



what matters.™

The True Meaning of Community

Webster defines community as, “a group of people living in the same region” or “a class or group with common interests”. Accurate as those definitions may be, they do not really get to the core of what true community is. During the first four months of 2007, fiery disaster struck three different apartment complexes in the area. In each case, the Dayton Chapter of the American Red Cross responded. If you asked the families affected by the fires for their definition, their response would provide insight to the true meaning of community.

On the night of February 14th, residents of Stonebridge Apartments in Beavercreek had two good reasons to cuddle up and keep warm. First, they were thawing out from the first major snowstorm of the season; and second, it was Valentines Day. An unwelcome third reason quickly shattered the coziness. Initially the fire was contained and the impact was limited, but later that night the fire reignited, destroying the entire 20-unit building and leaving 16 families homeless. Our local Red Cross responded – organizing relief and providing clothing, comfort kits, financial assistance, and counseling. Volunteers provided support, the apartment manager provided emergency housing, and local restaurants provided food...*that's community*.

“When the Red Cross arrives we feel we represent hope,” said Fran O’Shaughnessy, Chief Emergency Services Officer for the Dayton Chapter. The American Red Cross also provides leadership and stability. “I see the Red Cross involved in a situation like this and I am certain of two things. I know there are people in need of help and I know their needs will be met”, said David, one of many volunteers.

This scene repeated itself in Dayton on April 12th and again in Harrison Township on May 1st. Once again, the Dayton Chapter responded. Once again, volunteers and local businesses provided assistance...*that's community*.

A United Way Partner Agency, the Dayton Area Chapter of the American Red Cross, is the largest recipient of funding from the local campaign. Generous United Way contributions help our local Red Cross provide many services including disaster preparedness and response, health and safety education, aid to military families, and emergency housing. Led by volunteers, the Dayton Area Chapter responds to an average of 200 local disaster incidents each year. When they respond, they bring in relief and bring out community.