



Alberta
**REPORT BACK
TO THE COMMUNITY**

2012-13



**CANADIAN
RED CROSS
CROIX-ROUGE
CANADIENNE**

MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR



Jenn McManus

Acting
Provincial Director

A family was given food, shelter and clothing after their home went up in flames. A senior was able to be an active participant in the community thanks to mobility equipment. High school students champion, lead and train younger children in preventing bullying.

These are only a few of Canadian Red Cross' accomplishments in 2012-13. And while I'm impressed with the work being done every day, it's at this time of year, when I reflect back on the year in its entirety, that my heart really soars. This Report Back to the Community 2012-13 touches on some of the highlights of the year but is a mere reflection of many more stories of service and compassion every moment of every day. Thank you volunteers, donors, staff and community for your commitment to serving others so selflessly and bringing the principles of Red Cross to life.

Note: During the production of this publication, Alberta was hit by the largest flooding disaster in its history. Canadian Red Cross distributed more than 945,000 relief supplies; managed or supported 16 shelters; and, supported more than 98,000 individuals through a call centre with registration services, early recovery assistance, information and family reunification.

Canadian Red Cross is committed to long-term support for individuals, families and communities as they recover from the Alberta floods. For a more detailed accounting of flood efforts and long term recovery plans please visit our webpage at www.redcross.ca

A Silver Lining From Disaster

The memory of watching their home go up in flames continues to burn fiercely in the minds of Jerry Kachenko's and her husband, Norm.

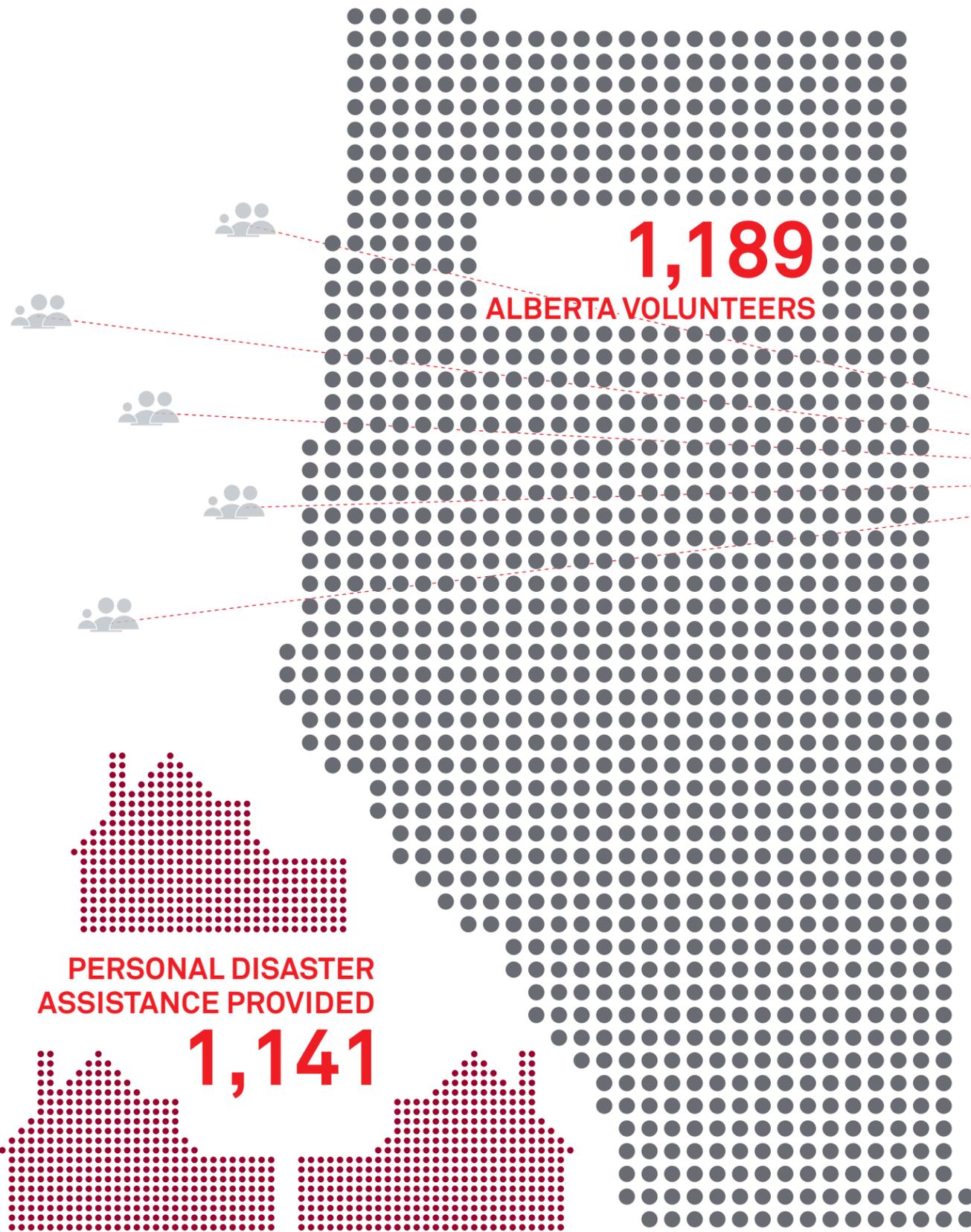
On March 3, after a 21-day work shift in Edmonton, Norm returned home to his wife in Lacombe, Alberta. Jerry recalls being pulled from her bed in the early hours of the morning and standing outside watching their beloved home turn to ash.

