



Western Colorado Chapter
506 Gunnison Avenue
Grand Junction, CO 81501

NON PROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Grand Junction, CO
PERMIT 229



Western Colorado Chapter

Spring 2005

CROSSNEWS

Armed Forces Emergency Services Program Helps Mother Reach Injured Son



Debbie England, left, with Jo Weber of the Western Colorado Chapter.

The grave news was that her son, a Special Forces Ranger with the Army's elite 82nd Airborne, sustained massive injuries during an attack south of Baghdad. Debbie's shock was followed immediately by fear that she couldn't afford the trip to see her critically injured son. That's when she found out about the American Red Cross, Armed Forces Emergency Services (AFES) Program.

"I always thought the Red Cross was there for natural disasters and the civilian population," said England. "I had no idea they helped military families too. It was truly a blessing to have help from the Red Cross."

England also praises Weber's ability to stay calm and organized during stressful situations. "Jo has a gentle, caring spirit that is calming during times of crisis," England says.

Fortunately, Sgt. Jepsen's military future is bright. A military board approved his re-enlistment application despite his serious injuries. Sgt. Jepsen, who received the Purple Heart and the Bronze Star for Valor, intends to become a doctor. He is currently at Ft. Bragg, North Carolina, and is using his recovery time to finish his bachelor's degree.

Continued on page three...

AFES was chartered in 1905 by Congress to provide emergency communications, financial aid and counseling services to members of the U.S. Armed Forces and their families. Jo Weber administers the program at the Red Cross, Western Colorado Chapter. When Weber learned of Sgt. Jepsen's injuries, she contacted the Englands and began measures to help them travel to Walter Reed Medical Center in Washington, DC.

Debbie England remembers the day she received news that her son, Sgt. Robert Jepsen, had been wounded in Iraq. It was January 27, 2004. Debbie and her husband Rod were returning home to Glade Park from Rod's cancer treatments in Denver. "I was in such a fog," Debbie England says, "I went totally blank and wasn't sure what they were telling me."

Calendar of Events

Class and Meeting Calendar

CPR Review	May 2	6:00 PM – 10:00 PM
CPR for the Professional Rescuer	May 7	8:00 AM – 5:00 PM
CPR	May 10	6:00 PM – 10:00 PM
First Aid	May 12	6:00 PM – 10:00 PM
CPR & First Aid	May 21	8:00 AM – 5:00 PM
Babysitting	May 14	8:00 AM – 5:00 PM
Instructor Training Course	May 20 – 22	
Family Services	April 20 - 21	6:30 PM – 9:30 PM
Firewise Training	April 16 & 17	
ICS 100 and 200 Training	April 23	
NIMS and National Response Plan	TBD	
Disaster Committee	May 11	5:30 PM
Health & Safety Committee	May 2	5:30 PM
Disaster Action Teams:		
Grand Valley	May 3	6:00 PM
Roaring Fork	May 9	6:30 PM
Delta/Montrose	April 25	6:30 PM
Carbondale/Aspen	April 18	TBD
Board of Directors Meeting	May 17	5:00 PM
CPR & First Aid	June 4	8:00 AM – 5:00 PM
CPR Review	June 6	6:00 PM – 10:00 PM
Babysitters Training I	June 6	8:00 AM – 12:00 PM
Babysitters Training II	June 7	8:00 AM – 12:00 PM
CPR & First Aid	June 8	8:00 AM – 5:00 PM
Instructor Training Course	June 10 – 12	
Basic Aid Training - ages 8 to 11	June 13	8:00 AM – 5:00 PM
CPR	June 14	6:00 PM – 10:00 PM
First Aid	June 16	8:00 A.M. - 5:00 P.M.
First Aid for Children Today - ages 5 to 8	June 20	8:00 AM – 5:00 PM
CPR & First Aid	June 25	8:00 AM – 5:00 PM
CPR Review	June 29	6:00 PM – 10:00 PM

ATTENTION EMERGENCY RESPONDER PLEASE SAVE OUR PETS

Number of Pets As Follows:

____ DOGS ____ CATS ____ BIRDS
____ REPTILES ____ SMALL MAMMALS

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS: _____

Veterinarian's Name: _____ Tele# _____

American Red Cross
Western Colorado Chapter

Provided by Westline Graphics, Printing & Signs - Cedaredge, CO

Free window stickers available, call 970-242-4851 or toll-free at 888-545-7800

I CAN'T STOP HIM FROM SPLASHING.
BUT I CAN STOP HIM FROM DROWNING.

