

The SWVA POINT

There was little calm after F-3 tornados tore through Washington Co. VA, on April 27 & 28. During the first day after the tornado, the Mount Rogers Health District decided to open tetanus dispensing sites in the town of Glade Spring beginning on Friday and called upon the SWVA Medical Reserve Corps to assist. Burt Bassham, Anne Pratt-Proctor, Rachel Carty and Carly Greer helped the District Staff with the dispensing operation, including going door-to-door.

By Friday, April 29th, the Washington County Emergency Manager had requested the assistance of SWVA MRC Volunteer Coordinator Kristina Morris to open and manage the Volunteer Reception Center (VRC) on the campus of Emory & Henry College. While the King Center was used as the VRC to coordinate the efforts of spontaneous volunteers, it was also where residents obtained permits to enter the Town of Glade Spring, the Department of Social Services and American Red Cross provided services, tarps were provided to cover roof damage, and initially the location was a drop off point for donated goods.

Because the SWVA MRC is a well-coordinated and responsive organization, their service was requested to assist with VRC activities at the King Center. Sara Ballou became an "expert" at issuing permits and trained new volunteers on the process whenever there was a shift change. Barbara Farmer came to help for a few hours and found she stayed for 10 days as she worked with groups to assign them to specific homes during the first week. Phil Ernst showed up for several days and because he stayed around so long, he got drafted to manage the VRC over the weekend of May 6th, which included moving it to Abingdon! Susan Austin, Jill Smeltzer, Beth Funkhouser, and Jennifer Dempsey were actively involved in making sure that volunteers and victims dealt with the stress in a positive way. Sam Fisher and Karen Northup were instrumental in making volunteer job assignments.

A full roster of SWVA MRC members who deployed to the VRC are listed on the right of this page. In total, 33 SWVA MRC volunteers responded to the VVHS alerts and provided over 410 hours of service between April 29th and May 13th. Another 10 SWVA MRC members provided volunteer service to a variety of other community and faith-based organizations who responded to this catastrophic event.

There were many lessons learned during this response and items which have been identified for improvement. One of the key issues that evolved when the alerts were issued was many SWVA MRC realized they no longer could find their ID badge. If you need a new ID badge, let Kristina Morris know at swva.mrc@vdh.virginia.gov.

Another positive outcome, SWVA MRC did NOT self-deploy --- pat yourself on the back. The training and orientation that each member has completed paid off and members waited to be called and waited for an assignment.

The SWVA MRC was tested and proved their effectiveness and their merit in assisting their local communities. Each volunteer should be proud of the service they provided to help Washington County citizens during this time of difficulty. Well done.

A Round of Applause:

- Sara Ballou
- Barbara Farmer
- Kathy Neace
- Phil Ernst
- Jennifer Dempsey
- Becky Barker
- Denise Deel
- Beth Funkhouser
- Jill Smeltzer
- Kathy Baldwin
- Larry Snapp
- Bessie Brown
- Sheri Yarber
- Kris Tracy
- Karen Northup
- Sam Fisher
- Kirsten Fleming
- Tammy Hardee
- Janie McGlocklin
- Chelsey Sloan
- Shannon Williams
- Robin Small
- Travis Rife
- Jessica Doane
- Judy Hurd
- Laura Isaacs
- Regina Davidson
- Linda Comer
- Susan Austin
- Rachel Carty
- Carly Greer
- Paula Jackson
- Burt Bassham
- Anne Pratt-Proctor



Kristina K. Morris, Volunteer Coordinator

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The SWVA POINT News

The National Kidney Foundation's *Kidney Early Evaluation Program (KEEP)* held in Wytheville on April 30th, at St. Paul United Methodist Church was another successful event this year. The SWVA MRC provided volunteers to staff the clinic which served over 75 patients. Fourteen SWVA MRC members assisted with this event for the second year. Hopefully, more of these events will be scheduled in other parts of the southwestern Virginia region and the SWVA MRC can support those clinics, as well.

Seeking VISTA Participant —AmeriCorps*VISTA Member with Southwest Virginia Medical Reserve Corps. SWVA MRC is seeking self-motivated individual to support the LENOWISCO Health District to build the volunteer capacity of the Southwest Virginia Medical Reserve Corps unit and engage volunteers in public health community initiatives. This is an exciting opportunity to help your community and gain experience in volunteer management, public health and emergency preparedness fields.

Benefits include living allowance, health coverage, childcare assistance (if eligible); and choice of stipend or education award upon successful completion of 12 month term. Training is provided to become an AmeriCorps*VISTA member. Associate or Bachelor's degree preferred. Must pass criminal history background check and have valid driver's license. Position starts August 18, 2011.

Interested candidate should send a letter of interest and resume with two references to robert.peters@vdh.virginia.gov by June 24, 2011 at 1:00 pm and submit an online application at www.nationalservice.gov. Information about AmeriCorps*VISTA can be found at <http://www.americorps.gov/about/programs/vista.asp>.

Even while tornado response activities were in full-force, the SWVA MRC also had the ability to staff a Drug-Take Back event in Washington County. This event was sponsored by Highlands Community Services Board and was an excellent out-reach opportunity for MRC volunteers. Four MRC volunteers accepted over-the-counter drugs and prescriptions drugs for four hours at a local grocery store. Thanks to Kathy Neace, Janie McGlocklin, Helen Forrester and Laura Isaacs for their help. Please notify Kristina Morris about other planned Drug-Take-Back events which the MRC could support.

I don't know if I will be able to write this with out tears flowing, but I will try.

The SWVA MRC has just been extraordinary this spring. Nursing students at each of our community colleges have joined the MRC; volunteers have supported health fairs & Family Fun Days; members have attended video conference training; MRC WalkVirginia activities have begun; members have submitted applications for the inaugural Advisory Board; office support has been provided to me; and the call to action was answered when tornados struck our region.

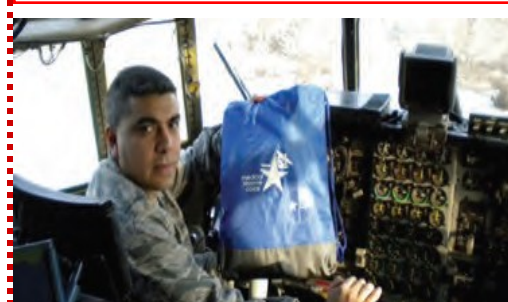
I am blessed to be associated with such a wonderful and caring group of volunteers. Each day, I marvel at what you agree to do to help your local health departments, partner organizations and communities. From the bottom of my heart—THANK YOU!!!! Fondly, Kristina

Current Volunteer Count SW Va MRC (as of 6/16/2011)

Physicians	16
Physician Assistants	2
Nurses	420
Nurse Practitioners	14
Pharmacists	27
Dentists	8
Veterinarians	4
Mental Hlth Professionals	49
EMS Professionals	102
Respiratory Therapists	4
Other Public Hlth/Med.	56
Other Non-Public Hlth/Med.	308

ATTENTION STUDENT VOLUNTEERS:

Many of our student volunteers have graduated and are studying for Boards. PLEASE make sure as soon as you get your license that you notify the Unit Volunteer Coordinator. A new ID badge will need to be issued, licenses will need to be obtained and being able to use new nurses, LPNs, Paramedics, pharmacists in direct patient care is critical to our response preparedness. Email your exciting news to swva.mrc@vdh.virginia.gov or call 276-274-0555. Don't forget!!



National MRC Picture of the Year
(Collin Co. MRC—Texas)