



Alberta
**REPORT BACK
TO THE COMMUNITY**

2013-14



**CANADIAN
RED CROSS**

MESSAGE FROM THE PROVINCIAL DIRECTOR

“Red Cross volunteers are the backbone to our work in communities around the world. We look forward to new volunteers, in the province of Alberta, joining us to increase our reach and capacity.”



2013 was an extraordinary year for the Canadian Red Cross, a year unprecedented for widespread responses to disaster both domestic and international. One example close to home is the southern Alberta floods of 2013, the largest domestic disaster in the history of the Canadian Red Cross. The devastation was staggering. But the flood was also a great example of humanity in action. Albertans and fellow Canadians stepped up to help their neighbours.

In addition to disaster management, the Red Cross in Alberta is also recognized for excellence in providing a wide-range of services including: Violence and Abuse Prevention; the Health Equipment Loan Program; Detention Monitoring; First Aid, Swimming and Water Safety; First Nation and Aboriginal Engagement; Restoring Family

Links; Community Housing; and International Humanitarian Law.

I'm proud of the role that the Red Cross plays in communities across the province. This report shares stories about our work in Alberta and profiles a few of those who play a vital role in providing our services. Thank you to all our volunteers, donors, staff, and the community for your commitment. Working together you have helped make a difference in the lives of others. Through these efforts, we are one of the most recognized and trusted brands in Canada according to a recent Harris Decima survey.

On a personal note, 2013 was also a year of transition. After serving as Acting Provincial Director, I was offered the opportunity in January to assume the role of Provincial Director. I'm grateful for the opportunity. The Red Cross has played a significant role in my life, starting with swimming lessons as a child to volunteering at home and abroad, including time in India and Iceland, and then recently serving as an employee. I am grateful for the opportunity and look forward to working together over the next 12 months and building on our successes.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jennifer McManus". The signature is fluid and cursive, written over a light blue background.

Jennifer McManus
Provincial Director, Alberta

RED CROSS FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES

HUMANITY | IMPARTIALITY | NEUTRALITY | INDEPENDENCE | VOLUNTARY SERVICE | UNITY | UNIVERSALITY



Photos (left to right): Jovey Sharma (centre); Ryan Hofer (centre)

A Sense of Belonging Through Volunteering

Nine years ago, a young Jovey Sharma stared out the window of the plane, wide-eyed and nervous. He had never been on a plane before and this wasn't just a vacation – he and his family had packed up their belongings and moved from India to Canada. The culture shock and bullying Jovey initially experienced in Canada made it extremely difficult for him to adjust to his new home. However, after joining the Multicultural Youth Action Program with the Canadian Red Cross, he found positive circles of support and learned to stand up for himself and friends. This empowering experience motivated him to volunteer with the organization in the Violence and Abuse Prevention program.

Now 19 years old, Jovey is also president of the University of Calgary's Red Cross Club, as well as a bullying and harassment prevention educator, facilitating workshops to students in junior high and high school. "Many still believe that bullying is something 'kids do' and will grow out of. Many ignore the long-lasting effects of bullying," adds Jovey. Jovey credits the programs and support of mentors at the Red Cross for where he is now and remains determined to pay it forward through continued volunteer involvement in his community.

Volunteer Connects Calgarians to the World

The world can feel like an awfully large place sometimes, and sometimes it's hard for Albertans to feel connected to issues happening across the globe. That's where Ryan Hofer likes to step in. The University of Calgary business student volunteers with the Canadian Red Cross International Humanitarian Law (IHL) program, where he participates in community outreach events to educate youth on the importance of IHL and global issues.

In recognition of his leadership, Ryan was recently awarded the Queen Elizabeth II Golden Jubilee Citizenship Medal. This award is given to eight young Albertans annually for outstanding citizenship, leadership, community service and volunteerism.

Ryan encourages anyone considering volunteering to take the plunge. "If you want to create an impact that doesn't only make a difference in the lives of other people, but in your life also, then you should join a global movement like the Red Cross. You will never regret your decision."

"It was pretty clear to me that there were a lot of people that shared a similar story as to mine, if not worse."

- Jovey Sharma,
Past participant of the Red Cross
Multicultural Youth Action Program and
President of the University of Calgary's Red
Cross Club

International Humanitarian Law Conference 2013

The Red Cross, along with the University of Calgary Faculty of Law, hosted the 1st Annual International Humanitarian Law Conference in November 2013. Through teaching and debate by a panel of experts, the conference brought awareness to the practice of targeted killings and the use of drones.

