



Red Cross youth volunteers Kiyoko Nakano (l) and Nikta Jaberzadeh practice drop and cover drill with William Love, age 4, during a disaster preparedness presentation for preschoolers at the West Valley Library.

Teens Teach Tots Preparedness Skills

Red Cross Youth Train Children for Emergencies

Teaching preschoolers about disaster preparedness is easy when you have a little help from Big Bird, Elmo and the rest of the Sesame Street gang. This year, Red Cross youth volunteers have performed puppet shows featuring the recognizable characters for more than 1,000 children and their parents at Los Angeles County libraries across the Southland.

► *Continued on page 3*

Mexican Consulate and Red Cross Strengthen Ties

Disaster Education Promoted

The Consulate General of Mexico in Los Angeles and the American Red Cross of Greater Los Angeles announced in July they will work together to prepare the Mexican immigrant

community in Los Angeles County for disasters.

Consul General Juan Marcos Gutierrez Gonzalez and Paul Schulz, CEO of the American Red Cross of Greater Los Angeles, signed a letter of understanding that calls for the two institutions to: provide disaster education outreach programs, recruit and train Spanish-speaking Red Cross volunteers, and develop bilingual educational materials.

As part of the partnership, the American Red Cross will distribute materials at the Mexican Consulate Health Office

and show disaster preparedness videos in the waiting area. The Mexican Consulate will assist in the translation of educational materials and the recruitment of Red Cross volunteers.

"Historically, the Red Cross has been

one of the most recognized and respected institutions by the Mexican community," said Consul General Juan Marcos Gutierrez Gonzalez. "This alliance will enhance the capabilities of both our institutions to improve the services we provide during emergencies caused by natural disasters."

"Historically, the Red Cross has been one of the most recognized and respected institutions by the Mexican community."

— Consul General Juan Marcos Gutierrez Gonzalez



Paul Schulz, CEO of the American Red Cross of Greater Los Angeles (left), and Consul General Juan Marcos Gutierrez Gonzalez of the Mexican Consulate in Los Angeles agree to promote disaster education outreach programs.

"The Good News" Celebrated at 93rd Annual Meeting

More than 150 people attended the American Red Cross of Greater Los Angeles chapter's 93rd annual meeting on June 26 celebrating the chapter's many achievements during the year.

Jeffrey B. Sakaguchi, a community volunteer with more than 30 years of business and executive management experience, was elected the new chapter chair. Dave Furhman and Christine Neal were elected vice chairs, and Gary Campanella and Paul Wolf were



Edmond Lelo, immediate past chair (left), congratulates Jeff Sakaguchi, new chairman of the Board of Directors.

elected secretary and treasurer, respectively.

The following board members were elected to a three-year term: Marianne Lamutt, Darren Seidel, Martin Cozyn, David Fuhrman, Joan Herman, Kirk Hyde, Lois Ingham, Joseph Kanimian and Jill Valenti. Bethany George and Christine Neal were elected to one-year and two-year terms. In addition, the following ex-officio members were elected to a one-year term: Frank Bell, Pat Mac Neil, René Mortensen, and Kirk Nelson.

Outgoing Chair Edmond Lelo outlined the chapter's many accomplishments during the year, including the opening of a state-of-the-art Emergency Operations Center.



Youth volunteer Yasmina Elsouiri helps deliver "The Good News" at the 93rd annual meeting.

Directory

On the web: www.RedCrossLA.org

General Information: 1-800-627-7000

Blood Donations
Dial 1-(800) GIVE LIFE or visit www.GiveLife.org

Communication & Marketing
(310) 445-2650

Community Events
(866) 548-8226

Disaster Relief/Military Services
(888) 737-4306

Fundraising & Special Events
(310) 445-2685

Health and Safety Classes
(CPR, First Aid, Aquatics)
(800) 627-7000

International Services & Tracing Services
(310) 477-5176

Volunteer Resources (Adult & Youth)
(866) 548-8226

Credits

AcrossLA is produced and distributed by the American Red Cross of Greater Los Angeles as an information source for supporters of the American Red Cross and the people of Los Angeles.

