

# RED ALERTS!



Keeping our valued Red Cross volunteers engaged and informed



## ON THE HORIZON

■ **9/11 Memorial Sound the Alarm event**, Sept. 11, Boise. Visit [volunteerconnection.redcross.org/?nd=vms\\_public\\_for\\_m&form\\_id=6732](http://volunteerconnection.redcross.org/?nd=vms_public_for_m&form_id=6732) to volunteer or learn more.

■ **United Way Day of Caring smoke alarm installation event**, Sept. 12, Billings.

## MEET A LEADER



**BRUCE WENIGMANN**, Disaster Spiritual Care Lead, Boise

“Disaster spiritual care is about providing emotional and spiritual support to people who feel overwhelmed. It helps them to experience hope and affirmation as they find their way forward from crisis to recovery.”

**FUN FACT:** “At the end of my junior year in Spain I ran with the bulls four times. That’ll get you going early in the morning!”



**19**

**Disaster responses in July. Families helped: 21.**



Volunteer Hank Nowak helps with casework and damage assessment after a fierce hailstorm hit the Shepherd area in August. **BELOW:** Hail and strong winds destroyed siding and damaged roofs.

# Bringing calm after the storm

*Red Cross provides services to more than 90 people following severe hailstorm in Shepherd*

Volunteer Hank Nowak may be relatively new to the Red Cross, but he’s lived in Montana close to four decades and had never been around a hailstorm like the one that struck Yellowstone County in August.

“I’ve been in Montana since 1980 and seen some hail damage but nothing like this,” Nowak said as he and fellow volunteer Sherrilyn Hamilton recently conducted casework in Shepherd, a community of about 300 people that was espe-

cially hard hit. “It was apple-sized hail that was just ridiculous.”

Besides the devastating hail, the violent thunderstorm also brought straight-line winds of up to 60 to 70 mph. Windows were broken, roofs and siding damaged, crops wiped out and flooding followed. At least 45 homes were significantly impacted including 15 that were no longer livable.

Soon afterward, Red Cross volunteers were on the ground in Shepherd doing damage assessments and giving families the help they needed to get back on their feet, including financial assistance and connecting them with mental health support. More than 90 people received

**SEE CALM, PAGE 2**



# Albertsons campaign has extra meaning

For assistant store director Shilo Lillo, Albertsons partnership with the Red Cross raising money for disaster relief has very real significance.

Some 20 years ago, Lillo’s mother, Karen, was living in northern Oregon when a late-night electrical fire destroyed her mobile home. She was able to escape unharmed but lost almost everything she owned. Soon after, Red Cross was on the scene help-

ing however they could.

“That night the Red Cross showed up and brought her some blankets and a few clothing items and put her and her husband up in a hotel,” said Lillo, who works at the Albertsons store on South Federal Way in Boise.

Lillo said Red Cross found a hotel for his mother and her husband that also accommo-

**SEE ALBERTSONS, PAGE 2**



Shilo Lillo is an Albertsons assistant store director in Boise. Twenty years ago, his mother’s home was destroyed in a house fire and Red Cross responded.



**MILESTONES**

**JULIE DASINGER,**  
10 years

**KELY SLOAN,**  
5 years



**14**

**Volunteers** joined us in July.



**IN MEMORIAM**

**Frank Schrandt,** of Meridian, passed away earlier this month. He was a transportation specialist who helped deliver lifesaving blood for seven years.

“We enjoyed his great sense of humor and looked forward to seeing him for his regular Friday shift each week,” said Marcia Gnehm, biomedical volunteer workforce engagement rep. “He will be deeply missed.”

*Wishing you the best, Jacqui!*



Jacqui Baldwin-Le Clair has left her role as disaster program specialist for western Montana to pursue a law degree at the University of Montana. Jacqui’s dedication and talent will be missed.

**Help with fleet, facilities**

Become a fleet and facilities volunteer and help maintain the vehicles and buildings that are at the heart of the Red Cross mission. Without our vehicles, volunteers couldn’t reach families whose homes have burned, blood products would never make it to hospitals and

shelters wouldn’t be stocked. Facilities volunteers assist with basic maintenance projects, warehouse organization and light cleanup. Volunteers are needed in Bozeman, Great Falls, Helena and Kalispell. Contact 208-258-0592 or [IDMT.Recruiting@redcross.org](mailto:IDMT.Recruiting@redcross.org).

**Social media volunteer recognized**

The communications team recently named social media volunteer Trina Conner its Volunteer of the Quarter.

Conner, of Meridian, creates several posts each week for the Red Cross of Idaho and Montana Facebook pages including those about biomedical services, the Service to the Armed Forces program and disability access. She also shares content from the

national American Red Cross Facebook to the local Facebook pages.

“Trina is a fabulous volunteer and a big reason why we just surpassed 4,000 likes on our Idaho and Montana Facebook pages combined,” said Regional Communications Director Matt Ochsner. “Thanks to Trina we are able to share our successes and our stories with more people.”



**Calm: Helena team opens shelters**

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Red Cross services.

“People seemed to be holding up fairly well,” said Nowak, a retired postal service employee who lives in Joliet. “The other day when we were out there were two people who were very emotional. When he turned over the cash cards to them, they started to cry and one gave me a big old hug. It was very rewarding.”

This was Nowak’s first big Red Cross disaster response since joining the organization at the end of 2018.

“I had a very good life, and I’ve got a lot of skeletons in my closet, and I just figured it was time to give something

back,” he said.

“To me it’s just amazing, and mind-boggling, how big Red Cross is and how much it does.”

**HELENA TEAM RESPONDS TO WILDFIRES:** The Lewis and Clark County Disaster Action Team answered the call this summer, opening shelters in response to the North Hills fire near Helena and the Horsefly fire east of Lincoln.

The team made sure those who evacuated had a safe place to stay, connected families with other community resources and helped with media requests, among many other duties.

“They sprang into action immediately,” Disaster Program Manager Shellie



Creveling said. “Within 30 minutes volunteers secured a shelter location and were prepared to welcome evacuees. We truly appreciate all that they do.”

**Albertsons: Program supports disaster relief**

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dated their cat and helped them stay there for an extended period.

“The Red Cross was there from the fire onward, until they got another place,” he said.

Through Aug. 31, Albertsons customers across Idaho and Montana can donate to Red Cross disaster relief and help others like Karen through their customer donation program. Those donations can be made at the check stand as customers pay for their grocery

ies and will help the humanitarian organization respond to local disasters.

The Red Cross of Idaho and Montana responded to more than 440 disasters last year alone — the vast majority of which are home fires.

“The Red Cross is such a huge part of all the communities across the United States and even the world,” Lillo said. “They’re there for support and to help people through a traumatic time. These people are servants to other people, and it’s just remarkable.”

Last year, the Albertsons customer

donation program raised \$138,600 at more than 80 stores across seven states.

Lillo said his mother is doing well and has moved to Nevada so she can be near her new grandchild. And two decades later, she’s still extremely grateful for all the Red Cross did to help her through an incredibly difficult time.

“She always told me that if I were to ever donate or give money to any charity always give to the Red Cross,” Lillo said. “They were willing to do whatever it took to make her experience better than what it was in that moment.”