

November 2013 – Volume 1, Issue 1

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Congratulations ACERT-D First Responders



ACERT-D First Responders:

Brian Sullivan
Dearborn CERT

Kevin Lewinski
Dearborn CERT

Ron Mesic
Dearborn CERT

Joy Sobczak
Kent Co CERT

William Plom
Washtenaw Co CERT

Donna Northern
Detroit CERT

Ronan Dalcross
Washtenaw Co CERT

Blaine Honeycutt
Taylor CERT

Shirley Franklin
Detroit CERT

Congratulations to the nine Michigan CERT Team Members who successfully passed the first Advanced CERT Designation (ACERT-D) Exam.

The Michigan State Police, Emergency Management and Homeland Security Division (MSP/EMSHD) and the ACERT Committee

administered the first ACERT Designation examination in April.

The nine candidates for the ACERT-D course successfully passed the exam, completed 74 hours of required courses and 60 hours of elective courses. In addition, they must participate in annual continuing education

sessions. These sessions are intended to maintain the connection between volunteer and professional responders.

Through volunteer efforts and dedication, our state is better prepared to answer the call to disasters or emergencies. The Michigan ACERT-D is intended to enhance those efforts.

2013 Recognition Awards

Every year, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) recognizes individuals and groups who do an outstanding job preparing their communities for disasters. FEMA received nearly 200 applications this year for the awards.

The Michigan Citizen Corps received an honorable mention in the Outstanding State Citizen Corps Council Initiatives category for ACERT. Heidi Witucki, of

Region 8, won honorable mention in the Community Preparedness Heroes Award for her work with teens. In addition, Do1Thing won an honorable mention in the category of Awareness to Action.

In addition to the volunteer FEMA Awards, Marquette County CERT volunteer Yvonne Clark was awarded the Governor's Senior Volunteer of the Year Award. Warren CERT received a the

recognition award from both the Warren City Mayor and the Warren PD Commissioner for being a valuable asset to the city and community. Also, Tim Tutak from Farmington Hills won the MEMA Volunteer of the Year Award.

All of your hard work and dedication has helped communities throughout Michigan to be better prepared for and more resilient to emergencies and disasters.

Disaster Distress Helpline

The Disaster Distress Helpline is the nation's first hotline dedicated to providing disaster crisis counseling.

This free, confidential and multilingual crisis support service is available 24/7 via telephone (1-800-985-5990) and Short Message Service (Text 'TalkWithUS' to 66746) to residents who are experiencing psychological distress as a result of natural or human caused disasters.

Disaster Shelter Training

The Medical Reserve Corps of Greater Kansas City (MRC-KC) has a series of award-winning training videos for volunteers in disaster shelters. "Universal Precautions," "Use of a Sliding Board," "Patient Life," and "Initiating a Conversation" may be found at:

www.mrckc.org/shelter-videos.html

One Year Later

By: Joy Sobczak – Kent County CERT

As I set pen to paper in remembrance of my first year as a volunteer in the Kent County Volunteer CERT (KCVCERT) program, my eyes have been opened, my mind is a wealth of information and my heart is truly in volunteer mode. This group of volunteers that I have gotten to know, through meetings and events of all kinds, conferences, and study groups, all have the same intentions with warm hearts and helping hands.

In trying to understand the whole picture and to be well trained for what we do and what we will be called out to do, a lot of us have hit the books. I have completed all of the required classes, buried my head in the Federal Emergency Management

Agency (FEMA) website to do most of those classes and have since taken and passed the Michigan State Police Advanced CERT exam. All of which, by the way, makes me want to do even more and to be that over prepared volunteer, for that just in case time of need.

There are quite a few of you that will be taking this Advanced CERT exam in December for just those same reasons, for that over the top understanding and preparedness to do the right thing for the community and beyond.

