



**American
Red Cross**

Pikes Peak Chapter

News Release
NEWS RELEASE

Pikes Peak Chapter
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SOUTHEAST BRANCH -PIKES PEAK CHAPTER OF THE AMERICAN RED CROSS RESPONSE TO BENT COUNTY WILDFIRES

Pueblo, Colorado, April 12, 2011, – On afternoon of April 11, 2011, the Southeast Branch of the American Red Cross dispatched a team of five volunteers to open a shelter for families evacuated in the Bent County Wildfire in Las Animas, Colorado.

Judy Navarro, Southeast Branch Director, and volunteers Carol Ann Clark and George Cary determined an Evacuation Center was to be set up at 1724 Ambassador Thompson Blvd at 6:00 PM. They served dinner for over 20 displaced members of the community and first responders. Volunteers from the Las Animas region generously provided food for pets. Although the evacuation order was lifted at 10:30pm, the shelter was staffed overnight by volunteers Bill Fortune, Don Espinosa, Teresa Vieira, Donna Martinez, and Roger Bram. Volunteers remain on standby should the fire flare up again and additional evacuations are ordered.

Tom Gonzalez, CEO of the Pikes Peak Chapter of the American Red Cross said, “In response to these wild fires, we have opened shelters in Southern Colorado and served hot meals to both evacuees and first responders. Specially trained workers assess the damage to better meet the needs of those affected. Others are comforting residents reeling from the sudden loss and disruption in their lives.

The Red Cross must be ready to respond, simply because there is no other organization that answers the call every time the alarm sounds. With the support of the community, we will be able to meet the challenges ahead, together.”

About the American Red Cross:

The American Red Cross shelters, feeds and counsels victims of disasters; provides nearly half of the nation's blood supply; teaches lifesaving skills; and supports military members and their families. The Red Cross is a charitable organization – not a government agency – and depends on volunteers and the generosity of the American public to perform its humanitarian mission. For more information, please visit www.pparc.org or join our blog at www.redcrosschat.org.

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The American Red Cross shelters, feeds and provides emotional support to victims of disasters; supplies nearly half of the nation's blood; teaches lifesaving skills; provides international humanitarian aid; and supports military members and their families. The Red Cross is a charitable organization — not a government agency — and depends on volunteers and the generosity of the American public to perform its mission. For more information, please contact the Pikes Peak Chapter at 719-632-3563 or visit www.pparc.org.