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## It's Red Cross Month!

Since 1943, every President of the United States has proclaimed March as "American Red Cross Month" to recognize the humanitarian accomplishments of the Red Cross organization.

All year long we are grateful for the tireless work of the volunteers and employees of the American Red Cross.

Only through our volunteers and donors are we able to serve our community every day.



### *Thank you* for helping your neighbors!

#### Want to help?



Visit [www.redcrosshelps.org](http://www.redcrosshelps.org) to learn how you can help your neighbors on any given day in March. Our online calendar has a variety of ways for you to change someone's life..

**Join our Heroes campaign! Visit [www.redcrosshelps.org/hero](http://www.redcrosshelps.org/hero).**



**American  
Red Cross**

Greater Carolinas Chapter



Join us for our annual  
fundraiser luncheon!

*You're the Reason*

Visit [www.redcrosshelps.org/thereason](http://www.redcrosshelps.org/thereason) for more on our April 1 event.

# Secure your retirement income

In these difficult economic times, many friends of the American Red Cross are looking for alternatives to stock market volatility or low CD rates – or just a safe place to put some of their nest egg.

The charitable gift annuity can meet any and all those needs. Charitable gift annuities are, in effect, a partnership with the Red Cross. In exchange for an asset, such as appreciated stock or a gift by check, the Red Cross



promises to pay you and/or any other individual you may name a guaranteed amount each and every year for the rest of your life.

You as the donor also receive a charitable deduction, and, since part of the distribution you receive is considered a return of your own funds you can receive a substantial amount tax-free!

You have the added flexibility of

deciding whether you would like to receive your payments quarterly, annually, or even monthly to supplement retirement income.

The minimum age for gift annuity recipients is 65, but younger donors often establish gift annuities for older relatives, which helps provide needed financial support for the older rela-

tives plus charitable deductions for the donors.

An important gift annuity option for “baby boomers” is

to set up *deferred payment gift annuities* as a supplement to their other retirement savings arrangements. Deferred gift annuities offer a substantial, fixed income that starts after you retire plus considerable income tax savings right now – and the satisfaction of assisting the Red Cross.

The recent downturn in the stock market took a bite out of most retirement savings plans.

## A charitable gift annuity might appeal to you if:

- You prefer the security of payments that will not vary with the ups and downs of the market
- You like the idea of receiving highly competitive payments made even more favorable by the opportunity to receive a portion tax-free
- You can use a federal charitable deduction that can often be as much as 50 percent of the value of the gift.
- You wish to provide support to the Red Cross while enjoying security of payments you or a loved one cannot outlive

*You, too, can establish a charitable gift annuity (CGA) with the American Red Cross for as little as \$5,000. With a CGA, you can enjoy the security of guaranteed income for life and the satisfaction of establishing a gift that will advance the Red Cross mission. To learn more, contact the Gift Planning Office at 1-866-620-8060, HodesP@usa.redcross.org or log on to [www.redcrosslegacy.org](http://www.redcrosslegacy.org).*

Check it out! Our Web site features a blog! Stay up to date with what's going on with the Greater Carolinas Chapter at [www.redcrosshelps.org](http://www.redcrosshelps.org).

# Blood donor volunteers to save lives

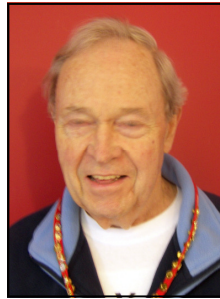
Imagine one individual touching almost 700 other lives just by donating blood.

Ron Sullivan, one of our dedicated Blood Services volunteers and life-long blood donors, has done that. Ron donated for the first time Feb. 2, 1951, while he was a student at UNC-Chapel Hill. He has been donating blood ever since then for a grand total just shy of 29 gallons of life-saving blood.

Shortly after graduation from college, he moved to Charlotte and became involved with the Greater Carolinas

Chapter as a Health Education Safety (HES) instructor. Ron went on to become an instructor-trainer and served for five years on the HES Committee.

In the early 1990s, Ron became involved with his church's blood drive and served for years as the sponsor for Myers Park Presbyterian Church's blood program.



Ron Sullivan

Ron officially became a Greater Carolinas Chapter blood volunteer in 2004 and volunteers every Thursday at the Park Road Blood Donation Center in addition to volunteering at several blood drives every month.

Still a "true blue" Tarheel fan, Ron is well-loved by the staff and donors alike. He enjoys meeting and interacting with our blood donors and his fellow volunteers.

Thank you, Ron, for your service to the Red Cross and for helping to save lives in our community.

