

Border Community SERVICE

Special Emergency Response Volunteer Initiative for Community Empowerment
www.niagara.edu/bordercommunityservice

NIAGARA UNIVERSITY

MAY 2009

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Community Preparedness Themes for the Month of May*

May is National Older Americans Month!

Older Americans are often greatly affected in large-scale emergencies and disasters and often have very special needs that require careful attention. Arrange for speakers at local assisted living facilities and senior centers, and encourage seniors to take an active role in promoting personal and community preparedness.

May 12, 2009: National Animal Disaster Preparedness Day

While our pets hold a special place in our hearts, unfortunately they often don't hold a place in disaster preparedness plans. Encourage members of your community to consider their pets when preparing for emergencies and disasters. Work with local shelters to identify pet friendly shelters for pet owners. Provide veterinarians and kennels with tips on disaster preparedness to share with pet owners. Additionally, consider partnering with a local pet store to hold an event offering "pet disaster kit shopping lists" and giveaways such as I.D tags.

May 17-23, 2009: National EMS Week

Take the opportunity during National EMS Week to honor the first responders in your area this month: nurses, police, professional and volunteer firefighters and emergency medical service personnel.

(You are invited to the National Police Memorial Week Service on May 14 in Lewiston. Please see p. 3)

May 24-30, 2009: Hurricane Preparedness Week

History teaches that a lack of awareness and preparation are common threads among all major disasters. While the Western New York area is not directly effected by hurricanes directly, indirect effects such as increased precipitation and high winds can cause serious concern in local areas. The WNY area may see severe flooding, downed power lines, etc. as a result of hurricane weather patterns moving inland and north. By knowing your vulnerability and what actions you should take, you can reduce the secondary effects of a hurricane disaster.

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*Please visit <http://www.citizencorps.gov/news/themes.shtm>
for additional themes and information each month!

Community Announcements



The **United Way of Niagara** is seeking volunteers to help during the local Letter Carriers Food Drive on **Saturday, May 9**. Volunteers will be asked to drive along with the Letter Carriers, pick up donations and return the donations to the assigned Post Office.

Sign up to help your local Letter Carrier stock our community food pantries by calling the **United Way of Niagara at 285-8461**.

You may volunteer at any of the following locations:

- LaSalle Post Office – Niagara Falls
- Main Street Post Office – Niagara Falls
- Lewiston Post Office
- Youngstown Post Office

Marlee Matlin To Speak At NFHS Community Event Celebrates School Volunteers

At **5:30pm May 14, 2009** at the Performing Arts Center at Niagara Falls High School, 4455 Porter Road, the Niagara Falls City School District will welcome keynote speaker Marlee Matlin to the Annual Parents & Partners Dinner Celebration.

The celebration originally planned to host Henry Winkler, but unforeseen professional commitments have prevented Mr. Winkler from attending the event. The District is thrilled to welcome Ms. Matlin, an Academy Award winning actress and activist.

Questions can be directed to (716) 286-4190.

“Make a Difference, Make a Change: Gang Intervention and Prevention”

May 28th & 29th, 2009 at The Niagara Falls Conference Center (101 Old Falls Street, Niagara Falls, NY 14303)

The goal of this training is to familiarize all of the attendees from law enforcement agencies, parents, school districts, the healthcare industry, and community stakeholders with the most current information on contemporary gang trends, gang identifiers, school violence, and community awareness. Intervention and prevention strategies will be covered in addition to the following topics:

- Introduction to Street Gangs
- Rap Music and its impact on Gang Recruitment
- Western New York Region Gangs/ National Information
- Gangs in Schools and in our Neighborhoods
- Dealing with the At-Risk and Gang Involved Youth
- Graffiti: What does the writing on the wall really mean?

Contact Jeannie M. Beeby-McNeil at (585) 798-7092 or McNeil.Jeannie@jobcorps.org for additional information. The registration fee is \$130.000 and includes two full days of dynamic training, continental breakfast, a buffet lunch.

Join ReNU Niagara COPC for the Highland Greenfields Community Garden Build Day!