Kent County Volunteer CERT has come a long way in the past three or so years and just like other volunteer groups, we have our very own

coordinator, David Everts, who eats, sleeps, and talks CERT. This helps to keep our group front and center, educated and familiar with whatever is going on in the moment. We also have some very knowledgeable volunteer members that have helped this group grow in a variety of directions, which helps us to be more confident, caring and stronger for our community.

There is a reason this group has won awards over the last few years and frankly the award that honors all of you, for all of your volunteer hours, is timeless.

Grand Rapids Flooding – April 2013

By: Kent County CERT



Few of us were alive in 1906 when the Grand River crested at 19.50 feet, a level that stood until May 2004. Since then, the "Mighty Grand" has tested the floodwalls four times between 1976 and 1986 and three times from 1997 to 2008.

We entered the record books on April 18, 2013 for the first time when the river reached a level of 18.5 feet and continued to rise to the record setting level of 24.76 feet on April 28. At that level; the flow of water was reaching the lower levels of several bridges

and even threatened the railroad bridge. It was decided that in order to ensure the safety of the bridge and to protect it from being swept downstream, a string of bulk carrier railroad cars would be parked on the bridge to add weight to hold it down.

Our Community Emergency Response Team was asked to support the mission of the Salvation Army on April 18, 2013. The initial role was to provide food and hydration to the volunteers who were filling sand bags along Monroe Avenue.

Our mission began to gradually evolve over the weekend as we began to see more residents and communities working to repair the damage to their homes. Although the crest moved steadily downriver and through the downtown area late Sunday night and into

Monday morning, all of the flood walls held. Over the next week, the water continued to subside and gradually things returned to normal. Our place in the history books is safe until the next 100 year flood arrives.

Our CERT team provided 62 volunteers who accumulated 419 service hours during the 12 days we worked the flood event. The Salvation Army – EDS activated three canteens, Lansing, Kalamazoo, and Traverse City, for a total of four onsite. They provided 6,053 prepared meals, 6,334 drinks and 7,930 snack items during the event.

CERT Put to the Test

By: Carl Seitz - Director of the Public Service Institute at Macomb Community College, Adjunct Professor of Emergency Management at Madonna University

The Strategic National Stockpile (SNS) is a contingency cache of medical supplies managed by the Center for Disease Control. It is aimed at protecting the American public in the event of a public health emergency severe enough to deplete local supplies. The success of the SNS is predicated on the ability of communities to distribute the supplies in time for them to be effective. A basic concern for many public safety officials; however, is the potential lack of resources available to ensure distribution. Many emergency response organizations and public health departments are understaffed to begin with. In many cases, they have difficulty meeting peak demand periods during day to day operations. In a disaster, those resources will most likely become overwhelmed. As a result, some communities have come to recognize their dependency on volunteers to assist in times of crisis. On June 19, 2013, that dependency was put to the test.

CERT teams from the city of Warren, Harrison Township and Macomb Community College came together during a statewide drill aimed at testing the ability to receive, deliver and distribute Doxycycline and Ciprofloxacin to the general public. These two antibiotics are used prophylactically in the event of an Anthrax threat. These volunteers were tasked

with the set-up, management and operation of one of Macomb County's points of distribution (POD). Operated from Macomb Community College's South Campus in the city of Warren, the POD is the only drive-thru point of dispensing site in Macomb County. The others used a walk-thru concept.

While there were a number of lessons learned during the exercise, overall it was met with great success. According to Macomb County health officials, with only two lanes of traffic open (the site is capable of operating several more), the volunteers proved capable of distributing up to 1,400 doses per hour while the goal of the walk-thru PODs were to distribute 1,000 doses over the same time period.

Perhaps the greatest lesson was that trained volunteers from three different organizations were successfully able to implement and utilize the incident command system and work together toward a common goal. When disaster strikes, community spirit may be our greatest asset.

