

# AmeriCorps Helps at Red Cross Shelter

By Pam Hubbard  
AmeriCorps Director

Gerry Morris, who just stepped into the Assistant Program Director position at the Grenada School District AmeriCorps Program, is also an active volunteer for the American Red Cross. She helped open the newly designated Red Cross Shelter at the Lewis Johnson Senior Citizen Center in August, 2012, when Hurricane Isaac hit the Gulf Coast. Many New Orleans residents evacuated to the Center which housed 65 people for several days with a staff that was on duty 24 hours a day.

"People say they admire what I do," Gerry says. "I tell them 'They can do it.' When I say that, I mean, they can do it! How did I end up working in shelters? In 2009 I became an AmeriCorps VISTA with the Volunteer Mississippi Disaster Response team. I was assigned to the Grenada School District AmeriCorps Program to help raise community awareness for preparedness and help the school district update their emergency plan. I wrote monthly articles in the Grenada Star and incorporated emergency preparedness education into AmeriCorps member training, National Service Days, and even the after school reading programs at the Elizabeth Jones Library."

When her VISTA terms ended in 2011, she kept volunteering with the American Red Cross and served during the floods that hit Mississippi during Hurricane Issac, and more recently, during Hurricane Sandy in the New York area. Now that she has returned to the AmeriCorps program as Assistant



Program Director, she coordinated and helped train the current members in February.

More hurricanes happen around the Gulf Coast area than other parts of the United States. Grenada, being on I-55, an artery from the Gulf Coast, often opens shelters when hurricanes occur. The Lewis Johnson Senior Citizen Center is an officially designated Red Cross Shelter and provides many benefits for this area. The shelter can be put into operation in a matter of hours. It is important to have trained Grenadians to be ready to serve when the shelter is opened and must be manned 24 hours a day. If someone can't leave Grenada for weeks at a time to serve, there is still plenty of need in our area. Volunteers can help with two, four, or six hour shifts.

Classes are being offered in our area by our regional American Red Cross Office in Oxford. This office can be reached at 662-236-1282. Gerry repeats, "You can do it!"

# GUES Rewards Students with a Puppet Show

By Frankie Fortier  
GUES Teacher

The performance of *The Toad Prince* on February 13, 2013, received rave reviews at Grenada Upper Elementary School. Brought to the school by Assistant Principal Mrs. Carol Tharpe for Good Behavior Day, the puppet show was presented by members of the Puppet Arts Theatre of Jackson, Mississippi. The performance was made possible through grant funds from the Mississippi Arts Commission, the National Endowment for the Arts, as well as, funds given by the GUES PTO.

*The Toad Prince* is an enchanting play based on a Chinese folk tale similar to "Beauty and the Beast." The play tells the story of how Indri, a son of a Water Sprite and the King of the Toads, is transformed from an ugly Toad Prince into a handsome prince through spending nine days in the presence of virtue.

The students at GUES were delighted with the puppets and the story. One student, Caroline Moss, says, "While I watched the play, it taught me to love and be kind to everyone despite their looks." Truly, the play gives the audience the wonderful message that looks are not as



important as the character of a person, and that thinking of others is a wonderful virtue.

Ian Cook, another GUES student says, "The puppets were the best out of the whole time I have been alive!" He loved the background and, "how they pulled the (whole) thing together."

The puppets were designed by Erica Flannes and built by Peter Zapletal, the founder of the Puppet Arts Theatre. The beautiful costumes and set were constructed by Jarmila Zapletal. The music that accompanied the production was authentic Chinese music, some played on unique Chinese instruments.

# GES Celebrates Important Birthday



(Front Row l o r) Ethan Dorris, Kristen Foxx, Case Smith (Back Row l o r) K-1 Assistant Terrice Ross, Sunny Logan, and Brendan Keys

By Martha Liberto  
GES Teacher

Grenada Elementary School recently celebrated the March 2nd birthday of Theodor Seuss Geisel, better known as Dr. Seuss. This year also marks the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Dr. Seuss's 1938 book, *The 500 Hats of Bartholomew Cubbins*.

Throughout the week, many classes read his books and had special activities to align with them. Some classes cooked in the Kidzeum to reinforce concepts from the book. Abby Poe's students made blue jello with colored goldfish to coincide with the book *One Fish, Two Fish, Red Fish, Blue Fish*. Melanie Williams' class made green eggs and a Dr. Seuss inspired cake. Rhonda Denley's class read *My Many Colored Days* and created multi-colored cookies. Students in the library read *The Shape of Me and Other Stuff*, a book of rhymes and silhouette shapes.

Many classes made hats to celebrate a specific work of Dr. Seuss. Phyllis Chism's K-1 multi-age class made hats, and each child picked a cover image from a different book to display on their

hat. Students from Bonnie Colbert's and Melanie Williams' 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> grade classes created hats and had a parade through the classrooms to exhibit their new creations.

Multi-age students from Pauly Oakes' room read a new Seuss book every day with a learning activity to coincide with the book. They created a timeline of his work to display in the hall, as well as, various creative writing projects inspired by a Seuss book. They even created "oobleck" after reading *Bartholomew and the Oobleck*. "Oobleck" is a cornstarch-based mixture that has both solid and liquid properties. Librarian Lynne Marascalco explained, "Dr. Seuss books open up a world of activities to promote learning in the classroom. Teachers can use them for various subjects and activities, and most importantly, the children are reading and engaged."

Friday, March 1<sup>st</sup> was designated as Dr. Seuss hat day, where students and teachers were asked to wear a hat in honor of any work of Dr. Seuss. The GES library gave prizes for the best hats.

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