



Red Nose Response Newsletter

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Editor: Arla Albers

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Red Cross Employee Receives Prestigious Award

Bob Gretton, 2009 COAI International Clown of the Year

By day Bob "Bunky" Gretton works hard in recruiting, training, and insuring the American Red Cross of Southern Maryland Chapter (La Plata) has the volunteers



needed to provide Red Cross services for over 300,000 people in the Southern Maryland area. The American Red Cross is an organization of volunteers governed by volunteers and to meet the needs is full time job of recruiting, training and retaining a volunteer work force.

By night, Bob "Bunky" Gretton clowns around in his other life. He has been a professional clown since the 70's. He has perfected his talents to the point that his peers in the Clowns of America International (COAI) choose to bestow the title and honor of "2009 International Clown of the Year" to Bob this month. Bob "Bunky" Gretton was recognized for his outstanding qualities as a clown, for he exemplifies the true meaning of what it is to

President's Corner

from Bob Gretton

One of the most enjoyable tasks I have as president is meeting our responders and introducing new ones.



I had such a great time at the Clowns of America International (COAI) convention in Clarksville, IN. I am pleased to announce that our board and advisers put together an excellent showing and presentation. RNR has its act together!

From beginning to end, RNR educated, entertained, and sweetly fed attendees at the convention. The red noses started rolling with Marion Lovig (who made over 200 hearts with noses representing the Heart of a Clown in approximately two days and sent them ahead to the hotel); then when Barbara Bird arrived she immediately went to work putting together the backboard and presentation for the Red Nose Response booth which included a beautiful display of pictures, information, slide show, and YES even candy, which became a hit with passersby! Keith "Toby" Stokes also brought in a large box filled with Georgia peanuts donated by Jim "Dune Buggy" Russell. Then along came Barbara "Nuzzles" Waters-Riddle, a Florida coordinator whose alley (Clowns R Us) are all responders. I helped by putting together "responder survival kits" and placing in all the goody bags.

be a clown through his caring, sharing, performance ability and going beyond the norm in promoting clowning.

"We are very proud to have the talents and abilities that Bunky brings to the American Red Cross in Southern Maryland," said Mike Zabko, CEO of the Chapter. "Bunky has incorporated a lot of his professional clowning skills in providing Red Cross services from, providing compassionate relief to disaster victims, to teaching new volunteers about their duties in the Red Cross. We have capitalized on his clowning talents and have found them extremely valuable in completing the Red Cross mission in Southern Maryland and we congratulate him on his award," Zabko continued.

Congratulations, Bob, from all of us at REDNOSE!!!!

COOKIES, COOKIES and more COOKIES!

The Greensboro deliveries

David Yohn in Greensburg, although he doesn't have exact numbers, said that he knows that dozens of cookies came in from Red Nose from all across the country!! Yea!! We are so blessed to have so many friends to the cookie drive!!



Gerry Bender, who is a native Greensburg woman, wrote thank you notes to each person who donated in whatever way! So everyone should hear from her soon if they haven't already.

The South Central Kansas Tornado Recovery Organization officially closed March 31st. The volunteer effort is now being directed by the Greensburg Volunteer Services. They are on www.greensburgks.org which is G-burg official website.

Greensburg and that area had a blizzard last week. There were people who relocated to nearby communities who had up to 28 inches and damage to roofs from so much snow. Comments were, "Here we go again." It's a good thing they are strong people.

Thanks to the many people across the country who sent cookies. They were well received! Your efforts were eaten up quickly and well digested.

Florida Leads the Way

100 responders

My class on Comic Relief was well attended and received. I was excited to share our newest direction of being communicators at times of disaster. Teresa, Keith, Barbara and I answered many different questions including responder roles, Red Cross classes, fund raising, etc. While emceeding the parade-ability competition, I plugged RNR by reminding those present they could become responders. By the end of the COAI Convention, every person attending knew about RNR and a good number signed up to become responders.

In February, I also enjoyed meeting some brand new clowns at a clown class in Leesburg, FL. Janet Timony invited me to speak to the newbies about Red Nose Response. They appeared enthusiastic. I believe we have had three responders join from that class.

Always Be Careful. Keep yourself healthy. Be knowledgeable. Be smart. Wash hands often and try to avoid close contact with those who appear to be coughing or sneezing. Keep us posted with any developments in your areas that are worthy of attention. Feel free to email me or the board any questions at info@rednoseresponse.org We will do our best to answer them. Keep in mind that there are many different types of disasters that threaten our communities and now we are facing a menacing bug with the swine flu. Remember your ABCs -

Take care and enjoy the spring.

Bob Gretton, President Red Nose Response

A Word from Milledgeville, GA

from RNR Responder "Dune Buggy"

In March the Red Cross organized an event in Milledgeville, GA for family members of D Company, 1st Battalion, Light Infantry. The National Guard unit is headed for Afghanistan for a year and is part of the 48th



Light Infantry Brigade of Georgia. Approximately 4000 troops are being called up for duty. In spite of the rain, and the need to move the event inside, many people participated, including RNR responder Jim "Dune Buggy" Russell. He tells us

The most recent responders to sign up are 3 from Florida and that makes 100 for that state. What an accomplishment! We are so proud of our supporters in the Sunshine State and the leadership that has encouraged them to join in. We thank all of you for your enthusiasm and support of Red Nose Response.

Wear RNR where you go out

Help spread the message



You too can be seen wearing one or more of these articles of clothing with the RNR logo on them.

