

# RED ALERTS!

Keeping our Red Cross volunteer workforce engaged and informed



## ON THE HORIZON

- **Easter**, April 4.
- **World Health Day**, April 7. Learn more [here](#).
- **Ramadan begins**, April 12.
- **National Volunteer Week**, April 18-24. Learn more [here](#).
- **Earth Day**, April 22. Learn more [here](#).



19

**Disaster responses** in March.  
**Clients helped:** 76



## MILESTONES

### March

**JAMES BURTON**, 10 years

**JANET LAMEY**, 10 years

**MICHAEL LAVOIE**, 5 years

**DEBRA LINN**, 5 years

**SHIRLEY OLSEN**, 5 years

**WAYNE OLSEN**, 5 years

### April

**MARLA CASE**, 20 years

**SANDY TIPPERY**, 10 years

**JAMES BROWN**, 5 years

**JUDY BURTON**, 5 years

**DAWN YADLOSKY**, 5 years



Photo by Matthew Rosine/Montana VA

Montana Red Crossers and those from the Montana Veterans Medical Center unload items to help fill veterans' needs. The Red Cross used grant money to purchase the goods.

# Red Cross items filling VA shelves

A Montana Red Cross team recently delivered nearly 800 items to the VA Medical Center at Fort Harrison in Helena, giving a boost to programs that support veterans in need across the state.

And it couldn't have come at a better time. "Especially right now during COVID, a lot of our volunteer and donation numbers are down so it's going to help sustain these programs for the upcoming months," said Amy Claridge, the Montana VA's acting chief of voluntary service.

"It's beyond measure." Purchased by the Red Cross through a Department of Defense grant, these items bolster the VA's recreational therapy program, women's health program and homeless veterans program, and will help those living at the VA's Freedoms Path housing unit. Together, the items totaled about \$3,400. The women's health program received socks and toiletries and goodies like baby shampoo and lotion they can include in a baby cart to support parents.

Wood and leathercraft kits and puzzle books will go to veterans taking part in the recreation therapy program.

And cooking, canning and juicing items will be used in conjunction with the VA's

community gardening program, as the vets learn to grow produce and turn it into healthy meals.

"When they can learn to grow a garden and

preserve those items and use them throughout the year ... skills like that are so important," Claridge said. "You're really touching people's lives — and not only the veterans — but in some instances it could also be their spouse or their children."

Socks, gloves, hats and toiletries support homeless veterans and the VA's inpatient clients as well.

"A sweatshirt or a pair of pants that are going to keep you warm, that's huge," Claridge said. "Small items people often take for granted mean the world to our vets in these situations."

Service to the Armed Forces VA volunteer Sue Hawthorne, Montana Red Cross board member Randi Heigh and Service to the Armed Forces Program Manager Sara Cease delivered the items to Fort Harrison in early March. And many of those items are already in veterans' hands.

"It's an amazing opportunity to be able to support the VA and provide things that make a veteran's life more enjoyable and give more comfort and care," Cease said.

SEE VETERANS, PAGE 2



Montana donor Patti Dorlarque proudly celebrates receiving her 10-gallon pin.

# Recipient stories move donor

In 1998, Patti Dorlarque was on her way home in Columbia Falls when she noticed a Red Cross blood drive. Diabetic, Patti didn't think she was able to donate but decided to stop in anyway to find out. It turns out she was eligible, jump-starting a two-decade tradition that has helped countless patients in need of lifesaving blood.

In November, Patti received her prestigious 10-gallon pin. Her blood has gone to medical facilities across the country and Montana including a couple of children's hospitals. She keeps all the letters she receives from

Red Cross telling her where her donation is being used.

The first letter Patti received let her know her donation went to someone at the hospital in Shelby, the community where she was born and raised.

"My chest just explodes," Patti said of the feeling she gets each time another Red Cross letter arrives. "I just love it. It makes me feel so good and so proud that I'm able to do that and help other people."

Patti says she donates every other

SEE DONOR, PAGE 2

# Great work-from-home job

Keep abreast of volunteer information at the Red Cross through In The Know. Looking for a new opportunity? Want to support Red Cross while filing your taxes? How about a social way to connect online with your fellow volunteers? It's all here. Read on.

**HELP NEEDED MONITORING CLIENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS:** Red Crossers! Are you seeking a virtual engagement job that you can do from home? If so, the compliance and monitoring team needs your support in providing program oversight. Please consider these positions.

**Compliance reviewer**  
All financial assistance 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, though variations can be expected.

