

Red Cross honors donors

Seal, Barbour, Lott recognized

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BILOXI — First lady Marsha Barbour, Leo Seal Jr. of Bay St. Louis — who died earlier Tuesday — and businessman, musician and Pascagoula native Chet Lott, now of Lexington, Ky., were special honorees Tuesday night at an American Red Cross Major Donors Appreciation Reception. It was held at the sponsoring Hard Rock Casino in Biloxi.

In accepting his uncle's award, Seal's nephew Clay Wagner told the group, "He didn't like to stand up before a group and he didn't like to be recognized but he did a lot behind the scenes."

The American Red Cross Mississippi Gulf Coast chapter recognized Seal, who donated more than \$200,000 to the Red Cross in the past

year, as its top major donor of 2008.

The Southeast Mississippi chapter recognized Lott for raising \$125,000 for the Red Cross through sale of his music CD, "Where Am I From?" which referenced Hurricane Katrina recovery.

The invitation-only event drew more than 100 people who have contributed significant sums to the two Red Cross chapters.

First person on the program was Marsha Barbour, well known for her dedication to the recovery of the Mississippi Gulf Coast after Hurricane Katrina. Mistress of ceremonies Paige Roberts, executive director of Southeast Mississippi Chapter American Red Cross, paralleled Barbour's efforts to those of Red Cross Founder Clara Barton, known as the "angel of the battlefield"

during the Civil War.

Barbour told donors: "I was a little hard on the Red Cross and I ask your forgiveness for that. I didn't realize the people who were the volunteers on the Coast were also the victims down here. I wanted things done immediately. Next time, we'll all be more ready."

Honorees were presented original drawings by Red Cross staffer Elihu Carranza of Pascagoula.

A testimonial to the effectiveness of Red Cross response after a disaster was given by Bronstine Miller and Leroy Johnson of Pascagoula, whose two young grandsons were killed in a house fire in November, 2006.

By garnering support of about 30 community organizations and volunteers groups, the Red Cross under Paige Roberts provided money for funeral expenses, "built us a house from the ground up and even made sure it was furnished."