



EVERYDAY HEROES

American Red Cross Capital Region Chapter

WHEN WILL YOU NEED A HERO?

Emergencies happen
every day without warning

by Michelle Carl



Today, someone in your community will be having the worst day of their life.

It could be a house fire, a mass evacuation or a flood — an emergency where their life is turned upside down. They'll need comfort. They'll need food. They'll need a place for their family to spend the night.

And they'll find these things through the American Red Cross.

Most everyone is familiar with the American Red Cross, which was famously founded by nurse Clara Barton following her experiences in the Civil War. And many can't help but see images of flooding and eviscerated homes when they think of the Red Cross' efforts to help victims of hurricanes and tornadoes.

But it doesn't take a Sandy or Katrina to be a hero — people are helping with emergencies large and small in our own backyard every day.

"Many people only see the big disasters and all the things the Red Cross does for those, but lots of things happen from day to day," says Kim Box, chairwoman of the American Red Cross Capital Region Chapter Board of Directors.

Founded in 1898, the Capital Region Chapter of the American Red Cross serves an 11-county area with a population of more than 3.4 million. It's the most ethnically and racially integrated metropolitan area in the country and covers a territory consisting of urban to rural and mountains to valley flatlands.

That diverse terrain means local emergencies could span from earthquakes to forest fires. Box says many people don't realize the amount of local emergencies the Red Cross responds to in our region — on average one every 21 hours. Volunteers are dispatched to give victims short-term shelter, food, clothing and emotional support.

Larger scale emergencies require the timely response of the local Red Cross.

In August 2011, a propane-filled railcar caught fire and threatened explosion, causing the evacuation of downtown Lincoln. The Red Cross Capital Region Chapter responded by setting up evacuation centers, making sure residents had food and shelter for the night while they waited for the propane to burn out.

The Capital Region Chapter counts on a highly-trained group of over 3,000 volunteers to provide this aid, locally and beyond.

"Red Cross volunteers leave their homes at a moment's notice to go help whenever they're needed. That obviously is an incredible sacrifice they make."

KIM BOX
Chairwoman, American Red Cross Capital Region Chapter board of directors

"Red Cross volunteers leave their homes at a moment's notice to go help whenever they're needed. That obviously is an incredible sacrifice they make," Box says of the disaster volunteers. "They do this on their own time and they do this because they want to help others in their time of need."

While volunteers' efforts are definitely heroic, Box says anyone can be a hero by preparing for an unplanned

event. Having a plan, assembling a disaster kit or taking a safety course are all ways we can be ready to act when an emergency strikes. The local Red Cross regularly holds preparedness training workshops and teaches courses in everything from lifeguarding to babysitting skills. Box says these trainers are so important because they are passing their life-saving knowledge on to other people.

The American Red Cross also serves the heroes in our armed forces by providing emergency communication services for military families. Pre-deployment briefings explain the services available, while post-deployment briefings help servicemen and women readjust to their lives at home.

An often-told story in Box's family is the time Red Cross helped her father, a Navy admiral. Right after he graduated from the U.S. Naval Academy in Annapolis, he couldn't afford to travel home to be with his dying father. The Red Cross paid for his ticket, even giving him money for incidentals.

"It's probably one of my earliest memories of the wonderful things Red Cross does," Box says.

It's the amazing work Red Cross does — being there when someone needs them most — that compels its donors to give.

"Without donations, Red Cross would not be able to sustain itself," she says. "People are so generous and people do rally to support Red Cross because they see that it's helping people in so many ways."

Whether they are volunteering as a disaster responder or to help with paperwork, whether they donate one time or out of every paycheck, whether they are teaching babysitting skills or CPR technique — ordinary people are doing extraordinary work in your community.

"Those are the heroes that keep things going every day," Box says.

'I SAVED A LIFE'

Woman knew what to do when her co-worker collapsed

by Michelle Carl

Anita Turley's husband and mother had just died. And as she pumped on the chest of her co-worker who had suffered a heart attack, she kept thinking: *Not this guy. I'm not going to lose this guy, too.*

The 56-year-old was ready to handle the emergency thanks to the skills she learned from the American Red Cross Capital Region Chapter.

Turley is on the safety committee at her workplace, Ingram Micro, a technology distributor and logistics firm. Her employer paid for her to become certified as a Red Cross CPR instructor, so she could train her co-workers. Although it was difficult, she said she enjoyed the training, which she completed in April 2007.

"When something happens, it's automatic. The training kicks right in."