Please address your comments to:

ACROSSLA

Communication & Marketing
11355 Ohio Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90025
Email: BrombergC@arcla.org

Copy Editor: Carol Bromberg

Design and Production: Robert Cooper

Contributing Writers: Carol Bromberg, Deana Mesa, Nikki Davis, Barbara Wilks, Amy Gross, Carmela Ann Burke

Photography: Robert Cooper, Bee Kong, Erica Helson, Ricardo Alterno, David Tuckman

Message from the Chair

New Board Chair Continues Efforts to PrepareLA+

Dear Friends of the American Red Cross,

I'm honored and privileged to be selected as the new Chair of the American Red Cross of Greater Los Angeles. My initial experience with the Red Cross was as a teenager taking first aid, CPR and lifeguard training. Since joining the Board of Directors four years ago, I continue to be amazed by, and proud of, the comfort, care and compassion the Red Cross provides on a daily basis to a wide spectrum of people in our community.

This is accomplished through our many programs and services, including health and safety classes, as well as preparedness training and our around-the-clock response to disasters large and small. In addition to sheltering and feeding thousands of people during major disasters, like last year's wildfires, our chapter assists people every day who are displaced by house fires.

An important part of our focus is preparing the people of Los Angeles for a catastrophic event, such as a major

earthquake. I want to thank our outgoing Chairman, Edmond Lelo, under whose leadership we have made great strides in preparing for a large disaster and become a highly respected model for other Red Cross chapters.

We have significantly improved our preparedness capabilities, but there is still much to do. During the coming year, we will launch an awareness campaign called PrepareLA+, with the goal of providing members of our community with the information needed to be safe and capable during a disaster. You will read more about the campaign in future issues of this publication.

I look forward to working with each of you during the next two years to promote our important mission.

Jeff Sakaguchi
Board Chair



Jessie Thompson Remembered at Special Memorial

Jessie Thompson, an employee who worked with Red Cross volunteers for



more than 33 years, passed away on May 7. She was honored at a special memorial held at the Greater Los Angeles chapter on

July 30, which was attended by more than 75 volunteers and colleagues.

Jessie first joined the Red Cross in 1976 as a bloodmobile volunteer coordinator and in 1981 was promoted to assistant director of the Volunteer Office. Over the years, she managed volunteers in numerous capacities, including recruiting and scheduling

volunteers for bloodmobiles, staffing and supervising telephone hotlines and disaster assignments, and assisting with the coordination of volunteer recognition events. After retiring in 2000, Jessie continued to work part-time as a volunteer specialist until April.

Volunteer Resources Officer Mauria McPoland commented, "Jessie could do it all—from recruitment to training to recognition. Many here will tell you no one—and I mean no one—could get a hotline up and running faster than Jessie. I will deeply miss this elegant woman with whom I had the pleasure of working for the past year and a half."

Previous Office of Volunteer Directors Victoria Garcia and Cheryl Dowden praised Jessie's patient, cheerful demeanor and her devotion to volunteers.



Allstate Supports the Red Cross

Representing the Allstate Foundation, Robert H. Barge III, field vice president for Allstate in California, presents a check to Paul Schulz, CEO, American Red Cross of Greater Los Angeles, to support the chapter's Catastrophic Disaster Plan.



The Red Cross sent food parcels to WWII prisoners-of-war.

Giving Back: Donor Says "The Red Cross Saved My Life"

by Deana Mesa, Communication & Marketing Volunteer

In his 86 years, Ernest "Ernie" Warsaw has earned many titles: doting father and grandfather, successful businessman, passionate art collector and hero.

A World War II Army Air Corps navigator, Warsaw's plane was shot down during a bombing mission over Germany in 1943. The majority of his crewman perished, but



Ernest Warsaw

Warsaw was able to parachute to German soil. He was immediately captured by the Nazis and sent to a prisoner-of-war camp in Breslau, Germany. For the next two years, he endured severe physical and emotional trauma at the camp and credits his survival to the Red Cross.

