

PROCLAMATION

6
2-28-06

WHEREAS, America has always been a place of humanitarian action and compassion—a place where people take care of each other, and are always willing to reach out and take care of others in need, whether they are down the block or around the globe. That American desire to put our compassion into action is deeply rooted in the character of Alexandria. The Alexandria Chapter of the American Red Cross is a true reflection of that character; and

WHEREAS, for more than 90 years, the Red Cross in Alexandria has been the place where citizens join together, and the generosity and compassion of the American people finds purpose. It's been the place where someone who may not know you will still give you their blood, save you from drowning or provide you with shelter. Never has this been more evident than this past year, when hurricanes pounded the East and Gulf Coasts and a deadly earthquake struck our neighbors in Southern Asia. Alexandria responded swiftly and generously, and in overwhelming numbers chose their Red Cross as the place to turn their caring into action; and

WHEREAS, the Alexandria Chapter responded to 16 local disasters last year and provided disaster education to 23,000 people. Some disasters are large, such as the hurricanes in August and September. During this past hurricane season alone, Red Cross chapters across the country worked together to provide more than 3.5 million overnight stays in shelters and served 60 million meals and snacks. Most often, the Alexandria Red Cross responds to disasters that don't make headlines, such as home fires and floods. These events disrupted lives right here in Alexandria and the Red Cross and its corps of volunteers are among the first on the scene, providing food, shelter, grief counseling and more; and

WHEREAS, Alexandria turns to its Red Cross Chapter for many of the things that make this city stronger and safer. Nearly half of our critical blood supply is collected by the Red Cross. Last year 3900 chose the Red Cross as the place to donate the gift of life. 4,477 also turned to the Red Cross to learn lifesaving skills such as first aid and CPR; and

WHEREAS, every month over 700 isolated senior citizens, many of whom are low income, receive compassionate quality of life programming from the Alexandria Red Cross. They receive weekly visits from a volunteer, household goods, therapeutic art classes, exercise classes and group social events such as bingo and movie nights. The human touch with a Red Cross volunteer is like medicine, relieving pain and depression; and

WHEREAS, the Red Cross continues to provide support and comfort to our military families. Last year, they briefed 400 reserves and National Guard troops and their families on how to access Red Cross services and connected loved ones separated by war and conflict; and

WHEREAS, recognizing that suffering knows no borders, the Red Cross provides assistance during international emergencies, such as the Pakistan earthquake. They have also spearheaded a campaign to immunize millions of African children against measles, a disease nearly forgotten in America, but a deadly killer in other parts of the world. Alexandria children have raised over \$1,000 for this life-saving mission; and

WHEREAS, in America, we may not all look the same, dress the same or sound the same, but we share a common spirit that binds us together when times are tough and unites us in action when someone is suffering. Like a mirror on America, the Red Cross shows us the best possible reflection of ourselves. In celebrating American Red Cross Month, we are celebrating the humanitarian and volunteer spirit here in Alexandria and all across America;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, WILLIAM D. EUILLE, Mayor of the City of Alexandria, Virginia and on behalf of the Alexandria City Council do hereby proclaim March 2006 as:

"AMERICAN RED CROSS MONTH"

I urge all Americans to continue to give blood, volunteer their time and give generously to the American Red Cross and its local offices. Alexandria, Virginia is a place where we take care of each other. When you help the American Red Cross, you help Alexandria.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Seal of the City of Alexandria to be affixed this 28th day of February 2006.

WILLIAM D. EUILLE **MAYOR**
On behalf of the City Council
of Alexandria, Virginia

ATTEST:

Jacqueline M. Henderson, CMC City Clerk