**Want to volunteer? E-mail [MartinHope@usa.redcross.org](mailto:MartinHope@usa.redcross.org) or call 704.347.4628.**

## Meet the chairman of the board

Mike Rash will never forget walking through the Coliseum in Charlotte after thousands of evacuees affected by Hurricane Katrina were relocated here.

"There was an elderly man walking just ahead of me, and walking toward him was a Red Cross volunteer walking a dog on a leash," Rash recalled.

The dog had been separated from his owner during the storm, and the volunteer was walking through the masses trying to find the owner.

"Well, here, the man in front of me was the owner, and I got to watch them reunite," Rash said. He talked with the dog's owner shortly after they reunited, and the owner sobbed as he said, "I never thought I'd see my dog again."

"That's one time that I can pinpoint being so proud to be a part of the American Red Cross," Rash said. Since July 2004, Rash has been a part of the Red Cross family through serv-

ing on the Board of Directors and taking the position of chair for fiscal year 2008-09.

"There is so much more to the Red Cross than what people think," he said, noting that one of his goals for the Greater Carolinas Chapter is to be the most popular choice for volunteerism among local nonprofits.

Outside of his Red Cross work, Rash is president of Exit Realty and serves on the board of Community Link, which provides safe, decent and affordable housing for working class poor in the Charlotte area.

Rash is a dedicated and engaging volunteer. You'll find him joking with people at all the chapter's big events or walking through the office, just to say hello to Red Cross volunteers and staff.

"There is so much passion in this organization—it's just so great to see," he said.



Mike Rash, chairman of the Greater Carolinas Chapter Board of Directors, speaks during the annual golf tournament.

# You have countless opportunities to help!

American Red Cross Blood Services serves an integral role in achieving the overall mission of the Red Cross. Every year thousands of people receive life-saving blood transfusions as a result of the blood collected from volunteer donors across the country.

In the month of March every presenting donor may enter for the chance to win one of two pairs of Delta Air Lines domestic tickets.

The winners will be announced and made available by contacting 1.800.GIVE.LIFE or by visiting [www.redcrossblood.org](http://www.redcrossblood.org).

**Want to give?**  
During March, volunteers will coordinate 40 blood drives in Iredell and Mecklenburg counties!

The Red Cross Carolinas Blood Services Region provides life-saving blood to 103 hospitals and must have 1,600 people give blood and platelets each weekday to meet hospital demand. There is no substitute for blood and

volunteer donors are the only source.

Blood donors must be at least 17 years old (or 16 with parental consent), weigh 110 pounds or more, be in generally good health and provide proof of identification.

The Red Cross encourages people who are in good health to donate so that hospital patients have the blood or platelets they need to make a full recovery.

Blood is needed to help treat a variety of patients including accident victims and individuals undergoing surgery and cancer treatment.

**Call 1.800.GIVE LIFE (448.3543) or visit [www.redcrossblood.org](http://www.redcrossblood.org) to learn more about giving blood or platelets or to schedule an appointment to donate.**

## Calendar — Selected March events

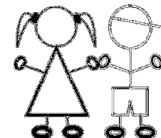


**Family Fun Day at The Pit:** The Pit in Mooresville is hosting a day of family-friendly fun to benefit the **Red Cross Heroes Campaign**. Ride go-karts, play laser tag, have lunch and take a Red Cross course on safety. The afternoon will include food, drinks, a silent auction and 50/50 raffle. 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday, March 28, at 346 E. Plaza Drive, Mooresville. Advance tickets are \$30 each or \$100 for a family of four (\$35 each or \$120 for a family of four at the door). Visit [www.redcrosshelps.org/the-pit](http://www.redcrosshelps.org/the-pit) or call 704.799.3470.



**Sirens and Shields:** 6-11 p.m. Saturday, March 28, at Cans Bar and Canteen in Uptown Charlotte. Club Red hosts **Sirens and Shields**, a fundraiser that celebrates our first responders. Event features live auction, silent auction, food and drink specials. \$10 donation at the door. Visit the site [www.redcrosshelps.org/clubred](http://www.redcrosshelps.org/clubred).

**Safe Family**



Learn together, prepare together



**Safe Family Day:** From 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. on Saturday, March 14, at the Charlotte Office, join us for basic safety classes for teens and adults. Classes for kids include Basic Aid Training and "Let's Get Ready." Visit [www.redcrosshelps.org](http://www.redcrosshelps.org).

**March plays host to a variety of Red Cross events.  
For a list of activities, visit [www.redcrosshelps.org](http://www.redcrosshelps.org).**