

Mrs. Sandy Adams was presented the American Red Cross Community Impact Hero Award for 2013, during the annual Hometown Heroes Breakfast on May 15, at the First Presbyterian Church of downtown Athens. This award is presented each year to a community group, neighborhood or organization that consistently demonstrates a commitment to making a difference in our community. The Elberton Pilot Club recommended Adams for the prestigious award. The American Red Cross recognizes that ordinary people and professionals living in East Georgia often commit selfless acts within their communities and honors outstanding residents of these East Georgia counties who have committed an act of heroism in several varying categories. Mrs. Adams was commended for her part in making a positive impact in the community and lives of her students, specifically through her founding leadership and voluntary service with the Friends Helping Friends Club. This young and largest service club at ECCHS provides inclusive educational opportunities including wonderful school trips, special events, lessons and crafts for students who have extra special needs. One of the many benefits of FHF is that several club members have selected to enter the Education Pathway as a result of their participation in Friends Helping Friends. Numerous students are motivated to improve their grades, behavior, and attendance in order to qualify for membership in the popular club. Go to www.friendshelpingfriendsclub.com for inspirational FHF videos and photos.

Mrs. Adams has been Elbert County Schools Adapted PE Teacher for nearly 20 years and more recently Founding Sponsor of Friends Helping Friends, which is dedicated to the memory of Bud McCall. Mrs. Adams credits Bud's sister, Katie, for sparking the initial flame of FHF. Katie is the founding officer of FHF. Together, with the efforts of other dedicated FHF Officers Committee members, the club has grown to 300 student members, including the new FHF club at Elbert County Middle School, in less than three years of its origin in 2010, with efforts now of going state-wide. Katie's father, GA State Representative Tom McCall nominated, and Governor Nathan Deal appointed Mrs. Adams to serve as one of nine Board Members to the new Georgia Vocational Rehabilitation Agency, reporting directly to the Governor. The new stand-alone agency creates policy and manages budget for Georgia programs that assist Georgians with disabilities. Mrs. Adams commented, "I don't consider myself to be a hero at all. The children who have special needs, who face so many challenges each day, are the true heroes!"

At the breakfast, the American Red Cross honored local heroes who live within the 14 counties represented by the East Georgia Chapter. These counties include Banks, Barrow, Clarke, Elbert, Franklin, Greene, Hart, Jackson, Morgan, Madison, Oconee, Oglethorpe, Stephens, and Walton. Hero Categories included: Good Samaritan Hero – presented to an ordinary citizen who has used lifesaving skills to save a life; Good Samaritan Youth Hero – presented to an ordinary citizen, under 21, who has used lifesaving skills; Animal Rescue Hero - presented to an ordinary citizen who has used lifesaving training to save the life of an animal; Emergency Medical Hero - presented to a medical professional, organization or an ordinary citizen whose life saving actions has gone above the call of duty; Law Enforcement Hero – presented to a law enforcement agent, or 911-dispatch agent whose life saving actions has gone above the call of duty; Citizenship Hero – presented to an ordinary citizen or professional making a difference in the community; Water Rescue Hero – presented to an ordinary citizen or professional rescuer involved in rescuing a person in a water environment; Disaster Relief Hero –

presented to a red cross volunteer involved in lifesaving disaster relief; Nurse Hero – presented to a local nurse going above and beyond the call of duty; Fire Rescue Hero – presented to a professional or volunteer fire fighter whose life saving actions went above the call of duty; Community Impact Hero - presented to a community group, neighborhood, organization, or local company that has committed to improving the community. The American Red Cross shelters, feeds and provides emotional support to victims of disasters; supplies nearly half of the nation’s blood; teaches lifesaving skills; provides international humanitarian aid; and supports military members and their families. The Red Cross is a charitable organization^¾not a government agency^¾ and depends on volunteers and the generosity of the American public to perform its mission. All proceeds from the Heroes Breakfast benefits local disaster relief, programs, and services.