



National Nurses Week – We Celebrate Our Nurses

Linda MacIntyre, PhD, RN



Happy Nurses Week! The American Red Cross thanks all our nurses, partners and those who support nurses in serving individuals and communities across the globe.

The Red Cross relies on more than 20,000 nurses and other health professionals who bring our mission to life each day. They continue a proud tradition of service that stretches back to the earliest days of the organization. In their distinctive capes and hats, nurses were the public face of the Red Cross for many decades. Today, the Red Cross nurse “uniform” may be a simple vest and/or a pin but they remain a vital part of our disaster services, blood program and health and safety training. [Learn more about Red Cross nursing here.](#)

The American Red Cross prevents and alleviates human suffering in the face of emergencies by mobilizing the power of volunteers and the generosity of donors.

I am deeply grateful to you for sharing your compassion and expertise in support of the Red Cross humanitarian mission. As nurses, you promote resilience through caring and leadership. You draw from many disciplines to ensure that evidence-based action guides your work. You bring hearts and minds together to mitigate suffering and promote well-being. Nurses do not work alone --we are indebted to individuals, partners and organizations who support and champion care for individuals and communities.

Here are some of the challenges and ways that nurses help address them:

- [Global disasters cost \\$160 billion in 2018](#) and the Weather Channel reported that four U.S. events accounted for one-third of the cost, with the Camp Fire the costliest at \$16.5 billion and Hurricane Michael at \$16 billion (Wright, Weather Channel 2018). The cost in human suffering is astounding.

Nurses and other health professionals supported efforts to mitigate the suffering.

- The global Red Cross Red Crescent network’s [2018 World Disasters Report: Leaving No One Behind](#) identified at-risk communities: ‘**Out of reach communities** cut off by geography, insecurity, war, violence against humanitarian personnel, and other conditions; **Out of sight communities**, including those that are unmapped. Poor or non-existent mapping, particularly in remote areas and fast-growing urban slums, can also render entire communities invisible; [and] **People left out of the loop**, including those with needs that have been long acknowledged. In particular, people with

disabilities and elderly people.’ In the United States, more nurses and other health and mental health

professional volunteers are needed to advocate for individuals and address disaster-related needs. Red Cross volunteer training is free.

- There is an ongoing need for blood donations and in January the Red Cross issued an emergency appeal. Nurses educate communities and promote blood donation to ensure that the correct match of lifesaving blood is available when needed.
- [In 2017, there were 1.3 million active duty military and more than 800,000 reserve military forces.](#) Red Cross health and mental health professional volunteers support members of the military, veterans and their families through emergency communication, reconnection workshops, case management and more.
- Measles outbreaks have increased in the U.S. Red Cross nurses teach communities in the U.S. about the [Measles & Rubella Initiative](#), advocate for

partner funding and raise funds through [Nurses Supporting the Eradication of Measles and Rubella](#).

- Red Cross nurses teach Nurse Assistant Training to help ensure that there are certified nurse assistants available to care for individuals. Health professional volunteers teach lifesaving classes.
- According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, in 2018 there were approximately 3 million nurses

in the U.S. There are approximately 20,000 Red Cross health professional volunteers. Some volunteer positions require licenses and many do not. Imagine the impact if each of these 20,000 recruited one new health professional volunteer each year. Invite someone to [Become a Volunteer](#).

You make a positive difference that can only partially be measured. Thank you for joining hearts and minds in your humanitarian service. Happy Nurses Week!

Molly Dalton

Sound the Alarm Against Home Fires

The American Red Cross is in the midst of a two-week effort to *Sound the Alarm* against home fires by installing 100,000 free smoke alarms in 100 cities across the country which have a high risk for fires.

- Made more than 661,000 households safer
- Reached more than 1.3 million children through youth preparedness programs

WHAT IS SOUND THE ALARM?