When you help the American Red Cross, you help America.

Contact the Western Colorado Chapter at 970-242-4851 or toll-free at 888-545-7800

American Red Cross

Youth Trained During Free CPR Saturday Event

Seeing teens at the mall on a Saturday is no big news. But on Saturday, April 2, nearly 75 young people aged 15 to 22 headed to Mesa Mall in Grand Junction not to shop and hang out, but to spend the day learning life saving skills.

In keeping with the mission of the American Red Cross to "help people prevent, prepare for and respond to emergencies," chapter volunteers, in partnership with local businesses, provided free CPR training to local youth.

Joe Adragna, CPR Saturday Chairman and President of Mesa State College Medical Sciences Club, says that the

event had a dual benefit. "CPR Saturday was a great gift from Red Cross volunteers to local youth, but saving a life could very well be the youth's gift back to our community." Mesa State college student volunteers conducted the April 2nd training.

The CPR Saturday event was made possible by generous contributions from local residents and businesses. Kudos go to event sponsors Wide Open MRI, Mesa Mall and KKCO TV (NBC) for underwriting training costs. Preparedness Director, Tamara Morris praised Joe and the student volunteers from Mesa State: Heidi Wiig, Maria



Trigg, Dori Kimminau, Ryan Edwards, Eric Behrman, Bethan Addudell, Tabetha Sampael, Calre Fassio, Lisa Geist, Jenn Ozmun, Ashley Dickens, Heather Kincaide and Ralae White. "We could not have conducted the event without them," said Tamara.

In this issue:

- Director's Corner... pg 2
- Board of Directors... pg 2

- Volunteer Spotlight... pg 3
- Calendar of Events... pg 4

American Red Cross

Western Colorado Chapter
506 Gunnison Avenue
Grand Junction, CO 81501

Phone: 970-242-4851
888-545-7800
FAX: 970-241-2337

www.westerncolorado.redcross.org

Board of Directors

Sheryl Gallegos
Chairman

Rick Beaty
Peggy Foster
Kim Giannone
Merle Glenn
Chuck Kornman
Mike Lorsung
Harry Mavrakis
Lloyd Quesenberry
Steve Schultz
Horace Sessions
Paul Spivey
Deb Veale
Jeff Wendland
Rob Zentner

Chapter Staff

Jean M. Hermanson
Executive Director

John Bear
Response Director

Penny Lyons
Program Specialist

Tamara Morris
Preparedness Director

Jo Weber
Armed Forces Emergency Services

Mary K. Wendland
Accounting Administrator

AMERICAN RED CROSS MISSION

The American Red Cross, a humanitarian organization led by volunteers and guided by its Congressional Charter and the Fundamental Principles of the International Red Cross Movement, will provide relief to victims of disasters and help people prevent, prepare for and respond to emergencies.

Director's Corner



Jean M. Hermanson
Executive Director

The mission of the Red Cross is all about people helping people. As you read our first issue of *CrossNews* you will find stories that bring you face-to-face with what helping people really looks like on a daily basis. Even though you'll only be able to catch a glimpse of what our Red Cross team has been involved in these past few months, I hope that these stories will connect you to what we do best.

This first newsletter highlights our service to the military – service that represents the roots of our organization. After the outbreak of the Civil War, Clara Barton's eyes were opened to the needs of people in distress and to the ways in which she and other volunteers could give help. By the force of her personal example, she cleared the path to new fields of volunteer service to people in trouble.

Today, there are approximately 1.2 million American Red Cross volunteers. It never ceases to amaze me that most of our assistance is provided by selfless people who give up sleep and work weekends to help those in need.

Historic disasters of this past year – from hurricanes to tsunamis – demonstrated that we live in an extraordinarily generous community. While tragedies like these will affect thousands of people for many years, we must remember the ongoing need to support each other in our own communities. Quiet disasters are happening here in Western Colorado every day...disasters that don't make dramatic news headlines. The letter below from the Delta County Sheriff's Office illustrates how the Red Cross is helping here at home.

In closing, my goal is to publish *CrossNews* quarterly. In July we will highlight Wildfire Mitigation and our Aquatics Program. I hope you enjoy this new publication. I welcome your feedback and your continued financial support.

