



Lakes Region Partnership
for Public Health, Inc.



Winter 2010

The *ALERter*

The Newsletter of the Lakes Region Community Emergency Response Team

Search and Rescue Exercise a Success



“Lost” girls found safe by LR-CERT after search and rescue drill.

In a simulation designed to enhance its search and rescue capabilities, the Lakes Region Community Emergency Response Team, LR-CERT, conducted a series of search exercises at the Belknap County Fairgrounds in Belmont on November 6.

Cliff Dickinson, Team Captain for the Search & Rescue Unit, organized the series of drills which were attended by a dozen CERT members. Cliff did a great job designing this training, down to details of “clues” left behind in different locations throughout the fairgrounds. There were line searches, building searches, and searching for moving victims. We used CERT’s family service radios to communicate with the different teams during the exercise, making it a good team building exercise as well.

As always, if any member has an idea for a training exercise, please contact Kathleen Merriam.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Wednesday January 19 (snow date 26th)

—Functional Needs Sheltering

Randy Wagoner will conduct the January training on sheltering the functional needs population. Our first experience with opening a shelter involved some with functional needs so this is a pertinent training. MRC is invited! 6-8pm, place TBA.

Thursday January 27—New CERT Class

The first CERT class of 2011 will be held on 9 consecutive Thursdays at the Laconia High School, room 225 starting Jan 27 from 6-8pm. If you know anyone who would like to take the course, or if you need to make up any missed classes please contact Kathleen at 528-2145 or at kmerriam@lrpph.org to sign up.

Saturday January 29—Rehab at Gilford Town Docks

Gilford Fire Rescue wants CERT to participate in another rehab opportunity at the Gilford Town Docks. They will be doing a winter water rescue practice. If you were not able to participate in the last rehab, please sign up for this one. It's on a Saturday so a lot of you working people will have an opportunity to help out. Tom will be asking for participants soon. More info to follow.

A new member of CERT, John Jonasz, has created a very detailed “CERT Go Bag” list that he shared with the membership. He reminds us of some good ideas when assembling and maintaining our go bags:

- John maintains the “kitchen sink” in his bag, taking out and leaving in his car those things not needed for that activation, that way he always has all he needs.
- His list of contents is dated when checked, states where items are in the pack if not in the main compartment, and keeps this list in his pack.
- Periodically re-checks contents, maintains current meds.

If you'd like a copy of John's list, along with his SAR list, please contact Kathleen and she'll be happy to email it to you.

For Those Who Missed It...

Timberman Triathlon—August 21&22. Several CERT members once again assisted Gilford Fire Rescue at this event with traffic control.

Gilford Old Home Day Parade—August 28. Parade with the CERTmobile on a beautiful day through Gilford Village. Lots of waving spectators, probably due to the fact that Kathleen knew most everyone in town! We even won 3rd prize in the parade.

Multicultural Day in Laconia—September 11. A new location for the CERTmobile and tent, with CERT and LRPPH working together for this yearly event. This is a good educational opportunity and a positive way to connect with the local refugee/international community.

Fall CERT Classes—September 16-November 11. Held in the Community Center of Meredith. A well-attended class with 5 new members accepted into CERT.

Peer Support Training—September 22. Mark Lindberg from DBHRT led the monthly training by hosting a conversation about developing a peer support team for CERT members when facing and dealing with disasters. We now have formed a partnership with Genesis to provide emotional support. This training is only the beginning of a more detailed process to develop a peer support team.

Safety Day at Meadowbrook—September 25. CERT members set up the tent and passed out information about home safety kits and talked emergency preparedness to people attending Safety Day at Meadowbrook, along with area fire and police departments and other interesting groups. Michelle Whitenack even signed up a new recruit for the MRC. There's a lot of cool equipment to see in action when

STEP Program—September 28. STEP (Student Tools for Emergency Planning) is a 1hr program teaching family preparation for disaster via DVD and discussion to 4th and 5th graders. Kathleen Merriam was trained to teach this class and this was her first time presenting the program. She went to Holy Trinity to the 4th grade class and all went well. She's looking for other people interested in teaching this program. Contact her if you want to learn more.

3rd NH State Functional Needs Working Conference in Concord—October 6. This was a day long conference to educate people from around the state to understand the challenges to emergency preparedness, response and recovery faced by individuals with functional needs during emergencies. There were panelists representing the spectrum of emergency preparedness from all around the state, including our very own Kathleen Merriam. There were also four breakout sessions that covered topics like Enhanced 911, Adult and Child Care Facility Emergency Planning, and Assistive Technology Solutions. Consider attending next time it's available.

Sandwich Fair Parking—October 9,10,11. Donning our new reflective CERT vests, members once again worked with Meredith Altrusa to earn money parking cars in the handicapped parking lot at the Sandwich Fair. A lot of members helped out at this event. The weather was beautiful and the people we interact with are very nice. We used our radios which really came in handy when trying to ascertain parking spaces from two different areas. It's always a lot of fun and we earn quite a few dollars for the CERT general fund.

Fall Festival @ Petal Pushers—October 17. A beautiful fall day at the greenhouse business on Parade Rd. in Laconia. Vendors from many types of businesses were on display for the over 4000 people reported in attendance. They mostly consisted of families with small children. Dick Christopher set up the CERT display, spoke to over 150 people and handed out lots of brochures. An excellent opportunity to spread the CERT "word" and get the community thinking about emergency preparedness. The last time CERT attended this event was in 2007. Thank you Dick for working this worthwhile venue. Let's try and get more CERT members to help out next year.

