

NORTHEAST TENNESSEE REGIONAL



National MRC: A national network of local groups of volunteers committed to improving the public health, emergency response and resiliency of their communities.

Happy New Year, Northeast Region MRC Volunteers!

I hope everyone had a rejuvenating Christmas and New Year. Many “thank you’s” are in order for those of you on the team who continued to volunteer during this busy time by distributing resources for Helene survivors at the Elizabethton- Carter County Animal Shelter, attending training for the MRC Warming Shelter Strike Team, greeting and triaging patient needs at the Carter County Health Department, cleaning up the CC DART barn, and providing administrative support for our unit to keep things running smoothly in a timely manner. I continue to be in awe of the **generosity** and expertise you share in support of fellow community members.

Please stay connected and monitor the *Northeast TN Healthcare Preparedness Coalition’s MRC webpage*: **[MEDICAL RESERVE CORPS – NETennHCPC](#)**. The *MRC Training & Events* document at the bottom of the webpage is updated frequently and contains details needed to learn more about happenings, and to register. Please feel free to let me know of any specific training you would like to see in the future.



Bless-me Ajani presenting quality improvement Project findings at MRC Potluck, 11/15/24



Candid from MRC Potluck at Regional Health Operations Center in Johnson City, 11/15/24

Please stay in touch.

All the best,
Jayne Harper



Gratitude & Impact

Please acknowledge everyone who has given generously of their time and expertise during **November and December 2024** on behalf of our MRC unit:

Bless-me Ajani	Martha Edde	Stephanie Okeleke
Damilola Amire	Lesa Gardner*	Natalie Olsen
Mary Dave Blackman	Karen Hampton	Sharon Owusu
Jerry Blevins	Wilkes Harper	Amy Poore
Shelby Blevins	Irene Hepler	Kristy Pruitt
Kim Bordeaux	Eddy Hogan	Ashley Reese
Bill Bridgforth	Madison Huffine	Diana Reese
George Bridwell	Kathy Kelley	Rhonda Roberts
Chidiebere Chukwuka	Mike Lane	Hannah Sigmon
Jeff Cope	Carolyn Lawson	Ginny Townsend
Bobby Darnell	Frank Liebe Jr.	Ed Williamson
Ed DePolo	Corey Lyons	Angela Wolfenberger
Marcia DePolo	Mark Moody*	Pat Woods
Doris Durey	Thad Noto	Thank You!

*Denotes MRC Volunteer from Sullivan County

MRC Warming Center Strike Team

Our MRC unit has been working collaboratively with multiple agencies in Washington County to formalize the process of providing safe and organized overnight overflow warming centers during the extreme cold. The Salvation Army in Johnson City acts as the gatekeeper and once their shelter reaches capacity of 25 adults, the Overflow Inclement Weather Shelters mobilize to ensure no one is turned away.

Two churches and the American Legion are on an on-call calendar while SAME provides transportation from the Salvation Army to the appointed Overflow Inclement Weather Shelter. Someone from the organization sponsoring the overflow shelter is onsite and a team of 2 trained volunteers also staff the overflow shelter overnight.

Inclement Weather Shelter Training took place on December 10th, 17th, and 19th. **A total of 28 volunteers have been trained, 12 of them MRC volunteers from our unit!** Volunteers do not have to be part of the MRC unit although the MRC program provides insurance coverage for those who are acting on behalf of our unit. **We still need volunteers who have an interest in helping in various ways – setting up the overflow shelter, staffing partial night or overnight, breaking down the shelter and cleaning up in the morning, washing laundry, meal prep and delivery.** If you are interested, please complete the brief survey: [Inclement Weather Overflow Volunteer](#)

Application. The next training is January 21st from 9 am-11 am in Johnson City. Additional training sessions will be scheduled soon.