During *Sound the Alarm* events, Red Cross volunteers and partners go door-to-door to install free smoke alarms, replace batteries in existing alarms and help families create home fire escape plans. Services are free and available to all people in need. Visit SoundTheAlarm.org to volunteer or help raise funds.

Home fires kill more people in a typical year in the United States than all other natural disasters combined. Most of these deaths occur in homes without working smoke alarms. The *Sound the Alarm* endeavor is part of the [Red Cross Home Fire Campaign](#) which the Red Cross launched in

2014 to reduce fire deaths and injuries. So far, it has reached more than 1.7 million people and saved more than 580 lives nationwide.

People can also take two easy steps to help save lives – practice fire drills at home and check their smoke alarms every month. Together, we can *Sound the Alarm* about fire safety and help save lives.

The Red Cross and more than 4,500 Home Fire Campaign partners have accomplished the following since 2014:

- Installed more than 1.5 million free smoke alarms

This work is made possible thanks to generous support from national partners: Airbnb, Delta Air Lines and Nissan North America.

Celebrate World Red Cross and Red Crescent Day

Molly Dalton

[May 8 is World Red Cross and Red Crescent Day](#), a time to celebrate the bravery and achievements of our volunteers and staff around the world whose life-saving and life-changing services ensure that we keep our commitment to humanity every day.



their lives at risk, teams deliver aid in line with [seven fundamental principles](#): humanity, impartiality, neutrality, independence, voluntary service, unity, and universality.

One in 25 people in the world is helped by the Red Cross or Red Crescent each year. Often putting

Around the world, the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement is providing a wide range of services to the most vulnerable people in all types of contexts - from responding to needs in

disaster and conflict situations, to providing assistance in urban centers and hard-to-reach areas and advocating on behalf of those in need.

A global and independent network of about 11.6 million active volunteers and 450,000 staff, the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement is working within communities in more than 190 countries. Our volunteers and staff come from all around the world and provide diverse assistance to 160 million people.

Together, Red Cross and Red Crescent teams not only respond to emergencies—such as earthquakes, conflicts, migration crises, and health epidemics—but also help neighborhoods prepare for future disasters and ensure that children receive the vaccines they need to stay healthy. Our network is active in nearly every country and is in some of the most dangerous places— a true front-line organization



that helps those most impacted by conflict and disaster.

For example, six months after a series of deadly earthquakes, nearly half a million people in west, north and east Lombok, Indonesia, are staying in small shelters they have cobbled together from plastic, tarpaulins or materials salvaged from their nearby damaged or destroyed houses. [See how the Red Cross is helping.](#)

Drawing on more than 150 years of humanitarian action, the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement is committed to providing relevant and timely humanitarian service to vulnerable communities now and into the future. On World Red Cross and Red Crescent Day and throughout 2019, we celebrate the strength and reach of our global network, and the contributions of our staff and volunteers through the theme #Love.

Over 109,000 People Died from Measles in 2017 — Needlessly

[Reprinted](#) from CNN opinion article by Kathy Calvin and Gail McGovern

CNN editor's note: Kathy Calvin is President and CEO of the United Nations Foundation and Gail McGovern is President and CEO of the American Red Cross. The views expressed in this commentary are their own.

A child [was hospitalized](#) in Brooklyn in the largest measles outbreak in New York state in decades. A 17-year-old [died](#) outside Paris, France. At least 12 children [suffered](#) the same fate in Brazil.

And these are not just isolated cases. In 2018, in Europe, 72 people [have died](#) and more than 59,000 [have fallen ill](#) with measles -- greater than double the number from the previous year. Meanwhile, nearly 17,000 people [have caught](#) the virus in South America and 76 people have died in Venezuela alone, where a regional outbreak began.

In the United States, Europe and Latin America, we're seeing more and more headlines proclaiming a child has suffered due to measles -- a disease that is easily preventable by vaccination.

As the disease surges to [its highest levels](#) in more than a decade, it's imperative that we all come together to stop the world from backsliding any further -- and that means ensuring everyone gets

vaccinated. Unless we act -- and fast -- more people will get the virus and die. And many of the victims will be children.

