

## Chapter Responds to New Year's Eve Tornado in Petersburg



*Red Cross volunteers provided meals to firefighters and other first responders on the scene to help out with the cleanup efforts.*

What was supposed to be a festive time became a nightmare for residents of Lake Petersburg when a EF3-class tornado unexpectedly ripped through sections of the Menard County community. Powerful winds uprooted trees and split others in half, ripped roofs and gutters off of houses, and scattered debris throughout the community. Within hours, Red Cross volunteers were on the scene providing comfort, kindness, and assistance. This included opening a temporary shelter for affected residents, handing out comfort kits, feeding first responders on the scene, and providing disaster assessment. Luckily, only one person received injuries, but four homes were destroyed, six sustained major damage, and 18 more suffered minor damages.

For Disaster Response Coordinator Teresa McLaughlin-Doll, the response was particularly personal because she grew up in Petersburg. "I knew that the community of Petersburg would rally and help their neighbors. I also knew how important it was for the Red Cross to have our resources and people who have been trained on scene as soon as possible. I was very proud of how everyone stepped up. It is my hope that the people of Petersburg will continue to respond by either volunteering time or donating money so that the Red Cross can continue to do the work in their community that is vitally important." Disaster teams continued to provide outreach and casework services to those impacted by the tornado in the days following the disaster with the overall cleanup effort being expected to take months. However, the Red Cross showed it is always ready to respond with well-prepared, dedicated individuals and resources. While disasters may happen anytime and anywhere, donations of time and money are key in helping the Red Cross continue to be on guard.

## Message from the Chief Executive Officer



*Colleen Stone  
Chief Executive Officer*

Supporting the American Red Cross means we will be prepared to respond to emergencies and disasters 24 hours each day. The past few months have given us many examples that illustrate the importance of being prepared. From the tornado at Lake Petersburg to the residents of the Pioneer Hotel in Springfield who found themselves without a home after a fire left 15 units uninhabitable, the American Red Cross was there to help. And of course, most recently, the American Red Cross was there during and after the snow/ice storm and ready to help individuals find a safe, warm place to stay while decisions were made about what to do next.

With your support, the American Red Cross will make sure our community never loses hope. With your support, the American Red Cross will make sure when people are at their most vulnerable; they will be taken care of. With your support, the American Red Cross will train individuals in lifesaving skills like CPR and First Aid. With your support, the American Red Cross will always be there, whenever, wherever needed.

Your support of the Red Cross is very much appreciated.



# Recent American Red Cross Events



DCDS Director Janet Cripe, Community Relations Coordinator Wes Lind, some of the talented kids from the shows.

For the second year in a row, proceeds from DCDS In Motion's "The Nutcracker: All Jazz'd Up," were donated to the chapter. In total, the event raised \$3,500 that will benefit local disaster victims.



CEO Colleen Stone, MOW Coordinators Faraji Martin, Jaleen Muex

On November 30, Wal-Mart awarded \$91,000 to the Chapter to expand its Meals-on-Wheels program. The grant will allow for MOW to focus on providing special dietary meals to an even larger number of clients.



Firefighters of the Local 37, Community Relations Coordinator Wes Lind

On December 15, the Local 37 Firefighters presented the chapter with a check for \$1,000.



Helen on left, Russ on the right

Members of the new Litchfield Red Cross office held their first volunteer orientation on January 24. The new office is being led by volunteers Russ & Helen Beason and will provide immediate disaster response to Macoupin, Montgomery, and Christian Counties.

## Service to the Armed Forces Has Strong 2010

The New Year closed a successful 2010 for the Illinois Capital Area Chapter Service to the Armed Forces (SAF) committee. Overall, SAF responded to 474 military-related emergency cases, educated 290 individuals, and provided 90 military-related international services. And yet, the numbers only show a fraction of what the liaison between the Red Cross and the military provides U.S. Service Members and their families. SAF volunteers assist when soldiers are deployed by briefing them and their families on valuable emergency communication services that can link a soldier and their family together. Additionally, they attend soldiers' send-off ceremonies, provide support services for military families while a soldier is overseas, maintain a presence at the local Illinois National Guard base, help out with the National Guard's Family Readiness Program, and assists in the yellow ribbon campaign, which reintegrates soldiers back into civilian life. Volunteers also provide assistance to families of fallen soldiers and attend the funerals of those killed in the line of duty, which they sadly had to do three times in 2010. They were solemn reminders of the sacrifices that continue to be made.

