



Rick Sheehy  
Nebraska Lt. Governor



## 2008 LT. GOVERNOR'S BE PREPARED Awards Winners

### **CITIZEN CORPS COUNCIL OF THE YEAR : Panhandle Citizen Corps Network, Hemingford**

The Panhandle Citizen Corps Network (PCCN) serves a population of 15,000 Nebraskans, covering 11 counties and 15,000 square miles. This Council includes law enforcement representatives, public health officials, non-profit organizations, search and rescue teams, and numerous community organizations. The PCCN supports an active Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) program, a Volunteer in Police Service program, Neighborhood Watch programs, and are in the process of developing a Medical Reserve Corp program in the Panhandle Region. Showing vision and leadership, PCCN also has the following initiatives under development: a database of community resources in the region; a volunteer database, to be used in credentialing and managing spontaneous volunteers at the scene of a disaster (in collaboration with the local United Way); a pet disaster preparedness plan for the region (in cooperation with the Ponderosa Search and Rescue team); and expanding the Disaster Chaplaincy program in the region.

### **CITIZEN CORPS COUNCIL MEMBER OF THE YEAR: Kathy Mersch, Bellevue**

Kathy Mersch brings many life skills developed through her background as a firefighter and ski patrol team member to her efforts with Citizen Corps. She is a gifted educator, watchful eye, and dedicated responder who assisted with the 2008 tornado and wind shear disasters in Douglas County.

### **CITIZEN CORPS COUNCIL PARTNER PROGRAM OF THE YEAR: Eastern Nebraska Community Emergency Response Team (CERT)**

The excellence of the Eastern Nebraska Community Emergency Response Team is reflected in the 13 Basic CERT classes taught to a total of 202 local residents, monthly team trainings on a variety of subjects, safety fairs conducted, outreach to Spanish speaking populations, presentations to faith groups, and its leadership in coordinating the efforts of 984 citizens who provided 3200 hours of relief support to the June 2008 storms in Douglas County.

### **LOCAL HERO AWARD: Pahuk Pride Class of 2008, Mid-America Boy Scouts of America Council**

"A Scout can face danger even if he is afraid." is one of the key tenets of Scout Law. On June 11, 2008 an F3 tornado struck the Little Sioux Scout Ranch near Little Sioux, Iowa while a Boy Scout troop predominately from the Omaha was in camp. All of the Scouts who were out at Little Sioux Scout Ranch that day were well-trained young men. Many of them helped others when they themselves were injured. There are 118 stories that of courage – one for each Scout in camp. Additionally the 11 adults at camp that day all showed leadership, courage and heroism as well. Every one performed in extreme circumstances with courage. While four Scouts tragically lost their lives, the quick action, bravery, and clear thinking of the Scouts and their leaders minimized the extent of serious injury and loss of life.

Katie Kassebaum, Marketing Director, Boy Scouts of America Mid America Council encountered this courage in meeting with one of Scouts in the hospital. A long line of stitches held together the wound on his head. With a huge smile on his face and this incredible energy in his voice, he shared with Katie what he experienced at the camp. He stated, emphatically, that he was "convinced I would have bled to death if my friend hadn't held my head together with his hands" until the paramedics arrived. That friend, of course a Scout, was injured himself ... suffering from a broken leg. Courage, beyond belief.

### **EXCELLENCE IN DISASTER PREPAREDNESS: Tim Hofbauer, Columbus**

Tim Hofbauer, Emergency Manager for Columbus/Platte County has spearheaded a dramatic expansion of volunteer-based disaster preparedness including CERT trainings, spotter trainings, creation of the Columbus COAD, and much more. This work and Tim's leadership was tested by the floods in the region in Spring 2008. All passed this test with flying colors. Tim is noted for his willingness to collaborate and continually engage new audiences and groups in ensuring the safety and preparedness of the region.

### **EXCELLENCE IN EMERGENCY VOLUNTEER MOBILIZATION: Otoe County Red Cross Disaster Volunteers**

Guided by Gregg Goebel, Otoe County emergency manager, the Red Cross volunteer team was launched to provide immediate local response to disasters large and small that may impact Otoe County. The team currently consists of 10 volunteers with active recruitment underway to expand the group

### **EXCELLENCE IN VOLUNTEER PUBLIC SAFETY: Ken Kruse, Lincoln**

As an American Red Cross volunteer for more than 45 years, Ken Kruse exemplifies excellence in volunteer public safety. Since joining the Red Cross in the 1960s, Ken has logged more than 14,200 career hours as a volunteer educator and responder. Ken is dedicated to training the community in safety and emergency preparedness.