Together with Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance, we have supported the vaccination of over 2 billion children, resulting in more than an estimated 21 million lives saved. Since 2001, the start of the Measles and Rubella Initiative (M&RI), a global partnership made up of the American Red Cross, the United Nations Foundation, the World Health Organization, US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and UNICEF, we have dedicated our efforts to eliminate not only measles, but rubella and congenital rubella syndrome (CRS), as well.

But now, after years of winning hard-fought battles, the current outbreaks threaten our progress. Measles may once again become common in places previously measles-free, as fewer children [are being vaccinated](#).

This is the reason outbreaks are occurring in Europe and the Americas -- vaccination coverage has dropped, which means not enough people are being vaccinated. [At least 95%](#) of a population must

receive two doses of the measles-containing vaccine to stop the virus from spreading, and in many areas with outbreaks, this is not happening.

Failure to vaccinate has far-reaching consequences -- from financial hardship in the form of lost wages while caring for a sick child, to a child developing life-long disabilities or dying. Some suffer complications such as blindness, encephalitis (brain swelling caused by infection), severe diarrhea, dehydration, ear infections and pneumonia.

We have the tools, knowledge and know-how to stop this avoidable disease. To build on this success and continue to move toward the elimination of measles, we must close immunity gaps around the world by reaching every child with lifesaving vaccines and detecting and responding quickly to stop every measles infection from spreading.

In the past four years alone, the global Red Cross and Red Crescent network says it has mobilized thousands of volunteers around the world who have visited millions of households in the poorest and most marginalized communities to stress the

Many Ways to Stay Safe this Summer

Summer is just around the corner, a time for outdoor summer fun. The American Red Cross wants you to enjoy the season and offers safety tips you can follow all summer long.

WATER SAFETY: Whether you're going to be in or around the water, it's important to be water competent. The Red Cross offers swim classes for people of all ages and abilities. [Find out more here.](#)

1. Actively supervise children and stay within arm's reach of young children and newer swimmers.
2. Always wear a U.S. Coast Guard-approved life jacket when on a boat.
3. Swim as a pair near a lifeguard's chair -- everyone, including experienced swimmers, should swim with a buddy. If in a location with no lifeguards, designate a "Water Watcher" to keep a close eye and constant attention on children in and around the water.
4. Download the Red Cross Swim App which promotes water safety education and helps parents and caregivers of young people learning how to swim. Search for 'American Red Cross' in your app store or find it at redcross.org/apps.

importance of vaccination. Such capabilities within each country help to ensure strong community safety nets that can be mobilized to protect the world from other health threats.

The recently published report, Progress towards Regional Measles Elimination -- Worldwide, 2000-2017, in the World Health Organization Weekly Epidemiological Record shows that [over 109,000](#) vaccine-preventable deaths still occurred last year. We call on ministers of health to commit to strengthening their immunization activities and to intensify surveillance to quickly detect cases and prevent this needless suffering. We call on parents to vaccinate their children.

With your support, the United Nations Foundation and the American Red Cross, along with other M&RI partners, pledge to continue to provide vaccines, training for health workers, technical assistance and community outreach and education.

We can -- and we must -- protect our kids against measles, and once again -- regain the progress we've made against this disease.

Molly Dalton

GRILLING SAFETY: A [recent Red Cross survey](#) showed three in five adults have walked away from a grill while cooking, one of the leading causes of grilling fires which cause more than 9,000 home fires on average each year. To avoid this, the Red Cross offers these grilling safety tips:

1. Always supervise a barbecue grill when in use.
2. Never grill indoors or in any enclosed area.
3. Make sure everyone, including pets, stays away from the grill.
4. Keep the grill out in the open, away from anything that could catch fire.

