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Boise, ID 83709
1-800-853-2570 x0

Coeur d'Alene
411 West Haycraft Ave.
Coeur d'Alene, ID 83815
1-800-853-2570 x103

Idaho Falls
330 Shoup Avenue
Idaho Falls, ID 83402
1-800-853-2570 x701

Lewiston
3332 10th Street
Lewiston, ID 83501
1-800-853-2570 x201

Twin Falls
253 4th Ave. N.
Twin Falls, ID 83301
1-800-853-2570 x301

Please visit our web site
www.redcrossidaho.org or
call us at 1-800-853-2570 for
more information on how to
volunteer or donate.

Training Schedules and
Registration can be located
on www.redcrossidaho.com

The Red Cross Reader Statement of Purpose

Expanding Awareness and
Encouraging Engagement
and Support of the
Humanitarian Mission of
the Red Cross throughout
Idaho

Help Red Go Green

If you would like to receive the
newsletter electronically, please
send your e-mail address to:
newsvol@redcrossidaho.org

August Calendar of Events

August 7, 2010—Navy Reserve Family Day, Gowen Field, Boise
August 12, 2010—North Central Idaho Red Cross Meeting, Lewiston
August 14, 2010—Bike Night Fundraiser, Snake River Yamaha, Meridian
August 17, 2010—South Central Idaho Red Cross Meeting, Twin Falls
August 18, 2010—Eastern Idaho Red Cross Meeting, Idaho Falls
August 19, 2010—Southwest Idaho Red Cross Meeting, Boise
August 26, 2010—North Idaho Red Cross Meeting, Coeur d'Alene

A Successful Eagle Scout Project

In May, Andrew Buchheister of Jerome, Idaho conducted a donation drive benefitting the Red Cross. He collected 15 cases of water, 20 blankets, 20 hygiene kits, and \$250 in monetary. Andrew is part of the 15th Ward Scout Troop in Twin Falls. We appreciate his enthusiasm and the donations. Thanks, Andrew!



Printing Donated By



What a Beauty!



The Emergency Response Vehicle in Boise got a beautiful new paint job compliments of the National Red Cross. Many thanks to Rik Skinner, our volunteer Fleet Services Manager, for making this happen!

Bike Night Fundraiser

On Saturday, August 14, Snake River Yamaha in Meridian is sponsoring a Bike Night. All proceeds benefit the Red Cross. Mark your calendars and plan to attend.

Correction

In July's issue of the Red Cross Reader, we incorrectly stated that Trish Franz had accepted the role of Events Coordinator in North Idaho. Jeanette Laster is the new Events Coordinator and Trish is the new Volunteer Services Lead. We apologize for this error.

Thank You to Our Sponsors



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Red Cross Reader

A PUBLICATION OF THE AMERICAN RED CROSS OF GREATER IDAHO

August 2010

Yellowstone Fires of 1988

Do you remember the Yellowstone fires of 1988? Did you know that they formed the largest wildfire on record in the history of the park? The fires actually started with many small individual fires caused by lightning strikes but due to high winds and drought they quickly spread into one large fire that burned for months. It was also the first time in park history that Yellowstone was closed to visitors until the fires could be brought under control. Thousands of firefighters and U.S. military personnel fought the fire, but only the arrival of fall's cooler temperatures and moist weather could extinguish the massive blaze.

The estimated cost of fighting the fire is somewhere between \$120 and \$140 million—one of the largest firefighting efforts ever. A staggering 1.4 million acres burned, including over 36% of the park. The fires were initially allowed to burn under Yellowstone's somewhat controversial "natural burn" policy, enacted in 1972. The policy was put in place to allow



Credit: Jeff Henry, 1988

fires caused by nature (not by humans) to run their

natural course as a beneficial ecological process. Under the policy, fires were suppressed if they threatened human lives, property, endangered species, or natural features. When the fires of 1988 initially started, officials were not worried; usually summer rains would keep them under control. However, no one knew the summer of 1988 would go down as one of the driest and windiest summers since the park was established in 1872.

The Yellowstone landscape seemed to be completely devastated after the fires. But fire is a necessary part of the life cycle of any healthy forest. Many

of Yellowstone's lodgepole pines have serotinous cones whose seeds can only be released under the intense heat of a fire. The fire cleared patches of ground and allowed these seedlings to take root and grow quickly in the sun. Wildflowers, grasses, and shrubs flourished from the nutrients contained in the ash. And in the long term, the park is returning to more normal conditions with wildlife and vegetation rebounding and even increasing in productivity.

For current park fire conditions, past fire reports, fire management, and the history of fires in Yellowstone, visit <http://www.nps.gov/yell/parkmgmt/firemanagement.htm>. This year we experienced a wetter than normal spring, but fire dangers can still be high in the fall. Grasses, shrubs, and weeds tend to grow taller and bushier in these wetter conditions and can lead to larger brush fires when conditions dry out. Turn the page for tips on how to keep your home and family safe from wildfires this summer.

www.redcrossidaho.org

Protect Your Home From Wildfires this Summer

The weather has finally heated up, and with the fun that comes with the summer heat also comes an increased threat of wildfire. After the wet spring that much of Idaho had, plenty of fuel exists to feed those fires. Make sure you know how to keep your home safe and prevent wildfires this summer.