Volunteers are needed to help:
Build raised garden beds
Spread dirt for vegetables
Put together a tool shed



When: Wednesday May 13th 9am-3pm

Where: Henry J Kalfas Magnet Elementary School, 1880 Beech Ave, Niagara Falls

What to wear: Clothes you can get dirty in!

Contact the ReNU Niagara office 716-205-0289 by
Tuesday, May 12th if interested in volunteering!

NATIONAL POLICE WEEK MEMORIAL SERVICE

You're invited to join area law enforcement agencies
(American and Canadian) as they honor their
fallen officers who lived and served in the region.

May 14, 2009 at 7 PM

St. Paul's Church
Fourth & Ridge Streets
Lewiston, NY

Reception to follow.



Program Updates!

Niagara County

Rob Mayer

716.286.8023

Congratulations to the **Niagara County Department of Health** (NCDH) for planning and delivering a wonderful day-long Emergency Preparedness Conference on April 28! Niagara County Manager Greg Lewis and Health Department Director Dan Stapleton welcomed approximately 125 participants and offered opening remarks that affirmed Niagara County's commitment to safety and preparedness for all of its residents. Nancy Brennan Blundell presented on "Personal/Family Preparedness" and "Map Your Neighborhood", a program that brings neighbors together before an emergency to plan for the emergency. After Nancy and CERT Instructor Roger Yurek overviewed the CERT program, Roger presented "When to Call 9-1-1" based on his training and experience as a Dispatcher for the Niagara County Sheriff's Office.

Niagara Grid Customer Advocate Miguel Santos shared information about utility outages and safety issues with special needs customers; American Red Cross Disaster Volunteer Michael Hoplight overviewed opening and maintaining a shelter; and Houston Crum and Kathleen Britton of Wild Kritters of Niagara County, Inc. described how to prepare and care for animals during an emergency.

Niagara County Mental Health Clinical Services Director Tim Deeks explained mental health issues associated with self-isolation. Principal Supervisory Public Engineer Ronald Gwozdek and Public Health Sanitarian (NCDH) talked about safety issues when stockpiling water and food for a potential emergency.

When presentations ended, participants broke into small group discussion and provided feedback from the community perspective. It was an enriching and empowering community event. Thanks and kudos to the planning team!

Border Community SERVICE would like to commend Niagara County's Head Start Program because all 5 sites have offered emergency preparedness training to parents and staff. We were also pleased to visit Niagara Falls Memorial Medical Center's Child Care Center to talk with staff members and parents.

City of Buffalo

Dana Estrada

716.851.4299

It looks like winter is finally behind us! While snow seems like a distant memory this is no time to get lax about emergency preparedness. In fact, April is as busy as ever as our community begins to prep for the Western New York summer, however short it may be! And as you plan for your vacations to far off destinations, remember to look into what weather events and surprises can happen. Unfortunately, we don't get a free pass when on vacation and emergencies can happen to us anywhere....I speak from experience as a power outage in the French Quarter of New Orleans threatened to put a damper on my recent vacation - I vow to always travel with a flashlight from now on!

I had the pleasure of being invited to present the "Ready America" program a staff meeting for Native American Community Services on Grant Street recently. NACS is on the ball and being really proactive when it comes to emergency preparedness by preparing a business emergency plan under the direction of staff member Norine Borkowski. I was also invited to present at the Piotr Stadnitski Gardens on the city's East Side, St. Ambrose Church Seniors in South Buffalo and the Hewitt Avenue Block Club in the Ken-Bailey Neighborhood. I also really enjoyed a recent presentation to the second graders of the Aloma D. Johnson Charter School on Michigan Avenue. These wonderful students are enrolled in a leadership program operated by the City of Buffalo's Youth Services entitled, "Neighbor to Neighbor." I also got a chance to return to the Stuyvesant Apartments on Elmwood to present the "Map Your Neighborhood" program which teaches neighbors to work together in an effective way should a disaster happen in their community. Special thanks to Buffalo CERT members Laura O., Bernice H., and Latefa B. for setting this up!

