



American Red Cross

Cindy Pfennig from the American Red Cross spoke at the Treynor Optimist Club on July 26. She is from North Dakota and moved to Western Iowa in 2009. She mentioned that the storm season has been difficult this year, but is not over. Last year there was a tornado in Nebraska on October 5.

The Red Cross provides five core services:

- Provide communication services to the Armed Forces
- Blood services
- Disaster services, including preparing, responding, and recovery
- Health and safety services, including CPR/first aid training, pet first aid training, babysitting training
- International services in 189 countries

The Red Cross started in Switzerland. On May 21, 1881 Clara Burton founded the American Red Cross.

For disasters, the Red Cross provides food, clothing, shelter, comfort, and other care. They do not allow pets in shelters, although many people want their pets with them.

94% of the Red Cross workforce is volunteers. 91% of money donations goes to service. One problem they have in local disasters is that they receive more food, clothing, and other items that take a lot of space to store. Money can always be used.

The biggest local disaster is home fires. Each year they hold a fire canvas event, in conjunction with the Council Bluffs Fire Department. Free smoke alarms are provided where needed. The next fire canvas is October 11.

In Pilger, Nebraska, 127 well trained disaster workers helped. Long term recovery is important for these disasters. 15%-40% of businesses in an area fail following a natural or man-made disaster, creating another disaster. 51% of businesses have experienced at least one emergency lasting at least three days.

Anyone can help, through money donations or volunteering. See redcross.org for more information.