

Letters

All signed letters to the editor should be 500 words or less and will be considered for publication if submitted by 1 pm the Friday prior to publication. Letters to the Editor are subject to editing. We reserve the right to not publish any letter.

FACE OFF

Red Cross helps people

FRANK JORDAN
News Editor

The tragic events of Sept. 11 have brought to light one of the more impressive things about being an American citizen. Our infallible ability to help our fellow Americans out in a crisis is one of the best things about living in the greatest country in the world.

But the only charitable organization that stepped forward from the beginning was that old standby, the American Red Cross. Hurricanes, floods, earthquakes and other natural and man-made disasters have been encountered by Americans all over the country, and the Red Cross has been there in the aftermath, providing logistical and financial support to those in need.

The recent events involving the Red Cross have been blown way, way out of proportion. Over \$500 million have been donated by generous Americans and others around the world to the Red Cross, in the hopes that those affected by this travesty can help to pick up their lives. Only in recent weeks has the Red Cross come under fire for not disclosing what exactly is to be done with this large amount of money.

The American Red Cross is not a government agency, but a non-profit organization whose sole purpose is to help those Americans in need because

of circumstances beyond their control. Yet there are Americans who truly think that the Red Cross has not done enough to help. If the Red Cross wants to spend a small portion of donations to actually cover administrative and logistical costs, I certainly have no problem with that. Mother Nature just does not shut down in the face of terrorism. Last week, the Red Cross mobilized to help those people affected in the Midwest after the devastating tornadoes that struck that region.

The American Red Cross is located in every nook and cranny of our great nation, ready to help those in need. House and apartment fires hit in our towns and cities every day. The Red Cross is usually the one that handles making sure victims are fed and housed in the short-term. Donations are the only way the Red Cross makes money to be able to afford these basic life needs. If people think they have been misled, maybe they should take a look at the bigger picture. If donations fall off or, God forbid, end, then there will be no one to pick up the slack.

Criticizing the major efforts of a well-respected relief organization such as the American Red Cross in our time of national emergency is not only wrong, but also short-sighted. Disasters will not go away. The American Red Cross is there to help pick up the pieces.



The Red Cross took a chance

DAN MERYS
Staff Writer

In the days following the Sept. 11 attacks, the American Red Cross set up the Liberty Fund. The purpose of the fund was to fill the immediate and long-term needs of the victims. To date, \$564 million have been donated to the fund. Millions of people donated money with the expressed intent of helping the victims of the attacks.

But the American Red Cross chose to use a portion of the money to cover administrative costs, which was something that money was not intended for. When the facts came to light, a good portion of the American people were outraged, and rightly so. What the American Red Cross did was wrong. They chose to use the money for something besides its intended use.

Clearly, the Red Cross needed to take care of other things (\$6 million of the Liberty Fund went to pay administrative and logistical costs), and the American people would have been more than willing to oblige them.

By lying, the American Red Cross has seriously jeopardized its relationship with the American people. No longer will people be so eager to hand over their hard-earned dollars

unless they are absolutely sure where it's heading. The American Red Cross took a chance and got burned. From now on Americans will take what the American Red Cross says with a grain of salt, and the American Red Cross will be tentative with their handling of certain situations. This is a prospect that is completely unacceptable for both sides.

The American Red Cross' intent was just, but misleading the public about what the funds are to be used for was not. The simple truth is that they should have done what they set out to do.

The American people have a right to be angry. But when that anger is detrimental to a highly beneficial organization (which has done nothing but help and care for others) then it's time to sit down and shut up. All the American Red Cross has ever done and will ever do is help people who, whether through their own actions or someone else's, are unable to help themselves. The American Red Cross is a completely non-profit organization that depends on us as much, if not more than we depend on it.

Go ahead and be pissed off, but remember that the American Red Cross is out helping people with real problems. Just be glad that you don't need that help.

Do you agree with the way the Red Cross disbursed the funds collected for the victims of Sept. 11?



Krystal Schneider
Major: Elementary Education

"I think it all should've went to Sept. 11...What are they going to do? Put it away for a rainy day until someone else flies a plane into a building and it blows up."



Brandon Gleich
Major: History

"Not really. If they said they were going to use it for that (Sept. 11 victims), they should have used the whole thing for that."



Photos and quotes compiled by Salena De La Cruz and Maggie Jirasek



Ben Wiltgen
Major: Business Technology Associates

"No, they should give it to the people who were affected because that's what it was for."



Amy Powers
Major: Business Technology Associates

"Yes. Because they are helping people in need."



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