

**From:** Petker, Jill  
**Sent:** Friday, May 04, 2018 3:34 PM  
**To:** supervisors@cosb.us  
**Cc:** Zapata, Dani <[Daniella.Zapata@redcross.org](mailto:Daniella.Zapata@redcross.org)>  
**Subject:** Request for Certificate of Recognition

Dear Supervisors,

On June 15, 2018, the American Red Cross of the Central Coast will honor several individuals whose extraordinary acts make them heroes in our community. One of those heroes either resides or works in the San Benito County. We invite you to join us in recognizing Shelby O'Neil by issuing a Certificate of Recognition that we may present the morning of the event. A brief description of her accomplishments is below. Mailing the certificate in advance to our Carmel-by-the-Sea office will allow us the opportunity to stay organized and on schedule. Please feel free to call Daniella at (831) 626-5255 if you have any questions.

**Environment Hero: Shelby O'Neil (San Juan Bautista)**

Shelby O'Neil, who has spent hundreds of hours volunteering for the Monterey Bay Aquarium, has developed a deep understanding of the environmental issues facing our oceans. But armed with this knowledge, the San Juan Bautista resident knew she needed to do more. So, for her Girl Scout Gold Award Project, Shelby, just 17, formed the non-profit *Jr Ocean Guardians*, which recruits other teen ambassadors to go into their communities to educate youth about alternatives to single-use plastics. The ambassadors also host beach clean-up events, where plastic straws — a small but significant environmental threat — are one of the most commonly found items.

Thank you for your consideration,

Jill Petker on behalf of:

**Daniella Zapata**  
**American Red Cross | Central Coast Chapter**  
Serving Monterey, San Benito, and Santa Cruz Counties

Mailing Address:  
P.O. Box AR  
Carmel-by-the-Sea, CA 93921  
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# Central Coast Heroes Breakfast 2018

Honoring ordinary people who have  
made an extraordinary impact  
throughout Central Coast.

[PURCHASE TICKETS](#)



**Friday, June 15, 2018**

Doors open: 8 a.m.

Program: 8:30 a.m. – 10 a.m.

**Twin Lakes Church**

**2701 Cabrillo College Drive**

**Aptos, CA 95003**

American Red Cross Heroes are ordinary people whose actions embody the values of the Red Cross, and demonstrate the potential that is in all of us. Whether they're stepping up during a medical emergency to provide assistance, or helping others through a lifetime of volunteerism, Heroes reflect what is best about our community.

Join us as we celebrate this year's heroes at the 13th Annual Heroes Breakfast!

# Central Coast Red Cross announces 2018 Heroes Breakfast honorees



Posted Apr 24, 2018

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855-559-0333

## 13th Annual Heroes Breakfast to be held on Friday, June 15

**CARMEL, CA (April 24, 2018)** – The American Red Cross of the Central Coast will be honoring a group of community members for their acts of courage or compassion, at the chapter's 13th Annual Heroes Breakfast on Friday, June 15, in Aptos.

After careful consideration, a committee of local community leaders selected the 2018 Central Coast Hero Award recipients based on the degree to which their actions uphold the values of the Red Cross and have a positive impact on the residents of the Monterey, San Benito, and Santa Cruz Counties. The following is a list of the 13 heroes who will be honored at this year's breakfast; descriptions of each honoree's actions are also included below.

- **Animal Rescue Hero:** Darla Smith (Salinas)
- **Disaster Services Heroes:** James Gruber (Salinas) and Paul Guzman (Soledad)
- **Education Hero:** Mary Gaukel Forster (Capitola)
- **Environment Hero:** Shelby O'Neil (San Juan Bautista)
- **First Responder Heroes:** Dan Perry (Capitola), Forest Gleitsman (Corralitos), Ziad Bawarshi (Davenport)
- **Humanitarian Hero – Adult:** Jessica Berg (Aptos)
- **Humanitarian Hero – Youth:** Matthew Gibbs (Monterey)
- **International Services Hero:** Tammy Renfer (Salinas)
- **Medical Hero:** Arthur Dover, M.D. (Watsonville)
- **Service to Armed Forces Hero:** Angel Hernandez (Salinas)

The Heroes Breakfast on June 15 will take place at Twin Lakes Church, located at 2701 Cabrillo College Drive. Registration will open at 8 a.m. that day, and the program will run from 8:30 until 10 a.m. Tickets are still available for the event.