Ed Williamson, Jayne Harper, Shelby Blevins, Kim Bordeaux, Eddy Hogan, Hannah Sigmon, Rhonda Roberts at the 12/10/24 Training



Aaron Scott and Dr. Opal Frye-Clark, Consultants for the City of Johnson City, present on 12/19/24 at Memorial Park Community Center

WJHL Channel 11 recently covered the work of this collaborative to educate the community about assisting our neighbors who are experiencing homelessness. Click the link to view it or read it: <https://www.wjhl.com/news/local/johnson-city-grows-network-for-cold-weather-shelter/>

Carter County DART (Strike Team)

The Carter County DART has been supporting the Elizabethton-Carter County Animal Shelter by staffing the Animal Resource Distribution Site Mondays through Saturdays between 10 am-1 pm, weather permitting. CC DART volunteers have been working side-by-side with shelter volunteers to ensure the pets of Helene survivors have adequate resources. Chewy has been donating food and resources. Distribution is expected to continue through this month and possibly February.

If you have an extra 3 hours some day and are near Elizabethton, please contact Kim Bordeaux to get on the schedule! Kim can be reached at bordeauxka94@gmail.com or (423) 342-5406.



Joy Stephens, Kim Bordeaux, Elise Guadagno at Elizabethton-Carter County Shelter Distribution Site, 12/2024



Ed Williamson reinforcing the DART storage barn on clean-up day, 12/7/24

A group of CC DART members braved the cold on December 7th to clean up the barn that has been donated for storage. It is conveniently located just off the Mary Patton Highway in Elizabethton. It is almost ready for storing items! The crew still needs to build a couple barn doors that lock so no one can vandalize our response resources.

Other great news from the Friends of Carter County DART includes recent notification of **two grant awards!** A huge shoutout goes to **Kim Bordeaux** for writing both of these grant proposals that got funded. The **Neighbor to Neighbor Disaster Relief Fund**, a fund of the East Tennessee Foundation, awarded the Friends of CC DART \$17,000 to purchase two enclosed trailers (and shelving, storage containers) to store and move resources for deployment more easily. **PetSmart Charities** awarded the Friends of CC DART \$7,000 for necessary resources such as tents and shelter, including weights to secure them in wind, generators, and propane heaters. This will expand our ability to deploy quickly and provide pet shelter for people using Red Cross shelters or overnight warming shelters.

We learned during Hurricane Helene how important it is to have credentialed and registered DART volunteers! People who are credentialed have the ability to handle animals during a disaster or sheltering event while registered volunteers can assist with administrative tasks without handling animals. We need to recruit more of both types of volunteers. Please keep inviting family members and friends with a heart to help to CC DART trainings and events.

Northeast Region MRC Unit Fast Facts

On 12.31.2024 there were **568** volunteers in our unit.

Between July 1st and December 31st:
MRC volunteers donated **2,879**
hours for a total worth of **\$100,702!**



Upcoming Training Topics

Below is a list of some upcoming training sessions available to MRC volunteers at no cost. Please visit (and bookmark) this site: [MEDICAL RESERVE CORPS – NETennHCPC](#) for details/register. It is updated as new opportunities come up.

- **Training for the Warming Shelter Strike Team** on **Tuesday, January 21, 9-11 am** at Memorial Park Community Center in Johnson City
- **The Readys! classes** on **January 23rd** (Erwin) **and January 28th** (Sneedville)
- **Carter County DART & Friends of Carter County DART** on **January 28, 5-8 pm** at the Regional Health Operations Center (RHOC) in Johnson City
- **FEMA ICS-700 class** on **Thursday, February 6, 6:00-8:30 pm** at the Regional Health Operations Center (RHOC) in Johnson City
- **Stop The Bleed class** on **Wednesday, February 12, 2:30-4:30 pm** at the Regional Health Operations Center (RHOC) in Johnson City
- **Skills for Psychological Recovery Virtual Conference** on **February 12-13 from 9:00 am-4:30 pm**; pre-registration required
- **MRC Orientation & POD Training** on **Wednesday, March 12th** – Virtual option 12:00-1:30 pm and **in-person option 6:00-7:30 pm** at RHOC in Johnson City
- **Save-the-Date for 2025 MRC Conference: Where Superheroes Hangout!** **Saturday, April 5 from 8:00 am- 5:30 pm** at Northeast State University Technology Building in Blountville

**"Volunteering is the ultimate exercise in democracy.
You vote in elections once a year, but when you volunteer,
you vote every day about the kind of community you want to live in."**



Thank you for being you!