

# RED ALERTS!



Keeping our Red Cross volunteer workforce engaged and informed



## ON THE HORIZON

- [World Blood Donor Day](#), June 14.
- [World Sickle Cell Day](#), June 19.
- [Juneteenth](#), June 19.
- [World Refugee Day](#), June 20.
- [Father's Day](#), June 20.
- [National PTSD Day](#), June 27.



# 33

Disaster responses in May. Clients helped: 114



## MILESTONES

June

- SANDRA CAIN, 15 years
- PAUL HICKS, 10 years
- ANGELA MEULLER-SAWYER, 10 years
- MICHELLE KAY, 10 years
- SUZANNE CARROLL, 5 years
- KATHLEEN MELLINGER, 5 years

## Good job!

Big applause goes to amazing Montana volunteer Tobie Weist.



Tobie recently won the Lyle Heath Community Service Award, which recognizes volunteers who unselfishly donate time, to nonprofits in the Missoula area.

Tobie has been a Red Crosser since 2000 as a disaster action team member and a pillowcase presenter.

## Join us

Our Montana Chapter's annual meeting will be June 17. This virtual meeting will begin at noon, and we will announce the winner of the Tom Wozniak Volunteer Award for Excellence. E-mail [diane.wright2@redcross.org](mailto:diane.wright2@redcross.org) to attend.



Friends and family members support 12-year-old leukemia patient Ethan Nguyen at a recent blood drive in Boise. Ethan needs regular infusions of blood and platelets, so his family is working to collect blood to help others in similar situations.

# Helping others lifts boy's spirits

## Family pulls together for Boise youngster

As his younger sister guided him around the Salvation Army gym in his wheelchair, 12-year-old Ethan Nguyen encouraged and thanked donors, a big smile on his face. Just six months earlier, Ethan was diagnosed with leukemia, a cancer of the blood and bone marrow that requires frequent blood and platelet transfusions as part of the treatment process.

On this day, his family was holding a Red Cross community blood drive in Boise in his name.

"He loved it," his aunt Samira Hernandez said after the March drive, which brought in 26 units of lifesaving blood. "It was great just to see him happy. He was so excited to see that all these donors were coming in at a blood drive held in his name."

In November, Ethan received his leukemia

diagnosis, the same form of cancer that had taken his grandmother's life 10 years earlier.

"Hearing his diagnosis was so, so devastating," Samira said, especially after losing another loved one to the same disease.

Understandably, Ethan struggled both emotionally and physically at first, undergoing aggressive chemotherapy that takes a toll on a young body.

"Mentally he wasn't doing well," she said. "He was really scared."

Ethan receives chemo orally, through a port and through his spine to prevent the cancer from spreading to his spine and brain. Just three weeks into his treatment, he developed sepsis, which required doctors to surgically remove his port. But even then, some of the sepsis remained, and Ethan underwent a

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# Teens engage through virtual club

Though the COVID-19 pandemic closed many doors, it also opened a few as well – including a new way of volunteering virtually for Idaho and Montana teens eager to serve the American Red Cross.

The Virtual Red Cross Club allows students from across Idaho and Montana to join together via Zoom and find ways of improving their communities, including making them safer.

"Seeing the students come together from across our region was just great," said Nate Gilbert, recruitment specialist for Volunteer Services.

The club's first project was related to ensuring community safety and raising awareness of

the Sound the Alarm program. This program teaches families how to prevent home fires and how to escape safely if one occurs.

Club President Melina Mohammadi, a 16-year-old from Meridian, says the fact that the club operated virtually made it particularly attractive.

"It allowed me to contribute to the community and connect with other like-minded students while staying safe," she said.

Melina has encouraged others to join and said she's felt supported every step of the way as a Virtual Red Cross Club volunteer. Everyone's ideas and voices are welcome, she said.

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MISSION CARDS

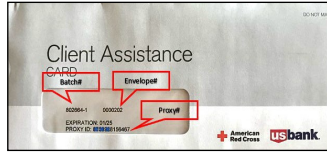
# Inventory vital to audit

It's time for the quarterly inventory of client assistance and mission cards.

