

COMMUNITY EMERGENCY RESPONSE TEAM and SEARCH & RESCUE TEAM

BUILDING AND EVIDENCE SEARCH TRAINING – MARCH 23, 2016

At 7:00pm on Wednesday March 23, 2016 sixty members of the New Lenox CERT met in the Community Room at the New Lenox Village Hall for monthly training. The training topics included building (interior) search and exterior (evidence) search.

Dan Martin provided those in attendance with a 15-minute building search refresher which included the following:

- Goals of Search and Rescue
- Search and Rescue Size-Up
- Team Safety
- Search Markings
- Search Methodology
- Tips and Strategies for an Effective Search

Joe Frigo then provided everyone with a brief overview of Ground Search and Rescue, with an emphasis on Evidence Searches. With the assistance of Lisa Murphy and Bill Gill, Joe demonstrated how a line search is conducted. The demonstration included examples of critical spacing, based on terrain, vegetation, and items being sought. Joe also discussed the duties and responsibilities of a Crew Leader and what searchers should do when an item (evidence) is located.

At 7:30pm those in attendance were divided into two teams of approximately 30 each. One team went outside the Village Hall with Joe, Lisa and Bill to practice three evidence searches that had been set-up in advance. The other team went to the 3rd level of the Village Hall with Dan, Mike English and Rich DeVault to practice building searches in a large mechanical / storage area.

The team searching outdoors did a great job searching for poker chips in two of the scenarios. They also did an excellent job searching for white plastic knives in a larger area in the Village Commons. Meanwhile, the building search team also did a great job searching for 24" pieces of black Styrofoam that had been hidden throughout the search area. Team members were divided into three smaller teams who were able to locate between 14 and 18 of the hidden pieces of Styrofoam. At 8:00pm team members from the outside came inside and team members from the inside went outside. The exercises concluded at 8:30pm, at which time everyone met in the Community Room for a de-briefing.



The de-briefing included lessons learned from the exercises with comments and feedback from the instructors. John Schuld then spoke about documentation, which included providing everyone with examples of the "Personnel Resources" form, the "Assignment Status" form, and the "Message" form. Following John's presentation everyone was congratulated on a job well done and thanked for their participation. Special thanks to our instructors who did an excellent job!

Our Core Principles:

- Readiness
- Member Safety
- People Helping People
- Doing the greatest good for the greatest number of people...

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16-HOUR GROUND SEARCH AND RESCUE (GSAR) COURSE – MARCH 5TH AND 6TH 2016

At 8:00am on Saturday March 5, 2016 nineteen members of the New Lenox Search and Rescue (SAR) Team arrived at the Plainfield Police Department for a 16-Hour Ground Search and Rescue (GSAR) Course. After signing in, receiving the course handouts, and finding seating, Will County Emergency Management Agency SAR Division Chief Domingo Kaller welcomed everyone in attendance. Chief Kaller explained that the course would include classroom training following by practical exercises in the afternoon and evening. Chief Kaller advised that day two would include a missing person scenario at Mather Woods in Plainfield.



Chief Kaller then began his PowerPoint-based lecture with an overview of Search and Rescue including its four phases (locate, access, stabilize, and transport). In addition, time was spent discussing the "subject profile," which included going over the Illinois Search and Rescue Council (ISARC) Search Urgency Rating Factors (SURF) form. In summary, the form includes the number of subjects missing, age, medical condition, physical condition, clothing profile, weather profile, equipment profile, subject experience profile, as well as the terrain & hazards profile. Once all the categories are completed, the rating factors (1, 2, 3, or 4) are added up. A total SURF score between 9 and 32 is possible, with a score of 9 being the most urgent scenario. In addition, it was noted that if any categories have a rating of 1, then a search may require an emergency response regardless of the overall total. During the lecture, Chief Kaller also touched on the following:

- Notable Behaviors of Lost People
- Common Lost Person Strategies
- Vision Theory
- Determining Search Range or "Average Maximum Detection Range" (AMDR)
- Critical Separation
- The Search Cycle
- Line Search Ground Coverage and Purposeful Wandering
- Time vs. Search Area
- Initial Search (Reflex Tasking)
- ISARC First Arriving Officer Checklist for Search of a Missing Person
- Efficiency Search
- Tight (Closed) Grid and Loose (Open) Grid
- Thorough Search
- Search Crew Positions, Whistle Signals, Parallel Search, First Pass Search and Flagging
- Pivot Pass Search and Flagging
- Trackline Search
- Searcher Safety, Equipment, 4 R's (Replenish, Repair, Repack, Rest) and Common Problems
- Compass Types, Basic Components, Azimuths, Back Azimuths and Pace or Stride



Following a break for lunch, attendees met at Mather Woods for some exercises. The afternoon exercises included pace count (100 yards / 100 meters) as well as an evidence search. Throughout the afternoon teams worked on AMDR and critical spacing during the exercises. Following a dinner break, attendees returned to Mather Woods for a Missing Person Night Search. Teams assigned a crew leader, flaggers and searchers while looking for the "missing person," as well as clues such as clothing. The night exercise ended at approximately 10:00pm.