Kentwood VIPS

By: Kentwood VIPS



The mission of the Kentwood Police Volunteers in Police Service is to use volunteers to perform necessary functions that help increase the effectiveness and efficiency of the Kentwood Police Department. To that end, the volunteers have built trust and understanding with the department so that a strong collaborative relationship has developed. The Kentwood Police Department has 50 volunteers serving in various

areas, including community road patrol, trail patrol, clerical volunteers and chaplains. All volunteers have the opportunity to participate in special events. Volunteers contributed approximately 3500 hours in 2012. The department calls on their volunteers to help with many responsibilities.

Events include:
Fourth of July Parade – Staff the parade barricades, parking lots, and intersections, as well as participate in the parade.

Toys for Tots – Work alongside officers to collect toys for children in need.

National Night Out – Attend neighborhood parties disseminating information about the

volunteer programs, answering questions, and allowing children to explore the volunteer car.

Cost of Freedom Memorial Wall – Came to Kentwood in 2012, staffed intersection barricades.

Lacks Chemical Training – Participated in detox exercise.

Great Lakes Homeland Security Conference - 2013

By: Kent County CERT



For the fifth year in a row, the Michigan State Police (MSP) have asked for our help at the Great Lakes Homeland Security Conference held each May at the DeVos Place. As always, we provided attendants for the Citizen Corps and CERT booths, as well as several people to help with the attendee registration.

This year, we were able to add some digital photo frames and

videos to enhance the effect of the CERT display. Thanks to Wendy Galbreath, MSP CERT Coordinator, we were strategically positioned right next to the snack / drink tables and directly in the path to the lunch area. As you might expect, this prime location generated a lot of traffic by our booth. A lot of people stopped and picked up our literature and handouts, watched at least a little of the

videos and admired the photos being played on the two photo frames.

We are looking forward to doing it again next year. If you are interested in helping, we will begin signups in February.

Annual Prepare Fair – 2013

By: MSP/EMHSD

The Michigan State Police, Emergency Management and Homeland Security Division (MSP/EMHSD), Do1Thing and the Kent County CERT partnered with Radio Disney and Grand Rapids area emergency first responders, nonprofits and volunteers to host the annual Prepare Fair in recognition of National Preparedness Month. The event was held on Sept. 14, 2013, at Comstock Riverside Park in Grand Rapids.

The Prepare Fair was a great opportunity for adults and children to meet their local first responders and learn about the importance of being ready for all types of

emergencies and disasters. Families attending the fair learned about ways to get prepared before an emergency or disaster occurs, including how to develop a family emergency plan, create an emergency supply kit, perform basic first aid and volunteer to help prepare their communities and more.

Comstock Riverside Park was chosen as this year's event location because of the severe flooding that impacted the Grand Rapids area between April and May 2013. Last year, the MSP partnered with first responders, nonprofits and volunteers to hold the first Prepare Fair in the Flint area after flooding occurred in Genesee County.



Q & A from CERT National Newsletter

Q. How can we expand our CERT program?

A. Think about who ELSE can benefit from CERT training. CERT is a great learning and training experience for everyone. Holding a few additional classes is a great way to engage new members of your community. Some great places to find new

members are:

Colleges/Universities – Campus CERT can teach students essential preparedness skills and help them to help others during an emergency, on or off campus.

Schools – Both staff and students can benefit from the important safety and preparedness information in CERT.

Houses of Worship – CERT is an exciting way for faith based agencies to become

aware of local emergency response operations.

Businesses – CERT in the workplace can provide safety training to employees, creating a culture of safety and preparedness.

Health Care Coalition News

By: MI Volunteer Registry

Region 1

The Region 1 Volunteer Workgroup has been meeting regularly since December 2011, to support local and regional volunteer management efforts. The workgroup includes members of the healthcare coalition, local public health, emergency management (EM), MI Volunteer Registry and other community volunteer groups.