All you need to do is go to our store at Cafe Press, find you favorite, place an order and it will come to your home in the mail.

RNR store

So you want to help the American Red Cross?

This month: Provide CDE Presentations in Your Chapter

So you want to use your expertise and help the American Red Cross? As the professional that you are, each of you has special skills that can be translated into Red Cross support. When you present yourself to your local Red Cross office, make sure that you have converted your skills to something that the Chapter can use. Sometimes the art of clowning is not what is needed, but your professionalism can be used.

Here is one for this month. Provide CDE Presentations in Your Chapter

Community Disaster Education: Make presentations to local groups, ranging from Kindergarten to Senior Citizens and everything in between to assist them in becoming Disaster Aware, and Disaster Prepared. This is something that chapters are always looking for; people trained in disaster that have the time to go out on the spur of the moment, as well as pre-planned sessions, and make community presentations.

Specific training requirements: You must attend the two-day CDE Presenter's workshop to be certified as a Presenter. Chapters may allow you to give talks even if you have not taken the course, but if you are very familiar with all of the ARC Disaster Preparedness materials.

How much time do I have to give? Presentations generally last from 20 minutes to 3 hours, depending on the group's request and the subject

he made balloons and generally clowned around with kids and adults. The day's event finished with a parade.

We appreciate hearing stories like this from our responders. There are so many ways to offer comic relief and Dune Buggy was there for one of them. He says "it was a good day and made you feel proud of our young men."

"Clown therapists" make Italian quake kids smile again

Wed Apr 08 08:31:31 UTC 2009 By Deepa Babington

L'AQUILA, Italy (Reuters) - A clown with a red rubber nose may be an unexpected sight in an otherwise somber camp for Italian earthquake survivors, but Francis Calsolaro says his monkeying around for newly homeless kids is serious.

Waving around a fluffy pink duster and falling over in mock dismay while playing with giggling children, "Francis the clown" says coaxing laughter out of kids left homeless by Monday's quake is more effective than any traditional therapy.

"This is not funny business, it's actually very serious," said Calsolaro, dressed in a baggy pin-striped suit, a colorful jacket and a hat with a daisy stuck in it.

"People don't need someone sitting high up there telling them how to deal with sadness. I genuinely want the children to think I am dumb and stupid."

Another 10 to 50 similar clown therapists from his group are expected to arrive soon to cheer up the homeless living in large blue tents in open air camps in around L'Aquila, says Calsolaro, who traveled down from Milan soon after hearing of the quake.

The quake, Italy's worst in 30 years, has so far killed some 250 people and destroyed large parts of 26 towns and villages in a rugged mountainous region east of Rome.

"When we came here, the camp was very silent, kids just quietly playing with each other," said Federica Marinacci, who goes by the clown name of "Nocciolina" (peanut). "But when they saw us, they all gathered around us and began laughing."

Fearful mothers also broke into a smile once they saw their children were laughing again after the terror of the quake, Marinacci said.

More traditional psychologists had also pitched up a tent in the camp as they set about helping grief-

matter. Plan on additional time to plan with the chapter and collect all materials needed for the presentation.

ARC documentation: CDE Presenter's Workbook A30-3020 Preparedness for Disaster Familiarity with all disaster preparedness brochures and materials such as Family Disaster Supply Kit Family Disaster Plan Are You Prepared for a Disaster? Masters of Disaster

For more information, contact Mike Z at MikeZ@SOMDRedCross.org

Do You Know a Clown that might want to be a Red Nose Responder???

Do you know another clown who might be interested in being a Red Nose Response clown? Even if they are in another state, have them send their full contact information to us at info@rednoseresponse.org and we will connect them with their state representative.



State representatives are still being called state coordinators. However the role and the name of that role is quickly changing. Follow our progress in the next few e-zines.

Some states still do not have a "coordinator". If you'd like to be a coordinator for a state that doesn't have one please contact either Vice President Barbara Bird, barbara@rednoseresponse.org or send that message to us under "Contact Us" by using the link at the end of this article.

Any clown is welcome to join! Let's see if we can increase our membership of truly dedicated helpers. Get involved. Let others know about Red Nose Response. Send them an email with the link above. Have it put in your local clown newsletters.

[Responders and More](#)

stricken survivors and the homeless with post-traumatic stress, but for now the clown therapists appeared to have stolen the show.

"We're just trying to bring the children back to the life that they've always had," said Marinacci, as she played with a child holding a orange balloon twisted into the shape of a dog as amused adults looked on.

Have You Done Something Good for Others?

Tell us about it!

With the fires in South Carolina and other disasters across the U.S. we know there have to be wonderful stories out there about the super things clowns have done for others. Please share your story with us so we can share with others.

Your efforts help to promote others to respond to disasters as well. Don't be shy. Send us a story and if you have a picture, send that as well. Send your information to our editor, Arla Albers at gogoclown@cox.net.

Thanks to the many people who "pay it forward" daily. I know you are out there!

And even if you have NOT been able to do something for others, maybe you have a really great idea that someone could pick up on and do for someone in need. Send that idea to us as well. Have you done a fund raiser? Did you deliver something to someone? How have you helped in the community to better it?

Have a GREAT day!

Arla Albers, RNR Editor

We want to hear from all of you, sharing your interests, your activities and your questions. Tell us when you spot a need. You are our eyes and ears. Email Arla Albers, our editor, with your articles and pictures at gogoclown@cox.net.

Bob

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