On Sunday March 6, 2016 GSAR attendees returned to Mather Woods in Plainfield for another search exercise. Team assignments were switched, giving others an opportunity to be crew leader, flagger, etc... Many of the above-mentioned skills were practiced during the exercise, which concluded at approximately 11:00am. Following the exercise, a debriefing was held under a pavilion, which allowed the Field Training Officers (FTOs) to provide comments. Congratulations and special thanks to all of our team members who completed the GSAR Course!

FIRST AID PRESENTATION FOR 2ND GRADE GIRL SCOUTS – MARCH 14, 2016

At 6:15pm on Monday March 14, 2016 Randy Halach and Jean Mandella gave a first aid presentation to twelve 2nd grade “Brownies” at Peace Lutheran Church. The presentation covered the following topics:

- How to get help by dialing 9-1-1 (name, phone number, address, what happened, who is injured, and to stay on the line until help arrives or until instructed to hang up).
- Tips for staying safe, avoiding injuries, and how to use a first aid kit.
- Treating minor injuries (cuts, scrapes, insect bites, etc...).
- How to use an EPI Pen (demonstration).



In addition to the above, the girls were instructed to bring their first aid kits to the meeting. Randy and Jean went through the kits and made suggestions as to what could be added. Everyone had great fun and the girls were happy to take a picture with our awesome volunteers. Special thanks to Randy and Jean for teaching some important skills to a wonderful group of young ladies.

SANDBAGGING AND CRIBBING – FEBRUARY 17, 2016

At 7:00pm on Wednesday February 17, 2016 approximately 60 members of New Lenox CERT met at the New Lenox Public Works Facility located at 2401 Ellis, New Lenox, IL. Daniel Martin, Public Safety Division Chief with the New Lenox Police Department and CERT Program Coordinator, welcomed everyone in attendance to the team’s monthly training event. Following the welcome and opening remarks, the floor was turned over to John Schuld.



John provided everyone in attendance with an overview on the techniques used in sandbagging during flooding events. The presentation was delivered via PowerPoint and contained photos of the various stages of sandbagging, including the required tools and techniques needed to fill and properly stack sandbags. John did an excellent job explaining how an efficient sandbagging operation is performed and took time to answer questions throughout the presentation.

Following John’s presentation, the floor was turned back over to Daniel Martin who provided a quick overview of cribbing and leveraging. Everyone in attendance had been provided with a handout, which was covered during the presentation along with a brief demonstration of the technique on a table top.

At approximately 7:30pm the room was divided in half (approximately 30 and 30), at which time everyone walked over to the garage area of the facility. At this time one group participated in a hands-on sandbagging exercise while the other group worked on cribbing.

Due to the time of year and the lack of sand, pulverized dirt was utilized for the sandbagging exercise. Team members filled the bags from the bucket of a large backhoe that was situated near a simulated area where the sandbags were needed. The bags were then passed from team member to team member to a stacking area. The foundation for the sandbag wall was made by stacking three sandbags wide. Two layers were completed by the first team and when the teams switched exercises at 8:00pm the second team completed the wall. The second team emptied the bucket of the backhoe, which allowed another two layers to be constructed.

The cribbing exercise simulated a make-shift wall that collapsed on a victim (Rescue Randy). The group was divided into three separate teams, each of which conducted a quick size-up prior to beginning the exercise. During the exercise, team members were assigned the following roles: Team leader, safety officer, medical person, fulcrum / lever operator, two cribbers, and two volunteers to provide the cribbing materials. Teams did an excellent job removing the “wall” and removing the victim from the debris. Following each team’s removal of the “victim,” a short de-briefing was held with each of the teams.

At approximately 8:25pm everyone assisted with clean-up and putting equipment back in the CERT trailer. Following clean-up, a short de-briefing was held back in the classroom and training ended at 8:45pm. Special thanks to everyone that attended – great job!