RED CROSS BY THE NUMBERS



Canada-wide stats



Alberta stats

OUR STRENGTH

is in our volunteers and donors



READY TO RESPOND

when disaster strikes



88,999
Canadians directly
assisted following
a disaster



72,000+ PEOPLE
assisted after a disaster
(total includes 2013 Alberta Floods)

READY TO SUPPORT

those in our communities



Restoring Family Links
program reunited
456 FAMILIES
separated by conflict,
disaster or migration



here in Alberta
162 BENEFICIARIES
found their families with help
from the same program

How we're helping Canadians here in Alberta and coast-to-coast

READY TO PREVENT

injuries and abuse


645,503 Canadians took violence, bullying, and abuse prevention training




80,000+ children, youth and adults have been positively influenced by the same training here in Alberta


609,367 Canadians took Red Cross First Aid courses




129,037 people received the same training here in Alberta


1,218,317 Canadians took Red Cross swimming and water safety lessons




195,883 people across Alberta took Red Cross swimming and water safety lessons

HEALTH EQUIPMENT LOAN PROGRAM (HELP)

49,944 pieces of equipment loaned





“Students were able to successfully complete swimming levels, which also boosted their self esteem.”

- Fort Chipewyan community leader

“I’m just glad that I know what to do – I can help now.”

- Arresa Powderface, Red Cross First Aid Training Participant

Swimming Program Reaches Remote and Northern Communities

Summer. It’s the season many wait for and seems to end too soon. It’s also the season when the importance of water safety is in the front of our minds. A recent Canadian Red Cross report notes that 525 people drown in Canada every year, highlighting the important role of Red Cross Water Safety programs across Canada. In remote and northern communities, drowning rates are 10 times higher and there is less access to swimming and water safety programs. To help address this gap, the Red Cross, in partnership with the Government of Alberta and the Future Leaders program, launched a two-year Aboriginal Swim Program to communities in central and northern Alberta.

In 2013 the program provided swim lessons for a total of 116 youth between the ages of 5 and 30 in the communities of Beaver First Nation, Fishing Lake Metis Settlement, Grand Cache, Fort Chipewyan, East Prairies, and Boyle Street. “Through this experience, many youth improved their strokes and comfort around the water,” says Erin, a community leader and Arts Mentor in Fort Chipewyan. Based on this success, the program is on track to increase the number of communities and students reached in 2014.

First Aid Training in Stoney Nation

During the 2013 floods, Arresa Powderface and her 4 year-old son, Caleb, spent hours each day in the Stoney Nation’s shelter in a Morley Elementary School. “Our home was basically unlivable,” she says. “We lost a lot – my high school diploma, Caleb’s clothes when he was just a baby...” The Canadian Red Cross worked with the Stoney First Nation during the floods, helping with providing shelter and on going needs in the community. The Red Cross also provided First Aid training in the shelter to build on current staff’s skills and their knowledge of responding to emergency situations. “We noticed there was a need for this training when people were applying for jobs, such as security, but didn’t have the required first aid training,” says George Whebell, a Canadian Red Cross volunteer. “We decided that providing that training to the broader community could improve their opportunities to getting work.” A participant in the training, Arresa says, “I’ve seen kids choke before and it’s pretty scary. With First Aid training, I’m just glad that I know what to do – I can help now.”



Photos (left to right): Nicki Anderson; Jodi Manz Henezi and sons Jordan and Connor

Down But Not Out

Living in most parts of Canada means enduring many months of snow, cold and sometimes treacherous driving and walking conditions. With such extremes in temperature and icy conditions, Canadians are at high risk for things like accidents, frostbite and falls—something Nicki Anderson is all too familiar with. The Edmonton resident slipped on a patch of ice and severely broke her ankle. The injury required surgery to place plates and pins into the bone to maintain proper positioning during healing. “Breaking my ankle was a big shock to my daily life,” says Nicki. “You don’t realize the things you take for granted like cooking or even getting to your own bed. I had to depend on friends and family to help me with even the simplest of tasks.”

Nicki was eventually referred to the Canadian Red Cross Health Equipment Loan Program and was amazed at the amount of support she received, free of charge. With the assistance of her equipment loans from the Red Cross, Nicki was quick to regain her independence. “The support I received from the Red Cross really made me feel like I could still live a normal life,” says Nicki. “For that, I am grateful!”

