

Maker of medical kits calls Global Rescue an 'absolute necessity'

February 06, 2011 • Story By LINDA HALSTEAD-ACHARYA Photos By PAUL RUHTER Of the Gazette Staff



Donna von Nieda, director of Wilderness Medical Systems, shows the supplies inside a medical kit at her home near Nye. The business makes medical kits for outdoorsmen and other travelers, or anyone who wants to be better prepared medically.

When one of her clients rowed across the Atlantic Ocean, Donna von Nieda followed his trajectory via GPS, using her computer at home.

Von Nieda, who lives above the Stillwater River west of Absarokee, doesn't consider herself adventurous. But her wilderness medical kits have accompanied travelers on adventures to Kuwait and Afghanistan, Mongolia and Alaska and just about every place in between. Two were carried to Antarctica by a company that was extracting a plane from a glacier. And, of course, one made a slow trip across the Atlantic.

"The majority of our clientèle, traditionally, have been big-game hunters going to far-off places," von Nieda said. "But, as times have changed, more people have found us on the Internet. We've been found by the military, overseas contractors, adventure travelers and people wanting to be more prepared at home."

...The third priority — having a way to get out — is addressed through another link on their website.

"To us, that's an absolute necessity," Donna said, recounting the tale of a man whose father developed a blood clot while traveling in Mexico. "Even before the jet left the tarmac in Miami to get him, they needed \$41,000 in cash."

Kurt told of another misadventure involving a hunter who was hooked by the horn of a wounded Cape buffalo in Zimbabwe. The bill for the evacuation ran into the hundreds of thousands of dollars.

The von Nieras recommend Global Rescue for this kind of service because the company is prepared to evacuate anytime, from anywhere and for a charge that's surprisingly affordable. Both Donna and Kurt say it's a "no-brainer."