Service to Military Families (SMF) Coordinator Mari Richardson has even greater ambitions for 2011 that start with securing more dedicated volunteers to serve local military service members and their families in a greater capacity. Her ultimate goal is to put one SMF volunteer into every Family Readiness Brigade Unit in Illinois. Just as it was when the International Committee of the Red Cross was originally founded following Henry Dunant's appeal for an organization to aid soldiers wounded on the battlefield, the American Red Cross SAF will continue our tradition of military care.

# The American Red Cross & The Community



*Red Cross Volunteers Writing Thank You Cards*

Board members, staff, and other volunteers got together on November 17 for the annual Thank-a-thon. In total, over 500 cards were personally written and sent out to donors and volunteers.



Members of the Chapter's Services to the Armed Forces teamed up with the Illinois National Guard Family Readiness Unit on December 22 for the first ever joint Holiday Mail for Heroes Card Sorting Party.



*Jaleen Muex, Church member, & Deana Achas*

In December, the First Methodist Church on Koke Mill Road donated ornaments for the Meals-on-Wheels program and Services to the Armed Forces.



*Chapter Americorp members in St. Louis*

In October, several Chapter members traveled to St. Louis for a regional Americorp gathering. During their visit, they participated in a painting service project.

## Volunteer Spotlight: An Angel on Wheels



*Patty on left, Chuck on right*

For nearly 35 years, Patty Kuhns has shown a steady dedication to those who depend on the Illinois Capital Area Chapter's Meals on Wheels program for food and comfort. Her husband, Chuck, used to take time off work to drive the routes with her in times of bad weather. Starting after his retirement in 2005, he now regularly joins her as they deliver meals together each Wednesday. Patty says she was originally drawn to volunteering with the American Red Cross because while she was a U.S. service member in the 1960's, the American Red Cross flew her back home for free to attend her mother's funeral. "That was really special to me, and I wanted to give something back," Patty says. It was a personal source of inspiration that led to her getting involved with Meals on Wheels

"I had a friend from my church who drove every week for Meals on Wheels," she says. "She was eventually diagnosed with leukemia, but even though she was sick, she still managed to drive her route once a week for two years before she passed away. I thought, if she can do it, I can do it." The years of service have been fulfilling for the couple, but what really sticks in her mind is that "I've met some really special people."

If you would like to get involved with Meals on Wheels, please call 217-787-7602 or email [fmartin@il-redcross.org](mailto:fmartin@il-redcross.org)

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

LOCALLY FUNDED  
LOCAL SERVICES,  
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Illinois Capital Area Chapter  
**American Red Cross**



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## Upcoming Red Cross Events

**Volunteer Appreciation Pancake Breakfast: March 5 @ 10 a.m. - 11:30 a.m. Union Baptist Church, 1405 E. Monroe Street.** Join us for pancakes, sausages, coffee, and juice in honor of our many dedicated volunteers.

**Pet First Aid Training: Saturday, March 12 @ 1:00 - 4:30 p.m. \$45 per person.** This class teaches how to care for a pet with breathing or cardiac emergencies, treat other common ailments, and include them in a family disaster plan. Pet manikins will be used for hands-on practice and actual pets are not allowed in the classroom.

**Wilderness First Aid: March 19, 20 @ 8:30 a.m. - 5:30 p.m. \$115 per person.** Regardless of your experience level, this class offers a great way to learn assessment and urgent first aid techniques. Previous completion of Adult CPR/AED is required to register. Class includes wilderness first aid kit and a three-year certification.

**March 25: Heroes Breakfast: Friday, March 25 @ 8:00 a.m. - 9:30 p.m. \$25 per person.** Come honor local heroes and creative youths at this year's breakfast, which is presented by the Bank of Springfield and benefits the American Red Cross Illinois Capital Area Chapter. **This event will sell out** so get your tickets early by calling 217-787-7602.

**Save-a-Life Saturday: March 26, @ 9 a.m. - 1 p.m., Illinois Association of Realtors, \$5 per person.** Participate in the community safety day and receive CPR certification. Sponsored by Mike Williams Plumbing + Heating.

**Babysitter's Training: Wednesday, March 30 @ 9:00 a.m., - 3:30 p.m. \$40 per person.** Learn how to be a good babysitter in this instructional class that provides the skills necessary for safe and responsible childcare. Attendees must be at least 11 years old and should bring a sack lunch.

**Volunteer Orientations: Thursday, March 10, Thursday, April 14, 5:30 p.m. - 6:15 p.m.** Take the first step towards getting involved with the American Red Cross by attending this informational session.

**Disaster Action Team Meetings: March 8, April 12, May 10**