

GEORGIA EAST METRO MEDICAL RESERVE CORPS NEWSLETTER



Mission Ready: MRC Volunteers in Action

The topic of February's training was cultural awareness and inclusivity! Special thanks to [Michael Davis, Ph.D.](#) with [GUIDE, Inc.](#) for such a wonderful presentation.

His passion and expertise shed light on the importance of embracing different perspectives. Let's continue the conversation and commit to creating spaces where everyone feels valued and heard. Together, we can build a more inclusive future!

We are excited to welcome, our new
Editor-in-Chief for the MRC GEM Newsletter,



Dr. Stacia Wilson

As member of MRC GEM since July 2021, Dr. Wilson brings a wealth of experience in public health, With a passion for translating complex health data into accessible, actionable information, she is committed to keeping our volunteers informed, engaged, and prepared. As a dedicated member of the public health community, Dr. Wilson looks forward to enhancing our newsletter, highlighting volunteer efforts, and sharing important updates that support MRC's mission.

A Hero Among Us

MRC Volunteer Spotlight Featuring:

Patty Thumann

For over seven years, Patty has been a pillar of disaster response and humanitarian relief with MRC GEM.



Her unwavering commitment to service, leadership, and community resilience has made a lasting impact on both volunteers and those in need.

As Response Director, Patty not only led critical relief efforts but also played a key role in enhancing communication within the MRC by editing this very monthly newsletter—a resource that keeps our team informed, engaged, and ready to respond.

With countless volunteer hours, an unwavering spirit, and a deep passion for serving others, Patty embodies the heart of MRC. We are proud to recognize her as the...

March 2025 MRC Hero Among Us!

MRC-GEM is an all-volunteer nonprofit whose mission is to augment community health operations during large-scale emergencies, aid response to pressing health care needs, and improve community emergency preparedness. Our volunteers speak over 70 different languages and dialects, allowing us to serve Georgia's Gwinnett, Newton, and Rockdale Counties, a highly diverse population of well over 1.2 million people. COVID is a perfect example.

Heroes aren't born. They Volunteer!

The Preparedness Pot: Insight & Inside MRC GEM

Where we stir together timely updates, expert insights, and must-know information to keep you ready and in the know.

On February 28, 2025, MRC GEM members participated in a multi-agency preparedness exercise for an avian (bird) influenza pandemic. MRC GEM was represented by Tony Varamo, Executive Director, Mark Owens, Opal Francis-Ruddock, and Steve Inserra. Each of these individuals contributed to the overall exercise organized via six discussion tables (about 40 discussants total). Collectively, we contributed about 18 hours of listening, discussion, and personal networking. We were excited to be invited to the exercise to increase MRC GEM collaboration and coordination with GNR Public Health and Gwinnett Emergency Management for preparedness and response planning purposes. Tabletop exercise discussions centered on identifying priorities and strategies for the public health response. This included the consideration of volunteer organizations such as MRC GEM. Also noted was the importance of an incident command-like structure to help leadership address the chaotic nature of a disaster. As part of the tabletop exercise, we were provided a historical/scientific update for avian influenza, including the more recent strain A (subtype H1N5). In case you are wondering, recent strains are the cause for concern, including the destruction of millions of chickens and other livestock, the high price of eggs, and some infected human workers with animal exposure. The training made evident the relevance and volunteer workforce the MRC GEM could provide, when called upon, for a real response to a public health disaster. By participating in future training and exercises, the MRC GEM can be viewed as an informed, valuable partner and collaborator. It would also provide the opportunity for additional MRC GEM members to participate in future training and exercises.

As our MRC GEM motto says: be prepared, all skills are valuable, make an impact.

Submitted by S. Inserra

Got a Story to Share?

We'd love to hear from you! If you would like to submit an article to be considered for the MRC GEM Newsletter, please email Stacia Wilson at stacia@mrcgem.com.

Your contributions help keep our community informed, engaged, and prepared!

#MRCGEM #StayConnected

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TRAINING CORNER: SHARPEN YOUR SKILLS

First Aid Mass Casualty
Triage/Bleeding Control March 15

AHA BLS CPR Training/Certification April 12

15th Annual MRC GEM Summit -
Hazmat Training May 17th &
May 18th

Please go to <https://bit.ly/mrcfirstaid>
and let us know if you plan to attend.

First Aid Training on March 15th.

We'll be at the GNR Health District Office,
2570 Riverside Pkwy. Lawrenceville, GA 30046.



BusinessRadioX Podcast

Click the link below:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yZKzuui9_A

[Sherwin Levinson with MRC-GEM and Kristi
Gorinas with Healthy Coverage for Life](#)

Latest on Dept Public Health News

**DPH confirms measles in
Metro Atlanta...**

Read More »



Personal & Family Preparedness

Ga Dept of Public Health offers multiple checklist and discussion about how to create an emergency plan so that families can stay prepared for emergencies. Click the link below to download and print a checklist to keep track of your supplies for the following:

- Basic Checklist
- Infant & Children Checklist
- Special Needs Checklist
- Pet Supplies Checklist
- Document Checklist
- Car Kit Checklist

Don't forget to download and print your emergency plan to include in the emergency kit.

<https://northcentralhealthdistrict.org/personal-family-preparedness/>

PUBLIC HEALTH EMERGENCIES Call 1-866-PUB-HLTH anytime, 24/7.

Heroes aren't born. They Volunteer!

Stronger Together:
MRC & Partners in Preparedness
COMMUNITY & CORPORATE PARTNERSHIPS

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YOU**

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Your Kroger Plus Card can help support our programs at no cost to you. Go to [Community Rewards](#) to enroll your card in support of MRC GEM. After registering your Kroger Plus Card, search for MRC GEM (org. #J1419) and select us as your supported organization. Once you do, Kroger will donate a percentage of what you spend to MRC GEM.



Support MRC GEM every time you shop. Donate spare change by automatically rounding up your orders to the nearest dollar at checkout. Go to [Walmart Spark Good](#) for more information and to enroll in the program.



Heroes aren't born. They Volunteer!

An All
VOLUNTEER
Organization

Visit our website to find out more about becoming a MRC GEM volunteer.
Become an MRC GEM HERO TODAY!

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