Out of this workgroup, a Volunteer Reception Center (VRC) template was created to assist with the coordination and management of unaffiliated and spontaneous volunteers during any size or type of disaster. MI Volunteer Registry procedures are integrated into the VRC template, which also supplement the Region 1 Public Health and Medical Volunteer Mobilization Protocol. The Regional Homeland Security Planning Board and Healthcare Coalition (D1RMRC) have approved the protocol, and are currently reviewing the new VRC template. Portions of the template were tested during the June Cities Readiness Initiative (CRI) statewide exercise, which will be assessed.

The Region 1 Volunteer Champion will continue local community outreach efforts, including county EMs, local emergency preparedness Coordinators, American Red Cross, faith-based organizations, universities, United Way and Region 1 Volunteer Organizations Active in Disaster (VOAD). The development and hosting of community partnership luncheons by D1RMRC hospital partners will continue to be a strong focus.

Region 2N

Volunteers from Region 2 North are an integral component in planning, exercising, and responding to real life incidents. The Macomb County MRC volunteers are coordinated through the Macomb County Health Department and the R2N MRC volunteers are coordinated through the Region 2 North Healthcare Coalition. Both units have been activated to assist in exercises or events, such as providing basic first aid assistance or helping hand out water to participants during running events. These MRC volunteers are ready and willing to help in times of need.

Moulaged volunteers were staged as patients at Henry Ford Hospital, where the exercise was kicked off to the overhead announcement, "This is an exercise: Attention all personnel, the National Weather Service has issued a tornado watch until 3 p.m." Shelter-in-place plans were activated and due to generator failure, simulated injured patients were cared for by flashlight. Suffering from a direct hit, the severely damaged hospital ultimately required patients be evacuated.

For more information on R2N volunteer efforts, the MRC or R2N training opportunities, contact the R2N.

Region 7

Region 7 Citizens Corp Advisory Council conducted a winter survival training at Camp Grayling in February 2013. To increase participant registration, the Council accepted the Region 7 Health Care Coalition Coordinator's offer to use the MI Volunteer Registry for announcing this training and promoting volunteer participation.

As the event would be valuable to a broad range of individuals, an initial mission message was sent to all registry volunteers throughout the state in December 2012. The total number of volunteers who received the registration information was 5,064. Of those volunteers 68 responded that they planned to attend and 32 were then assigned positions in the registry. Using the registry's functionality for checking in and out participants ultimately helped maintain accountability.

Individuals from all eight Michigan regions were in attendance and learned a great deal from their participation. The first day focused on classroom topics on the physiology of cold weather and how to cope. The second day got everyone outside to put what they learned to use in a search and rescue operation. Overall, the participants enjoyed their training.

Region 8

On April 22, 2013, volunteers of the Schoolcraft County Medical Reserve Corp (MRC), Community Emergency Response Team (CERT), and Health Occupations Students of America (HOSA) assisted Schoolcraft Memorial Hospital with moving patients from its old facility to the new facility. An evacuation from one hospital building to another.

MRC volunteers were essential in providing assistance with patient movement and patient tracking. CERT volunteers provided assistance with visitor tracking and traffic control. HOSA students were paired up with the MRC and CERT volunteers, as well as nursing staff, to lend a hand. Thirty-four volunteers assisted at the hospital and several more were involved with the participating EMS units.

A month earlier, a full "hands-on," county-wide evacuation exercise was held to ensure the methods to be utilized on the real move date were effectively tested.

The assistance of the MRC and CERT volunteers made it possible to efficiently and safely move patients with the least amount of impact on patient care, minimizing the stress on the patients too.

American Sign Language Videos

The Illinois Emergency Management Agency and the Illinois Deaf and Hard of Hearing Commission collaborated to create a series of videos presenting vital preparedness messages in American Sign Language.

To view the videos visit:

www.illinois.gov/ready/multi-media/Pages/AmerSign.aspx

Developmental Disabilities Training

Emergency Preparedness Training for Volunteers and First Responders in an Emergency or Disaster is a free training conducted by the Developmental Disability Institute. (DDI)

This training addresses the unique needs of people with disabilities including but not limited to shelter access, communication, sign language, equipment, transportation and reunification with family and caregivers.