ANITA TURLEY
American Red Cross CPR instructor

But it wasn't until four years later when she could put her life-saving skills to the test.

Turley was working at her desk when a manager came and said one of her co-workers was ill. Apparently, he had been complaining of back pain and was on his way to report it to a supervisor when he passed out on the cement floor right outside the office where Turley worked.

With assistance from another safety committee member, Turley performed a vitals check.

"The brain is going a million miles an hour, but your body immediately starts going into gear," Turley recalls. "With my having trained for so long ... when something happens, it's automatic. The training kicks right in."

Fortunately, he collapsed right next to a defibrillator station. But the man was sweaty and the electrode pads that would have given his heart a jolt couldn't make a connection to his skin.

The man's breath was erratic — he would take deep, involuntary breaths with long pauses in between. Turley knew to treat this type of breathing as if he weren't breathing at all.

Turley administered CPR, both breath and chest compressions. Fresh in her mind were her recently deceased husband and mother. She remembered how powerless she felt as she watched them succumb to cancer and old age, and she felt determined not to let this man die.

"I'm not going to lose that other person, whatever it takes for me to do this ... I didn't want to lose another person," she says. "I just lost my mom and my husband, but this is somebody I could help."

After 15 minutes, the fire department arrived. Emergency responders were able to use their defibrillator on the man and get his vital signs up.

Turley says she was a little emotional after the event, but felt like she was just doing what she was trained to do.

Her co-workers, however, were in awe of her ability to remain calm.

"They thought I was the coolest thing since sliced bread," she remembers, with a laugh. "They were extremely impressed that, first of all, it worked, and how it looked so effortless."

Watching Turley in action inspired her co-workers to learn safety skills, and Turley even got to travel around the country to share her CPR skills with other Ingram Micro locations.

When the man whose life she saved returned to work, Turley felt a little uncomfortable about reuniting with him. She didn't want to be seen as a hero.

"To me the real heroes in life are people who do this every day," she says. "But when he came back, he and I embraced and gave each other one big, long hug. For me that was enough, that was good enough for me."

Turley hopes her story inspires other people to become CPR certified so they'll know what to do in an emergency.

"Sooner or later ... they will be faced with [an emergency] in real life," she says. "I encourage anybody and everybody to have some type of knowledge that can help someone survive until the real help gets there."



Anita Turley used her CPR training to help a co-worker who had a heart attack.

PHOTO BY PRISCILLA GARCIA



The power to save lives



The American Red Cross offers a wide variety of training courses in first aid, CPR, AED, life guarding, swimming, babysitting, care giving, and other areas for both individuals and organizations. The Red Cross is the most trusted training provider of health and safety training that meets OSHA guidelines and many other professional and regulatory standards. Many self-study classes are available online and you can also register for classroom courses.



Visit www.redcross.org/take-a-class to find a particular class in our area. Or to schedule a training at your facility, contact April Henry at (559) 455-1000 or april.henry@redcross.org.

ON CALL FOR WHEN DISASTER STRIKES

Volunteer puts her love of community into action

by Corrie Pelc

Every four weeks, Michael Lilley of Sacramento gives up 48 hours of her time to help others. During those 48 hours, Lilley could be called at any time — during the day or late at night — to help those who are affected by an emergency.

Lilley is a Disaster Action Team (DAT) volunteer with the Capital Region Chapter of the American Red Cross. She and nine other volunteers form one of four DAT teams that cover the entire Sacramento region. Each week a different team is activated and each volunteer is asked to be available for 48 hours to respond to emergency calls, many of which are home fires.

“It was my way to prove that I do love my community and I’m out there helping people.”

MICHAEL LILLEY
Red Cross DAT volunteer

Calls such as the one Lilley received a few weeks ago, where a large fire south of Elk Grove left an extended family of parents, grandparents and children homeless. Although they had homeowner’s insurance, Lilley says the fire was on a weekend so they were not able to get in touch with their

insurance agent right away, leaving them without a place to stay. “It was successful ... we helped them find a place for the weekend,” she recalls. “There were three of us volunteers that helped 10 people.”

Lilley’s team also provided the family with “comfort kits,” which includes basic necessities like shampoo, deodorant, shaving cream and razor, as well as a list of resources to help them find food, clothing, and legal help if necessary. And to help comfort the children, Lilley says they gave them Mickey Mouse dolls they receive as donations.

For Lilley, helping those in need is her passion. In addition to her volunteer work, Lilley is a full-time student studying fire service at American River College. In addition to becoming a firefighter after she graduates in May, she also plans to go to paramedic school.

