

Dream of vacation, make a donation

This winter season the American Red Cross and Alaska Airlines/Horizon Air invite you to dream of vacation while you make a blood donation. Between now and January 31, 2008, blood drive participants at American Red Cross Pacific Northwest Regional Blood Services blood drives will have the chance to win two round-trip coach class airline tickets to anywhere Alaska Airlines or Horizon Air fly.

The 2007-2008 winter season kicks off the first "Dream of Vacation, Make a Donation" campaign at the Red Cross. During the winter months, many donors are unable to keep their appointments due to competing holiday events and

the start of cold and flu season. As a result, blood donations typically dwindle. The Red Cross is hoping that the idea of vacation – especially during the colder winter months – will encourage people to donate blood.

Last week Horizon Air managers visited the American Red Cross in Portland, Oregon to help launch the "Dream of Vacation, Make a Donation" campaign by donating blood, volunteering to pack medical kits, and sealing holiday cards for Red Cross donors. "We're very excited to partner with Alaska Airlines/Horizon Air," said Sandy Parkin, Marketing Development Manager for the Pacific Northwest Regional Blood Ser-

vices of the American Red Cross, "This campaign is a great way to thank our current blood donors, plus an opportunity to attract new ones."

All who are present to donate blood at any Red Cross Pacific Northwest Regional Blood Services blood drive will be entered into the "Dream of Vacation, Make a Donation" drawing. The winner of the airline tickets will be selected from a random drawing to be held on February 5, 2008. Full details and rules for participating in this giveaway program can be found at www.nwblood.redcross.org. Donation appointments can be made by calling 1-800-GIVE LIFE.

FEMA denial is not always final word

Oregonians with property damaged by the severe storms, flooding, landslides and mudslides of December 1-17, who applied for assistance to the Federal Emergency Management Agency, (FEMA) may have received letters from FEMA stating their application has been denied.

The denial letters are based on information given at the time of application or inspection and may not be the final decision.

The main reasons why Oregonians may receive a denial letter are either the home sustained insufficient damage or the home had insurance.

Applicants may not be eligi-

ble for housing assistance simply because, at the time of inspection, more information was needed. Applicants need not be discouraged. The denial letter is not the final word. Also, more than one form of housing assistance may still be available.

In any case, if the applicant does not agree with the decision, they have the right to appeal within 60 days of the denial letter, explain in writing why they disagree with FEMA's decision and provide any new or additional information and documents supporting their appeal.

"We are committed to pro-

viding you any help we can. If anyone has questions regarding your claim, please visit a Disaster Recovery Center or contact FEMA's Helpline," said Federal Coordinating Officer Glen R. Sachtleben. "The Helpline is the same number you used to register: 1-800-621-FEMA (3362). If you were denied assistance, because you were insured, consider calling FEMA after your insurance claim is settled."

"By law, FEMA cannot duplicate what insurance already covers, or pay deductibles. However, in some cases, they may be able to help, up to the extent of program limits. The only way to know is to register at 1-800-621-FEMA (3362)," said Sachtleben.

Oregonians who receive a
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Free crisis counseling is available

Free crisis counseling, funded by a grant from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is available to Oregonians and Oregon families in Columbia and Tillamook counties who may be suffering stress, anxiety or depression as a result of the severe storms, wind, mudslides, landslides, and flooding striking the state December 1-17.

Registration for assistance with FEMA is not required to access this program.

Common reactions to a disaster may include nightmares, difficulty sleeping, feelings of being overwhelmed, fear of the weather, anxiety about the future, difficulty making decisions, hopelessness, disappointment with outside help, headaches, increased anger or aggression, domestic violence, frustration and feelings of powerlessness. These symptoms can be exhibited by people of all ages.

"No one should overlook the severe stress a disaster can cause," said Glen R. Sachtleben, federal coordinating officer for the Oregon disaster recovery. "This program can be vital to everyone who suffered, but especially children and old-

er Oregonians."

Interruption of daily routine and loss of the stability the home environment provides can be highly stressful for children and the elderly. Even individuals who experience a disaster "second hand" through exposure to extensive media coverage can be affected.

"We encourage everyone who needs assistance to take advantage of this program soon," said Abby Kershaw, state coordinating officer.

Family counseling to overcome stress-related impact on family groups is an integral part of the program.

In addition to Crisis Counseling, State-FEMA funded programs offer a wide-range of services including disaster unemployment and disaster legal assistance.

Referrals for counseling services are available via telephone at the FEMA help line 1-800-621- 3362 (FEMA), the TTY line at 1-800-462-7585 for those with special speech or hearing needs; at disaster recovery centers; or directly from:

Columbia County Mental Health at 503-397-5211

Tillamook Family Counseling at 503-842-8201.

FEMA warns about identity theft

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and Oregon Emergency Management (OEM) are warning residents against a particular kind of fraud that may follow in the wake of a major disaster – identity theft.

People living in the disaster area may be contacted by phone or e-mail from someone posing as a state or federal official.

The imposter claims there is a disaster assistance grant or loan for the resident which requires the resident's bank account number, Social Security

number, or other personal information to complete the processing.

In some cases, the imposter may even ask for a "processing fee" up front to be paid by either credit card or an online payment service.

A twist on the same scheme is to pose as a volunteer offering to help fill out an application for disaster assistance. The real point, of course, is to steal the victim's banking information.

"Don't be fooled by scams like these," warns Glen R.

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