

# Red Cross Month Kicks Off To Honor Community Heroes

by Ann Vastmans

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**ST. LOUIS** - The American Red Cross of Greater St. Louis is kicking off its annual Red Cross Month celebration in March to honor local community heroes who help ensure their neighbors never face crises alone.

**Red Cross Month** is a national tradition that began in March 1943 when President Franklin D. Roosevelt issued the first Red Cross Month proclamation — and each U.S. president has followed ever since. Locally, Governor Mike Parson signed a proclamation at the State Capitol today (Tues. Feb. 27) declaring March as Red Cross Month in the state of Missouri.

“During Red Cross Month, we are proud to honor the people in our community who step up to support one another when help can’t wait during emergencies,” said Beth Elders, Executive Director, Red Cross of Greater St. Louis. “This relief and hope wouldn’t be possible without these local heroes. Please consider joining this team of heroes by donating, volunteering, giving blood or platelets, or taking a lifesaving skills course.”

**Join the Red Cross Month celebration by visiting [redcross.org](https://redcross.org) to make a financial donation, give blood or platelets, become a volunteer or take a lifesaving skills course.** Those who donate at [redcross.org/givingday](https://redcross.org/givingday) on **March 27** will be part of the **10th annual Red Cross Giving Day**, which aims to rally 30,000 supporters nationwide to help provide shelter, food, relief items, emotional support and other assistance for people affected by disasters big and small.

Volunteers comprise **90%** of the national Red Cross workforce to power its lifesaving mission, along with generous blood, platelet and financial donors; people trained in skills like first aid and CPR; and other supporters.

The **Greater St. Louis Chapter** provided the following services in calendar year 2023:

#### Disaster Services:

- Responded to over 650 disasters like home fires.
- Supported nearly 2,500 individuals impacted or displaced by disaster events.
- Installed over 2,900 free smoke alarms, making more than 1,130 homes safer.
- Empowered more than 1,000 children and youth with emergency preparedness education.
- Created more than 1,000 customized fire escape plans with families.

#### Service to Armed Forces:

- Provided nearly 1,600 military members, veterans and their families with almost 2,700 emergency and community services.
- Supported nearly 700 military members through physical and mental health workshops.

## Training Services

- Trained over 25,700 individuals in lifesaving First Aid, CPR, and AED skills.
- Educated more than 4,000 individuals with Aquatics and Water Safety.

## Blood Services:

- Collected over 97,000 units of blood, platelets, and plasma from nearly 35,000 donors.

As we approach the final weeks of winter, the public is urged to book a time to donate blood or platelets now as we continue to strengthen the blood supply heading into spring. Much like pets provide comfort and support, so does the Red Cross in local communities. As a thank-you for providing comfort during Red Cross Month, all who come to give blood or platelets March 1-24 will get a \$10 e-gift card to a pet supply merchant of choice, plus automatically be entered for a chance to win a \$3,000 gift card. There will be five winners. See [rcblood.org/Pets](http://rcblood.org/Pets) for details.

## ***About the American Red Cross:***

*The American Red Cross shelters, feeds and provides comfort to victims of disasters; supplies about 40% of the nation's blood; teaches skills that save lives; distributes international humanitarian aid; and supports veterans, military members and their families. The Red Cross is a nonprofit organization that depends on volunteers and the generosity of the American public to deliver its mission. For more information, please visit [redcross.org](http://redcross.org) or [CruzRojaAmericana.org](http://CruzRojaAmericana.org), or follow us on social media.*