BE SAFE IN A CROWD: If your summer plans include crowded places, you can expect to wait in lines and possibly face extra security measures, along with getting separated from your group. The Red Cross has safety steps you can follow:

1. Have a few different methods to communicate -- cell phone, tablet, calling card. Stay with your group. All adults should have a cell phone and exchange numbers with the others in your group. Plan where you will meet if you become separated.
2. Dress appropriately and in layers so you are

ready for any change in the weather. Stay hydrated. Apply sunscreen regularly.

3. Watch the weather and seek shelter if any severe weather warnings are issued. Know where the exits and shelters are.

4. Be on the lookout for suspicious activity and report suspicious people or packages.

[DOWNLOAD RED CROSS APPS](#) The “Emergency”

app can help keep you and your loved ones safe by letting you monitor more than 35 different severe weather and emergency alerts. The “First Aid” app provides guidance on handling some common first aid emergencies. Download these and other apps for free by searching for ‘American Red Cross’ in your app store or at redcross.org/apps. Learn First Aid and CPR/AED skills (redcross.org/takeaclass) so you can help save a life.

Northeast Tennessee Volunteer Spotlight: Kate & Gerry Tron

Jane Harris, former Executive Director, NE Tennessee Chapter

Often individuals become Red Cross volunteers when they have recently been exposed to a need met by the local Red Cross, have been a recipient of a Red Cross service, or want to find a meaningful opportunity to give back to their community. Sometimes we find Red Cross volunteers who have been Red Crossers for a very long time.

As volunteers or as staff members in the past, they bring a wealth of knowledge and experience to the local Red Cross organization. Such is the case with Kate and Gerry Tron, whose Red Cross experiences go back to the 1960s and 1970s. When they began to volunteer for the Red Cross in Newport, TN a few years ago, they brought more than 100 years of experience with the organization along with them. They may be retired, but they have the enthusiasm and energy of teenagers.

In 1961, Gerry took Junior Lifesaving and Water Safety Aid training; eventually with more training, he began teaching swimming and lifeguarding classes in Kansas. Little did he know the Red Cross organization would provide him with varied and exciting experiences for the rest of his life. After a few years he added Lifesaving, First Aid, CPR, and Small Craft Safety (boating, canoeing, etc.) to his training skills. In his professional life he worked in law enforcement, which was how he met Kate. Kate was a nurse working at a hospital in Missouri. One of his responsibilities was to be a “bodyguard” for her, escorting her to and from her vehicle – an unusual way to meet one’s future spouse!

Later Gerry joined the Red Cross as a staff member in the Midwestern Red Cross office, training instructors in small chapters across 13 states. Liking what Gerry was doing, Kate became a Red



Kate and Gerry Tron preparing for a class with a furry companion present.

Cross volunteer using her training as a health care professional to teach CPR and First Aid. Kate also worked for a time as a caseworker in the Service to Military Families program of the Red Cross. After some years in the Midwest, the family made their way to Washington D.C. Gerry became a Health and Safety Director setting up water safety training classes across the United States. He also worked for the Eastern Area of the American Red Cross before finally ending up working as an administrator for the American Red Cross with the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). In this position, he was assigned to many international disasters that were mostly in war zones. After several years of this stressful assignment, Gerry worked again stateside with the American Red Cross. This time his role was what he called a “fixer,” helping chapters who had some sort of issue and needed help to reach their full potential.

During the years Gerry was with the National Red Cross in the Washington, D.C. area, Kate worked as a nurse. She and Gerry were raising their family. She also continued her education, moving from LPN to RN. Kate worked for the apheresis unit of the Red Cross Blood Services. Later she joined the nursing staff at Walter Reed Hospital, setting up and organizing their apheresis unit and serving as their chief nurse.

From Washington, D.C. their life adventures led them to Columbus, Ohio and then finally to Tennessee. Gerry said in his many trips around the country, the pull to return to Tennessee was strong. They loved the people and the countryside. Upon retirement, they found a life they could enjoy in East Tennessee. Gerry tried several volunteer roles with

the Tennessee Red Cross. He finally determined the role he enjoyed most was the one he was doing when he first became involved with the organization back in the 1960s and 1970s, which was teaching people lifesaving skills.

