



Inside This Issue:

Letter from the Director **2**

Where We Worked in 2013 **3**

Across North America,
Volunteers Respond **4**

Serving a Faithful God Together
in LaPlace, Louisiana **5**

Retirement...Experiencing
God's Continued Blessings! **6**

Charity Days Support High
River Response **6**

Giving Opportunities **7**

In Memory of . . . **7**

In the Office **7**

World Renew DRS Sunday is March 2, 2014

Celebrate what the Lord is doing through DRS and you by observing World Renew DRS Sunday 2014 at your church on March 2, 2014! To help you plan and resource your congregation, all-new DRS Sunday materials are available online at www.greenshirts.org, including a DVD, poster, and bulletin inserts or covers. Your church offering is crucial to World Renew DRS's ability to help families in the U.S. and Canada say, "I am home," after a disaster.

Here are some great ways to promote DRS Sunday in your congregation:

- Wear your green shirt to church.
- Order the new 2014 DRS Sunday poster, bulletin insert or cover, and DVD.
- Decorate a bulletin board with photos from a DRS volunteer trip.

- Display DRS brochures (available from the DRS office).
- For those located near the DRS office in Byron Center, Michigan, request a display board.
- Ask for a "Moment for Missions" during a worship service or adult education time.
- Request an offering at your church, and mark your check "DRS Sunday" when you send your gift to World Renew.

If March 2 does not work for your church, it's no problem—these materials can be used at any time during the year. Thank you for your support!



Bill Adams,
director of World
Renew Disaster
Response Services.

World Renew Disaster Response Services' Mission is:

To show God's love and bring hope to disaster impacted communities in North America by restoring the homes and lives of those who are most vulnerable,

To help communities build their capacity to prepare for and recover from disasters, and,

To provide opportunities for Christians to honor the Lord by using their time, talents and financial resources in service to others.

Letter From the Director

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Happy New Year! We pray for peace, good health, and God's rich blessings for you and your family as we travel into another year together. Thank you for your ongoing support of World Renew Disaster Response Services (DRS)!

Praise the Lord for one of the mildest Atlantic hurricane seasons on record in 2013. A mere 13 named-storms formed last year, and only two—Ingrid and Humberto—became hurricanes. Neither of these achieved category-3 status or higher, and only Tropical Storm Andrea made landfall in the U.S.

"This unexpectedly low activity is linked to an unpredictable atmospheric pattern that prevented the growth of storms by producing exceptionally dry, sinking air and a strong vertical wind-shear in much of the main hurricane formation region, which spans the tropical Atlantic Ocean and Caribbean Sea," said Gerry Bell, lead seasonal hurricane forecaster at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration.

We thank God that He blessed us with these "unpredictable" atmospheric conditions. But we are also mindful of what happened in the Pacific last year. We pray for the people of the Philippines and for a mild Pacific storm season this year.

As you know, DRS Sunday in 2014 is scheduled for March 2 in U.S. for the Christian Reformed Church. Your participation plays a big part in helping us meet our annual fundraising goals, so once again we're asking all of our volunteers to get involved! Encourage your church to schedule an offering, help us arrange a speaker for your congregation, and plan on wearing your green shirt. Our Canadian churches are not included in the March 2 offering because of a scheduling conflict, but we ask our Canadian volunteers to also involve their churches by planning a DRS Sunday observation date sometime in 2014.

In addition, we have faithful volunteers who attend churches from other denominations, including the Reformed Church in America, Lutheran churches, Presbyterian churches, and others. Please consider talking to your church leadership about this great ministry that you're involved in and how they can get involved in supporting your work and DRS by taking a special offering. We'll be happy to arrange a speaker for your event. Give me a call!

Visit greenshirts.org to order our all-new materials for DRS Sunday 2014, called "I AM Home." There are bulletin covers, inserts, posters, and a DVD. A PowerPoint presentation is also available for adult education classes at your church. Let me know how we can help you—and thank you again for your servant leadership!

As DRS prepares for work in 2014, we pray that God will bless His world with peace, freedom from disasters, continuing economic recovery for the developed world, prosperity for the poor, and an increasing knowledge and commitment to His will for all people. Each of us has a part in making that happen. I look forward to working together with you in the months ahead.