She says her year-and-a-half experience on the DAT team is helping to prepare her for a firefighting career by letting her see what happens to people after a fire is put out. “It’s definitely going to make me more connected to the people that I’m helping [to] understand where they’re coming from,” Lilley explains. “You go out there and you’re doing your job, but to be mindful that it’s about the people that you’re helping — that’s what you’re there for.”

And Lilley takes pride in knowing through her work with DAT, she is able to make an impact on her community. “It’s one thing to say that you’re involved in your community and that you love where you live, but it takes actions, not words,” she says. “It was my way to prove that I do love my community and I’m out there helping people.”

PHOTO BY TARA PATRICK

As a Disaster Assistance Team member, Michael Lilley volunteers to be on-call in case of an emergency.



What is DAT?

American Red Cross Disaster Services volunteers provide relief to those affected by disasters such as home fires, floods, wildfires and more.

These volunteers are part of Disaster Action Teams (DAT). In Sacramento County, more than 60 volunteers comprise four DATs that provide Red Cross emergency assistance. According to Sacramento DAT volunteer Michael Lilley, her DAT team is called out by the fire department to help those who have been affected by a

disaster, such as lost electricity, extensive water damage, or losing their home entirely. “We come out and assess the damage, and help them find lodging, food and [clothing] — immediate needs within the first 72 hours of a disaster,” she explains.

Members of the DAT team may also be called to help with relief in neighboring counties. If they are able, some may be deployed to offer assistance in other places around the country. **CP**

 To find more information about the DAT program, visit www.redcross.org/CapitalRegion or email our volunteer coordinator at kathryn.caldwell@redcross.org

WHAT GOES IN A RED CROSS
EMERGENCY SURVIVAL KIT?

Being prepared means being equipped with the proper supplies you may need in the event of an emergency. Keep your supplies in an easy-to-carry emergency preparedness kit that you can use at home or take with you in case you must evacuate.

- 1

Food & Water — non-perishable, easy-to-prepare items (3-day supply for evacuation, 2-week supply for home)
- 2

Battery-powered or hand-crank radio
- 3

Pet supplies (collar, leash, ID, food, carrier, bowl)
- 4

Emergency blanket
- 5

First-aid kit
- 6

Flashlight

Find other great items to put in your emergency kit (like a manual can opener) at www.redcross.org/prepare/location/home-family/get-kit.



‘I LOST
EVERYTHING’

Woman receives help after house fire

by Mike Blount

It only took about 10 minutes for 70-year-old Judy Tashjian to lose almost everything she owned. In July 2009, a house fire caused excessive damage to her Elk Grove home displacing her and her family. But the American Red Cross was there to help when the family needed it most.

What was supposed to be a quick errand to drop off her dog for a training class turned into a mad rush to get back home, Tashjian recalls.

“We had no idea where we were going to sleep that night and we had no idea what we were going to do. It was such a relief. They really helped us out.”

JUDY TASHJIAN,
fire victim who was helped by the Red Cross

“At first, I got a phone call from the alarm company saying my alarm was going off. I told them it couldn’t be because my granddaughter was home,” Tashjian explains. “But then I got a call right after that from my granddaughter telling me the house was on fire, so I grabbed my dog and rushed home.”

Tashjian says she arrived to a scene that any homeowner would dread. There were several fire trucks, police cars and emergency vehicles lining her street. Her neighbors found her amid the chaos and let her know they were able to get Tashjian’s other pets out of the house, as well as her granddaughter and grandson. The fire department was able to put out the fire, but by the time they arrived, the damage had already been done.

Once Tashjian was finally able to look inside she was devastated by what she saw. “I lost it all — my computer, my stereo, my television, my furniture — I lost everything,” Tashjian says.

The fire started in an add-on room off of her house — probably from bad electrical wiring, Tashjian believes. It was contained to just two rooms within the house, but smoke ruined everything else in her home. Even her clothes, in a bedroom far away from the fire, had a heavy smoke odor, according to Tashjian. She had to completely start over.

In the aftermath, Tashjian and her family were approached by American Red Cross volunteers who offered assistance. They made sure she had a place to stay that night, as well as money for her and her family to eat and purchase toiletries. Tashjian says she and her family were very grateful for the help — and even a little surprised.

“I had no idea they even did stuff like that,” Tashjian says. “It was very nice of them. Honestly, I would have never even thought to call them because I assumed they only responded to big disasters, but now I know. We had no idea where we were going to sleep that night and we had no idea what we were going to do. It was such a relief. They really helped us out.”



