



Rick Sheehy  
Nebraska Lt. Governor



## 2009 LT. GOVERNOR'S BE PREPARED Awards Winners

### **CITIZEN CORPS COUNCIL OF THE YEAR : Sarpy County Citizen Corps Council, led by Curtis Rainge**

The Sarpy County Citizen Corps Council has provided 150 Sarpy County residents with disaster preparedness training during 2009 and has reached out to schools & faith-based organizations by providing Disaster 101 classes and other presentations. The council operates the Community Emergency Response Training (CERT) program. To observe National Preparedness Month, council members organized a disaster preparedness fair in Bellevue to provide information and resources on personal preparedness. Members work with the Bellevue Senior Coalition, local Neighborhood Watch organizations, emergency management officials and police to reach out to Sarpy County residents and encourage them to be ready to assist their families and neighbors in an emergency.

### **CITIZEN CORPS COUNCIL MEMBER OF THE YEAR: Bob Hessler, Scottsbluff**

Bob Hessler is a member of the Panhandle Citizen Corps Network, one of Nebraska's most comprehensive volunteer organizations. Hessler has also served on the statewide CERT Standards Committee. He helped create the first collegiate CERT team in the state that serves as a model for other college campuses.

### **CITIZEN CORPS COUNCIL PARTNER PROGRAM OF THE YEAR: The Cornhusker Region American Red Cross Disaster Team, Lincoln**

The Cornhusker Region American Red Cross Disaster Team was an integral part of the response and recovery efforts in Hallam and surrounding areas after a tornado struck in 2004. More recently, chapter volunteers spent weeks assisting those affected by spring 2008 storms. Disaster volunteers respond to an average of 70 local disasters each year in a seven county area, providing for the basic needs of individuals. The chapter has 113 trained volunteers ready to respond in the event of a disaster, many of whom have deployed to other states to assist with recovery efforts to 29 natural disasters in 2008. Individuals recognized include

### **LOCAL HERO AWARD: Scott Zager, Lincoln**

Scott Zager has been active with the American Red Cross since 2003, and is currently chairman of the disaster committee with responsibility of seeing that all response functions are ready in the event of a disaster. He also serves as the disaster action team leader, a disaster instructor, and the chapter liaison to the city/county emergency operations center. Zager is one of several team leaders trained to lead volunteers in responding to local incidents ensuring basic needs of those displaced by disasters are met before first responders depart. He spent more than 2,000 hours on call in the 2008 and volunteered more than 200 hours. He also teaches numerous classes each year in volunteer disaster response.

### **EXCELLENCE IN DISASTER PREPAREDNESS: Loren Uden, Hastings**

As emergency management director for Adams County Emergency Management since 2001, Loren Uden has been a key figure in the planning and training of first responders and volunteers. He has developed table-top exercises, conducted school safety walk-throughs, and made many presentations to community and service groups. Uden also helped the county obtain a communications bus, an incident command trailer and other equipment to support city departments, village and county personnel in the field. Uden serves as the Chairman of the Adams County Pandemic Flu Committee, and is an active CERT instructor who has served on the state's CERT Standards Committee.

### **EXCELLENCE IN RISK COMMUNICATIONS: Robin Zagurski , Omaha**

Robin Zagurski, a social worker with the University of Nebraska Medical Center's Department of Psychiatry, has contributed her time and expertise to help educate professionals and volunteers on the psychological aspects of disasters since 1996. She is a member of the behavioral health team for the United Way of the Midlands Medical Reserve Corps, the American Red Cross Disaster Response Team, and a charter member of the Nebraska Behavioral Health Emergency Response Team. Zagurski provided mental health services following house fires, Omaha's 2007 mall shooting, the Little Sioux Boy Scout Camp tornado, and the 9/11 terrorist attacks. She is an author of psychological first-aid curriculum for first responders and has taught the course to local first responders to help make the need for psychological care a part of emergency response and recovery efforts.

### **EXCELLENCE IN PREPAREDNESS EDUCATION & OUTREACH: Betty Plankinton, Columbus**

Since retiring from working with the East Central District Health Department in 2005, Betty Plankinton now spends one day a week working as an infection control nurse and emergency preparedness coordinator for Genoa Community Hospital. Since March 2009 she has been a volunteer emergency preparedness coordinator for Nance County. In 2006, she was among the members of the Nance County All Hazards Response Team helping test the county's mass treatment dispensing plan. In 2007, she coordinated a training exercise involving local hospital personnel. Her public health experience has helped recruit 225 volunteers to complete disaster response exercises, provided training for dozens of volunteers and frontline medical personnel, and coordinated response plans. She has done all of this in Genoa and Nance County despite being a resident of Columbus.