

RED ALERTS!



Keeping our Red Cross volunteer workforce engaged and informed



ON THE HORIZON

- August, [National Immunization Awareness Month.](#)
- Aug. 7, [Purple Heart Day.](#)
- Aug. 12, [World Humanitarian Day.](#)
- September, [National Preparedness Month.](#)



20

Disaster responses in July.
Clients helped: **82**



MILESTONES

- July**
- STEPHANIE SMITH, 5 years
 - BRIAN WILLS, 5 years
 - PATRICIA WILLS, 5 years



TO DONATE BLOOD

Visit online [RedCrossBlood.org](#)
Or you can call 800-RED-CROSS

Blood gives life



Bertie Gaverick is now a happy-go-lucky baby after receiving multiple blood transfusions to combat problems that developed during the final week of pregnancy.

Now-thriving baby saved at birth

Ten-month-old Bertie Gaverick is a wide-eyed explorer, determined to be a part of the action.

“She’s a very busy, observant young lady,” her mother, Wren said. “She refuses to sleep because she just doesn’t want to miss out on what’s going on around her.”

Happy and healthy now, Bertie faced an uphill battle the moment she arrived on the scene in Bozeman, and without the generosity of blood donors, her story might have turned

out much differently.

After a healthy pregnancy and a week before Bertie was due, Wren noticed that Bertie was no longer kicking or moving. An ultrasound showed a heartbeat, but no movement. After more tests, Bertie’s heart rate plummeted, and the doctors performed an emergency C-section. That’s when they determined that Bertie and Wren had suffered a

SEE THRIVING, PAGE 2

Blackfeet welcome shelter trailer

Montana Red Cross delivered an emergency shelter trailer loaded with supplies including cots, blankets and comfort kits to the Blackfeet Nation in Browning late in July.

Those supplies will help Browning-area communities open a shelter quickly during disasters like wildfires, flooding or winter storms until Red Cross teams arrive. Emergency management officials and tribal council members were on hand as the Red Cross delivered the trailer.

“It’s important for us to have the opportunity to open a shelter quickly,” said Robert DesRosier, the director of Emergency Management for the Blackfeet Nation. “Disasters know no boundaries.

“We’re really grateful to the Red Cross for what they’ve done here today. We look forward to the day when we have a much easier time responding to disaster.”



Shellie Creveling, Red Cross disaster program manager for western Montana, helps deliver a new emergency shelter trailer full of supplies like cots, blankets and hygiene items to the the Blackfeet Nation.

SEE SHELTER, PAGE 3

Two promoted from within

We are pleased to announce the promotion of two employees who moved into key positions recently.

VOLUNTEER SERVICES

We are pleased to announce that Valerie Ballard is our region’s new



Valerie Ballard

regional volunteer services officer. Valerie joined the American Red Cross as a volunteer in 2003 and began her first paid staff position in 2007.

Since then, she has served in a variety of roles, most recently as a senior disaster program manager in the Illinois region.

Throughout her Red Cross journey, Valerie has remained passionate about finding ways to connect individuals with the organization’s lifechanging and lifesaving mission.

She has lived in Gardiner, Mont., since March of 2021 and loves the natural beauty that surrounds her and the people of Montana.

Valerie moves into the position previously occupied by Wendy McGrew, who recently became our region’s chief operating officer.

BUSINESS OPERATIONS

Kelly Graepel is our new business operations specialist. Kelly joined the Red Cross in 2020 as an administrative

assistant supporting Eric Horton, who oversees biomed operations in our region.



Kelly Graepel

Prior to her work at the Red Cross, Kelly worked at the Mayo Clinic for 18 years on the patient and consumer marketing team.

Kelly has a Bachelor of Business Administration from Gonzaga University.

Kelly is passionate about helping others.

Outside the office, Kelly enjoys gardening, cycling, skiing and spending time with her husband and two children exploring Idaho and beyond.

Become a Red Cross duty officer

This month, Red Cross recruiting is focusing on duty officers to help coordinate disaster responses. Also, if you have been skipping our monthly virtual get-together, you are missing some great conversations. Check out the link below to Ketchup With Friends.

POSITION OF THE MONTH.

Duty Officers assess the situation and deploy the most appropriate resources to support efforts such as casework, sheltering, disaster assessment, and recovery planning.

Title: Duty Officer

Location: Virtual — work from home.

Time Requirements: **Preferred length of commitment (after training) is at least 6 months, and a year is greatly appreciated.*

Full-time: Nine 6-hour shifts per month

Part-time: One 6-hour shift per week

Volunteer Responsibilities:

- Have a computer with reliable Internet service and a phone.
- Complete Red Cross training (online and with supervisor).

IN THE KNOW



RED CROSS NEWS & HAPPENINGS

- Be on-call during selected shifts
- Dispatch Disaster Action Team volunteers and provide leadership guidance during local disasters.

Questions? Contact Gini at IDMT.Recruiting@redcross.org or by phone/text at 406-493-8778 for more information.

KETCHUP WITH FRIENDS.

Please join fellow volunteers at our virtual social time, Tuesday, Aug. 9, from 7:30- 8 p.m. If you attend, you will be eligible to win a door prize. Click [here](#) to join the meeting.



If you join and don’t have access, please send Nate Gilbert an email at Nathan.Gilbert@RedCross.org and we will see what we can do to help get you connected.