I also was invited by the Child Care Resource Network in North Buffalo to the kick off event for "Turn Off Your TV Week". Over 50 families participated in this great event where children were able to participate in arts and crafts activities, physical education activities and educational opportunities - including learning what to do in the event of an emergency! I'll be wrapping up the month by attending the Board of Block Club meeting at Belmont Shelters to introduce City of Buffalo Block Clubs to the great array of programs that BCS offers!

I also recently teamed up with the Buffalo Fire Department to distribute the "File of Life" on their behalf! The File of Life is used by individuals to record their medical conditions and medications and places on their refrigerator for use by first responders in case of emergency. The initial distribution of these documents aims to get them to senior citizens in the City of Buffalo.

And finally, welcome to Rob Mayer as he joins the BCS "family" - I look forward to working with you!

Border Community SERVICE

Program Updates Continued...

Town of Tonawanda

Heather Johnson

716.879.6606

The Town of Tonawanda CERT program will be very busy in the coming months! Please join us at the following events:

- The Town Showcase on Saturday, May 2 from 11AM-6PM and on Sunday, May 3 from 11AM-4PM at Lincoln Park Arena
- **“Sign Language for Emergency Situations”** on Wednesday, May 20 from 6:30-9:30pm in the Community Room of the Phillip Sheridan Building, 3200 Elmwood
- A general CERT membership meeting on Tuesday, June 2 at 7pm (location TBA) to help plan our garage sale fundraiser and to get current information for upcoming events and trainings.
- The CERT class will conclude on Saturday, June 6. Volunteer “victims” are needed for the disaster simulation exercise.
- The “Prepare NOW Expo” for Saturday, June 13 at the Eastern Hills Mall. Town of Tonawanda CERT has reserved a table from 10am– 2pm for this important community outreach effort.

Also, we are collecting “experienced” stuffed animals looking for a new home and a new purpose in life. Your old friends will be put to work assisting with disaster training. Stuffed animals in need of a new home can be dropped off at the Police Station (please call ahead to schedule a time they can be dropped off) or brought to the Fire Tower on Thursday nights (6:30-8:30pm).

Border Community SERVICE Welcomes Robert Mayer As Niagara County Project Coordinator

Hello, my name is Robert Mayer. I would like to take this opportunity to introduce myself as the new Project Coordinator for Niagara County at Border Community SERVICE. I would first like to thank Nancy Blundell and Dr. David Taylor for the chance to work with this dynamic and engaging program.

I think it would be helpful for all of us if I told you a little bit about myself. I’m a native of Western New York and most recently worked in the Western New York Regional Office for State Attorney General Cuomo. Prior to that I spent time working for Mayor Masiello and the Clinton Administration so I have a broad understanding of the various levels of government that we all have to interact with. I also spent some time working for several different non-profit groups; my first formal experience in that field took place when I graduated from college and spent a year in the AmeriCorps*VISTA program. I worked with several community policing agencies located throughout the City of Buffalo.

In addition to my work experience I also earned a Masters Degree at St. Bonaventure University and a graduate certificate in Theology at the Washington Theological Union in DC. I hope that my academic background will give me a broader sense of the issues and approaches that you take to community empowerment and preparedness in the towns, villages and cities of Niagara County.

I believe that strong communities are communities that work together and develop multi-lateral partnerships with other groups and institutions. When it comes to being prepared for an emergency those tools and relationships are fundamental to maintaining cool heads and taking care of the people in our neighborhoods who are going to need it the most. I’m looking forward to bringing the resources of Niagara University and the Border Community SERVICE program to you.

Already we have begun planning to offer CERT (Community Emergency Readiness Team) courses at several sites. We hope to have a great turn-out. I also look forward to setting up a number of presentations to speak with speak groups about Emergency Preparedness. If you’re interested in setting up one of these presentations, please feel free to call my office at (716) 286-8023. If I’m not there please leave a message and I’ll get right back to you.

I look forward to working with many of you and I hope that you will come to see me as a resource and partner in making our communities safer and ready for whatever hazards may challenge us in the future. Thank you for the opportunity to work with you and please know that my door is always open