

### Red Cross promotes rip current awareness and beach safety

(Submitted by the American Red Cross)

Get prepared for summer safety fun by watching the short video, *How to Survive a Rip Current*, and by reviewing (and sharing with friends) *Beach Safety Tips* for swimmers.

Rip currents are powerful, channeled currents of water flowing away from shore and can occur at any beach with breaking waves, including the Great Lakes. They are particularly dangerous for weak or non-swimmers, but rip currents have the potential to pull even the strongest swimmers out to sea under the right conditions.

The Red Cross advises anyone taking a trip to the beach or a lake this summer to swim at lifeguard-protected beaches if possible, within the designated swimming areas. Obey all instructions and orders from lifeguards.

It is important to remember that storms increase the risk of dangerous surf conditions. Even storms that don't reach shore can cause strong rip currents along the beach, posing dangers for swimmers. While enjoying the shore, keep alert and check the local weather conditions.

Rip currents are responsible for deaths on our nation's beaches every year, and for most of the rescues performed by lifeguards. Beachgoers should be aware of how dangerous rip currents are, and swim only at beaches with lifeguards in the designated swimming area. Rip currents can form in any large open water area, such as low spots and breaks in sandbars, or near structures such as jetties and piers.

For your safety, be aware of the danger of rip currents and remember the following:

- If you are caught in a rip current, stay calm and don't fight the current.
  - Swim parallel to the shore until you are out of the current. Once you are free, turn and swim toward shore.
  - If you can't swim to the shore, float or tread water until you are free of the rip current, and then head toward shore.
  - If you feel you can't make it to the shore, draw attention to yourself by waving and calling for help.
  - Stay at least 100 feet away from piers and jetties.
- Permanent rip currents often exist near these structures.
- If someone is in trouble in the water, get help from a lifeguard. If a lifeguard is not available, have someone call 9-1-1. Throw the victim something that floats — a lifejacket, cooler, inflatable ball, and yell instructions on how to escape the current.
  - When at the beach, check conditions before entering the water. Check to see if any warning flags are up or ask a lifeguard about water conditions, beach conditions, or any potential hazards.

#### Beach safety tips:

While you are enjoying the water, keep alert and check the local weather conditions. Make sure you swim sober and that you never swim alone. And even if you're confident in your swimming skills, make sure you have enough energy to swim back to shore.

Have young children or inexperienced swimmers wear U.S. Coast Guard-approved life jackets in and around the water. No one should use any other type of flotation device unless they are able to swim.

Don't dive headfirst — protect your neck. Check for depth and obstructions before diving, and go in feet first the first time.

Pay especially close attention to children and elderly persons when at the beach. Even in shallow water, wave action can cause a loss of footing.

Keep a lookout for aquatic life. Water plants and animals may be dangerous. Avoid patches of plants and leave animals alone.

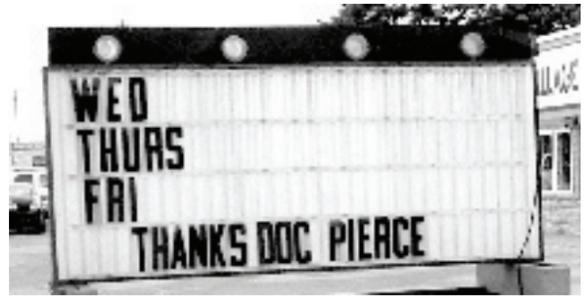
### Bravehart Raptor Center

[www.braveheartraptor.org](http://www.braveheartraptor.org)

The Braveheart Raptor Rehabilitation Center holds open houses every second Thursday and Sunday of the month from 1 to 4 p.m. It is free and guests will learn all about the facility, birds, and what they do. Guests will also get to see their permanent resident birds, and get to touch real artifacts!

In addition to free handouts about preserving the environment for raptors and other conservation information, they have T-shirts, raptor bookmarks, and notecards with photos of their ambassador birds for sale. Located at 6221 Sweeter Road in Twin Lake. For more information or if you need help with an injured bird, please call (231) 821-9125.

## Robert Pierce, D.O. April 20, 1939 - June 23, 2013 Third Avenue Family Clinic



A big *thank-you* to  
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