Homeowners situated near the wildland/urban interface need to take extra steps to protect their homes from wildfires. These homes need to have 100 feet of defensible space surrounding them if they are situated on flat ground and up to 200 feet on slopes. This defensible space is divided into three zones: the home, the surrounding landscaping, and for large properties, the native landscape generally 100 feet or more beyond the home. To make your home more resistant to ignition, use fire resistant building materials, keep roofs and gutters free from debris, enclose soffits and overhangs, and reduce the amount of flammable materials immediately adjacent to the house. The surrounding landscaping should be well watered and well maintained. Islands of vegetation—such as trees, shrubs, and flowers—should be surrounded by brick

or stone retaining walls and well-watered grass. Beyond the landscaping, keep the natural vegetation trimmed back as much as possible. For extensive information about protecting



your home from wildfires, visit the [Idaho Firewise](#) website.

Make sure you also take steps to prevent wildfires, especially as you are recreating in Idaho's beautiful open spaces this summer. If you are in an area that allows campfires, use an existing fire ring whenever possible. If you do need to build your own and it is allowed, choose a spot at least 15 feet from any flammable materials. Make sure the site is not under any low-hanging vegetation that may catch fire. Clear the area of any flammable debris within a 10-foot radius. Dig your pit approximately 1-foot deep then encircle your pit with rocks. Keep your unused firewood upwind of your fire pit and make sure

you have a shovel and bucket of water nearby. After you build your fire, keep it small and under control at all times. Don't ever leave your campfire unattended, and watch children and pets at all times. When it's time to extinguish your fire, let it burn down completely to ash if possible. Drown your fire in water, making sure you douse all the embers, not just the red ones. You should continue pouring water on the fire until the hissing stops completely. Stir up the ashes and scrape any remaining logs to make sure all the embers are removed. Continue stirring

until everything is wet and cool to the touch. Don't leave your fire if it is too hot to touch. For more information about wildfire prevention and a map of current fires, visit the Forest Service's [Smokey Bear](#) website.

These tips are only the beginning of making sure you know how to keep your home and family safe from wildfire this summer. Visit the websites above and explore the many other resources available to give you the knowledge you need to protect your home, family, and our great outdoor spaces where we work and recreate. With these and other tips, you're on your way to a fun and safe summer!

Volunteer Extraordinaire

Greg Gemar has been an Instructor Trainer in Health and Safety since May 2006. He came to the American Red Cross as a volunteer in 2003 and quickly became trained as a Health and Safety Instructor. Greg has a passion for teaching and a devotion to the American Red Cross, so hand-in-hand this allows him to be a most effective "spokesperson" for the organization. His dedication has truly increased the chapter's dependability on him. He rarely has answered "no" over the past seven years. Students and business customers have gotten to know Greg and they repeatedly request

him as their Instructor.

Consequently, the Health and Safety program has grown tremendously because of Greg's availability to teach, his flexibility, and his reputation for being a super instructor. He is witty and makes the learning experience more enjoyable and memorable. He is patient and encouraging so that each student gets the very best out of the training.

Greg has traveled to places like Twin Falls, Pocatello, Abereen, Ashton, and Salmon to teach classes. He was invited by the

Jackson, Wyoming, office to go there for two days to teach an Instructor Course since they did not have a Trainer in their area to teach the course. He has spoken "live" on the public television station in Pocatello once a month for almost two years now. He has spoken to several Chamber of Commerce groups and performed short demonstrations for scout groups, Joshua D. Smith Foundation, Bonneville High School, and others.

The Greater Idaho Chapter of the American Red Cross would surely benefit if we could clone Greg Gemar!

Disaster Response Goes Smoothly

Kirk Marshall and Shari Williams, volunteers with the North Idaho District of the American Red Cross of Greater Idaho, participated in a 20-agency disaster simulation event. Fire Chief Robert Goodyear served in the operations command role. Red Cross volunteers were responsible for serving lunch to exercise participants.

Marshall and Williams drove to the staging area at the Sagle Fire Department where they delivered and served lunch to over 80 firemen; EMTs; law enforcement officers; representatives from the Bureau of Homeland Security, Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, Idaho Department of Lands; and many others who came to prepare for community disasters.

After lunch, the teams were given scenarios and designated as responders, safety workers, personnel management workers,

dispatchers, victims, or evaluators. Goodyear briefed the participants on safety, logistics, and protocol before the exercise saying, "This will be handled as a true emergency situation." No one had any prior knowledge of the exercise until they were called in as teams. The city of Sagle, Idaho, granted the simulation participants access to an empty housing development with mountainous, treed acreage for the event.

According to Robert Tyler, Fire Chief of Northside Fire Department #1402 in Sandpoint, Idaho, who served as an evaluator during the exercise, "[the simulation] brought to the forefront the necessity and importance of interagency cooperation, communication and coordination when managing such an event where urban and wild lands interface."



Fire Chief Robert Goodyear of the Sagle Fire Department briefing on area maps



Volunteers Kirk Marshall and Shari Williams serving lunch