"Without the Red Cross we would have starved to death," says Warsaw. POWs were fed just a bowl of soup and one piece of bread daily. It was the Red Cross parcels, containing canned food and supplies, that the POWs depended on for nourishment. Twice a month, without fail, the Red Cross delivered food rations, as well as books and occasionally

clothing. Warsaw kept a list of the more than 350 books he read while in the camp.

Warsaw and his fellow POWs were liberated from Breslau on April 29, 1945. He returned to the states and began rebuilding his life in Los Angeles. Although still reeling from his experience, Warsaw became steadfast in his support of the Red Cross. He gave speeches about his war-time experiences and became a Red Cross financial donor.

Ernest Warsaw (front row kneeling second from right) and his fellow crewman in 1943.

Warsaw applied the same commitment and intensity he once used to stay alive to get the message out about the Red Cross.

"There is such a sense of generosity with the Red Cross because they don't know who you are and they don't care. If you have a problem, the Red Cross is there to try to help," he said.

Sixty-four years later, Warsaw continues to donate to the Red Cross. He is an ambassador and a member of the Clara Barton Society, a group of donors who give annual gifts of \$1,000 or more to the American Red Cross of Greater Los Angeles.



Amy Keller, associate director of Major Gifts says, "Ernest really believes strongly in our mission. He is so thankful that we were there for him in his time of need."

To see a video of Ernest telling the story of how the Red Cross helped him in WWII, please visit www.youtube.com/LARedCross.

Planned Giving Tips: Contributing to the Red Cross and Retaining the Benefits from Your Gift

by Amy Gross, PhD, Gift Planning Officer

How can you make a gift that benefits the American Red Cross and returns income to you?

There is a family of gifts that transfers assets to the American Red Cross and then returns income to you. You can use these gifts to convert low-yielding securities to a higher income stream at a greatly reduced capital gains cost. You also can receive fixed or variable income, take payments for your lifetime or for a term of years, and direct the income to other beneficiaries. In essence, you make a contribution yet retain benefits from what you gave away.

Your charitable deduction is based on the full market value of the assets you contributed, minus the present value of the income interest you retained.



Even though we cannot use these gifts until the death of the last income beneficiary, they will help ensure the Red Cross is financially strong in the future.

What assets can you give?

- **Cash.** It is, of course, the easiest transaction to make. You are limited only by your cash flow and your inclination to draw from your cash reserves.
- **Appreciated securities.** Get the same tax deduction as if you had given cash, but use stocks or bonds that cost you less than they are currently worth. Your deduction is based on market value, but you incur no capital gains liability on the transfer to us. It's one of the best tax incentives left, and we can work with your broker to make a gift of securities simple.
- **Real estate.** Gifts of land, vacation homes or income-producing properties can bring great benefits to us. You can give real estate outright, transfer it in a part sale/part gift arrangement, use it to fund a life-income gift, or give your residence and reserve the right to continue to live there.
- **A retirement account.** The balance remaining in your retirement account after your death is subject to double taxation if it passes to your heirs: it's taxed both as income and as an estate asset. Result? Over 75% of the account value may go to taxes. It's a better plan to designate the remainder of your account to the Red Cross, and then use other assets for gifts to your family. New regulations simplify the procedure to name the Red Cross as beneficiary; we're ready to assist you.
- **Appreciated property.** You may be holding property like books, artwork or equipment that you no longer wish to maintain. Instead, these assets could bring real benefit to the Red Cross. There are particular IRS requirements to meet before you can deduct a gift of appreciated assets. We will review each gift proposal carefully to make sure that the Red Cross can put the asset to good use.
- **Business interests.** A partnership, an interest in a business, shares of closely held stock, or a limited partnership share may all hold value for us. We will work with you and your advisors to make the transfer simple.

For more information, please contact Amy Gross, Gift Planning Officer, at (310) 445-2685, or email her at grossa@arcla.org.