This is the biggest one of the year as it is used by our auditors to close out the fiscal year. Please help our region continue to excel in this area. It only takes a few minutes, and we appreciate your help.

We will compile a "snapshot" of the location of cards on one specific date only – May 31 – using an online form as in the past. The online reporting form will only be open **June 1-8**.

Please note the cards you have on May 31 and report that, even if that information changes because you use cards during the open reporting window



that follows. To ensure data are comparable, it is important that all reporting is for cards in hand on the "snapshot date" only.

DCS volunteers should watch for an email on June 1 from Regional Disaster Officer Ted Koenig. It will provide a link to a short form to record card information. That information appears on the outside of the envelopes in which these

cards were provided to you. All DCS workers with client assistance cards or mission cards must complete the form, regardless of position.

If you will not have access to your cards between June 1-8, please contact Angela James at [angela.james@redcross.org](mailto:angela.james@redcross.org) prior to June 1 with your card information and she will assist you with reporting on time.

Cards that are not reported will be electronically destroyed shortly after the form closes on June 8 so our records will remain accurate. In this event, you will not be able to use these cards in the future.

# We need your technical help

Whether you are watching for the perfect volunteer opportunity, want to hang out virtually with other volunteers, or you just need to be connected to company changes, In the Know is the place to find information. Enjoy.

**COMPUTER TRAINER.** We are seeking a volunteer with the technical and professional skills to teach others to use two software packages. The right applicant will become an expert in using and teaching the RC View program and Microsoft's Power BI application. This ensures our region has the capacity to provide technical support to volunteers and staff members.

**Operations Associate, RC View/Power BI Application Lead (virtual):** Become an expert for the RC View program as well as the Microsoft Power BI application. Individuals with experience in leading cross-functional teams and the ability to effectively coach and train others in the use of this technology is preferred.

**Location:** Virtual. Work from the comfort of your home. (Must have reliable internet service and phone coverage.)

**Volunteer Responsibilities:**

- Serve as the regional champion and expert for RC View & Power BI applications.
- Establish ongoing calendars for RC View & Power BI applications and training.
- Conduct RC View & Power BI applications training, using American Red Cross training materials.
- Participate as a member of the Regional Application Support Team (RAST) and coordinate with RAST Lead as needed

**Time commitment:** 6-10 hours a month after initial training.

Interested? Send an email to [IDMT.Recruiting@redcross.org](mailto:IDMT.Recruiting@redcross.org).

**VOLUNTEER CONNECTION ISSUES.** Some Red Cross volunteers have encountered problems while attempting to log in to their Volunteer Connection accounts. Updates to the Red Cross system could be the culprit, making cached pages inaccessible. One solution is aimed at people who have bookmarked Volunteer Connection. Please clear your cache and cookies. This should allow you to log in again. If issues persist, contact your manager.

**NEW RESOURCE COMING.** We are pleased to reintroduce the Asian American and Pacific Islander Resource

## IN THE KNOW



RED CROSS NEWS & HAPPENINGS

**Group.** Chief information officer Ronnie Strickland will be the executive champion for this group. This initiative will be a valuable resource for all Red Crossers; anyone can join and allies are welcome. If you're interested in [joining the group](#) or in [joining its steering committee](#), please apply.

**COVID GUIDELINES.** As more people have become vaccinated and the number of COVID-19 cases are significantly reduced, we have reached an important milestone in the battle against the pandemic. Our country has reached a point where we can begin to alleviate some of the burdens of COVID-19.

Below are new guidelines from the CDC that were also endorsed by OSHA and went into effect at the Red Cross on May 21.

- Fully vaccinated workforce (paid and volunteers) will no longer need to wear a mask while conducting Red Cross business as long as they avoid large groups.
- Non-vaccinated workforce whose job function requires face-to-face interactions with the public will continue to perform their job, but they must wear a mask and continue socially distancing.
- Fully vaccinated blood donors and class participants will no longer need to wear a mask or socially distance. Non-vaccinated blood donors and class participants will continue to be required to wear a mask and socially distance.

