Institute for Civic Engagement

The grand opening and blessing of Niagara University’s new Institute for Civic Engagement was held on Tuesday, Sept. 27, 2011.

Two of Niagara University’s flagship community-minded programs, Border Community SERVICE and ReNU Niagara, will fall under the umbrella of the Institute for Civic Engagement. In addition, the institute will also collaborate with NU’s EAGLE leadership program and Learn and Serve Niagara to create meaningful service-learning opportunities for students.

For more information please contact Dr. David Taylor, director of the Institute for Civic Engagement, at 716.205.0074 or dtaylor@niagara.edu.

If you would like to read the article and see the many photographs, please go to http://www.niagara.edu/niagara-university-unveils-institute-for-civic-engagement/

CERT Volunteers Needed for Final Exercises

Volunteers are needed to act as victims for the final Disaster Simulations for the Grand Island and Buffalo CERT classes. CERT members who feel they will benefit by participating as a student in the final exercise are welcome to join and participate as well.

Grand Island’s CERT Training Exercise is on Saturday, November 5, 2011 starting at 8 am at Town of Tonawanda Fire Training Tower, 70 Fire Tower Drive (located off Two Mile Creek Road in the Town of Tonawanda).

City of Buffalo’s CERT Training Exercise is Wednesday, November 16 at 6:30 p.m. at Buffalo Fire Department Training Center located at 20 Elmwood Avenue (corner of Virginia Avenue) in the City of Buffalo.

Anyone interested in volunteering or participating as a student in the final exercise must register in advance by contacting Valerie Haseley at 716-205-0076 or vhaseley@niagara.edu for Grand Island’s exercise or Elizabeth Oddy at 716-851-4299 or ehoddy@niagara.edu for the Buffalo’s exercise.
September was National Preparedness Month and proved to be very busy for Border Community SERVICE within the City of Buffalo! We had four Clean Sweeps reaching 355 households as part of Mayor Byron Brown’s Save Our Streets Taskforce. BCS participated in the New York State Health Department’s “Day of Health” at the Matt Urban Hope Center. A thank you goes out to Mary Rose Gaughan for inviting us to distribute disaster preparedness information to the attendees. BCS had the opportunity to participate in Medaille College’s Community Participation Day where, not only did we distribute information to the students, but we had the opportunity to talk about volunteering with BCS and becoming a CERT member. Disaster Preparedness information was also distributed to shoppers at the Elmwood-Bidwell Farmers’ Market on Saturday the 17th. Later that day, I went to a meeting of the Parish Nurses to help them prepare themselves and their clients in the case of a disaster. To close out the Saturday, Marge Price and I went door-to-door in the Chandler Street area to pass out flyers about the upcoming CERT class. This past summer this area experienced an industrial fire that impacted the Chandler Street neighborhood. This serves as a good reminder for everyone to review your sheltering-in-place plan and supplies!

We are happy to announce that BCS of Buffalo has partnered with Target stores to educate their customers, staff, and management team in disaster preparedness. Over two days, I was able to provide information to over 1,000 shoppers at the Delaware Target. Thank you to Christopher Baldonado, Assets Protection Manager for inviting us and for increasing his own skill, set by joining the newest class of CERT trainees as well! On Saturday, October 24th I delivered the “Ready America” presentation at the Zonta Conference held at the Adam’s Mark Hotel. The members of this worldwide organization comprised of executives in business and professionals who work together to advance the status of women were very grateful to attend the presentation. Even those who consider themselves “preparedness experts” commented on how they learned about many things they had never thought of before! BCS is partnering with the City of Buffalo, Division of Senior Services to educate seniors and enroll those in need into the DisasterLan system so emergency workers can better care for the special needs of our older population. We continue to meet with the Neighbors Connecting group to make Buffalo a better place to live, work, and play. Finally, 2,030 “Preparing Makes Sense” brochures were delivered to some of the Buffalo Public Elementary Schools in honor of National Preparedness Month in order to reach those households who may have not received this information yet.

