

## Red Cross volunteers help flooding victims

By LAURIE PELLICHERO  
Special to The Times

On July 17, just three months after floods inundated Mercer and Hunterdon counties, a thunderstorm in Middlesex County dropped an estimated 8 inches of rain in 25 minutes.

More than 300 homes in the communities of Jamesburg, Helmetta, Spotswood, South River and Monroe were flooded.

The American Red Cross of Central New Jersey's emergency services staff immediately opened a shelter in Jamesburg to provide a haven for residents who had to leave their homes.

When the waters receded, 56 volunteers worked with the local chapter staff to canvass the affected areas, distributing water and snacks to residents returning to clean out their flood-damaged homes. Volunteers also provided cleanup kits to those affected, and Red Cross family services teams were on hand to provide emotional support and financial assistance.

More than 2,060 meals and snacks were provided to flood victims and 350 cleanup kits were distributed.

Hattie was just one of many Jamesburg residents affected by the flood. As the water around her single-family home began to rise, she and her family were evacuated and went to stay with her sister. When they returned, they found debris and damage left by the water that had flowed into their home.

"The water was halfway up the refrigerator," said Hattie.

Hattie said she was surprised that Red Cross volunteers were able to provide immediate assistance for food and clothing. She was even more surprised to learn that the assistance is made possible by financial donations from the community — neighbors helping neighbors.

"I'd like to thank them all very much," said Hattie. "We were hurting



from that flood and the Red Cross was the best thing that happened."

Jamesburg Mayor Anthony LaMantia said, "I would like to personally thank the American Red Cross, Central New Jersey chapter, for all it did for the residents of Jamesburg during the July flood. Its response was unbelievable. It made sure that our residents were fed and had a place to rest and, above all, showed caring and compassion to each and every one during their time of need.

"It's heartwarming to know that people are there volunteering to help others when all seems lost," said LaMantia. "Once again, from the bottom of my heart, I would like to thank the American Red Cross and all of its wonderful volunteers."

Funds from this year's Times' Holiday Appeal will be used to support the services and programs of the American Red Cross of Central New Jersey.

The Times deducts no overhead expenses. All money goes directly to the designated nonprofit agency.

To make a donation in support of the American Red Cross of Central New Jersey, please make your check payable to The Times Holiday Appeal and mail or hand deliver it to: 500 Perry St., Box 847, Trenton NJ 08605. You can also make a donation online ([www.njredcross.org](http://www.njredcross.org)).

All gifts will be acknowledged. Anonymity, if requested, will be granted.

For more information about the American Red Cross of Central New Jersey, call (609) 951-8550 or look online ([www.njredcross.org](http://www.njredcross.org)).