



Red Nose Response Newsletter

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Greetings Red Nose Response responders!

The severe weather, the after effects of those storms and the stubborn wild fires have been all over the map, literally. We have tried to contact the local state coordinators, but often they have been as much the victims as anyone else. All we have been able to do at this time is communicate with you by phone, email and through your newsletter. You are at the center of our concerns.

This issue brings you information about what some of our responders have been doing. It also gives some more advice about preparing yourself for a disaster, a follow up of sorts from the June 2008 issue.

Please send a message to info@rednoseresponse.org to help or to tell us where you need help.

The Editors and the Board of Red Nose Response

What is a Call Center?

Call 1 866 GET-INFO.

A call center is a centralized office for receiving a large number of phone calls (or in some instances for making calls out). It is usually an open workspace equipped with phones and headsets for the operators, the call agents, and a connection to a computer for each station.

You have probably called a call center when you have attempted to get tech support or customer service. Calling **1 866 GET-INFO** takes you to one of the American Red Cross call centers, or the main response center at National headquarters. In times of heavy demand after a major disaster, several call centers can be activated at once, such

How to Help in a Meaningful Way

One clown finds her niche in a call center

Teresa Gretton, an advisor to the Red Nose Response Board of Directors, is one who casually said, about a year ago, that she would be interested in helping at the Southern Maryland Red Cross Call Center. That led to training, and ultimately to becoming the supervisor of the call center. Who would have guessed?



Teresa, also known as Blinky or, as shown, Blondi, has found this activity very fulfilling and feels that her ability to bring gentle comic relief at the right

as the most recent midwest tornadoes and floods in June.

The Red Cross has about 30 call centers located in chapters across the country to receive all types of calls for help, information and referrals. When the individual call center is activated it means that the center will be available for a period of time and call agents are ready to answer calls that come in.

In order to volunteer to work at a call center, a training session is given that lasts about three hours. This is where the volunteers learn how to answer calls, where to go for references, and how to fill out forms to "create a case". The rest is "on the job" training. The volunteer call agents are given a training manual and they also have a huge resource on line that is accessible to each one. In addition, they have an internal web site to access for further information. As people call in with particular concerns, the call agents go to the resources.

The time spent on a call averages about 10-15 minutes but can be longer if the need is there. There is a basic script to follow starting with a greeting and eventually getting a survey that results in feedback for the center. All of these are web based. The call agents listen with compassion, but try to get the caller to a resource for help as quickly as possible so the lines are available for other callers.

Volunteers are asked to be available as often as possible during the month that their call center is on alert. The average volunteer might donate about 4 hours of time during an activation. During a major disaster the volunteer hours can be very different. The centers are generally open during daytime hours with overnight calls during an emergency handled by headquarters.

Interested? Contact your local Red Cross chapter and ask if they have a call center. If so, speaking to the Call Center supervisor will put you on the fast track to help out when it is needed.

Have you gotten your RNR pin or patch yet?

We can mail them to you



Have you gotten your pins and patches yet? We know you will want them to wear on your costume, your vest, your hat. We know you will want to wear one at the next alley meeting you go to and the next convention you attend.

time is part of her strength in this role. She says that it is possible to bring some laughs and some relief when people are going through stress.

A call agent for the Red Cross call center is not a know-it-all person. Instead, the purpose of the role is to be a messenger, to listen and then direct the caller to where they need to go. Teresa said that they are currently talking with individuals involved in the wild fires and the Midwest flooding victims.

Teresa tells us that listening is a major part of the role and she gets to know people and what their losses are. "Only when you get a chance to verbally communicate with these people do you realize how great their losses are and what they need."

Teresa advises that the Red Cross is limited to immediate assistance in housing, food and clothing. When that period is passed, and people still need help, she and the other call agents will send them (refer them) to other organizations, more local, that can give additional help until they get their feet on the ground.

What is AED?

And what does that little red heart mean?

An AED, which stands for Automated External Defibrillator, is a device about the size of a laptop computer that analyzes the heart's rhythm for any abnormalities and, if necessary, directs the rescuer to deliver an electrical shock to the victim. This shock, called defibrillation, may help the heart to reestablish an effective rhythm of its own.



An AED is easy to operate. It uses voice prompts to instruct the rescuer. Once the machine is turned on, the rescuer will be prompted to apply two electrodes provided with the AED to the victim's chest. Once applied, the AED will begin to monitor the victim's heart rhythm. If a "shockable" rhythm is detected, the machine will charge itself and instruct the rescuer to stand clear of the victim and to press the shock button.

Training is necessary in order to understand the role of defibrillation in the broader context of the cardiac chain of survival. Training in CPR and AED skills will enable the rescuer to use all the steps in the cardiac chain of survival, thereby significantly increasing the victim's chance of survival.

Oh, that little red heart you see displayed in so many locations? It means that the facility is

The pins and patches are \$5.00 each with a small shipping and handling charge. The shipping for a patch is \$1.00, because it can go in a paper envelope. The shipping for a pin or a combined order that includes a pin is \$2.00. The Postal Service has changed how they rate these as packages.

All orders need to be prepaid. You can do this by writing a check to Red Nose Response and mailing it to Bob and Teresa Gretton, P.O. Box 787, Waldorf MD 20604-0787.

