Border Community SERVICE

Special **E**mergency **R**esponse **V**olunteer **I**nitiative for **C**ommunity **E**mpowerment

Web: www.niagara.edu/bordercommunityservice

Niagara University

November 2007

Greater North Tonawanda CERT Course Scheduled to Begin January 10, 2008

Encourage your friends, neighbors and colleagues to register now!

Border Community SERVICE is delighted to announce that a CERT training course has been scheduled in Niagara County!

The City of North Tonawanda will host the first class of 2008 at **Columbia Hook & Ladder Company** at 85 Columbia Drive (Marion Street) in North Tonawanda.

CERT Training will begin on **Thursday, January 10** from **6:30-9:30 PM** and continue for eight **Thursday nights** ending February 28. the course will conclude with a course review and simulated emergency exercise on Saturday, March 1.

CERT training prepares individuals to help themselves, their neighbors and their community during natural and man-made emergencies. Training includes: Emergency Preparedness, Fire Safety, Light Search & Rescue, Emergency Medical Operations I & II, CERT Organization and ICS 100: Incident Command System, Disaster Psychology, and CERT & Terrorism.

Chief Joseph Krantz, Bill Manth and Jerry Doucette of the City of North Tonawanda Emergency Management Office have worked with Border Community SERVICE to plan this training. Funding for the course was provided by Niagara County as part of its Citizen Preparedness and Participation initiative.

The class size is limited to 30 participants. Participants will receive a CERT backpack with equipment to be used in the event of an emergency. Please encourage your friends, neighbors, and colleagues to register now at our website or by calling **716 286-8010**.

On Page Two:
CERT Meetings
Conference Rescheduled
Tips for Pets
Training Opportunities

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Niagara County CERT Reports

All three Niagara County CERT groups met recently. Here are highlights from those meetings:

Central Niagara County: CNC CERT updated and re-organized their phone tree. They are working on a reflective road signs project. **All CERT Teams are invited to help**. Please **contact Howard Morgan** at **574-0311** if you're interested in helping. The Team is trying to arrange periodic training with the Cambria Volunteer Fire Hall. Suggestions for minor changes to the By-Laws draft were sent with some questions to the Niagara County CERT By-laws Committee. The **next CNC CERT meeting** is scheduled on Thursday, **January 17, 2008 at 7PM**.

Greater Niagara Falls CERT: GNF CERT discussed their vision for their Team. Members were in favor of more community inter-action and outreach. Members want to set a schedule of more regular meetings with better communication lines. The GNF Team is interested in additional training for shelter skills and possibly First Aid and CPR training. GNF CERT also expressed interest in additional drills and skills exercises.

Greater North Tonawanda CERT: GNT CERT was introduced to the new Fire Chief, Chief Joseph Krantz. Subcommittees were introduced and a sign-up was passed around. The Leadership Committee went over plans for IDs and background check information. Contact information was updated. Arrangements for the next North Tonawanda CERT Training and publicity arrangements were discussed . (See above story.)

Help Animals in Disasters: You Can Prepare, Train and Assist

By: Nicole Gerber, Grand Island CERT

People are often informed of steps they can take to ready their families, homes, and communities. A growing topic of interest for animal owners and for those in the emergency response field is planning and preparing for the safety and welfare of companion animals and livestock in case of emergencies. This has been especially apparent after seeing the devastating effects of Hurricane Katrina on thousands of animals in that region. That storm changed the way federal and local governments and animal welfare organizations handle the evacuation and sheltering of pets in disasters and even paved the way for the 2006 Presidential authorization of the Pets Evacuation and Transportation Standards (PETS) Act. With this legislation, municipalities are now required to include a companion animal evacuation and shelter component in their emergency plans in order to receive disaster assistance funding.

Preparing

- Assemble an Animal Emergency Supply Kit. Consider assembling a Pet First Aid Kit ready for any emergency medical response.
- Create a Pet Information Folder of all your pet's important paperwork and current photos. Have that folder readily accessible to place into your animal emergency supply kit.
- Prepare an Evacuation Shelter Plan where you know which facilities allow pets in emergency shelter situations. Keep that list of names, addresses, and phone numbers in your Pet Information Folder.
- Develop a Pet Buddy System to identify family or friends willing to accept you and your pets in their homes if you need to evacuate.

Last month we presented an article with preparedness information for pets. For additional information, please visit Border Community SERVICE's November newsletter at www.niagara.edu/bordercommunityservice/documents/2007-11.pdf

Training and Assisting

In areas devastated by natural events such as hurricanes, floods, or wildfires, companion animals and livestock often need to be evacuated, sheltered, and cared for in facilities away from their owners and relying on the kindness of strangers. This is where animal owners and those who care about animal safety and welfare can take an active volunteer role in helping animals affected by disasters. Individuals can train to be volunteer emergency animal disaster responders with animal care organizations.

Through online trainings offered by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and through participation in emergency animal responder workshops, people can learn national emergency animal response guidelines and practices utilized by the organizations called upon to assist after disasters. Lessons are also provided on emergency animal rescue and the many roles volunteers fulfill when helping at emergency animal shelters. FEMA's "Animals in Disaster" Modules are free and provide valuable education on using the national emergency management system in coordination with animal specific responses to disasters. Module A and Module B are located at http://training.fema.gov/IS by clicking on ISP Course List.

The United Animal Nations (UAN) is considered the leader in providing disaster relief for animals. Through their Emergency Animal Rescue Service (EARS) program, they provide rescue and shelter assistance for animals displaced during disasters. The EARS staff and volunteers perform crucial tasks at shelters such as implementing record keeping and identification systems, coordinating veterinary care, coordinating food and supplies, providing animal care and shelter housekeeping, and assisting in the reuniting process. Visit www.uan.org to view the schedule of upcoming EARS workshops.

Learning how you can take care of animals before and after a disaster is important knowledge and training to have. Animals depend on us for their safety and well-being and if you take the time now to plan and prepare, you will be ready to help your pet, and maybe even other pets, in the event of any emergency.

Did You Know?

You can sign up to receive free immediate emergency alerts sent in the form of an email, page or text message to you on your computer, pager, cell phone or PDA. Check it out at:

www.emergencyemail.org

Other excellent websites: **www.fema.gov**
www.ready.gov
www.weather.gov