



# IrishRedCross

PJ Fagan Kildare Area Red Cross

Co. Kildare Community & Voluntary Forum AGM, 29.06.2011

**1. Mr Chairman ladies and gentlemen**

2. My name is PJ Fagan and I'm a Volunteer with the New bridge branch of the Red Cross there are three branches of the Red Cross in the Kildare Area these are located in Newbridge, Kildare and Clane.
3. I can be seen on the pitch most Saturdays or Sundays when there's a match in Newbridge or when there's community events on and The Red Cross are asked to provide first Aid cover. One of our tasks is to provide back up cover for the HSE in an emergency. All our Ambulance crews are trained to the highest standard and the Ambulance's and crew have to be ready to respond when called upon.
4. You might have noticed us out during the bad weather over Christmas and during the flooding in Sallins.
5. This has been a busy year for us and like most Volunteers we give of our time and don't get paid.
6. 'In Ireland, a network of Irish Red Cross Volunteers provides services day and night come rain or shine. I could tell you about our Volunteers that risk life and limb to go out on to the mountains of Wicklow and Sligo to rescue climbers and hikers who are lost and hurt. Or, I could tell you about the ambulance crews who give up their weekends to cover local events like GAA matches and road races to make sure that people are safe and cared for.

**7. (Recognise the volunteer in you)**

Instead I want to tell you about Paddy. Paddy has been an Irish Red Cross Volunteer for over 25 years. As a Volunteer *he* has juggled work and family in and around *his* Red Cross duties to make sure that *he* can give as much time as possible. At 6 o'clock every *Wednesday*, Paddy goes home from work, quickly grabs a little dinner and then heads out the door and down the road to carry out first Aid training in the local community hall. Every winter Paddy as he say's himself, goes to College for 16 weeks, He instructs on two 8 week courses in first Aid. By doing this he may have helped save someone life. Of course Paddy never thinks of things that way he just enjoys meeting people and he loves passing on his skills.

When Paddy goes on holidays he brings his expertise with him and has often come back with tales of having to use his Emergency first Responder skills. Paddy famous saying is You Never Know lads be prepared. (We always tell paddy that we will never go on holiday's with him)

Early On Saturdays and Sundays You will find Paddy checking that the Ambulance is kitted out and fit for duty when this is done he will drive down with his fellow Volunteers Mick and Nuala to the local GAA pitch our some other event to do first Aid cover .

Thankfully there are weeks when Paddy's training isn't needed – which is good because it means no one got hurt! But they keep going, every week, because on those days when the worst happens, when there's a fall, a rough tackle a stray hurl, it's Its Paddy Mick and Nuala who leap into action. It's there training and experienced that has shown them where to apply pressure to the wound, or how, in the most dire circumstances, to carry out CPR!



## 8. (Why does the volunteer do it?)

So, you might be asking yourself – Why?

Why does Paddy give up his Saturdays to stand on the edge of a rainy pitch?

Why does Rosemarie give up her weekends to train families in Therapeutic Hand Care?

Why do teams of people choose, every day, to give their time to others rather than keep it to themselves?

Well, to me it's about Community and being a good neighbour knowing that if you give of yourself you'll be a better person for it. It's been my experience that in Volunteering you enhance your own life, your skills picked up and by seeing that look on a person's face when you have helped them, that look means thank you even though they might never say it.

Well I would like to say thank you out loud, to all Volunteers out there who have served their community selflessly over the years without getting anything in return.

People like the person who calls to the old man down my road every Friday night to ensure that person has food for the week.

People like Nora who has just retired after over 40 yrs of looking after the church.

The community groups who look after the old and the marginalised in our society.

The people in the Kare community who volunteer to offer their time so that people with mental disability can have a better quality of life through social inclusion.

Volunteers who run your Credit Union /Badminton Club/Boxing Club/ Boy Scouts /Girl guides and many more to numerous to mention.

You are the unsung hero, who deserve to be honoured for your hard work and dedication, you give so much of your self

Myself and my neighbour, my neighbour's neighbour, my friend, my friend's family are that little bit safer because there are members of the community who choose to care, choose to give and choose to Volunteer.

On behalf of the Irish Red Cross and the wider community I would like to be the first to thank you and to let you know your efforts are appreciated.

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The Kildare Branch of the Red cross in association with the Kildare Volunteer Forum and other interested parties have got together to recognise the work of the volunteer in Co. Kildare

**The plan over the next few months**

We have a number of events planed over the next few months ending with an evening of celebration on Oct the ( ) which we are officially going to call the Kildare Volunteer day. We hope to have a similar day next year but this has yet to be decided

Please contact us if you wish to hold an event during this time as we would be only to glad held in any way we can.

Watch out for these events in your local paper and on the local Radio all volunteer are welcome to join in suggestion and idea's are also welcome.

Contact the Kildare Area of the Red Cross or the Kildare Voluntary Forum