Individual lines of service (Service to the Armed Forces, Disaster Cycle Services, etc.) will notify you of specific requirements and guidance.

Volunteers are encouraged to report their vaccination status in Volunteer Connection as soon as they become fully vaccinated. Go to MyNHQ on the Volunteer Connection homepage and follow the directions under COVID-19 information.

Recording your vaccination status is not a requirement, nor is receiving a vaccine.

Personal vaccination information will be treated as confidential.

If an employee or volunteer does not provide their COVID-19 vaccination

status, we'll assume that individual has not been vaccinated.

To help address any questions, please review the [Changing COVID-19 Safety Protocols and Vaccine Reporting FAQs](#), or reach out to your supervisor or email [IDMT.info@redcross.org](mailto:IDMT.info@redcross.org).

Thanks for your patience as we navigate these changes together.

**ANOTHER WAY TO CONNECT.** Have you ever wondered how to sign up for Cross Connection (the national newsletter) or join the Heath Professional Community? With only a few mouse clicks, you can get it all taken care of. Go to your profile on Volunteer Connection and navigate to your Personal Information. Edit the Other Options so that "yes" is selected.

And while you are there, be sure to enter your T-shirt size.

**CRAZY KETCHUP.** OK, this Ketchup With Friends is going to be a fun one! Please join us for our next social time together – AND BRING YOUR PET. You may even meet some fellow volunteers who are pets themselves. In June, you could win Red Cross travel tags (must be present to win.) May prizes (Red Cross canvas totes) went to Seina Canales, Don Geertz and Julia Haggerty

These meetings are purely social. We would love to have additional event team members to help us plan more fun events like this one. If you are interested, please contact Nate Gilbert at

[Nathan.Gilbert@redcross.org](mailto:Nathan.Gilbert@redcross.org).

Join this **Microsoft Teams** meeting on your computer or mobile app at 7:30 p.m. June 8. To join, [Click here](#).

**VOLUNTEER HOURS.** Don't forget to log your hours. We will do our annual drawing for some great Red Cross apparel. Names will be drawn in two categories: volunteers with more than 20 worked hours, and those with more than 100 worked hours. Hours can be logged between July 1, 2020, and June 30, 2021.

Be sure we are aware of the hours you are putting in, and don't miss out on the drawings.

**REGIONAL TRAINING LEAD:** We are seeking a regional training lead. If you have a background in training and are interested, reach out to Peggy Smith at [peggy.smith@redcross.org](mailto:peggy.smith@redcross.org) or call 208-789-3326.



## Retirement approaches for 40-year technician

Join us in congratulating fleet and facilities technician Eric Beasley on four decades of service with Red Cross of Idaho and Montana. Eric, who works out of our Boise facilities, will retire on June 4 after 40 years dedicated to keeping our building and vehicles running smoothly and so much more.

Look for a story on Eric’s amazing Red Cross career and all the changes he’s seen through the years in the July edition of RED ALERTS.

Also, if you or someone you know is interested in filling this key full-time Boise-based position please let us know. This person will conduct routine inspections to determine if repair and maintenance work is necessary, coordinate projects with outside vendors and perform tasks like painting and basic plumbing work.

Learn more and apply [here](#).

## Going above and beyond



Montana Red Cross board member Craig Stahlberg has been named the University of Montana’s Outstanding Student Volunteer. Craig has served on the Montana board since 2016 and is the chair of the biomedical services committee. He helped support our Community Volunteer Leader program and in 2019 was recognized nationally as a Presidential Award Finalist for his outstanding service.

# Youngster: Remission brings ‘huge relief’

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second surgery in December to remove a portion of his thyroid. That surgery was complicated because of difficulty getting blood, a result of the holidays and the COVID pandemic. That’s when his family decided to reach out to the Red Cross about hosting a blood drive.

“We said, ‘OK, what can we do as a family to help the situation or do something greater,’” Samira said.