Making Volunteering a Family Affair

The balance of juggling a career, family, hobbies and other day-to-day commitments contributes to the reason why many people are unable to volunteer. Jodi Manz Henezi, has found a creative solution by including her two sons in her volunteer efforts and making it a family affair.

Since 2010, Jodi has been a member of the Canadian Red Cross Personal Disaster Assistance Team in Red Deer, helping ensure people have their basic needs met after disasters strike. Jodi also includes her sons, Jordan, age 10, and Connor, age 12, in her volunteer work with the Red Cross. As a family, the Manz Henezi’s have contributed to the annual Canadian Red Cross and Walmart Canada campaign to raise funds for local Disaster Management programs, raised public awareness about the need to be prepared for disasters, and even sold cupcakes at local hockey games with the proceeds going to the Canadian Red Cross. The concept of family volunteering is a unique new way of contributing to the community. Jodi believes that volunteering together as a family has brought them closer together. “I believe in giving back to the community. This is the example I want to model for my children.”

“You don’t realize the things you take for granted...”

- Nicki Anderson
Health Equipment Loan Program recipient

“This is the example I want to model for my children.”

- Jodi Manz Henezi
Canadian Red Cross volunteer

2013 Alberta Floods BY THE NUMBERS

The Red Cross has provided help to nearly **70,000** individuals, including more than **6,600** families

The Red Cross distributed **945,000** relief supplies

The Red Cross operated a toll-free line that was accessed by more than **55,000** people to register, get information or to reunite with family

The Red Cross managed or supported **16** emergency shelters and reception centres

Approximately **94 per cent** of individuals said the Red Cross services were appropriate to their needs

\$42 million was raised for the floods

95 cents of every dollar donated to Alberta Flood Relief goes directly to impacted individuals and communities



Dr. Barrie Strafford

2013 Alberta Floods: High River Family Moves Forward with Thanks

Slabs of fresh sod draw subtle lines along the High River field where Andrea Vasquez's kids play soccer now. Just as the park shows few signs of the devastating 2013 floods, Vasquez says her family also refuses to be defined by the disaster. Rather than focus on all they've lost, the family of six is determined to stay positive. "We want to tell people how much their efforts mean to us, that we are truly grateful," says Vasquez. "It has been rough for us, it's true. We have been so fortunate in many ways. And frankly, all I can say is thank God for the Red Cross because I don't know how we would have managed."

Andrea, her husband, Freddy, and four children are still recovering from the partial destruction of their rented home. But that traumatic event is not their only challenge. Just months before the disaster, Freddy was diagnosed with a brain tumour, severe head trauma and heart issues, and had to stop working. Andrea works at a local school and family finances are extremely tight. After the flood, the family received Red Cross cash cards to help buy groceries, gas and household goods. And at Christmas, like most High River families with children in school, they received help with holiday expenses. They bought the boys' winter coats, shoes and other necessities. Freddy got new glasses. But the emotional support means just as much, says Andrea. "Our Red Cross caseworker has just been wonderful. At times, she is the only one who has stopped to ask me: How are you, really?" "If something else happens, like it floods here again, then so be it. We got through the last time with only the clothes on our backs but we still have the most important thing: Our family."

The Red Cross is dedicated to long-term recovery in southern Alberta. More details are available at www.redcross.ca/abfloods

A Commitment to His Community

Dr. Barrie Strafford is a Calgary philanthropist who cares deeply about others and the community, both here at home and around the world. Dr. Strafford has demonstrated great leadership in seniors care through his work in assisted living and within nursing home environments. As a Red Cross supporter since 2006, he demonstrated tremendous philanthropy in December 2013 with a \$1,000,000 gift to support those significantly impacted across the Philippines following the widespread destruction of Typhoon Haiyan.

Following the tragic and sudden loss of his wife in 1974, Dr. Strafford chose to devote his life to the service of others. His leadership gift to the Canadian Red Cross supported more than 2.75 million people receiving Red Cross assistance in the aftermath of the typhoon's devastation. Dr. Strafford has been honoured by many institutions including receiving the Queen's Golden Jubilee Medal for his ongoing commitment to the community. He has also received an Honourary Fellowship in the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada and an Honourary Doctor of Laws Degree from the University of Calgary. The Red Cross thanks Dr. Strafford for his ongoing support of our work in the community and for this generous gift that provided much needed help and hope to those in the Philippines.