We are also offering a 10% discount on the pins and patches (not the shipping costs however) for an order of three (3) or more. If you are uncertain of what you want or what the total cost might be, send an email to teresa@rednoseresponse.org and she will have an quick answer for you.

You Are Never Too Old to be a Responder

See what Zoof has been up to



This is a great story! How cute is that lady? She is Rita "LuLu" Daniels, Charlie "Zoof" Daniels' **90 year old** mother who recently not only became a clown but also is a RNR responder.

And this is how it all happened. Zoof tells us, "This past year I have been working with a small Hospice Care in Pawtucket RI. It served a very unique population of folks, mostly immigrants who have lived on the edge and where now dying. In 22 years of being involved in Hospice, I still was amazed most days. I joined into the agency as a nursing assistant and within less than 2 months became the volunteer coordinator and developed a clown program and recruited a bunch of people who "always wanted to be a clown" and wanted to volunteer. So I started a clown training program. The day before the training I resigned from the agency.

Without me the clown program couldn't exist and I had to call up the new recruits to tell them it was canceled. They wanted to meet anyway, have a cup of coffee and talk about other possibilities. Guess which possibility they choose!!!! Yup RNR. I created a "1st of May clown training program." We meet for classes at a nursing home in East Providence, RI (where some of the new clowns reside) and they will join RNR as part of the Caring Clown training.

equipped with an AED.

[Learn about the cardiac chain of survival and how to be trained](#)

A Responder Tells Her First Hand Story

Meet Janet "Moonbeam" Schoor

Janet "Moonbeam" Schoor is a RNR responder from New York City, but she's also a Red Cross disaster responder. She wrote to us in early July to say she had just spent two weeks in Cedar Rapids and Cedar Falls, Iowa, having been deployed by the Red Cross. She shared her story with us and we want to share it with you.

Moonbeam tells us, "My clown paraphernalia is always in my car along with my Red Cross go bag, and when I got assigned to go to Iowa, my first DR, I made sure to take my clown stuff with me.

I worked from an ERV for feeding most of my assignment, but the last 2 days were spent at a shelter in Cedar Rapids. By then residents had been there for about 2 weeks and in that short 2 days I got to know a few people and their children.

By my last afternoon there, I got permission from the shelter manager to put on a clown show. I immediately ducked into the bathroom, donned my costume, wig and nose, put on make-up, and got my tricks into a bag. I noisily went through the shelter, in costume, collecting children and their parents. You can imagine the excitement!

We went outside where I began to blow up balloons and make animals. Because there were only about five children, there was no rush, and the children each got a sword and several animals. I also showed them how to make the balloons.

Then I did face-painting--a few pirates for the boys and cats for the girls. After a little banter, we did a sing-a-long with their parents. For just such an occasion, I have xeroxed sing-a-long sheets of old songs that everybody knows such as "You Are My Sunshine", "In the Good Old Summertime", etc. Granted, these are geared more for adults than children, but my intention, once the time is right, is to get people singing...at least whoever feels like it.

For me, it was a great way to end a very fulfilling mission on a DR, and the kids and their parents, I could see, were delighted."

Alas, no pictures were taken as far as I know. I did get a positive evaluation, but it did not specify the clown act. it just said, 'She also went the extra mile with the children in the shelter. She made a big difference in a short amount of time. ' "

I haven't really had a chance to think of what humanitarian involvement we will do. It will not be the Red Cross at this time. But, I'm thinking of a local very needy soup kitchen and get RNR, as well as the soup kitchen, some publicity.

Meanwhile, I am now with a Hospice in Massachusetts and about to deal with the interested RNR members who "want to do something" but don't want to get involved with the local Red Cross disaster teams. I am going to somehow mesh the MA/RI groups together and let the older clowns (most of which are in the local COAI alley) help the newer clowns and do some local humanitarian stuff under RNR."

Zoof signed up eight new responders with his "elder clown" activities. He is the State Coordinator for Massachusetts and Rhode Island. One Board member commented that she didn't think there were that many clowns in the entire state of RI, but Charlie is bringing them out. No offense meant, Rhode Island, but you are a very small state. Do you have more clowns that we don't know about?

Your Favorite Cap

One size fits all

You, too, can have one of these just by going to the RNR store on our web site.



[RNR store](#)

Thank you Moonbeam for sharing this story. We're sorry we don't have photos to share the smiles, but we are certain you did make a difference. That is what Red Nose Response is all about.

Editors Note: Janet says "I am not on a DAT team. I am on a Pro team which is the first volunteer response, as a team, to a disaster once Red Cross staff has arrived and begun to get things started."

International Clown Week is Just Around the Corner

Celebrate clowning and RNR



August 1-7, 2008 is International Clown Week (ICW.) What are you doing to celebrate? Let us know how you will, or did, tell the community about **Red Nose Response**. We love photos!

If you don't have a cool tee shirt or cap with the RNR logo you can still go to the RNR store and buy one in time for ICW.

[RNR store](#)

RNR's President Wants You!

Questions and comments requested

We all know clowns are rarely afraid to express themselves and now, it's your turn to speak directly with RNR's President. He wants your questions, comments and even concerns about the organization. You can make a difference! Email him at jeremy@rednoserresponse.org. We will even share some of your thoughts in future newsletters.

Thank you for your support, suggestions and encouragement. You are our eyes and ears.

Sincerely,

Jeremy Cohen
Red Nose Response

email: info@rednoserresponse.org

phone: 866-422-5696

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