"If it wasn't for the Red Cross, I don't know where we would be," Jerry states. The Canadian Red Cross came to their aid to provide food, clothing and shelter until the couples insurance took over. Jerry claims that her silver lining in this devastating circumstance are the new friends, including those from the Canadian Red Cross, that have helped Norm and herself.

Though struck by tragedy, the Kachenko's are staying extremely positive. "We're the phoenixes. We're coming out of the ashes," Jerry proclaims. "We will rise above this and march on."

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ALBERTA BY THE NUMBERS



PERSONAL DISASTER
ASSISTANCE PROVIDED
1,141



ABORIGINAL ENGAGEMENT
INITIATIVES REACHED
13,209

FIRST AID TAUGHT TO
122,451

SWIMMING
LESSONS
PROVIDED
168,170

VIOLENCE, BULLYING
AND ABUSE PREVENTION
PARTICIPANTS
59,901

HEALTH EQUIPMENT
LOANS
48,728



“Every time that somebody comes in, if I’m able to help them, I feel good about myself... after 16 years; I’m still fired up to come in every day.”

Helping While Sharing a Smile

The Medicine Hat branch of the Canadian Red Cross is fortunate to have so many amazing volunteers. Among these dedicated individuals is office customer service volunteer and unofficial comedian, Devon Marshall.

As part of his role, he helps Red Cross provide health equipment, such as wheelchairs, walkers and bathroom aids, on a short-term basis to individuals recovering from illness, injury, or surgery.

Marshall has been donating his time to the Red Cross for over 16 years and is a welcomed presence to all branch visitors. “When Devon isn’t in the office, lots of people ask about him,” Vicki Koop, the local Health Equipment Loan Program Coordinator reflects. “He has a very outgoing personality and a great sense of humour.”

The position can be challenging for Marshall at times because he has paralysis below the waist and uses a wheelchair to get around. But he says he wouldn’t have it any other way; “every time that somebody comes in, if I’m able to help them, I feel good about myself... after 16 years; I’m still fired up to come in every day.”

Preventing Abuse and Violence in Aboriginal Communities

For the last 25 years, the Canadian Red Cross has been working in communities across Canada to end abuse, bullying, violence, and sexual exploitation. Dean Brown, Provincial Aboriginal Outreach Associate and member of the Cree First Nations, has dedicated his life to prevention. Dean’s past lends him a special understanding of what victims of violence face - he witnessed first hand the violence his mother was subjected to.

“I think of my mom’s experiences in my life and the violence and abuse happening in Aboriginal communities,” Dean says, “if there is anyway to show people there is an end in sight and that there are better ways to cope, I’m all for it.”

Dean’s passion for change is contagious in his workshops and has seen impactful results. “One participant came up after and said, ‘Now I understand why my grandparents and parents are the way they are’”, explains Dean. “These workshops are more than informative. It touches you on a cellular level.”

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For the Love of Swimming

It began in 1981, when, as a young boy, John Napier took his first swimming lesson with the Canadian Red Cross. Fast forward more than 20 years, Napier now works as a Master Instructor Trainer with the Canadian Red Cross Swimming and Water Safety program. In this role, he trains, recertifies and mentors Instructor Trainers, who teach instructors how to facilitate swimming lessons.

“Just to get asked (to be in the Role of Master Instructor Trainer) still sends shivers down my spine to know that they saw that within me,” he says. “I felt truly honoured to be a part of it.”

From seeing the smiles on children’s faces when they master a swimming technique to serving on the committee for Alberta Water Safety Conference, Napier says being a part of the Red Cross program has brought him great satisfaction and reward on many levels.

“(What I enjoy most) I think is the passing on of knowledge that I have learned, hoping that it will inspire others to do great things and to never stop showing passion for humanity.”