THE UNSUNG HEROES

Lifeguards use training to prevent emergencies

by Kendall Fields

For 37 years Gigi Tree has suited up in her Speedo and stood guard, protecting the lives of hundred of swimmers at Rusch pool in Citrus Heights.

Tree started lifeguarding in 1972 as a high school student, taking her first class through the Red Cross and continuing her training through undergraduate and graduate college programs. Tree says lifeguarding is such an important job because it saves lives.

“It’s the heroes that are always there. It’s not because they saved a life, but because they prevented a person from getting into a situation [where they would] have to save a life.”

GIGI TREE
Lifeguard, Rusch pool

Today, Tree manages nearly 100 lifeguards and swim staff at Rusch and facilitates the new-lifeguard hiring and training programs. Tree, who also teaches music at Center High School, says the biggest part of the Red Cross training emphasizes preventative lifeguarding. “If you recognize potential danger and stop it before a rescue needs to be made, then you are really ahead of the game,” Tree adds the pool does not have many rescues with most of the lifeguards’ “saves” being precautionary things such as keeping a child from going too deep. “When we see these low numbers, we are encouraged that we are doing a good training,” she says.

After working at the pool for almost four decades, Tree says she has seen a lot of lifeguards grow and

mature, with many guards starting out in high school as she did. “It’s a way for young people to experience their first job, to learn responsibility, to study and train for something that is going to make a difference,” Tree says, adding many of her guards come back each summer.

Johnny Coburn is one such guard. Coburn started lifeguarding six years ago when he was 15. Coburn, who is studying geology at Sacramento State and lifeguarding at Rusch as the assistant pool manager in the summer, saw his siblings go through the Red Cross lifeguarding program with Gigi and decided it was the first job he wanted. For Coburn, the responsibility of protecting hundreds of people not only helped him mature, but it also taught him the importance of teamwork. The team at Rusch pool is like a family for many of the guards, Coburn explains. “You see yourself change after your first summer as a [lifeguard]. You’re more mature with that kind of responsibility and training,” Coburn says. “And then, you see yourself fitting into a new group of friends who know that kind of pressure.”

To deal with the pressure, 16-year-old Samantha Keyes says Tree trains the staff with rigorous drills to make sure they are ready in the event of an emergency. Keyes, who will be returning to Rusch for her second year of lifeguarding this summer, explains how she learned everything from proper swimming techniques to CPR and rescuing tactics in the intensive Red Cross training process. Keyes says the staff, including Tree and Coburn, are so knowledgeable and supportive that it really helps build new guards’ self-esteem. “[Lifeguarding] makes me feel like I have a purpose and I have a chance to give back to my community,” the high school sophomore says.

But for Tree, the teamwork, training and confidence don’t compare to the quality she looks for in every new guard: reliability. “It’s the heroes that are always there. It’s not because they saved a life, but because they prevented a person from getting into a situation [where they would] have to save a life,” Tree says. “Those are the unsung heroes we don’t really hear about because they don’t allow the emergency.”



Samantha Keyes, Gigi Tree and Johnny Coburn say lifeguarding is a big responsibility.



Youth involvement

American Red Cross is training the next generation of heroes through its youth involvement programs. Red Cross school clubs give students a way to learn new skills and use them to make a difference. Students in these school clubs, which are offered from elementary school through college, get the opportunity to work closely with their local Red Cross chapter to create, plan and implement service projects to improve their community. By participating in these school clubs, students are empowered and develop critical leadership skills. **KF**

➔ To find out more information about joining or even starting a Red Cross club visit www.redcross.org or email Heidi.Elneil@redcross.org.

REMEMBERING THOSE WHO SERVED

Family partners with Red Cross to honor troops

by **Kendall Fields**

On an early spring morning, over 400 people stand encircled by dozens of rustling American flags. The crowd is silent, except for a few sniffles as someone wipes away a stray tear as the Color Guard for the Sacramento County Sheriff's Department marches to the melancholy melody of the orchestra. Today, members of the Elk Grove community gather to remember fallen soldiers. Pausing. Reflecting. Celebrating.

The Walk To Remember Bryan E. Hall is an event created by Elk Grove resident Kristi Hall to honor her brother who died in 2010 while serving in Iraq. Kristi and her mother, Betty, work with other military organizations and corporate sponsors to support the annual walk at Elk Grove Regional Park. Community members register for the untimed walk around the park with proceeds divided among a college fund for Bryan's 6-year-old daughter, local schools, military groups and charities.