Teens Teach Tots Preparedness Skills

► *Continued from page 1*

Working in conjunction with L.A. County children's librarians, Red Cross youth members have performed shows at 15 libraries from Porter Ranch to Chinatown. Each show features three interactive skits — Beat the Quake, Crawl Low in Smoke, and Stop, Drop, and Roll — where children learn and practice what to do during an emergency. Parents are advised to practice emergency drills at home and are encouraged to build a disaster kit for their family.

In addition to libraries, Red Cross youth puppeteers are available to perform the 45-minute show at hospitals, community events, fairs and other public events.

"Holding the attention of a 4-year-old while lecturing on a topic like earthquake safety would be nearly impossible without the puppet show," said Erica Helson, Youth Services liaison for the American Red Cross of Greater Los Angeles.

"Elmo comes out and the kids are star-struck; they listen carefully to the preparedness tips."

For information about scheduling a puppet show or becoming a Red Cross youth volunteer, please contact Erica Helson at (424) 832-6501 or at helsone@arcla.org.



Mental Health Volunteers Offer Psychological First Aid

By Nikki Davis, Communication & Marketing Volunteer

Mental health professionals play a pivotal role in planning for and responding to disasters. Using their training and therapeutic skills, these Red Cross volunteers provide support and assurance, serve as advocates and help disaster victims cope with their circumstances. They also monitor the well-being of disaster shelter residents and provide support for other Red Cross workers and first responders.

"What I offer is psychological first aid," said Karin S. Hart, Psy.D., a Disaster Mental Health volunteer for almost 10 years. Hart is a clinical psychologist specializing in trauma, anxiety disorders, and clinical hypnosis. "In some cases, taking it one day at a time is too much to handle," said Hart. "You have to narrow it down to one hour or less, asking disasters victims when they last slept or ate."

Barbara Racy, Ph.D., a licensed psychologist in private practice, has assisted at numerous disasters during her many years as a mental health volunteer, including a lengthy deployment to Louisiana following Hurricane Katrina. "Some kinds of disaster situations cause more trauma than others, and we have the training to get people the help they need."

Red Cross Disaster Mental Health volunteers must be state licensed as a psychiatrist, psychologist, marriage and family therapist, or clinical social worker. Registered nurses with documented psychiatric training and experience in the mental health field and professional school counselors also qualify.

Mental health volunteers are required to take two American Red Cross disaster courses prior to assisting at disasters:



Fulfilling Our Mission, a general overview of the Red Cross, and Foundations of Disaster Mental Health, a six-hour instructional training class.

Mental health professionals give their time to help Red Cross disaster victims for numerous reasons. Hart volunteers because "Making a significant impact on a person's life at the time of a disaster can be profoundly meaningful."

For more information about becoming a Red Cross Disaster Mental Health volunteer, please contact Mary Chasin, R.N., supervisor, Health Services and Disaster Mental Health, American Red Cross of Greater Los Angeles, at chasinm@arcla.org or call 310-477-5243.

WILDFIRE SEASON IS AROUND THE CORNER



Every year, Southern Californians brace for dry Santa Ana winds and the wildfire season. If you live in an area affected by wildfires, the following tips can help you prepare now:

- Provide a protection space around your home.
- Remove flammable vegetation and other combustible growth within 30 feet of any structures. Thin out or remove vegetation an additional 70 feet from the structure to a total of 100 feet.
- Plant fire resistant plants around your home.
- Post address on front of the house and make sure it is visible.
- Maintain all plants by regularly removing dead branches and leaves.
- Clear your roof and gutters of dead leaves or pine needles.
- Create a 10-foot clearance from chimney tops to trees or anything close.
- Clear back flammable vegetation at least 10 feet from roads and driveways.
- Cut overhanging tree branches above roads to provide minimum of 16 feet of clearance.

Red Cross in the Spotlight Red Cross in the Spotlight Red Cross in the Spotlight Red Cross in the Spotlight



Actress Jamie Lee Curtis, pictured with American Red Cross of Greater Los Angeles CEO Paul Schulz, recently taped a public service segment at the chapter which encourages people to create their own emergency preparedness kits before disaster strikes.

