



**American  
Red Cross**  
National Capital Region

# RED CROSSroads

April 2010

## Thank you to Our Volunteers!!



What do we call people who, with willing hearts, give to their community week after week, year after year, expecting nothing in return? We call them volunteers. And in the National Capital Region we appreciate each and every one of you.

Red Cross volunteers save the day. They provide a place to stay and emotional support when their neighbors are faced with a home fire or other disaster. They teach lifesaving safety courses such as first aid, CPR, babysitting and care giving. Volunteers connect military families, work at blood drives, and, in general, take the actions needed to provide relief to victims of disasters and help people prevent, prepare for and respond to emergencies.

This month, and every month, we recognize the selfless gifts of time, money and blood the Red Cross has received from our neighbors in the National Capital Region. Thank you. Without your gifts we could not fulfill the Red Cross mission.

**National Volunteer Week** is also a time to invite you to join us. If you are not a volunteer, give the Red Cross a try. Red Crossers are people who are trained to perform extraordinary acts in the face of emergencies.

Please visit [www.redcrossnca.org](http://www.redcrossnca.org) on the web to learn more about volunteering if you aren't doing so already, or to let your friends and family know about opportunities. Check out our [VolunteerMatch](#) web page for current volunteer opportunities that may interest you. Volunteer opportunities are constantly changing, so please check back for new openings!

And, from all of us, thank you.

Linda Mathes, CEO  
American Red Cross in the Nation Capital Region

## Red Cross volunteer donates time, money to wounded, ill, injured

By Chelsea Gitzen  
Staff writer, Capital Flyer

For retired Airmen like Ed Smolarsky, the consuming pride and heart that's instilled at Basic Military Training will never falter. Mr. Smolarsky retired as a senior master sergeant in 1975, and began volunteering with the American Red Cross after retiring again as a Capitol Hill policeman. Today, he selflessly serves nearly every servicemember that comes to Joint Base Andrews wounded, ill or injured.

"He's very dedicated to the American Red Cross and supporting our troops," said Elsie Smolarsky, Mr. Smolarsky's wife of nearly 55 years and fellow American Red Cross volunteer. "He even keeps his hair cut short like them." Serving as a training instructor for basic military trainees at Sampson Air Force Base, N.Y., he gained a love of the military as well as met his wife.

"Ed loves to volunteer here," said Mrs. Smolarsky. "It really means a lot to him to be able to help these heroes. He loves taking care of the wounded – he says it's like they're his daughters and sons all coming home and he does the best he can to make sure everything and anything they need he has for them."



To keep up with the needs of the hundreds of medically evacuated servicemembers that Mr. Smolarsky almost always personally greets when they first arrive, he has established a very organized filing system in the storage room of the American Red Cross at the 779th Aeromedical Staging Facility.

"He runs the inventory for all donated supplies and keeps it very tidy," said Sahazan Christian, American Red Cross chairman for Red Cross volunteers at the Malcolm Grow Medical Center. "There's just so much that he does."

At 75, Mr. Smolarsky may use his own personal funds at times for items the wounded, ill or injured servicemembers may need. He also keeps a stockpile of items in other places such as his home or car in the event that he may need more items on hand for the members.

"He keeps some things in his car that someone might need like sweatpants or glasses," said Mrs. Smolarsky. "He also works five to six days a week setting up and purchasing items,

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picking up donations or tending to the servicemembers who come into the American Red Cross' Maryland Room at the 779 ASF. In addition to all that, he maintains the room to make sure it is clean and fully stocked."

The ample amount of time and dedication Mr. Smolarsky donates is an incredible gift to servicemembers and their families who may not be able to give them the attention that he is able to so quickly.



*Felicia Hillary, another dedicated volunteer, makes sure the coffee is always good and hot for servicemembers.*

"His dedication is above and beyond the call of a volunteer," said Mrs. Christian. "He gives so much of his time on a daily basis. The hours that he puts in are very incredible since whenever he is needed he is always there at any time of day or night. He is a godsend and I don't know what we would do without him or Mrs. Smolarsky. The Maryland Room wouldn't run without him."

Working with Mr. Smolarsky has a large impact on those around him, including his wife and fellow volunteers.

"Mr. Smolarsky's dedication as an American Red Cross volunteer over the years has been very overwhelming," said Mrs. Christian. "I can't say enough."

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### Check Out Our Recent Media!

Suresh Shenoy, our Region's Board Chairman, and CEO Linda Mathes were both guests on Cox Local Edition in mid April. The topics included the Red Cross Ready Rating program and all the great work our volunteers do in our community.

The episode has started airing on CNN Headline News (HLN, channel 70 on Cox in Fairfax County), and will air in a regular rotation for several weeks.

The video clip is posted on YouTube where you can view it at:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=njF2EK5QzOs>

### Red Cross Pride Fridays

*Many volunteers and staff have asked that we all "show our spirit" at least one consistent day a week. Starting immediately we suggest that volunteers and staff wear pins, shirts, hats or red and white on Fridays.*

*Let's claim our pride in the American Red Cross every day, and all together on Fridays!*

*Go Team Red Cross!!!*



## Please Save These Dates

**May 7**

**World Red Cross Day**

**8550 Arlington Blvd., Fairfax, VA**

**4 – 7 p.m.**

**May 26**

**Annual Meeting**

**Board of Governors Hall**

**National Headquarters, Washington DC**

**4 – 6 p.m.**

**June 3**

**All Staff Day**

**Location/time to be announced**

**June 14**

**7<sup>th</sup> Annual Invitational Golf Tournament**

**Trump National Golf Club**

**June 19**

**Run for the Red 5k/10k Race**

**Alexandria, VA**