**ID/address document reviewer**  
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.

**Event reviewer**  
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 and documenting information about the event in traditional media or contacting a fire department or local emergency official to obtain details. This step protects the integrity of our work by demonstrating that an event actually happened and, by extension, assistance was properly offered. Approximate time commitment: 2-4 hours per week.

## IN THE KNOW



Please note fiscal controls forbid pursuing these jobs if you are an active client assistance card holder and disaster action team responder.

For questions or to express interest in any of these roles, please contact Gini Kay at [IDMT.Recruiting@redcross.org](mailto:IDMT.Recruiting@redcross.org).

**POSITION HIGHLIGHT: DUTY OFFICER:** Are you organized and flexible, and do you like to talk on the phone? Would you like to be essential to initiating assistance during times of disaster? We need you as a duty officer.

A duty officer is the lynchpin of a Red Cross disaster response. These volunteers receive notification from clients and agencies requesting assistance during a fire, flood or other disaster. They assess the situation and deploy resources to support efforts such as initial case-work, sheltering, disaster assessment and recovery planning.

Location: Virtual/Work from home.

Volunteer Responsibilities:

- Complete training
- Have a computer with reliable internet service and a phone.
- Be on-call during selected shifts
- Dispatch Disaster Action Team

Time commitment:

- Full-time: Nine 6-hour shifts/month
- Part-time: One 6-hour shift/week

**DEPLOYMENT AVAILABILITY:**  
We are anticipating a very busy deployment season. Please update your availa-

bility within Volunteer Connection. Please contact your disaster program manager or specialist with any questions. You also can email IDMT-DWMteam@redcross.org if you plan on deploying and we will ensure your Volunteer Connection profile is set. We also can get you a mission card in anticipation of your deployment.

**PUT KETCHUP ON THAT:** Many of us are hungry to socialize again with friends, work colleagues and family. Ketchup with Friends is helping virtually. We are meeting monthly via Teams to swap stories, laugh and meet new people. You could even win something in a drawing! The next meeting is Tuesday, April 13, from 7:30-8:30 p.m. MT.



The winner of the March drawing was Scott Fairfield, who won a pair of Red Cross socks. In April, we will be giving away a Service to the Armed Forces hat.

Join the Microsoft Teams meeting on your computer or your mobile app. [Click here to join the meeting](#)

**IDAHO TAX OPPORTUNITY.** Please consider supporting the Red Cross of Greater Idaho as you file your taxes this year. The Idaho individual income tax form provides an easy way to donate money to the humanitarian organization and support our work in communities across the state. Just fill out the line next to the American Red Cross of Idaho Fund on your tax form to make a donation. **(See illustration below.)** These tax-deductible donations will stay in Idaho and help Red Cross provide disaster relief, collect and distribute blood, support military members and their families, recruit, train and deploy volunteers and teach lifesaving skills like CPR and first aid. Thank you for all you do to help us turn empathy into action.

DONATIONS. See instructions, page 9. I want to donate to:	
33. Nongame Wildlife Conservation Fund .....	•
35. Special Olympics Idaho .....	•
37. American Red Cross of Idaho Fund .....	•
39. Idaho Foodbank Fund .....	•
41. TOTAL TAX PLUS DONATIONS. Add lines 32 through 40	

# Veterans: Warm clothing, therapy tools

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

The Red Cross has a long history of supporting service members and their families here in Montana and across the globe.  
Last year, the Red Cross provided services and care to nearly 1,200 Montana military families. That includes helping deployed service men and women return home for a major event like a funeral or the birth of a child and

**TO LEARN MORE**

Discover how you can get involved with the Service to the Armed Forces program. Visit <https://www.redcross.org/about-us/our-work/military-families.html>.

giving families the skills they need to cope with the stress and uncertainty that comes with a deployment.

And just as importantly, the Red Cross also supports VAs and our veteran community.  
“We would like to thank the American Red Cross,” Claridge said. “They’re just great people with positive attitudes. We appreciate all the efforts that went into getting the grant. These are priceless for our veterans and their families.”  
— Story by Matt Ochsner

# Donor: Enjoying Red Cross interactions

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

month “like clockwork” and enjoys meeting other donors and talking with the Red Cross staff.  
“I feel like a little kid sometimes because you get the badge to put on that says when your appointment is and I wear that all day because I’m proud of that,” she said.  
— Story by Matt Ochsner

## Consider donating blood today

Every two seconds, someone in the United States needs blood including cancer patients, accident victims, expecting mothers and those undergoing surgery.  
Schedule an appointment today to



donate, or search for a blood drive near you by visiting our Web site, [RedCrossBlood.org](http://RedCrossBlood.org).  
You may also call 800-RED-CROSS (1-800-733-2767).  
The donation process takes about an hour from start to finish and just might save a life.