We hope you can join us this month. See you all there!

Here is a link to a video if you need help joining the meeting: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IYdZYP9tITg>

GET BACK TO US. We know the world is constantly changing right now, and we want to make sure we are communicating these changes and updates with you in the ways – and at the pace – that you prefer.

Below is a link to a survey asking how we should best communicate these breaking news updates with you, and how often you would like to receive this information.

Please take a few minutes out of your busy day and fill out this quick survey, found here:

https://volunteereconnection.redcross.org/?nd=vms_load_form&form_id=10958

Thriving: Transfusions critical

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maternal-fetal hemorrhage, a condition where the baby’s blood cells enter the mother’s bloodstream.

“So when she was born she was missing about four-fifths of her blood volume,” Wren said.

Bertie received two transfusions immediately in Bozeman before being flown to Billings, where she underwent therapeutic hypothermia, a treatment that helps prevent brain damage by lowering the body’s temperature. She received another blood transfusion there.

“It was terrifying, but we kept getting good news throughout the process, so we were able to focus on that,” Wren said.

In Billings, little Bertie began to bounce back quickly, eating well and passing all her tests.

About eight days later, the Gavericks were back home in Bozeman. She’s had regular follow-ups with the developmental clinic, and an MRI shows no signs of brain damage. First steps aren’t all that far away.

VOLUNTEER AT BLOOD DRIVES

Red Cross is recruiting compassionate donor ambassador volunteers to support blood drives. These volunteers ensure that blood donors have a pleasant experience by helping the drives run smoothly and thanking donors for their contribution.

Explore the possibilities at www.redcross.org/volunteer and complete your application today! Interested? Contact our team at IDMT.Recruiting@redcross.org for more information.

“She’s been off the charts healthy and doing great ever since,” Wren said. “We had a rocky start, but she’s definitely a success story.”

To celebrate Bertie’s recovery and raise awareness of the importance of blood donation, Wren and her husband, Michael, organized a two-day In Honor of Bertie Blood Drive at the Red Cross Donor Center in Bozeman in early July. Thirty-six donors, including nine first-timers, came through the door.

Without the generosity of donors like these, Wren said, things could have turned out much differently.

“If we wouldn’t have had those two

units right away in Bozeman, I would have never gotten to meet her and if we hadn’t had more available in Billings she wouldn’t be the happy, healthy little gal that she is,” Wren said.

“It’s not just my life that has been changed by having our daughter with us, it’s that whole network of people who love me and were so terrified at that time that she wasn’t going to make it. Had we not had blood to give Bertie, it’s unthinkable the impact it would have had on this huge web of people.”

— Matt Ochsner
Regional Communications Director



Red Cross Mobile Casework Outreach Team volunteers Jo Ericksen, Linda Racicot, Cherry Eustace, Hannah Christen and Kerri Strasheim met with those impacted by historic Montana flooding, offering assistance and care.

Flood workers, assistance crucial

With the help of its partners, the Red Cross continues to deliver assistance to those most impacted by historic flooding across Montana. Since this operation began in mid-June, more than 100 volunteers and paid staff have supported this response, both on the ground and remotely.

During the first days of the disaster response, the Red Cross opened seven shelters and evacuation centers, providing 62 overnight stays. Red Cross and its community partners also served more than 4,600 meals and snacks and distributed 1,000 relief items.

We have now shifted to the recovery phase, working with families to determine ongoing needs and teaming with emergency officials to provide financial assistance and mental health services. To date, we have provided more than \$60,000 in direct financial assistance.



In June, roaring floodwaters mowed through several communities across Montana, damaging and destroying homes and businesses, stranding campers, washing out roads and piling up debris. Hundreds of Montanans were dramatically impacted. The Red Cross mobilized more than 100 volunteers and staff to provide immediate assistance and help with long-term recovery.

Shelter: Vehicle will help preparedness

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Working closely with community partners and emergency managers, each year Red Cross helps meet the needs of hundreds of Montanans following disasters like wildfires and flooding.

That includes the Richard Spring wildfire on the Northern Cheyenne Reservation and the Pine Grove wildfire on the Fort Belknap Reservation last summer. Also, it includes the Spotted Eagle wildfire that led to the evacuation of Heart Butte in 2015.

“We are honored today to be able to deliver these emergency supplies to such a wonderful partner,” said Shellie Creveling, Red Cross disaster program manager for western Montana.

LEARN MORE

To learn more about becoming a Red Cross Disaster Action Team volunteer, please visit redcross.org/volunteer, email IDMT.Recruiting@redcross.org or text or call 406-493-8778. Training will be provided.



“Disaster response is a communitywide effort, and partnerships like these make our communities better prepared and more resilient.”

Support from Margaret A. Cargill

Philanthropies provided funding for the trailer and supplies.

In the past few months, Red Cross has also delivered emergency shelter trailers to the Northern Cheyenne Nation and to the Fort Belknap Reservation. The Crow Nation also received a disaster trailer and supplies several years ago.

Red Cross is currently recruiting for more volunteers to help the organization respond to Montana disasters. These Disaster Action Team members help deliver food and shelter — and just as importantly — provide emotional support and a shoulder to lean on for those impacted. More than 90 percent of the Red Cross workforce are volunteers.