In His Service,

Bill Adams, Director
World Renew Disaster Response Services

Where We Worked in 2013



Across North America, DRS Volunteers Respond

Reconstruction Sites

There is always a lot going on at World Renew DRS reconstruction sites. The New Jersey and Alberta sites will remain open during the winter, and volunteers are needed!

- In **Ocean County and Atlantic City, New Jersey**, Project Managers Rich and Phyl Grevnstuk are working with several long-term recovery groups (LTRGs), and volunteers are completing a number of significant projects with homeowners.
- Volunteers at another new site in **La Place, Louisiana**, completed several projects that helped get homeowners resettled in their homes. Project Managers Don and Gert Vos are working the LTRG to line up ongoing work for DRS volunteer teams.
- Because of the amount of work that still needs to be completed in **Hyde County, North Carolina**, Project Managers Rick and Bonnie Wiersma have arranged for DRS to remain there until April 2014.
- The **High River, Alberta**, reconstruction site will open on January 11, 2014. To prepare, Project Managers Henry and Linda Visscher are working with the LTRG and other local organizations there. Two new DRS employees will assist in this project: Mike Gorchynski, construction coordinator, and Sarah Bruinsma, case manager.
- Project Managers Doug and Pat Guikema said farewell to the wonderful people in **Schoharie, New York**, when the site closed on November 23, 2013. It was a privilege for them to work with Schoharie's well-run LTRG and the local homeowners. Our volunteers developed many close ties in this friendly community, and we pray

for God's continued blessings on them in the future.

We want to thank our regional project managers for their ongoing efforts with LTRGs as they attend meetings, facilitate volunteer trainings, assist other RPMs, and complete the many other responsibilities included in their work.



Needs Assessments

Unmet Needs Assessments in Fall 2013:

- Eagle Pass, Texas, led by Bruce and Christine De Boer
- High River, Alberta, led by Yogi and Liya Haasdyk
- Union County, New Jersey, led by Mark and Carol Martin
- Camden, Salem, and Gloucester Counties, New Jersey, led by Jerry and Nancy Brouwer
- DRS is currently making plans with LTRGs in Essex County, New Jersey; Oklahoma; and Colorado for possible implementation of unmet needs assessments in early 2014.

Early and Rapid Response

Tremendous rain last September turned some of the streams in the Front Range of the Colorado Rockies into raging, destructive rivers. To respond to the resulting flooding, DRS deployed Early Response Coordinators Fred and Mary Visser to the area, and they joined Area Representatives

Walt and Carol Ackerman, who live nearby. After surveying some of the damage, connecting with government and local leaders, and providing support to survivors, the two couples recommended that DRS send a Rapid Response Team. Two teams led by Dave Gabrielse and Andy VanderMeer worked in hard-hit Longmont, Colorado, and surrounding communities. The groups called The Journey Church (CRC) of Longmont their home base during the time they were there. Our volunteers gave the DRS tractor a good workout, removing three-foot-deep mud from some of the affected properties.

In late October, tornadoes and storms tore through parts of Illinois and Indiana. Early Response Coordinators Glenn and Betty Geurink traveled the affected areas, interacting with and supporting people whose lives were turned upside down. Several survivors left church one Sunday morning to find that an EF-4 tornado had completely destroyed their homes. In response to these storms, clean-up needs are being met by other organizations, but DRS anticipates assisting several communities with rebuilding in the coming months... and perhaps years.

Group Mission Trips

Groups of all sizes from churches, colleges, businesses, and families contact DRS about opportunities to serve, and DRS needs volunteers in many locations every week of the year. In recent months, the most visited sites have been in New Jersey (Superstorm Sandy) and Southern Indiana (tornadoes). This winter and spring appear to be busy as well, with groups serving on the East Coast and in Florida, Louisiana, Texas, Oklahoma, Alberta, and in between.

Serving a Faithful God Together in LaPlace, Louisiana



Do you remember the “call to Macedonia” in Acts 16? Through it God made a “divine appointment” for the apostle Paul to bring the good news of Jesus Christ there. God continues to call his church and his people to serve those who need help and hope today. Volunteers from World Renew Disaster Response Services (DRS) recently answered one of God’s calls—to LaPlace, Louisiana. There, Earline Wilson was praying faithfully for God to make a way to provide for her needs.