Today, Kate and Gerry are vital parts of providing services for the Red Cross. They jointly teach First Aid, CPR, Bloodborne Pathogens and Water Safety skills on a regular basis (once or twice a month) in Newport, TN. People from Cocke County and surrounding counties take their classes that are taught at the community center. Kate also loves her work with Disaster Health Services. She uses her nursing skills to help in disasters both locally and across the country. She has deployed for three national disasters in recent months, including Hawaii, North Carolina and Florida. Kate also served as the Tennessee Regional Nurse Leader in

The Backstory

Shortly after Sylvan Tron immigrated to France from Germany to escape from Hitler, he met a young lady, Yvonne Etasse and fell in love. War came, and Sylvan was called to fight with the French Foreign Legion. France was soon invaded and divided by Germany and unfortunately Yvonne was on the occupied side and Sylvan on the other side of France. It was many years before they would be reunited. Enter the International

Military Hospital Clinic Volunteer Spotlight: Sydney Slusser, RN

Sydney Slusser, RN, began volunteering with the American Red Cross in September 2017 and has since contributed over 900 hours to the Naval Family Branch Clinic aboard Marine Corps Air Station (MCAS) Iwakuni, Japan. As part of the American Red Cross' Service to the Armed Forces, she serves as a nurse in the clinic's Acute Care Center (ACC) and provides care to active duty service members, Department of Defense civilians, and their families during critical times of need.

Her impact as a Military Hospital Clinic Volunteer has been significant, as she is often the first to triage and interact with patients, collaborating with

the Red Cross Nursing Network for several years. Many Cocke County residents, as well as the Red Cross organization in Northeast Tennessee, benefit from the years of experience this couple brings to the area.

When asked, Gerry gave the following advice to anyone just beginning to volunteer: "Jump in and look for something you like! Be honest with the staff member or your supervisor. Let them know what you like and what you do not like about your assignments. This way you can stay involved and enjoy your experiences."

There is always a need for additional volunteers with the local Red Cross. You can work in a variety of positions. Training is available for disaster and non-disaster positions. For more information on volunteering and training, visit redcross.org.

Kate Tron, RN

Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC). After much searching, it was able to reunite the couple. Shortly thereafter they married, left France for America and had a wonderful baby boy.

The ICRC holds, and always will hold, a special place in my heart because that baby boy is my husband, Gerry. We have two fantastic children and four even more fantastic grandchildren...all because of the ICRC.

Alyssa Granillo, Military Hospital Clinic Lead military healthcare providers to determine patients' severity and develop a plan of action in a fast-paced environment.

Sydney says the program has been "invaluable to get hands-on experience as a recent graduate" and she has honed her nursing skills through "spending more time face-to-face" than she could in the average civilian emergency department.

Of her contributions, ACC Department Head LCDR Michelle McCormick, DNP, FNP-BC, says, "Sydney is amazing. She has helped us in multiple departments as a great team player, and has been so eager to learn." Speaking of the Military Hospital Clinic Volunteer program, she



Sydney Slusser, standing on the right, volunteers in the Naval Family Branch Clinic.

notes it "gives both nurses and providers the opportunity to gain experience and build relationships. It's a really valuable program."

Red Cross Nurses' Article Published in May 2019 AJN

"[Advocating for Janetta](#)" is an inspiring article about Red Cross nurse Debby Dailey and how she supported Janetta, a fire client (May 2019 *American Journal of Nursing*). It was written by

Sydney's dedication to serving the MCAS Iwakuni community is extraordinary and we are so thankful for all that she does!

Debby Dailey, Red Cross nurse volunteer, and coauthored by Linda MacIntyre, Red Cross Chief Nurse. During May 2019, you can access the excellent [article](#) for free on AJN's website.