MONTHLY SAR TRAINING WITH WILL COUNTY / ANIMALS IN SAR AND ROPES – FEBRUARY 20, 2016

At 8:00am on Saturday February 20, 2016 three members of the New Lenox SAR Team met at the Plainfield Police Department, along with members of several other SAR teams. The training topic(s) for the month of February included Animals in SAR and Ropes.

Training was conducted by Illinois and Wisconsin Search and Rescue Dogs Volunteer Team. There were about 30 in attendance from several agencies. First, a 20-minute video was shown that explained the history of ILLWIS Search Dogs and what they're all about. After the video the instructors discussed the importance of a flanker, who watches over the handler and dog team. Flankers provide safety to the team, help them avoid obstacles, call out for cars if they are along a street, assist with radio communications, map covered search areas, and keep an eye on the dog in case a signal is missed by the handler. During activations, the handlers sometimes do not have trained flankers available so a handler from another dog team has to assume the role. As such, the number of dog teams in the field is reduced. If some GSAR personnel were trained as flankers they could work with a handler and dog team if needed.



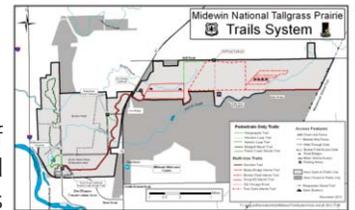
When the ILLWIS concluded their presentation, Plainfield EMA went over tying knots. Figure eight, double figure 8, butterfly knot, double fisherman's knot and handcuff knot were explained and executed by all SAR members. Training concluded at approximately 10:30am, at which time our team members returned to New Lenox.



Photos courtesy of Naperville EMA Search and Rescue

SAR TRAINING / HIKE, COMMUNICATIONS AND TRANSPORT – FEBRUARY 8, 2016

At 7:00pm on Monday February 8, 2016 fourteen members of the New Lenox SAR Team met at the Hoff Road entrance of the Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie for monthly training. Joe Frigo, Tricia Pakosz and Lisa Murphy took the lead for this particular training which encompassed a hike, a test of the team's radios and a transport exercise. Everyone was properly dressed and equipped by 7:00pm at which time Joe Frigo held a short briefing in the parking lot. Everyone in attendance was told that two teams of seven would be formed with one team heading out about 10 minutes before the other. The teams would hike approximately 1-mile and meet at a picnic table near a small lake. During the hike the teams would test their radios to ensure that everyone's communications were up to par.



The first team (Team Alpha) arrived at the designated meeting location in approximately 20 minutes with the second team (Team Bravo) arriving approximately 10 minutes later. At this time the team was told that an injury (knee / leg) was sustained by a team member (Lisa Murphy) and that the team would have to transport her 1-mile back to the starting point. Team members then immobilized Lisa's leg using a "SAM" splint and wrapped her in a blanket. Lisa was then placed on an 8' X 10' blue tarp at which time a 6-person carry was used to transport her. Carry personnel were switched every few minutes or every couple hundred yards, setting Lisa down on the ground each time. As the team moved down the road, switches were made one person at a time so that stopping and setting her down was not necessary.



With approximately ¼-mile to go, additional carries were attempted, including 5-person carry, a

3-person carry as well as a 1-person carry. Much learning took place during the exercise and upon reaching the parking lot a de-briefing was held. Team members discussed the importance of staying hydrated and noted that a concerted effort to drink water should have been made along the way. The team also discussed the need for a portable stretcher or similar device during these situations because the plastic tarp was difficult to utilize, especially for those carrying in the middle / center positions. Tricia Pakosz also touched on communications (Do's and Don'ts) and provided everyone in attendance with a handout. It was noted that it took approximately 40 minutes to transport Lisa back to the starting point, about twice as long as it took to initially arrive at the picnic table. The de-briefing concluded just before 9:00pm.

Special thanks to Joe Frigo, Lisa Murphy and Tricia Pakosz for leading this training event. Also, thanks to those that attended the training – we had a very good turnout.

Keeping our community safe, healthy and prepared . . .

