

# Partner Profiles



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*Editor's Note: This article is part of an ongoing series that demonstrates the community impact of the United Way of the Tri-Valley Area (UWTVA) and its funded Partners. To learn more about how you can give, advocate, or volunteer in your community, or to view the article archive, visit [www.uwtva.org](http://www.uwtva.org). To contact staff, call (207) 778-5048 or e-mail [info@uwtva.org](mailto:info@uwtva.org).*

## **There when you need them: American Red Cross provides disaster services, and hope**

Red Cross staff and volunteers stand ready to answer a call for help, to lend a hand, and to help those who need it the most. Whether it is a flood, a fire, an ice storm or a hazardous material situation, 153 Red Cross Disaster Action Team (DAT) members are trained to assist the people who are affected. The United Way helps to fund these disaster services. Last year, United Valley American Red Cross staff and volunteers responded to 80 disaster calls affecting a total of 326 individuals. A sample of those calls that came from Greater Franklin County are below:

Lighting started a fire that damaged a home in Eustis, displacing two people. The clients were not home at the time of the fire, but neighbors were able to rescue the couple's two dogs. Red Cross volunteers Donna Richard and Carole Richards responded: Red Cross provided assistance with food and clothing, as well as referrals and teddy bears.

A fire in New Sharon destroyed the mobile home of a family of 5 (2 adults, 3 children). The fire was believed to have started around the clothes dryer and within minutes, the home was filled with smoke. Moments later the dwelling was fully engulfed. The family had no insurance for either the dwelling or contents. Fire Chief Churchill called the Red Cross to assist the family who lost their residence and belongings. DAT volunteers Carole Richards, Donna Richard, and Kelley Dyke responded within minutes of the call and provided the family with food, clothing, comfort kits, teddy bears, and referrals.

While visiting his neighbor, a Livermore Falls resident noticed heavy smoke coming from his home. The fire caused extensive damage to the uninsured dwelling. DAT Captain Carole Richards immediately responded, contacting the client by phone, who asked if Carole could meet with him the following day. Carole met with the client the following day, and Red Cross provided assistance with food and clothing, as well as referrals and a teddy bear.

Fires account for most of the American Red Cross - United Valley Chapter's disaster calls. However, the Red Cross remains ready to also help mass shelter people in a disaster. To ensure they, and the community, are ready, two upcoming workshops are being provided in north Franklin County.

- Phillips Shelter Operations Workshop: Tuesday, February 23, 6:30 p.m. – 9:30 p.m. at Mt. Abram High School. Instructor, Eric Lynes, Disaster Services Director. Pre-registration is required.

- Rangeley Shelter Operations Workshop: Wednesday, February 24 6:30 p.m. – 9:30 p.m. at Rangeley Public Safety Building. Instructor, Eric Lynes, Disaster Services Director. Pre-registration is required.

To register for either workshop, contact Rudy Davis at 864-3800 or e-mail [firechief@rangeleyme.org](mailto:firechief@rangeleyme.org).

*The United Way of the Tri-Valley Area's (UWTVA) mission is to improve people's lives by focusing the caring capacity of our communities. One of 10 United Ways in Maine, UWTVA conducts an Annual Fundraising Campaign, contributions to which are reinvested in Greater Franklin County, by supporting programs run by area 501 (c)3 health and human service organizations. UWTVA also coordinates the Emergency Food and Shelter Program and collaborates with area volunteers and organizations to conduct initiatives that support the community, including food drives and homeless prevention activities.*