Delta County Sheriff's Office

P.O. Box 172 * Delta, Colorado 81416-1796
(970) 874-2000 * Fax (970) 874-2027

On March 18th at approximately 1428 hours, Delta County Dispatch began receiving 911 calls that the Electric Mountain Lodge north of Paonia had exploded and there were several injuries and possible fatalities. Emergency responders from all over Delta County converged on the lodge and Town of Paonia to assist in any way they could. The American Red Cross was no exception.

I would like to personally thank your men and women for the sustained commitment they showed during initial efforts and the continuing recovery efforts in the Electric Mountain Lodge incident. Your group showed professionalism, dedication and compassion in carrying out the responsibilities to a successful conclusion. Without the dedication and commitment they showed, the family members of the three children lost in the fire may not be able to grieve properly. You should be very proud of the way your team conducted themselves during the entire incident and be confident that as long as we all work together toward the same goal, there is nothing that we, as first responders, cannot handle in Delta County.

Respectfully,

Sheriff Fred McKee

Undersheriff Mark Taylor

Volunteer Profile

Red Cross Volunteer Reflects on Five Decades of Service

In the fall of 1950, Virginia Samuel was a new nurse and a bride of less than a year. She had no idea that both her degree and husband would lead her down the same path for the next 56 years.

When James Samuel was recalled to active duty in the Army in September 1950, Virginia Samuel became one of more than 200,000 nurses to serve in military hospitals overseas. During the Korean War, Virginia worked as a "grey lady," visiting patients in the hospital, and as a doctor's office assistant at military posts. Over the next 18 years, Virginia worked as a Red Cross nurse wherever her husband was stationed in the Army, including Falls Church, Virginia, and Fort Huachuca, Arizona. When Virginia and James retired to Meeker, Colorado in 1972, Virginia's involvement with the Red Cross expanded. As a Red Cross Chapter Chairman in Meeker, she supervised or taught classes including First Aid, CPR, swimming and babysitting.

Virginia began her volunteer work with the Western Colorado Chapter of the American Red Cross after she and James moved to Grand Junction in 1987. In her home overlooking apricot trees and the Colorado National Monument, Virginia helps coordinate local emergency communications for the military and their families through the Armed Forces Emergency Services (AFES) program.

This Red Cross service keeps military personnel in touch with their families following the death or serious illness of a family member or other important events, such as the birth of a child. The Red Cross quickly sends these communications on behalf

of the family to members of the U.S. Armed Forces serving anywhere in the world, including ships at sea, embassies and isolated military units. The information or verification of a message assists the service member's commanding officer with making a decision regarding emergency leave.

Jo Weber, AFES Coordinator for the Western Colorado Chapter, marvels at Virginia's energy and dedication. "After all these years she has not tired of the work. It tickles me that when she is ill, she gets annoyed about not being able to take those calls. Virginia's dedication and love for the service people in our community is awesome."

Despite hardships of her own such as caring for her husband during a recent illness and her sister who has cancer, Virginia intends to be available to local military families and the Red Cross as long as she is able. "It gives you a lot of satisfaction, knowing you're giving people a sense of security. Some people are so grateful; they just say thank you over and over again," says Virginia.



Red Cross nurse and volunteer, Virginia Samuel, began working with the American Red Cross in 1950. Samuel has been a volunteer with the Western Colorado Chapter since 1987 and works primarily with the Armed Forces Emergency Services program.

Armed Forces Emergency Services Program continued from page one...

At the Red Cross office in Grand Junction, Jo Weber continues taking daily calls about wounded West Slope military personnel. Weber, whose son is a Marine, says she takes comfort in her work. "The more you know how things are handled and what's going on, the easier it is to cope when something happens," she says. With the help of volunteers, she makes sure families like the Englands can connect with their loved ones.

MILITARY PERSONNEL:

To reach your family in times of emergency, call the Western Colorado Chapter at:

970-242-4851 or toll-free at **888-545-7800**



Sgt. Robert Jepsen, far right, enjoys a laugh with members of his unit after being released from the hospital. Jepsen sustained serious injuries while serving in Iraq. He was reunited with his mother, Debbie England of Glade Park, with assistance from the Western Colorado Chapter of the American Red Cross.