Thank you for your interest and participation in our programs and please feel free to refer any groups in the City of Buffalo who might be interested in a presentation! Also, if you know of an upcoming event that we could arrange to have a BCS/CERT information table, please contact me at 851-4299 or ehoddy@bpdny.org
Our September Skills Enhancement Training was titled ‘Urban Map & Compass Navigation.’ A sincere thank you to Len Pratt from Niagara Frontier Search & Rescue Team, to everyone at Medaille’s Public Safety Office and Evelyn Hamilton for hosting us for this training. Congratulations to the 20 CERT members and other volunteers for attending this Skills Enhancement Training. Here’s what some of our participants had to say about the morning:

 refrigeration.

µ."The class was exceptional. This is an area that we overlook if we are centered in an urban area. We must remember that there is always a potential that our services may be needed in an area that we are not familiar with or comfortable in navigating.”

µ."I didn’t know anything about delineation, no wonder I don’t know which way is up!”

µ."I learned a lot of new information, especially the Universal Transverse Mercator Map and how to read corresponding coordinates. Len was very helpful and patient as we learned to use our compasses and did a very fine job putting it together!”

µ."It was everything I had hoped for and more. I have had a compass and books on how to use it, but always ended up confused.”

Skills Enhancement Training ~
Tuesday, October 18, 2011 5:30-7:30 PM
Medaille College, Buffalo Campus, Main Hall room 102
Guest Presenter- Wayne Cole of National Grid

Topic: Electrical Issues in a Disaster: Chances are that when there is a storm, there will be downed power lines. Even though power lines may be down, they can still carry an electric current strong enough to cause a serious injury or death. At the peak of a storm’s fury, it may be hard to think of the electrical safety precautions you should take, but it is necessary to do just that in order to ensure you and your family’s safety and well being. Join us and learn how you can help prevent death, injuries, and property damage.

PLEASE RSVP to: Elizabeth H. Oddy, City of Buffalo Project Coordinator

ehoddy@bpdny.org or 716-851-4299

Please include the # attending for each session, spelling the names as you would like them to appear on the participation certificates, and contact information for each person
September was National Preparedness Month and I had many programs going on in Niagara County that was able to educate the citizens about the importance of preparing for disasters and emergencies. I conducted two Ready America presentations at People Inc.’s Pine Senior Apartments in Lockport and at the new Office of Aging congregate meal site located at Hartland Bible Church in Gasport. I was able to provide valuable information to 40 individuals.

BCS participated in two of Niagara University initiatives during this month. The first was participating in a new Niagara University tradition during new student orientation, the “Walk to Whirlpool.” Students walked along the Niagara Gorge and our department welcomed the new students by giving out hand sanitizer sprays and informing them of our program. Niagara University, in partnership with the City of Niagara Falls and the P² Collaborative of WNY, was awarded a grant from the Oishei Foundation for the implementation of “Creating a Healthy Niagara Falls: A Neighborhood Empowerment Approach”. BCS is a partner with this initiative and participated in their kick-off event and cook-out that was open to the residents of the Spallino and Niagara Towers and the surrounding neighborhood.

Thank you to Bonnie Klein, Peggy Slowinski, and Rich Snyder for volunteering their time to hand out literature to the more than 350 individuals who stopped at our booth during the Lewiston Harvest Festival. Lastly, I participated in a Health Resource Fair at the Lockport Town Hall in conjunction with a flu shot clinic sponsored by The Dale Association. 36 people attended this event and were receptive to the materials we had on emergency preparedness.

I also had the pleasure of attending the two-day NYS Citizen Preparedness Program Conference in Latham, NY at the end of September. The Conference’s theme was Get Ready, Get Set, PREPARE! and included topics on Individual Financial Preparedness, Grant Writing, Engaging the Public and Training Best-Practices for Volunteers. The speakers and break-out sessions were extremely informative and gave helpful suggestions and tips.

Everyone wants to have a safe and happy Halloween for themselves, their guests and their children. Using safety tips and some common sense can help you make the most of the holiday, keeping it as enjoyable for your kids as it is for you! There are lots of ways to keep your child safe at Halloween, when accidents and injuries are more likely to occur. The excitement of children and adults at this time of year can sometimes make them not as careful as they would normally be.