WGU Education Discount Available To Red Cross Employees and Volunteers

Did you know that Western Governors University offers special benefits to Red Cross employees and volunteers? Classes start the first of every month, so give them a call when you are ready to begin! From May 1 – July 1, 2019, volunteers can receive a

5% tuition discount and an opportunity to apply for the [WGU Red Cross Partner Scholarship](#). This offer is valid for all degree programs, including nursing/health professions, business, IT or teaching. Please visit [WGU.edu/redcross](#) for more information.

Wreath Laying Ceremony, Arlington Cemetery, April 13, 2019 Jean Shulman, RN

On a beautiful spring afternoon, representatives from the American Red Cross, the Daughters of the American Revolution and the Army Nurse Corps gathered at Jane A. Delano's grave site in Arlington National Cemetery. They were there to [commemorate](#) the 100th anniversary of her death, April 15, 1919, with a moving wreath-laying ceremony that included the playing of taps and a reading of John McCrae's *In Flander's Fields*.

of the American Revolution.

In 1920, the Delano grave site stood alone on the hillside of the Nurses Section #21. Today hundreds of graves surround the site of the director of the American Red Cross Nursing Service. As we celebrate National Nurses Week and thank Red Cross nurses across the country, we can also remember Delano and the nurses at Arlington.

Speakers included Susan Watson, Archivist and Manager of Historical Programs and Collections, American Red Cross; Linda MacIntyre, Chief



From left: Colonel Lozay Foots, LTC Mary Ann Bowery, Dr. Linda MacIntyre, Marcia Guzauskas and Koby Langley.

Nurse, American Red Cross; Koby Langley, Senior Vice President of International Services and Service to the Armed Forces, American Red Cross; and

Colonel Lozay Foots, Deputy Chief, U.S. Army Nurse Corps. LTC Mary Ann Bowery, Regent and Marcia Guzauskas, State Regent, represented the District of Columbia Daughters of the American Revolution. Jane Delano belonged to the District of Columbia Judge Lynn Chapter of the Daughters

Two fellow pioneer American nurses are buried in Section #21. Anna Caroline Maxwell, a respected nursing administrator, and Dora E. Thompson, 4th superintendent of the Army Nurse Corps were charter members of the National Committee on American Red Cross Nursing Service. Maxwell worked with Delano to recruit contract nurses for the Spanish American War. All three nursing leaders encouraged nurses to enroll in the Red Cross Nursing Service and to accept assignments for military service in WWI.



Dora E. Thompson

Julia E. Lide died in France on February 24, 1919. A graduate of Garfield Memorial Hospital in Washington, D.C., she served as a Red Cross nurse in the Spanish American War. In July 1917, she sailed with Detroit's Harper Hospital Unit, Base Hospital # 17 and received the French Croix de Guerre for her service. Returned to the United

States in September 1920, she received a full military funeral at Arlington Cemetery. In WWII, the nurses' recreation club at Fort McClellan was renamed the Julia Lide Hall to honor the Talladega, Alabama native.

Ohio nurse, Lt. Col. Rachel "Rae" Diana Landy, first answered a 1913 request from Henrietta Szold and Hadassah to establish a district visiting nursing service in Palestine. With Red Cross nurse Rose Kaplan, she created child and maternal health programs for the needy. Assigned to the Army Nurse Corps in 1918, she sailed for France and Belgium. After the Armistice she became chief nurse for a unit sent to Coblenz, Germany. She worked in the Philippines in the 1930's at Sternberg Hospital. During WWII, she served as chief of nurses of the Second Command in New York and at Crile Army Hospital in Cleveland, achieving the rank of lieutenant colonel. Until her death in 1952, she volunteered with the Cleveland Red Cross and recruited nurses for enrollment.

