

Volunteer

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Evans said she sees a lot of Soldiers and their family members come through for the Red Cross.

"We have a lot of Army wives that come in and volunteer, and people from [the United States Army Sergeants Major Academy]," Evans said. "Some of them have helped with disasters, and one of our volunteers is an active-duty Marine who comes in and helps whenever there's a disaster.

"The nice thing about the military is that they're fantastic workers. They're very organized, and the wives are the same way," she said.

The Fort Bliss location provides volunteers to assist with military briefings, work in the office and help the chapter office in El Paso with disaster assistance, Evans said.

"We also have our oldest volunteer, Dr. [Herman] Bailey, who turned 95

[Friday]," Evans said. "He does our surveys, and was a chapter volunteer before he came to us here."

Bailey, who considers himself "95 and counting," conducts post-service surveys, calling Red Cross clients to ask them about the quality of service they received from the organization.

"I call them and read them the questions and the options for answers and ask them which answer applies," Bailey said. "I usually say, 'Our records show your family has used this service; hopefully, you'll be kind enough to take a few minutes of your time to answer questions these questions.' Most of the time, they say yes."

Bailey served on the board of the Red Cross in St. Paul, Minn., before he



Laverne Evans



Dr. Herman Bailey

moved to El Paso in 1983.

"When they [in St. Paul] knew I was going to move here, they contacted the Red Cross chapter in El Paso," he said. "After a while, I got settled in and called the chapter here – I didn't do it right away. When I called, they said, 'I wondered when you were going to call.' They knew I was coming."

Bailey served on the board of the El Paso Area Red Cross for a time, and remained active in the chapter until he had open-heart surgery in 2005.

"When I recovered, I came over here [to the Fort Bliss location] to see what I could do," he said. "I do the surveys from home whenever I get the chance.

"The best thing about volunteering," Bailey said, "is the satisfaction of justifying your existence."

"Volunteering makes people happy," said Matthys. "Of course, it's helping others, but you really do get that glow of knowing that you did something valuable.

"It's proven that volunteering for a cause is probably the second-most important thing one can do for personal happiness," he said. "The most impressive thing, to me, is to see the personal sacrifice volunteers make to help others. I always tell people, 'We're the ones running into places everyone else is running out of,' and it's true."

For more information on volunteering with the El Paso Area Red Cross, attend a volunteer orientation session, held from 10 to 11:30 a.m. Fridays at the Fort Bliss Red Cross, Bldg. 45, Slater Road, and from 6 to 9 p.m. Thursdays at the El Paso Red Cross, 3620 Admiral St., or visit the organization's Web site at www.redcrosselpaso.org.

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