Visit:

Ddi.wayne.edu/emergencycpr/ep.php

Hospital Volunteer Management and Credentialing Conferences

By: MI Volunteer Registry

The Office of Public Health Preparedness (OPHP) held two Hospital Volunteer Management and Credentialing Conferences on Sept. 4 in Lansing and then again on Oct. 7 in Traverse City.

Hospital medical staff services, human resources

staff and emergency preparedness coordinators were invited to attend.

Representatives from Connecticut, California and Michigan spoke on emergency credentialing and volunteer management plans.

Each Michigan health care coalition was represented at

one or both of these conferences. Conference attendees were able to meet with their regional representatives and ask questions throughout the day. Many compiled a mailing list from business reply cards, customer information sheets, business cards collected at trade shows, or membership lists.

...So That Others May Live

By: Paul Makoski - Calhoun County CERT/SAR

Hundreds of people become lost in the state of Michigan each year. Fortunately, most of these incidents have a happy ending with the lost person quickly finding their way safely home. However, because of the possibility of an unhappy ending, every search for a missing person must be treated as an emergency. Time is critical. With the passage of every hour, the chances of a lost person's survival diminish. This is particularly true during poor weather or in dangerous terrain. Since people die each year after becoming lost, a rapid and effective response is essential.

People can become lost in many different places in many different ways. A lapse in attention while walking in a state game area may result in unpleasant consequences. This is especially true for young children, those with serious medical conditions or those who are just poorly equipped for an unexpected night spent in the wilderness.

In the summer of 2011, the Calhoun County Sheriff Department, Office of Emergency Management, identified the need for a team trained and certified in wilderness search and rescue. The team, which currently consists of nine team members and two trainees, who are all

volunteers, is intended to serve as an asset not only for Calhoun County but for agencies and communities throughout Michigan. To date, the Calhoun County CERT search and rescue team has only been activated for searches outside of Calhoun County.

Currently, Calhoun County's search and rescue (SAR) team has nine nationally certified members, which is the largest percent of any search team in Michigan. The SAR team members earn their certification by meeting rigorous standards and training set by the National Association for Search and Rescue (NASAR).

To earn and maintain their certification, team members must demonstrate competency in several key skills. These skills include but are not limited to land navigation, the art of map reading and compass use, survival techniques, emergency medical and victim transport, as well as search methods, communication and team leadership.

Maintaining these skills requires a lot of practice. The SAR team practices between two and four times per month in exercises lasting several hours. These field exercises are always held outside, regardless of the weather or

temperature. Some night exercises may conclude at 1 am. Since the team is on 24 hour call, seven days a week and there is usually no advance warning of a search activation, the members must be ready to respond on very short notice.

Calhoun County provides much of the core equipment needed, such as packs, compasses, tools, ropes, and radios. Members routinely spend hundreds of dollars each year on additional equipment, training classes, and expenses incurred while activated for a search somewhere in Michigan.

During the walk, they need to be situationally aware so as not to miss anything in their assigned search area and knowing their location and direction of travel through the practiced use of compass and map. In addition, the Calhoun County SAR team is often asked to provide leadership to teams of untrained searchers involved in the search.

There are many reasons why a person may become involved in search and rescue. For many, it may be best expressed by the motto of the National Association for Search and Rescue: "...so that others may live."

Annual Disaster Exercise

Congratulations to all members who participated in the 2013 Disaster Exercise. The evaluators had very high praise for the professionalism displayed and the manner in which you all conducted yourselves as a team.

One of the main reasons for conducting annual training is to put the trainings and skills into play and learn where strengths are and what areas need to improve, both individually and as a team. Below is the list provided by the evaluators and other team players. We hope to continue to build on our experiences to strengthen the skills of our team members.

Strengths

- Great communications skills.
- Professionalism in treatment of other team members and of victims.
- Followed orders.
- Able to adapt to problems.
- Utilizing training of how to handle difficult people.
- Check-in of team members and check out of radios.