The annual breakfast is a community event that supports the lifesaving programs and emergency services the local Red Cross chapter provides for the nearly 750,000 residents of Monterey, San Benito, and Santa Cruz Counties. To purchase tickets to the breakfast, please go to: [redcross.org/centralcoastheroes](http://redcross.org/centralcoastheroes). To help with sponsorships or if you have other questions about the event, please call 831-626-5255.

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## 2018 CENTRAL COAST RED CROSS HONOREES

### **Animal Rescue Hero: Darla Smith (Salinas)**

While Darla Smith serves on the board of the Animal Friends Rescue Project and is on the Advisory Committee for Salinas Animal Services, those appointments fall short of describing her commitment to animals. Over the past 10 years, Darla has rescued more than 500 puppies, taking the time to nurture them and find them their "forever" homes. The puppies are often so young when she gets them that they are completely dependent upon Darla for everything, including long days and nights of bottle feedings and keeping the puppies warm. Once the puppies are old enough, Darla finds them homes through organizations like Peace of Mind Dog Rescue and the Animal Friends Rescue Project.

### **Disaster Services Heroes: James Gruber (Salinas, CA) and Paul Guzman (Soledad)**

It can be a nervous shift for Water Resources Agency staff who pull overnight river monitoring duties during heavy storms. But two workers assigned to the Pajaro River during a recent stormy night ended up rescuing residents from a fire, not a flood. When pulling up to the Main Street bridge levee in Watsonville at 4 a.m., James Gruber and Paul Guzman saw smoke coming from the roof of a building near San Juan Road. Two businesses in the complex were ablaze, and fire threatened apartments across the driveway, prompting the

two to start evacuations. As the fire spread, James and Paul acted as first responders, entering burning structures, alerting people to the danger, and rushing many out to the street and safety. They also rescued nine dogs.

**Education Hero: Mary Gaukel Forster (Capitola)**

In Mary Gaukel Forster's household, retirement is a running joke. She may be even busier than she was during her more than 40 years as an educator and administrator, a career in which she regularly went above and beyond to help local English learners and continuation schools. In "retirement," Mary is the Executive Director of *Your Future is Our Business*, an organization that links local and regional employers with Santa Cruz County schools and, in the process, improves students' employment prospects. She is also involved with the Transition Age Youth Program for the local Court Appointed Special Advocates (CASA) organization, the Youth Violence Prevention Taskforce, and Santa Cruz County's 5-year Alcohol and Drug Prevention Program.

**Environment Hero: Shelby O'Neil (San Juan Bautista)**

Shelby O'Neil, who has spent hundreds of hours volunteering for the Monterey Bay Aquarium, has developed a deep understanding of the environmental issues facing our oceans. But armed with this knowledge, the San Juan Bautista resident knew she needed to do more. So, for her Girl Scout Gold Award Project, Shelby, just 17, formed the non-profit *Jr Ocean Guardians*, which recruits other teen ambassadors to go into their communities to educate youth about alternatives to single-use plastics. The ambassadors also host beach clean-up events, where plastic straws — a small but significant environmental threat — are one of the most commonly found items.

**First Responder Heroes: Dan Perry (Capitola), Forest Gleitsman (Corralitos), Ziad Bawarshi (Davenport)**

On a late winter afternoon, a 9-1-1 call was received regarding a surfer observed waving in distress about 500 yards off shore at Davenport Landing Beach. When CalFire, AMR ambulance service, Santa Cruz City Fire, and State Lifeguards arrived on scene, conditions were extreme, with 12- to 15-foot-high surf breaking just off the beach. Nonetheless, State Lifeguard Dan Perry paddled out to make contact with the surfer. Behind him, paddling out to assist, was State Lifeguard Forest Gleitsman. State Lifeguard Ziad Bawarshi then arrived on scene and also paddled out to assist. The three lifeguards worked as a team to get the surfer safely back to the beach before darkness.