“This is the least of what we can do as a family for children like Ethan, or for anyone who needs blood.”

In his first few months of treatment, Ethan received 18 units of blood and nine units of platelets. And he’ll continue to receive transfusions going forward – blood products available because of the generosity of donors.

“Ethan literally needs this blood to survive right now. That’s just the bottom line,” Samira said. “It’s so amazing that there are people out there right now who are able to give him the gift of life with this blood.”

Ethan’s cousins, Talia, 15, and Veronika, 14, are planning to host another drive for Ethan in June as part of Leaders Save Lives, a Red Cross program that encourages young people to host blood drives and offers them an opportunity to win a college scholarship.

### COME ON OUT AND DONATE

Every day the Idaho Red Cross holds blood drives in communities across the state, collecting the lifesaving blood products Ethan and so many others like him depend on. Find a blood drive



near you and schedule an appointment today by visiting [RedCrossBlood.org](http://RedCrossBlood.org), or calling 800-RED-CROSS. A donation takes less than an hour and can potentially save up to three lives.

That drive will be held at Ethan’s school, Lake Hazel Elementary.

“This is such a great opportunity for them,” Samira said. “We’re hoping this will be a yearly event and the turnout is even greater than the last.”

Even though the chemo continues to make him ill, Ethan is doing much better, Samira said. He loves spending time with his three cousins, playing Xbox and Pokémon Go and cheering on the Seattle Seahawks.

“Considering everything that he’s gone through, he’s doing great,” Samira

said. “Once he saw how much support he had he started to improve a lot.”

“Ethan is the nicest kid. He’s sweet, and he loves to joke around. He’s funny ... he’s literally a funny 12-year-old kid.”

And he recently got a new best friend, Roki, a mini goldendoodle puppy compliments of the Make-A-Wish Foundation.

Ethan still has a long road ahead, but all signs look promising. He went into remission in the first 29 days – a key benchmark in the treatment process – and has no signs of the cancer in his bone marrow.

“Which is amazing,” Samira said. “That was a huge relief.”

And their family can’t thank the donors who came out to their drive and countless other drives enough for donating the lifesaving blood Ethan and others like him depend on.

“We never even thought we could do something like this as a family — you never think that you would HAVE to do something like this,” Samira said. “I would encourage people to donate even if you’re not in the situation that we’re in. If I can donate one pint of blood and potentially save three people’s lives that’s amazing.”

— Story by Matt Ochsner

# Club: Team brings smart innovation to projects

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As part of the Sound the Alarm program, Melina contacted friends and community members in the Boise area and invited them to take the steps necessary to keep their friends and families safe from home fires.

“(I feel) very grateful to have had the opportunity to work to improve the lives of people in my local community and beyond,” she said.

The club’s vice president, Alekya Tanikella of Boise, also participated in the Sound the Alarm program.

“It was a really engaging way to come up with a project and think about creative ways to get the word out, whether it is an Instagram page, bulletin board posts or just asking people to sign up for the program,” she said.

Alekya, who’s also helped organize a

### JOIN US

The Idaho and Montana Virtual Red Cross Club is always looking for new members. If you or someone you know is interested, email [IDMT.Vol@RedCross.org](mailto:IDMT.Vol@RedCross.org) or call Nate Gilbert at 208-488-5231. The club is open to all high schoolers in Idaho and Montana.

Red Cross blood drive, said many volunteering opportunities exist through the Red Cross, and she’s found working with a team of smart and innovative people is a great way to put ideas into action.

The club has plans for more projects,

including working on the Missing Maps campaign this summer. With the help of satellite imagery, the teens will use software to help map areas of the globe – often in remote regions like jungles – to help first-responders know where structures and roads are in case they need to respond to a disaster there.



Hauschildt

Red Cross youth engagement lead Reagan Hauschildt of Missoula said the club’s leaders are doing a great job of establishing and building the club. Reagan and Gilbert provide training for the student organization and plan to have guest speakers share their expertise and to provide background information about future projects and learning.