The residents of LaPlace were hit hard by Hurricane Isaac in August 2012. Although many people whose homes were damaged have received some assistance from the government and other agencies to make them habitable, their homes often still need significant repairs to make them livable from day to day. Earline Wilson’s home was one of those.

When a World Renew DRS work team arrived to provide the help she had prayed for, Wilson and her two granddaughters warmly welcomed

the volunteers into their home and their lives. Their older mobile home, perched next to a levee on the Mississippi River, was damaged by torrential rain that fell during the slow-moving storm.

“The Wilsons received funding from the federal government to help them recover, and they had a new roof put on their home after Isaac destroyed the old one,” said Metha Alberda, an on-site manager for World Renew DRS. “That allowed the family to stay in their home for the time being. But when the long-term recovery group in LaPlace referred DRS to her, Miss Earline’s house still needed a lot of work.”

The team got busy making the needed repairs, fixing the water supply line under the kitchen sink, putting up drywall, painting, and installing trim. They also gave the bathroom a needed remodel, replacing the subfloor as well as the sink, bathtub, and toilet. “I think the carpet was about the only thing holding them up,” Alberda said.



Not only were the homeowner and volunteers working side by side each day, they were also developing strong bonds as they shared their lives and faith together.

“Every morning when we arrived at her house, Miss Earline joined us for prayer to start the day,” Alberda said. “By the time the second week came around, she and her granddaughters joined the volunteers for supper at our lodging. After we ate, she shared her testimony, praising God for His goodness in hearing her prayer for help.”

It’s hard to tell who was more blessed that night, the Wilson family or the volunteers who heard their story. Thanks be to God who hears our prayers and ministers through the people of his church when someone calls, “Come over here and help us!”

Retirement . . . Experiencing God's Continued Blessings!

by Joyce Boerman

In October 1990, God answered my prayer for the opportunity to work for a faith-based organization. I was hired by Neil Molenaar, the first administrator of the Christian Reformed World Relief Committee's (CRWRC) Disaster Response Services program. Soon after I started at DRS, Neil left for a new position, and from 1990 to December 2013 I had the privilege of working as office coordinator/manager with several directors, including Michael Bruinooge, Bev Abma, and Bill Adams, the current director.

I came into a busy office setting. Hurricane Hugo had hit South Carolina in September 1989, and at that time it was the worst disaster ever experienced in the U.S. Hugo was followed in October by the Loma Prieta earthquake in California. Then, a few years later came Hurricanes Andrew, Iniki, and Isabel, and in more recent years, Hurricane Katrina and Super-storm Sandy. This often meant having



volunteers work in the office to assist staff members with overwhelming workloads. It was a pleasure and blessing to work with each one.

The history of DRS has been a journey of change and moving forward in faith as the years have flown by. In that time, I was greatly blessed in working with DRS leaders, office co-workers, and committed volunteers who have made the program what it is today. The change of CRWRC's name to "World Renew" in 2012 reflects what we are about in the world as Christ's followers. Praise

God for His faithfulness to DRS for more than 40 years!

Working with DRS has been an awesome journey for me for the past 23 years. I will miss being a part of the DRS program, but I am confident that God has a retirement plan for me. Part of that feels uncertain because of the unexpected loss of my precious husband, Lloyd, in July 2013. But I have comfort in knowing he is celebrating in his heavenly home as I travel this new retirement road. I look forward to spending time with my three children and their families, which include six wonderful grandchildren and two great-grandchildren, with the added joy of welcoming a new great-grandchild this coming spring. I plan to pursue various volunteer opportunities in my church, community, and wherever the Lord leads me, but my heart will always remain with World Renew DRS. I learned many things through the years, and God provided an amazing experience.

Charity Days Support High River Response

Alberta-based Park Lighting in Edmonton and Cartwright Lighting in Calgary are locally owned businesses that make giving back to the community a top priority. In October the two lighting stores donated the income from an entire day of sales to World Renew DRS for response

to last June's flooding in southern Alberta. Through a fundraising campaign called "*Help for High River*," they contributed more than \$87,000 to World Renew DRS. Thank you, Victor and Betty Johannesen, family, and staff!