Lessons Learned

- Learned a lot: how to better organize gear, work through unexpected events, what to expect when arrive on scene.

- Need to practice techniques - stretch carry, 30 second triage.
- Do not leave command post abandoned, for two reasons, that is where people were told where to check in and for supplies and equipment that were abandoned.
- Location of Command post and briefing.

Life Saving Text Messages

Stay ahead of severe weather with emergency text message alerts. These alerts can be life-saving because they inform the public to take preventive measures immediately. To get emergency alerts, first check to see if your mobile phone is equipped to receive Wireless Emergency Alerts.

Be sure to subscribe for alerts in your area through: www.weather.gov/subscribe

See Something, Say Something

If you see something suspicious taking place, report that behavior or activity to local law enforcement or if it's an emergency call 9-1-1. Suspicious behavior may include situations like unattended bags or someone trying to break into a restricted area.

American Red Cross – Tornado App



The American Red cross has launched its official Tornado App, putting lifesaving information right in the hands of people who live in, visit or have loved ones in tornado-prone areas.

This free app - available in English or Spanish-gives iPhone, iPad and Android smart phone and tablet users instant access to local and real-time information so they know what to do before, during and after a tornado. The app includes a high-

pitched siren and "tornado warning alert" that signals people when a NOAA tornado warning has been issued to their area – even if the app is closed. An "all clear" alert lets users know when a tornado warning has expired or has been cancelled.

Other features of the app include:

- Location-based NOAA tornado, severe thunderstorm and flood watch and warning alerts.
- Enhanced weather maps.
- One-touch "I'm safe" messages that allows users to broadcast reassurance to family and friends that they are out of harm's way.
- Simple steps and checklists people can use to create an emergency plan and share it with household members.
- Preloaded content that

gives users instant access to critical action steps, even without mobile connectivity.

- Toolkit with flashlight, strobe light and audible alarm.
- Locations of open Red Cross shelters.
- Badges users can earn through interactive quizzes and share on social networks.



Program Contact:

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State Program Coordinator
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Regional Focus Groups:

MRC:

Virginia Zimmerman - MDCH

VIPS:

Leslie Montgomery

Region 1:

Bruce Pollock and Richard Warner

Region 2:

Donna Northern, Danielle El Zayat
and Kathy Rich

Region 3:

Richard Ripke and Elizabeth Carr

Region 5:

Patti Kolden and Lori Phillips

Region 6:

Rhona Colbert

Region 7:

Sandra Ruppert and Audette Miller

Region 8:

Teresa Schwalbach and Heidi
Witucki



Visit our Web site:

www.michigan.gov/citizencorps

Follow us on Twitter:

@MichEMHS

Upcoming Events/Themes:

November:

- 1 – ACERT-D Applications Due
- 14 – Conference Registrations Due
- 15 – Winter Preparedness
- 15 – Annual Award Nominations Due

December:

- 4 – ACERT-D Exam
- 4 – Citizen Corps Conference, Great Wolf Lodge, Traverse City
- 5 – Citizen Corps Conference, Great Wolf Lodge, Traverse City

Next edition submissions due by May 30, 2014

Useful Websites:

Preparedness Information	www.ready.gov
CERT Supplies, Clothes, Kits	www.cert-kits.com/responderkits/packs-bags
CERT Style Gear	www.sosproducts.com
ER Food Safety	www.foodsafety.gov/leep/emergency/index.ht
CSX Railroad Online Training	www.csxsafe.com
FEMA Independent Study Courses	http://training.fema.gov/IS/crslist.asp
Community Preparedness Toolkit	www.citizencorps.gov/getstarted/toolkit/kitindex.shtm
Citizen Corps Programs	www.citizencorps.gov/index.shtm
Youth Preparedness	www.citizencorps.gov/getstarted/youth/youthindex.shtm