

# RED ALERTS!



Keeping our volunteer partners engaged and informed



## ON THE HORIZON

■ **Training Institute**, April 5-8, Holiday Inn, West Yellowstone. More to come.



Join us in congratulating Regional Disaster Officer **Colleen Tone** on her promotion to North Central Division disaster director. Colleen served as RDO for seven years. Many thanks for a job well done.



## MILESTONES

- SANDRA BILLS**, 5 years
- JERRY LOWE**, 5 years
- JERRY HAMILTON**, 5 years
- JULIE McLAUGHLIN**, 5 years
- GLORIA PADDOCK**, 5 years
- JULIANNA PARKER**, 5 years
- BETH PESHMAN**, 5 years
- DIANE SEITZ**, 5 years
- JOHANNA SHARP**, 5 years



## IN MEMORIAM

Billings Disaster Action Team volunteer **Ken Finley**. He was 94.

# ‘Miss them bad’

*Idaho man deployed to California expecting to help people; he got to comfort their pets, too*

**W**hen Red Cross volunteer Tim Dye left Twin Falls for California in November to help those in the path of devastating wildfires, he had no idea he would be spending as much time with pets as people.

“We were sitting at our nightly meeting the first night, and the man said we were going to start an animal shelter and we need a guy. I walked up to him and said ‘I’m your guy,’” Dye said. “I’ve been around dogs for 72 years. I’ve milked cows. I’ve treated cows. I’ve raised baby calves. I’m your guy.” And he said, ‘Do you know what? I think you are.’ So he put me in the shelter that night.”

For the next few weeks, Dye and his team would care for the pets of families staying at emergency shelters or in tents or trailers in the parking lot, as was often the case. He spent 14 days in Orland and six in Chico. By the end, they were tending to 80 dogs, 11 cats and two birds.

Often starting his day at 5 in the morn-



Twin Falls volunteer Tim Dye with Zina, his favorite of the dogs he cared for following the wildfires in California.

ing, Dye would first walk the bigger dogs and then get the other volunteers started on cleaning cages and feeding and watering

SEE DYE, PAGE 2

# Operating response vehicle as much about people as driving

The most important skills of operating an emergency response vehicle are the same as with any deployment: flexibility, the ability to sleep on a cot and wake up happy and most of all people skills, Red Cross volunteer Johnnie Sue Elliott said.

Elliott took a recent Red Cross ERV training held by Don Nesbitt, a volunteer who recently drove the ERV from Boise to South Carolina during Hurricane Florence.

Virtually every disaster response needs ERVs, Nesbitt said. The modified vans are a way to deliver and serve food and other supplies to areas affected by an emergency.

“Moving the vehicle down the road is important, but it’s one of the lesser parts of being an ERV driver,” he said. “I had three pages of lessons learned when I taught the class.”

Nesbitt said knowing how to serve the food, how to work in a kitchen and knowing how to relate to others is important, too. If you can talk to people, you’re half-way there.

The introduction course for ERV drivers



Volunteer Johnnie Sue Elliott recently took emergency response vehicle training.

is online at RedCross.org and lasts about an hour.

The ideal ERV driver is “a person who is

SEE ERV, PAGE 2

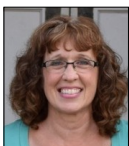
# Zimmerman recognized for volunteer work

The Volunteer Services team is pleased to announce that Pam Zimmerman of Kalispell is the Volunteer Services’ Volunteer of the Quarter.

She has been with the Red Cross since August of 2018. After joining the Volunteer Services Recruitment Team, she promptly began following up with individuals who were interested in volunteering with the organization.

She has been an absolute rock star

by encouraging prospective volunteers to start their applications and making timely second and third follow-up contacts. Because of her hard work, we have seen an increase in interested people beginning their application and becoming active volunteers.



**HOURS INCENTIVE PROGRAM:** In December we asked

volunteers to help choose a 100-hour milestone incentive and the votes are in. Anyone who logs 100 hours between July 1, 2018, and June 30, 2019, will be entered into a drawing to win one of eight Red Cross jackets. The drawing will take place in mid-July.

Those who log 20 hours during that same timeframe will receive a Red Cross luggage tag.

Please remember you can log your hours retroactively from July 1, 2018, forward.

# Dye: Early love for animals

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

their four-legged guests. Like their owners, many of the animals were having a difficult time.

“The dogs were stressed,” he said. “Most had never been in a cage before. It was really hard on the animals, just like it was hard on the people.”

Dye said setting up an animal shelter like this was new to the Red Cross and provided an invaluable service to those families who had lost everything. Being able to remain with their pets restored a sense of normalcy to their lives, and the shelter gave them the peace of mind that their animals would be well cared for when they ran errands, returned to work and began the initial steps of the long recovery process.