Christine M. Nuno joined the Red Cross and Army Nurse Corps during WWI. She served as chief nurse at the Ellis Island Debarkation Hospital #5. After WWI, she worked for the Red Cross Atlantic Division in New York City. Throughout demobilization, she met returning sick and disabled nurses at the dock. She helped them find

housing, medical care and assisted with government paperwork. Through Red Cross efforts, a hotel at Madison Square and the Bay Shore Convalescent Home on Long Island provided quarters until the nurses could return home. When the program ended, Nuno volunteered with the American Red Cross Commission to Greece and with the Near East Relief organization. She spent many years in Tokyo, Japan as director and instructor of public health nursing at St. Luke's Hospital. After the attack on Pearl Harbor, she returned to the New York Chapter and worked as a liaison with nursing staff at national headquarters and the overseas members of the Army and Navy Nurse Corps. She died in New York in 1946; an obituary in the New York Times recognized her service in both world wars.



Christine M. Nuno at far left, marching with other Red Cross and Army nurses in a procession to honor WWI heroes who died during the war.

Every stone has a story deserving to be retold and honored. The history of American nursing lies among the rows and rows of white marble markers on that hillside in Arlington.

Atlanta Remembers... Red Cross WWI Nurse Camille O'Brien Honored in Centennial Memorial Service

Sherry Nicholson, Regional Communication Director

Georgia native Camille O'Brien was the only Red Cross nurse from Atlanta and the only nurse with the famed Emory Unit to serve and die in France during WWI. Following her death, in a letter sent to Camille's sister from the Chief Nurse at the hospital where Camille had cared for sick and wounded soldiers, her superior wrote, "Possibly you, her people, may feel hurt more keenly that she must go among strangers, but the ravages of this war have brought about a bond which is unexplainable, and you can never realize what it meant to us to give her up."



in an unmarked grave, unknown until recently to her oldest living relative, a great nephew. Information on the heroic service of this Red Cross nurse and the location of her grave came to light for all of us over the past year through the research of Atlanta historian Michael Hitt.

Camille Louise O'Brien, one of 13 children, moved with her family from her birthplace in Warren County, Georgia to Atlanta and attended St. Joseph's Infirmary School of Nursing from 1913-16. Soon after her graduation, the entrance of the U.S. into World War I brought about an unprecedented need for nurses. American Red Cross Nursing Services was the recognized reserve

In 1921, Camille's body was returned to Atlanta and buried in Greenwood Cemetery with honors but left

of the Army Nurse Corps. In 1918, Camille joined the Corps as a Red Cross nurse.

She was assigned to Emory Unit, Base Hospital 43 in Blois, France where she worked selflessly, even when ill, saying “I cannot rest while we are taking in more wounded than we can bandage.” Her dedication never waived; when the Emory Unit returned home after the armistice in January 1919, Camille and 40 other nurses volunteered to stay back for the soldiers still in need of care. In April of that year, she contracted spinal meningitis and sadly, died at the young age of 35. Beloved by all, she received a full military funeral in France.

Though we never met Nurse O’Brien, as fellow humanitarians, we already knew her. Her story was so intriguing that we had to be there on April 18, 2019 – the 100th anniversary of her death – to help mark her final resting place and honor her sacrifice as a Red Cross volunteer.

A bird sang its approval loudly that Thursday as a gathering of modern-day admirers stood on a hilltop in old Greenwood Cemetery - people and organizations with ties to Camille’s past. The colors



were presented, the homily given, the wreaths laid, the flag folded to the playing of taps and the new marker for her resting place unveiled. The service was befitting a WWI heroine, which she was, and a

were presented, the homily given, the wreaths laid, the flag folded to the playing of taps and the new

Connie Bittfield, Nurse in a Small Nebraska Town, Leaves Generous Legacy Gift

Charlene L. DeWitt

Connie Bittfield was a nurse not just for her patients: she also held the pulse of her small Nebraska town. Up until just months before her death, Connie was their de facto community health nurse/case manager: she was concerned about the health of everyone she knew, made sure everyone had a ride to doctor appointments and treatments, and would field phone calls for health advice. When she needed care late in life, the hospice nursing students she had trained were honored to step up to help her.