Giving Opportunities

Thank you for your financial support for DRS! When sending a financial gift, please remember to make out your check to World Renew DRS, and indicate on the memo line which project you would like to support.

U.S.: World Renew, 1700 28th Street, Grand Rapids MI 49508-1407.

Canada: World Renew, 3475 Mainway, PO Box 5070, STN LCD1, Burlington ON L7R 3Y8.

Online at worldrenew.net/donate or by calling 800-552-7972.

Does your employer match donations? Some employers offer matching grants to employee-supported non-profit organizations. Ask your employer if they will consider matching gifts to World Renew DRS.



Colorado Floods

Your financial support for Colorado Flood Response helps DRS assist those affected by heavy flooding in and around Boulder, Fort Collins, and Greeley, Colorado, in September 2013.

Southern Alberta Flooding

Help those who were affected by major flooding in southern Alberta in July 2013. World Renew DRS is helping families repair and rebuild their homes after assisting with clean up and needs assessments.

World Renew DRS Where Most Needed

DRS often responds to disasters that are small in scope and not in the media, but they are just as devastating and traumatic for the people they affect. Help those whom others may forget by designating your World Renew DRS gift "Where Needed Most."

Visit worldrenew.net/drs for ongoing projects in need of donations.



In Memory of . . .

Several members of our volunteer family were welcomed into heaven in 2013. We would like to acknowledge their faithful work and support, and we pray that God continues to comfort the families of

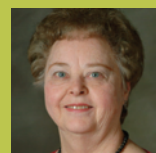
Dorothy Grimley
Andrew Leep
Bob Bush
Nellie Van Dellen
Norman Haan
Lloyd Boerman
Walter Vander Heide
Bernard Vander Veen
Effie Holthof
Arlan De Yong
David Stone
Arlene Kool
Marion Vos
Bill Wolbert
John Langeland

Preparing for Disasters

In the event of a disaster, is your family prepared? What about your church? Visit worldrenew.net/prepare-disasters to develop a plan to reduce your risks.



In the Office



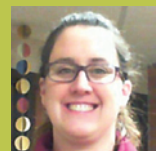
Joyce Boerman, after working with DRS for 23 years, retired on December

31, 2013. Joyce ensured that the office ran smoothly, our financial transactions were processed, our meetings were well-organized, and much more. Joyce plans to spend time with her grandchildren and volunteer in her church and elsewhere. Thank you, Joyce, for your years of dedication!



Sarah Bruinsma has joined DRS as a case manager in High River, Alberta.

Sarah works with homeowners who need assistance after flooding that occurred last June, connecting them with the resources they need to recover. Sarah has lived in High River all of her life and is married with two children. Welcome, Sarah!



Stephanie Kroll joined DRS as the new office manager on December 17

and is being trained by Joyce Boerman in her new responsibilities. Welcome, Stephanie!



**DISASTER
RESPONSE
SERVICES**

1700 28th Street SE
Grand Rapids MI 49508-1407

Address Service Requested

NONPROFIT
ORGANIZATION
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT NO. 149
GRAND RAPIDS,
MICHIGAN

Contact Information

World Renew DRS Staff

World Renew DRS
400-76th St SW
Suite 17
Byron Center, MI 49315

1.800.848.5818
616.965.2355
Fax 616.726.1141
drs@worldrenew.net

www.greenshirts.org

Director:
Bill Adams
badams@worldrenew.net

Program Information:
Stephanie Kroll
skroll@worldrenew.net

Communications:
Kellie Scholma
kscholma@worldrenew.net

Individual Volunteers:
Becky Purdom
bpurdom@worldrenew.net
Shirley Ritsema
sritsema@worldrenew.net

Volunteer Groups:
Art Opperwall
aopperwall@worldrenew.net
Pauline Mitchell
pmitchell@worldrenew.net

DRS Systems:
Sue Kuipers
skuipers@worldrenew.net

Administrative Assistant:
Luanne Mellema
lmellema@worldrenew.net

If you would like to receive this newsletter via email please notify Kellie Scholma at kscholma@worldrenew.net.