

FROM: American Red Cross in the Finger Lakes
83 West Bayard Street, Seneca Falls 13148
Tel. 315-568-9436

For More Information: Lynne Tyler, executive director
tylerl@redcrossfingerlakes.org

For Immediate Release

Red Cross Asks:

DONATE TEDDY BEARS

AT CELEBRATE COMMEMORATE

SENECA FALLS –There is nothing like having a teddy bear or a stuffed toy to hug when your home is flooded, or is a smoldering rubble.

That's why disaster responders from the American Red Cross in the Finger Lakes take stuffed toys with them when they answer a call for help.

"Even adults need something to hug for comfort in a time of crisis," said Cheryl Hoggard, Red Cross director of emergency services.

But now the Red Cross is facing a crisis. The toy cupboard is bare.

That's why the American Red Cross in the Finger Lakes is asking people to donate their new or very gently used bears and stuffed toys to the Red Cross during Celebrate Commemorate to honor the visit of President Teddy Roosevelt to the village.

People in Waterloo have a special connection with bears, a symbol of Samuel Bear who founded the village in 1792. The carved image of Samuel Bear, by local artist Bill Cooper, is the symbol of Celebrate Commemorate.

Do you know how the teddy bear got its name? One story says that the stuffed bear became known as a Teddy Bear after Roosevelt went on a bear hunting trip in 1902. He came upon an old, tired bear in the woods, but rather than killing it, he set the bear free. News of his kindness spread and a toy shopkeeper asked Roosevelt if she could sew stuffed Teddy bears and sell them as a symbol of kindness and caring. The President agreed, and the name stuck. Today, children of all ages cherish Teddy bears.

“We encourage everyone to share the good feeling of Celebrate Commemorate by donating bears, the symbol of kindness and caring, to help the Red Cross help their neighbors in need,” said Hoggard. People should bring the bears to the Red Cross disaster trailer, parked near the railroad tracks behind the Main Street school, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Saturday and Sunday, May 29 and 30. Teddy bears and stuffed toys also can be donated at the Red Cross office, 83 West Bayard Street, Seneca Falls.

The 11th annual Celebrate Commemorate event will be held May 28–30 in Waterloo, the Birthplace of Memorial Day. For more information about the events, go to www.waterloony.com.