Connie’s humor and positive outlook on life was legendary. When she was a child, she used to dress up like Clara Barton and pretend she was a nurse.

Connie was born in 1945 and raised in Kenesaw, Nebraska, a town of about 1,000 people. She graduated from Bryan Memorial Hospital School of Nursing and worked at Bryan Hospital in Lincoln. She left Nebraska to be the head operating room nurse at Baylor Medical Center in Dallas, Texas and also worked in Estes

“soldier true,” according to her comrades.

Three Red Cross volunteer nurses from metro Atlanta were among the delegation that attended the Centennial Memorial Service. Like Camille, Jeanne Spears, Health Services Lead for the American Red Cross, Southeast and Caribbean Division is an Atlanta native, a graduate of St. Joseph’s Infirmary School of Nursing, and a passionate Red Cross nurse volunteer. She presented the family with a framed certificate and Red Cross nursing pin, along with a letter from American Red Cross Chief Nurse, Linda MacIntyre. Ebony Bradley, Red Cross Service to the Armed Forces Director for Georgia, placed an arrangement of flowers trailing an American Red Cross ribbon, on her grave.



Metro Atlanta Red Cross nurse volunteers (l-r) Joanna Griffin, Donna Anderson and Jeanne Spears display the framed certificate and pin presented to the family of WWI Red Cross nurse Camille O’Brien at her centennial memorial service on April 18, 2019 in Greenwood Cemetery, Atlanta.

The history of nursing in the Red Cross dates to the very beginning of our organization. As early as 1892, Clara Barton was building an enrollment file of reserve nurses for call in time of war or disaster. During National Nurses Week in May 2019, Red Cross nurses past and present will be well represented among the many women and men who have given so much in service to others. Here, at Atlanta’s Red Cross, none will strike a chord more deeply than Camille O’Brien.

Park, Colorado. She returned to the Kenesaw area when her dad became ill and taught at Mary Lanning Memorial Hospital School of Nursing for many years. She attended Kearney State College where she obtained a Master's of Science in Education. She taught nursing at Mary Lanning School of Nursing and worked as a staff nurse at Mary Lanning Hospital before retiring in 2003 after a career of more than 30 years as a nurse.

In retirement, she taught CPR classes and took

blood pressures in church and everywhere else people gathered. She loved getting the Red Cross Nursing Matters newsletter, which she distributed at her retired nurses' association meetings. With her love of nursing, and because of her generosity, she established a generous bequest to the American Red Cross.

Connie died on October 4, 2018. Her gift will help those in the Kenesaw area for years to come.

Charitable Gift Annuity--Giving and Receiving

Candace Roosevelt, MAN, MBA

You do a wonderful thing when you make a gift to the Red Cross, but what if you could also help yourself at the same time? You can, with a charitable gift annuity. Many friends of the Red Cross say they wish they could do more to support our important programs, but feel they can't give up any income. A gift annuity, in which you retain payments for your life, may enable you to make a larger gift than you thought possible. A gift annuity also entitles you to an income tax charitable deduction, but more importantly, allows you to be part of our nationwide efforts to help those in need.

- Take an immediate tax deduction;
- Enjoy tax-free income for a portion of your annual payments;
- Minimize capital gains taxes if you fund your gift annuity with appreciated securities; and
- Know the personal satisfaction of supporting lifesaving Red Cross programs.

For more information about establishing a charitable gift annuity, please contact Candace Roosevelt, Gift Planning Officer, at 617-306-3875 or Candace.roosevelt@redcross.org.

A charitable gift annuity is simply a contract between you and the Red Cross in which you exchange a gift of cash or securities for the receipt of guaranteed fixed payments each year for the rest of your life and/or the life of a loved one. With a gift annuity, you can:

- Receive fixed payments for life at attractive payout rates;

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Help us get in touch with and recognize other current and former Red Cross Nurses!

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