”

The Correas say they won’t be able to begin rebuilding until the spring and are still pondering their next move. While they are going through an incredibly difficult time, they say the outpouring of support they have received has been overwhelming.

“Of all the places to have this hap-

pen, Orofino is a wonderful place,” she said.

A local church reached out and provided them with everything from clothing and toilet paper to chicken noodle soup and crackers. One friend gave them a couple of quilts and another a toaster.

“Just things you wouldn’t even think about until you don’t have them,” she said.

And of course, they’re extremely grateful to the Red Cross volunteers who went above and beyond.

“I’ve heard about Red Cross before, but I never really knew exactly what Red Cross did,” she said. “I’m just so grateful that service is available. They provided food for us and a room and support and even rounded chickens up. Those guys were just awesome.”

— By Matt Ochsner



# Weber brings experience to new role

The Idaho and Montana Disaster Services team is excited to announce that Barbara Weber has joined our region as the Disaster Program Manager serving Western Idaho and Eastern Oregon. Barbara brings a great deal of professional and Red Cross experience to this role.

Weber

She comes to the Red Cross after a 30-year career working in sales and marketing management positions for companies such as Hewlett Packard and Simplot. She developed marketing and training programs, built and managed strong customer and partner relationships, and frequently presented industry trends and marketing strategies at com-

## IN THE KNOW



RED CROSS NEWS & HAPPENINGS

pany meetings and industry events.

Barbara developed a passion for humanitarian work as a Red Cross volunteer in Disaster Cycle Services and has demonstrated leadership through her roles in disaster workforce management, training, deployment, disaster response and communications.

Barbara has deployed on several national Disaster Relief Operations in public affairs, logistics, staff services and mass care. As a disaster instructor, she teaches a wide range of training courses at regional and Pacific Division Training Institutes.

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CONGRATS TO Idaho Red Cross

Board co-chair and Red Cross National Philanthropic Board member Roy Eiguren who was recently named an Idaho Business Review Icon Award winner.

The awards are given to those over the age of 50 who helped Idaho's business community grow and continue to champion their industry through creativity, innovation and leadership.

Roy was also a recent recipient of an Esto Perpetua Award.

Presented by the Idaho State Historical Society, these awards recognize outstanding accomplishments in preserving and promoting Idaho's heritage. Learn more [here](#).



Eiguren

## Providing comfort, care during wildfires



LEFT: Jack Smith meets with firefighters working the Woodhead fire near Cambridge. ABOVE: Bill and Linda Racicot and a four-legged friend at a recovery event at the Gallatin County Fairgrounds.



LEFT: Diana Ochsner and Jim Brown deliver services in Twin Falls during the Badger fire. ABOVE: Holly Ellithorpe and Sherrilyn Hamilton volunteer at the temporary evacuation center in Roundup, helping those families impacted by the Bobcat fire.

## Stars: More volunteers go out the door

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- **Paul Fritz**, Cascade County (MT), 169 hours
- **Sally Amador**, Latah County (ID), 155 hours
- **Cheryl Minto**, Ada County (ID), 153 hours
- **Ellen Barrios**, Ravalli County (MT), 134 hours
- **Dee Ellsworth**, Ada County (ID), 132 hours

- **James Brown**, Twin Falls County (ID), 115
  - **Syd Brosten**, Gallatin County (MT), 29 hours
  - **Allycia Schmitt**, Lewis and Clark County (MT), 21 hours
- Congratulations everyone!

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**RECENT DEPLOYMENTS:** A huge thank you to everyone who has raised their hand and gone out the door

to help our colleagues respond to a run of never-ending disasters.

Helping with the wildfires in Oregon are Disaster Action Team member and Community Volunteer Leader **Mike Bolts** and Idaho-Montana Regional CEO **Nicole Sirak Irwin**.

Gallatin County Disaster Action Team volunteer **Judy Correnti-Graf** is providing relief to those in Texas impacted by hurricanes Laura and Marco.

We are proud of you!