Some simple common sense ideas can do a lot to stop tragedies from happening:
◊ Observe the curfew set by your town or area (and most definitely - set by your parent!)
◊ Stay together with your group
◊ Visit homes that have a porch light on
◊ Accept treats at the door - NEVER go inside a stranger’s house
◊ Cross the street at the corners
◊ Carry a flashlight to light your way
◊ Have an adult inspect your treats BEFORE eating any of them
◊ Be smart and stay safe!
Regional CERT IDs

CERT members who have all the required 'pieces' have been invited to register for the background check and if cleared, have also been notified of dates and times to come and get their regional CERT ID photo taken and have the ID issued. If you haven't heard from our office and have your (1) CERT certificate ~ (2) your ICS 100 certificate ~ (3) have filled out the BCS enrollment form, please make sure we have all of those components and we'll start the process of your background check "invite" and be on our way to issuance of the regional ID. Please contact Gail at gstruzik@niagara.edu if you have any questions.

Skills Enhancement Training

Date: Wednesday, October 26, 2011 6:30-7:30 p.m.
Location: Cambria Fire Company, 4631 Cambria-Wilson Road, Lockport NY 14094

Topic: Working in a Point of Dispensing (POD) Training

Presenter: Elaine Roman B.S.N., Director of Public Health Planning & Emergency Preparedness
Public Information Officer, Niagara County Department of Health

Description: The use of points of dispensing (POD) to get medications and vaccinations out to large numbers of people quickly in emergencies is a very effective and efficient method to protect our communities from disease or injury. CERT volunteers are very important to helping POD operations flow smoothly in the communities we serve. During the flu pandemic, Niagara County Department of Health was able to provide vaccinations to over 40,000 people at PODs throughout the county because of dedicated CERT volunteers.

PODs are efficient because of the way they are organized. Learn how a POD works and the valuable roles CERT members can play to run an organized and successful POD.

Please RSVP to: Valerie Haseley, Niagara County Project Coordinator, at vhaseley@niagara.edu or 716-205-0076.
Thank you to all the many volunteers who assisted with the Thunder of Niagara Air Show at the Niagara Falls Air Reserve Base on September 10 & 11. Our volunteers assisted Security Forces with traffic control and were applauded by the Air Base’s Security Forces Commander and senior leadership for providing the public with a safe and enjoyable weekend. In addition, BCS had a booth in the hangar and was able to provide educational materials on emergency preparedness throughout the entire weekend to the thousands of people who attended the event.

Peggy Bartolomei    Marsha Koerner
Wayne Baumgartner  Michael Koscielny
Eugene Berg        Margaret Price
Michele Berg       Justin Printup
Brendan Bodkin     Lynnor Printup
Susanne Boulter    Paul J. Quinnan
Shane Brady        Clark Reinard
Floyd Curtis       Peggy Slowinski
Michelle Fittry    Mary Stoberl
Linda Hardy        Jill Stuart
Richard James      Janice Vertlieb
John Kasupski      Sal Zarbo

Saturday Booth Volunteers: John Kasupski, Peggy Slowinski, Mary Strobel, and Shane Brady

Crowds of people at the Air Show watching the Stealth Bomber

We'll Never Forgot...

Parade commemorating Police, Fire and US Military that responded during the September 11 Attacks
Events for Tonawanda CERT members ~ submitted by John Moffat

**October** – T of T CERT will be scheduling Emergency Preparedness, Fire Prevention and Special Needs Registry presentations at the new Brighton Square residence and other locations in the town as part of National Fire Prevention Week.

Join us for two events:

**November 11 & 12:** CERT Board members will be holding a fundraiser bake sale during Bon-Ton Community Days 2011 at the Bon-Ton Department Store on Sheridan at Delaware Avenue. Discount coupon books will be on sale along with baked goodies. Coupon books containing $200 in savings are going fast and baked goods sold out at the last bake sale. Anyone wishing to donate baked goods or volunteer to help at the table, please E-mail tonawandanycert@gmail.com or call 832-0425. Coupon books are on sale now and during the event. Your $5 donation goes to the T of T CERT treasury to support CERT meetings and activities.