"The reason I work to make this event happen every year is because it's what my brother would have done," a tearful Kristi tells the crowd at the opening ceremony. "I'm doing it to take care of my beautiful niece and for those who served."

"It's important for Red Cross to be here because of the Hall family. This tragedy happened right here in our home and we want to help in any way we can."

TRISHA JOHNSON
American Red Cross

At this year's event the Hall family received commendations from local government agencies for their commitment to fostering military appreciation within the community and honoring troops who have sacrificed their lives.

Trisha Johnson, who works at Red Cross as the Assistant Director of Emergency Services, says Red Cross volunteers come to this event because it's important to support troops and their families. "It's important for Red Cross to be here because of the Hall family. This tragedy happened right here in our home and we want to help in any way we can," Johnson says. The Capital Region Chapter is also particularly invested in the Hall family because Sgt. 1st Class Hall was honored as the organization's "Hometown Hero" in 2009. When Bryan died, his widow Rachel Hall contacted the Red Cross to ask for help so she could go to his memorial in Fort Hood, Texas. Rachel says without this gesture from Red Cross she would not have been able to attend her husband's memorial. "Being able to go was an emotional and fulfilling experience," she says.

Rachel says the walk allows the Hall family to bring people together to celebrate the sacrifice Bryan and his fellow soldiers made and honor their bravery. "All our fallen soldiers should be held up and honored," Rachel says, "I believe this is a great event to come to and do this."



Kristi Hall speaks about her brother during the Walk to Remember Bryan E. Hall in Elk Grove. Hall's family received help from the Red Cross after he was killed while serving in Iraq.



Pillowcase Project

The American Red Cross is committed to giving back to those who serve in the military. As a way of showing gratitude to members of the armed forces, Red Cross partners with businesses, schools and individual volunteers in its Pillowcase Project. Volunteers decorate pillowcases and fill them with toiletries, treats and thank you notes.

Then, Red Cross staff distribute the pillowcases to wounded soldiers and veterans in local veteran's association hospitals. Three years ago, the Red Cross team distributed the first batch of 50 pillowcases and, ever since, veterans anticipate their visits, says Assistant Director of Emergency Services Trisha Johnson. **KF**

For more information on the Pillowcase Project or to find out how you can get involved, visit redcross.org/CapitalRegion.

YOU CAN BE AN EVERYDAY HERO.

Find a way to save someone's life **today.**

Take a class

From parents to office workers, executives to professional emergency responders, each year more than 9 million individuals receive the training they need to respond to emergencies from the American Red Cross. The Capital Region Chapter offers training in first aid, CPR, life guarding, canoeing, babysitting and more. Be prepared and take a class — you'll never know when you'll need it.



To find a class: Visit www.redcross.org/CapitalRegion.

For swimming lessons: Visit www.redcross.org/CapitalRegion for a list of authorized Red Cross swimming and water safety programs in your community.

To schedule training at your facility: Contact April Henry at april.henry@redcross.org or (559) 455-1000.

To become a Red Cross instructor: Contact Mary Larkins at mary.larkins@redcross.org or (916) 993-7062.

Have a plan

Less than 40 percent of Californians have taken steps to prepare for a disaster. Knowing what to do in an emergency could save the lives of you and your loved ones. American Red Cross teaches individuals, families and organizations how to prevent, prepare for, and respond to disasters through our Community Disaster Education program. The Red Cross provides trained professionals who will customize a presentation to meet the needs and interests of your business, school or organization.



Request a presentation: Visit www.redcross.org/CapitalRegion and find the form to "Request A Preparedness Education Presentation."

Free online course: Take the simple online preparedness course at www.redcross.org/CapitalRegion under Local Programs and Services find "Get Prepared."

Volunteer

Looking to volunteer on a regular basis? A variety of opportunities are available for you to join us daily, weekly or monthly. Volunteers aged 17 and under are encouraged to become part of our Youth Program, which offers meaningful opportunities for education, training and community service.

Sign up: Join one of our free volunteer orientation sessions by calling (916) 993-7070.



Make a donation

The Capital Region Chapter relies on donations to fund provide emergency services throughout its 11-county territory. There are many ways to donate, including at your workplace and by bequest.

Online: Use the secure online donation form at www.redcross.org/CapitalRegion.

Mail or in person: 1565 Exposition Blvd., Sacramento, CA 95815.

Text: Text "Red Cross" to 90999 to make a \$10 donation.

Phone: Donations are accepted by calling (916) 993-7080.



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