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Special Units Update

Animal Response Unit

Team Captain Pam Griffeth
pamela03227@hotmail.com

Search & Rescue Unit

Team Captain Cliff Dickinson
NIRCQ@metrocast.net

Rehab Unit

Team Captain Tom Murphy
membersis@aol.com

Communication Unit

Team Captain
Dick Christopher
N1LT@metrocast.net

Traffic Control Unit

Team Captain David Stamps
dbstamps@dbstamps.com

Shelter Unit

Team Captain Debbie Murphy
debsta97@aol.com

More For Those Who Missed It

[Regional Swat Team Training](#)—October 20. What an evening at the Belknap County Sheriff's Dept, and I don't mean from behind bars! Twenty-two CERT members were introduced to the BRSO, Belknap Regional Special Operations Unit, and the Bearcat, or Armored Rescue Vehicle. Sheriff Wiggin, operation commander of the 22 SOU team members, put on a power point lecture, with input from Dave Perkins, swat team leader. They detailed the structure of the SOU, including negotiators and snipers. Snipers, we learned, primarily act as forward observers and intelligence gatherers. There are currently 11 multijurisdictional SOUs across the state, with our local one consisting of Belknap County groups along with the town of Moultonboro. We were given a tour of the bulletproof "Bearcat" which is used to move up close to a building or place where a suspect might be hiding. We also got to sit in the mobile command vehicle and get a feel of where the planning and decisions take place.

[Fall CERT Graduation](#)- November 11. Taylor Community Woodside saw the graduation of 10 people from the CERT class, once again facilitated by Kathleen Merriam and taught by a wonderful group of first responders. Five of those graduates went on to apply and were accepted onto the CERT team. Many of the new members have already been involved in a number of activities including the S&R training and the CERT Christmas party. We're very happy to welcome these new members to our wonderful team: Eric Felch, John Jonasch, Lisa Nachbaur, Roger Turgeon, and Greg Janaitis. We look forward to working with them.

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CERT Activations on the Rise

On three recent occasions LR-CERT was called upon to assist the Laconia Police Department. The first occurred on Sunday evening, November 21 when a multi-unit apartment building on Union Ave. caught fire. Traffic had to be restricted on Union and surrounding streets. At the same time, police were responding to an armed robbery on Court St. The CERT volunteers were able to take over traffic duties, thus allowing police to attend to crowd control at the scene as well as investigate the robbery. The team worked for 3 hrs.

The next Sunday, about 5:00 am, the team got another call from the Laconia Police Dept. to cover traffic after an early morning fire broke out on Mechanic St. in Lakeport. Several streets had to be closed to allow the fire department to douse the flames. It was a cold morning and those who responded covered traffic for 2 1/2 hrs.

Then on December 13, we got the call to cover a closed Messer St. in Laconia. Again, the team responded quickly, controlling the flow of traffic for about 3.5 hrs.

A big thanks to Dick Christopher, Dave Stamps, Tom and Debbie Murphy, Rob MacGuffie, Jim White, Mike Hardy and Kathleen Merriam for their quick responses to these activations.

Without the hard work of Kathleen Merriam, all of these members might have slept through the night! Capt. Steve Clark, LPD, took Kathleen around to area police departments to introduce her and CERT to the depts. Dep. Chief Steve Currier, GFD, introduced Kathleen to Chris Kelly of GPD. These meetings allowed Kathleen to inform the different depts. of what CERT is capable of doing and when we can be useful. Well, it worked!



Meadowbrook Fire Rehab Drill

On Saturday, Dec 11, members of the LR-CERT team supported the Gilford Fire Rescue in rehab duties for a controlled burn of a vacant house on Meadowbrook property in Gilford. Meeting at the fire station at 6:45 am, plans were made with attention to safety of personnel and property and then all headed over to Meadowbrook, accompanied by several fire fighting vehicles. Fires were started and extinguished to create various scenarios for the firefighters to train with, ending in a spectacular blaze that reduced the house to embers. CERT members set up the rehab tent, table and chairs and provided hot and cold drinks, along with sandwiches throughout the drill. Tom Murphy, Rehab Leader, was trained to fill the depleted air bottles in the GFD rehab trailer. Tom's work was a huge help to the fire dept. as it freed up the firefighters to concentrate on their training. CERT members assisted in packing up the equipment, then conducted their own "hot wash" on site before leaving about 1 pm. Cooperative trainings such as this help the first responders and the CERT members develop trust in a working relationship. We appreciate all opportunities to work with the various departments in our area.



Even More For Those Who Missed It

[Laconia Christmas Parade](#)– November 28. Five spirited CERT members carrying our banner, marched in the Laconia Christmas Parade for a 3rd year. With a huge American flag and two holiday wreaths decorating the front of the CERTmobile, Dave Stamps drove while Kathleen, Tom, Debbie and Dick walked in front of the vehicle. Debbie looked very elf-like in her Santa hat.

[CERT Christmas Party](#)– December 10. Kate Bruchacova obtained a room for us at the Margate to hold our party, and again decorated it to look very festive. Everyone brought something for the pot luck meal and a go-bag gift for the Yankee Swap. Susan Lavarack entertained us with a competitive guessing game. We also collected a large assortment of items to donate to a local charity, New Beginnings.

[Meadowbrook Fire Rehab Training](#)– December 11.

[Christmas Cookie Delivery](#)– December 20. Kathleen and Sally collected homemade cookies and bread from CERT members and delivered huge platters of the holiday sweets to the local police and fire departments who are so supportive of our team. It's a small way to say thank you for all they do for the communities and let them know we appreciate their support of our team and activities. I ***think*** the desserts made it out of the chiefs' offices to the rank and file...

ICE: In Case Of Emergency

ICE is a method of contact during emergencies. We all carry cell phones with numerous names and numbers of friends and family. All you need to do is store the number of a person or persons to be contacted in case of an emergency under the name ICE. This way, health care providers can look in your