Do More Than Cross Your Fingers

American Red Cross Celebrity Cabinet member Jamie Lee Curtis is urging Americans to do more than cross their fingers when disaster strikes.

Curtis is the national spokesperson for a new Red Cross public awareness campaign, called "Do More Than Cross Your Fingers," to promote and improve personal preparedness. In a public service announcement filmed at the Greater Los Angeles chapter, Curtis displays the items in her own personal disaster preparedness kit and encourages everyone to create their own kits.

After the filming, Curtis met with employees and volunteers and thanked them for their service to the Red Cross. The campaign begins in September.

"Why I Volunteer..."

by Carmela Anne Burke

...Because new experiences never end even after many years as a volunteer. For example, in July 2008, as the team arrived to help the regional chapter respond to the Mariposa wildfire (near Yosemite), we were advised to stay at a staff shelter—an elementary school gym. There were 12 of us so we picked our preferred spots to place our cots. Four took the stage which had curtains, one brought her own airbed. The "Exit" sign was the night light. It was like summer camp all over again. During our brief deployment, we worked well as a group and promised to stay in touch as the operation transitioned back to the regional chapter.

...Because one learns to adapt not only to the culture of the community but the culture of the relief operation as well. You hear about disaster victims becoming disaster volunteers, about outreach workers driving to affected homes to check on residents, about nearby churches and organizations opening local assistance centers to connect victims with organizations that can provide financial assistance as well as emergency and recovery information on food, clothing and temporary housing.

...Because the empathy you get just by listening to the clients makes you want to do your best to get them back to the way they lived before the disaster hit. We do what we can with the resources we have at the time to move our mission forward, and to help families get their lives back to normal.

...Because the worst moments bring out the best in people. It is said that President Lincoln established Yosemite National Park as a symbol of national healing. This sentiment embodies the coordinated local and national relief efforts as residents affected by disasters heal their disrupted lives. I am privileged to be part of these efforts.



Carmela has been a Red Cross public information volunteer since 1992 and is one of the chapter's local and national instructors in Disaster Public Affairs. Her first relief operation was Hurricane Iniki in Hawaii and she has also been part of responses to hurricanes in St. Croix and Florida. After 9/11, she was sent to New York in January 2002 as part of the American Red Cross relief efforts. She also helped at the National Red Cross Disaster Operation Center for the tsunami recovery program and during Hurricane Katrina. As Public Affairs Manager, Carmela was on the ground for several hurricanes including Rita, Ike and Gustav, floods in Texas as well as numerous California wildfires.

NON-PROFIT ORGN
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
LOS ANGELES, CA
PERMIT #31589

American Red Cross
Greater Los Angeles
11355 Ohio Avenue
Los Angeles, CA 90025
www.RedCrossLA.org

Preparing Military Families

Volunteers from the Greater Los Angeles and Greater Long Beach chapters of the American Red Cross provided emergency preparedness and Red Cross military services information to U.S. Navy personnel and their families on July 11 at the Queen Mary.

More than 900 people attended Family Preparedness Day sponsored by the Long Beach Navy League Council, where the Red Cross distributed information on how to develop a family emergency plan and how to create an emergency supplies kit.

In addition, attendees received the Red Cross brochure "Get to Know Us Before You Need Us," which explains the services offered by the Red Cross to military personnel. The American Red Cross Services to the Armed Forces provides emergency communications and financial assistance, as well as delivery of emergency action messages in the field where Red Cross workers are deployed.

"This was a great opportunity to emphasize the breadth of services the Red Cross offers to military members and their families," says Eric S. Brubaker, program coordinator, Service to the Armed Forces.

For more information on how you can help members of the military and others who receive services from the Red Cross, please call (310) 445-2685.



Red Cross Youth Show Gratitude to Members of the Armed Forces

Kiara Rojas (pictured) and Red Cross youth members from the San Fernando Valley joined other community volunteers in helping assemble 3,000 care packages in July on behalf of Operation Gratitude. The packages will be sent to men and women in the Armed Forces serving in Iraq and Afghanistan.