**Humanitarian Hero – Adult: Jessica Berg (Aptos)**

On a dark January night, Jessica Berg was taking a dinner break from her job at the Crow's Nest Restaurant in the Santa Cruz Harbor. Gazing out at the rainy night from a second-story kitchen window, the waitress suddenly saw a car rolling down the boat ramp toward the water. Within seconds, the car was completely underwater. Jessica had seen enough to believe that two people were trapped in the vehicle. Springing into action, she initiated a 911 call and alerted others at the restaurant. Prompted by Jessica's distress signal, a group of employees ran to the boat launch ramp and pulled a man and woman — both in their 50s — out of the submerged car and up onto the ramp. Supported by Jessica's quick thinking, the vehicle's occupants survived.

**Humanitarian Hero – Youth: Matthew Gibbs (Monterey)**

Matthew Gibbs is the founder of an organization called *Athletes That Care*, which provides sandwiches, clothing, and other items to the homeless of Monterey. He has delivered 30-40 sandwiches nearly every Sunday to the people in need at the city's Window on the Bay Park. In fact, since 2015, he and his group have delivered nearly 4,600 sandwiches; hundreds of bottles of water, snacks, waterproof tarps; and many items of clothing to the homeless. Matthew, just 18, funds the organization by collecting bottles and cans and recycling them in Marina. For two years, he has also organized and raised money to host a Super Bowl party for the homeless and disabled in Monterey.

**International Services Hero: Tammy Renfer (Salinas)**

Tammy Renfer had already worked at Salinas Valley Memorial Healthcare System for approximately 10 years in the Employee Health Department when she decided to build on that culture of caring. She decided to join a team of volunteers for a mercy mission to the war-torn South Sudan. During the eight-day trip, she helped families, especially children, with their medical needs. Tammy and the volunteer group erected pop-up clinics near villages that had little or no access to medical care or supplies. The trip exceeded all of her expectations, as she and the volunteer group saw 1,100 people during their travels in South Sudan. Tammy is now continuing her commitment to the international cause with the goal of taking such a trip twice a year.

**Medical Hero: Arthur Dover, M.D. (Watsonville)**

Fresh from medical school in 1969, Dr. Arthur Dover worked in the parasitic diseases branch of the Centers for Disease Control's Epidemic Intelligence Service. But Dr. Dover's primary interest at the time was children's medicine, so he operated a local pediatrics practice in Freedom from 1975 to 2009. After 34 years, he decided to return to disease control as his primary focus, administering recommended immunizations for overseas travel to patients who come to his Aptos office. Dr. Dover has also taken 20 medical mission trips to foreign countries, providing surgical support for children to repair cleft lips and palates. Closer to home, he has a well-deserved reputation as a pediatrician for children of migrant workers.

**Service to Armed Forces Hero: Angel Hernandez (Salinas)**

Consistent with the principle of self-sacrifice that was reinforced during his military career, Sergeant Angel Hernandez has made a habit of helping others, even when it puts his own life at risk. Deployed for Operation Iraqi Freedom, Sgt. Hernandez received shrapnel injuries when his convoy was ambushed by a blast that killed his driver and severely injured his Platoon Sergeant. After recovering and receiving a Purple Heart, Sgt. Hernandez was deployed to Afghanistan for Operation Enduring Freedom. Eventually discharged, he was working at Salinas Valley State Prison when he learned that a coworker was suffering from complete renal failure. Sgt. Hernandez stepped forward to be tested, and it was determined that he was a perfect kidney donation match. The operation, which took place last August, was a complete success.

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**About American Red Cross of the Central Coast:**

With offices in Monterey, San Benito, and Santa Cruz Counties, the American Red Cross shelters, feeds and provides emotional support to victims of disasters; supplies about 40 percent of the nation's blood; teaches skills that save lives; provides international humanitarian aid; and supports military members and their families. The Red Cross is a not-for-profit organization that depends on volunteers and the generosity of the American public to perform its mission. For more information, visit our web site at [redcross.org/centralcoast](http://redcross.org/centralcoast) or call us at 1-831-624-6921. You may also find us on Facebook and Twitter.

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# CERTIFICATE OF RECOGNITION

*Presented to*

*Shelby O'Neil*  
ENVIRONMENT HERO

Selected by the Central Coast Chapter of the American Red Cross  
for your commitment to environmental activism.

*Congratulations From The*  
*SAN BENITO COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS*

June 15, 2018

Anthony Botelho, Chair

Mark Medina

Jerry Muenzer, Vice-Chair

Jaime De La Cruz

Robert Rivas