**November 28:** Our general meeting will be held at the Philip Sheridan Center, Community Room, 3200 Elmwood Avenue from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. The meeting will feature a guest speaker, open nominations for Board Co-Chairman and Treasurer, CERT announcements, door prizes, a 50/50 drawing and refreshments. The meeting is open to all Tonawanda CERT members and the guest presentation is open to all regional CERT. Watch for more information. Tonawanda CERT ID badges will be distributed to those who had their pictures taken at the April Open House meeting. ID pictures will be taken for eligible Tonawanda CERT members wishing to be issued a Tonawanda CERT ID. For questions or more details, E-mail tonawandanycert@gmail.com (Please note: This ID is different from the Regional CERT ID offered by the BCS Office).

**December 19:** Last Board meeting of 2011 and opportunity to nominate candidates for Co-Chairman and Treasurer. Elections will be held at the January general meeting (to be announced).

Please update your contact information by emailing your name, address, phone number and email address to tonawandanycert@gmail.com
FAST FACTS ABOUT FIRE

Home Fires
- One home structure fire was reported every 87 seconds in 2009.
- On average, seven people died in home fires every day. Adults 65 and over face the highest risk of fire death.
In 2009, U.S. fire departments responded to 362,500 home structure fires. These fires caused 12,650 civilian injuries, 2,565 civilian deaths, $7.6 billion in direct damage.

Escape Planning
According to an NFPA survey, less than one-fourth of Americans have both developed and practiced a home fire escape plan (PDF, 640 KB).
- Almost three-quarters of Americans do have an escape plan; however, less than half actually practiced it.
One-third of Americans households who made and estimate they thought they would have at least 6 minutes before a fire in there home would become life threatening. The time available is often less. And only 8% said their first thought on hearing a smoke alarm would be to get out!

Smoke Alarms
Roughly two-thirds of home fire deaths happen in homes with no smoke alarms or no working smoke alarms. About one in five smoke alarm failures was due to dead batteries.
- Working smoke alarms cut the risk of dying in reported home fires in half.
In fires considered large enough to activate the smoke alarm, hardwired alarms operated 91% of the time, while battery powered alarms operated only 75% of the time.

Smoking Materials
The risk of dying in a home structure fire caused by smoking materials rises with age.
- In recent years, Canada and the United States have required that all cigarettes sold must be “fire safe,” that is have reduced ignition strength and less likely to start fires.
U.S. fire departments responded to an average of 18,900 smoking-relate home fires each year between 2005-2009, causing an average of 660 deaths, 1,270 injuries and $492 million in direct property damage.

Home Fire Sprinklers
Automatic fire sprinkler systems cut the risk of dying in a home fire by about 80%.
- Home fire sprinklers can contain and may even extinguish a fire in less time than it would take the fire department to arrive on the scene.
Sprinklers are highly effective because they react so quickly in a fire. They reduce the risk of death or injury from a fire because they dramatically reduce the heat, flames and smoke produced, allowing people time to evacuate the home.

Cooking
Cooking equipment is the leading cause of home structure fires and associated injuries, and was tied for the third leading cause of home fire deaths.
- Unattended cooking was by far the leading cause of these fires.
- Households using electric ranges have a higher risk of fires than those using gas ranges.
- Children under five face a higher risk of non-fire burns associated with cooking than being burned in a cooking fire.
- Nearly half (45%) of microwave oven injuries seen at emergency rooms in 2009 were scalds.
U.S. fire departments responded to an average of 155,400 cooking-related home fires each year between 2005-2009, causing an average of 390 deaths, 4,800 injuries and $771 million in direct property damage.
The Autumnal Equinox, the official first day of fall, was Friday, September 23, 2011.

On the Autumnal Equinox, the sun is directly over the Earth's equator, and there are equal hours of day and night. Since the Summer Solstice, the days have been getting shorter, and from now until the Vernal Equinox (spring), the days will remain shorter than nights. The first day of Fall shouldn't be confused with the end of Daylight Savings Time, which in 2011 ends on Sunday, November 6th at 2 a.m. At that time all clocks need to "fall back" one hour.

And don't forget to replace the batteries in your smoke detectors!

Besides getting outside to enjoy nature’s beautiful colors and harvest, now is the time to winterize your home, install new windows, or do other energy efficient improvements so that you’ll spend less money on energy this winter. Many of these improvements qualify for federal tax breaks of up to $500. (Most tax breaks expire at the end of 2011, so don't delay!) Come winter’s cold, you’ll be glad you did all that winterizing!