And by caring for the animals, Dye found he was also forming a bond with their owners.

“There was this one guy who had lost his wife four years ago, and then a year ago he had a heart attack, and then three months ago they found out he had a brain tumor, and I could see the sadness in his eyes,” Dye said. “I sent the mental health people over to his trailer to talk him. I said, ‘This guy, you can see, is so sad.

“And then when he finally brought his dogs in a couple days later, he said, ‘Tim I need to thank you so much for coming over and helping me. You perked up my attitude.’ From then on, we were buddies. Every morning he would come in to walk his dogs and he would give me a big hug.”

An especially poignant moment for Dye came on Thanksgiving Day when a family from Redding — some 100 miles away — brought 20 turkey dinners specifically for the volunteers working in the animal shelter. They had lost three family members — a grandmother and two great-grandkids — in the Carr fire just a few months earlier. It was a heartbreaking incident that drew national media attention. The grand-



By caring for the animals during his deployment to California, Twin Falls volunteer Tim Dye also formed close bonds with their owners.

father talked to his wife and his two grandkids on the phone as the fire converged on their home, unable to reach them.

“That was probably the most emotional moment for me,” he said.

Dye said he became especially attached to a little white dog named Zina. Zina never barked during the 20 days he cared for her, but the day he was getting ready to fly back to Idaho, she pulled the leash out of her owners’ hands, ran over to Dye, jumped on him and began to whine.

“She knew I was leaving,” he said. “I’m not kidding.”

Dye slept in the same area with the dogs. One pup named Gus would howl all night, so Dye decided to try something. He tucked the dog’s leash under his cot so he couldn’t get away and let the dog sleep on his legs.

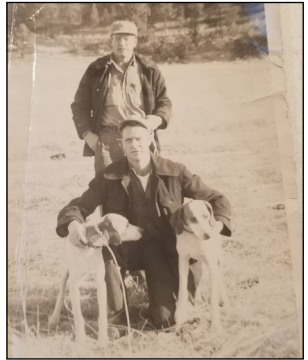
“He never cried after that,” Dye said.

Dye’s love of animals began early in life. He grew up on 80 acres near Hamilton, Mont., where his father owned a blacksmith shop. The family had 20 hound dogs they used to track coyotes, mountain lions and bobcats for their hides.

When he was 4, Dye’s dad took him out to the pen one morning and told him he was now in charge of the dogs.

“I said, ‘Yes sir,’ and I took care of them all,” he said.

Dye is retired now but has done a little of most everything during his 71 years. He was a crew chief on a



When Tim Dye turned 4, Tim’s dad, pictured here with Tim’s uncle, put him in charge of the 20 hound dogs they used to track coyotes, mountain lions and bobcats.

B-52 bomber in the Air Force, worked in a papermill for 10 years, owned a restaurant for 20 years, managed a dairy and ran a convenience store.

He’s been on several other deployments during his time with the Red Cross including two following Hurricane Sandy, and also helped with operations in Colorado, Kentucky, Pocatello and Missoula.

But none were like this.

“I ate, slept, did everything with those dogs for 20 days, and I miss them,” he said. “I miss them bad, and their owners. Their owners were so sweet. I tried to take the best care of them I could — the owners and the pets — and they knew it. Cause you know they got nothing left, nothing.”

— Matt Ochsner

# ERV: ‘Like we were an ice cream truck’

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

conscious of safety, who cares about the clients, is trainable and willing to learn, is willing to accept criticism and has a lot of grace,” Nesbitt said. And the driver should have a clean record and be able to do some lifting.

The in-person training involves learning to work the vehicle, backing up with a spotter and driving the vehicle around town and on the freeway.

The most recent ERV training in Idaho was actually Elliott’s second time taking the training. She wanted to update her skills with the new vehicle.

When she deployed to Georgia after Hurricane Matthew in 2016, Elliott drove into a hard-hit neighborhood with water and snacks, only to learn the people there didn’t have any electricity.



Teresa Browning was one of five people who took part in emergency response vehicle training in Idaho Falls. Six others took part in Twin Falls.

“Since they didn’t have power, of course they could use food,” she said.

“We served about 300 people at a time. It was like we were an ice cream truck. They’d see us coming and follow us to the park.”

With the schools closed, many of those served from the ERV were children.

One moment stands out from that

deployment. Toward the end of dinner service, a woman arrived. Elliott asked how she’d found them and said she was just driving by, wondering if she had any food in her house to feed her children when she spotted the Red Cross.

“She needed something and we were able to provide that need,” she said.

— Kristen Inbody