SAR SEARCH IN BARRINGTON, IL – FEBRUARY 9, 2016

At 4:45pm on Tuesday February 9, 2016, WCEMA sent out the following message: Missing 38 y/o despondent - Staging @ Barrington Hills Riding Center, 361 Bateman Road. One member of the NLSAR responded by calling the staging area to confirm that the search was still active before heading out, since the location was 56-miles from New Lenox. Upon arriving at staging at 7:00pm, the NLSAR member signed-in and was directed to a warming bus where assignments were given. While on the bus an initial briefing about the missing 38-yr. old, white male, was given. The summary included information that the subject never made it to work on Monday and police were subsequently able to locate his car in Barrington via cell phone pings. The subject was not found with his car, so the search was centered in this high probability area. Hasty searches with dogs had already been completed during the day, along with helicopter searches that continued throughout the night. At 7:30pm the next search assignment came out, and our SAR member was asked to lead Team 6, which would be searching "Segment D," an area bordered on the west by Bateman Road, on the north by Donlea Road, and the remaining perimeter by Spring Lake Trail. The NLSAR member received final instructions and radio from Incident Command, then instructed his group on the operation. The team consisted of five members, one from New Lenox, two from McHenry EMA, and two from Elk Grove Village. The weather was cold, snowy and windy. There was about 2" of fresh snow on the ground, which would ultimately help us on return segments, as the flagger could follow back his footsteps to locate previously hung flags.



The team was able to complete 3 of 4 search legs in the assigned area. The terrain was at times very steep, with dense thicket and iced-over creeks. As such, it was not a very fast moving search. After searching about 80% of the assigned area, Incident Command called all searchers back to command at 11:30pm. Upon returning to Incident Command, the formal paperwork was completed, the assigned radio was returned in, and all team members signed out at midnight. It was noted that the search would continue on Wednesday as a recovery search. The NLSAR team member arrived back in New Lenox at 1:00am.

Takeaways:

1. NLSAR had a training event the day before this real world activation in very similar weather conditions. This training event gave the NLSAR member very high confidence about the gear and clothing he had to support this mission. (TRAINING COUNTS!)
2. One member did not have a head lamp. This member was also one of the flaggers, which added to the search time due to the fact that he had to hold the flashlight under his arm while flagging. (GET A GOOD HEADLAMP IF YOU DO NOT HAVE ONE!)
3. One member was a flagger only had "white" flagging tape, which in the snowy environment had about zero effectivity. (BE PREPARED – HAVE DIFFERENT COLORS AVAILABLE!)
4. At one point the return flagger lost his position and could not find the next flag to continue on the proper heading. Using the compass and tracks on the GPS, the team was able to guide the flagger to close proximity to find the next flag. If the team did not find the flag, it would have been necessary to backtrack to the last know position. (GET TO KNOW ALL YOUR TOOLS, ESPECIALLY YOUR COMPASS & GPS!)

*The Daily Herald reported that the body of Tim Anderson was found in a forest preserve near Barrington Hills on Wednesday February 10, 2016. This was not the search area described above.



SEMI-ANNUAL CERT MEETING – JANUARY 19, 2016



At 7:00pm on Tuesday January 19, 2016 approximately 75 members of the New Lenox CERT met in the Community Room at the New Lenox Village Hall for the Semi-Annual Meeting. In addition to those that had previously completed our 20-Hour Basic CERT Course (Classes 1-10), there were about a dozen people from CERT Class #11 in attendance even though the class was not scheduled to begin until January 28th. It was great to see our "veteran" CERT members welcome the new folks.

New Lenox Police Department Public Safety Division Chief and CERT Program Coordinator Daniel Martin kicked-off the meeting by welcoming everyone in attendance. The meeting went into full swing with a review of the team's accomplishments during 2015. Accomplishments included an amazing total of 3,707 hours logged by our outstanding volunteers. The breakdown of those hours included 357 hours for meetings, 1937.5 hours for training, and 1,412.5 hours for community events.

Members of the 2015 Prairie State CERT Challenge Team were congratulated for their 1st place finish. It was noted that the team's efforts have brought a tremendous amount of credit and recognition to our program, as well as our community. Perhaps even more important is the experience that the team members gained from their participation in the event. Knowledge has already been shared with others so WHEN a disaster strikes, our team will be better prepared to assist our community.

Some time was spent talking about the \$10,000 "Powering Community Safety Grant" from ComEd and the National Safety Council. Monies from the grant funded CERT Class #10 and will fund CERT Class #11 as well. In addition, the grant will allow our team to purchase a fire extinguisher training system. The system will be used when our instructors teach "Unit 2: Fire Safety and Utility Controls" during the Basic Class, as well as future refresher training.

The team's quarterly newsletter has been a huge success, published in January, April, July, and October each year. Martin thanked everyone for participating in training and community events, which provides great material for stories. Articles related to disaster preparedness were encouraged to be submitted.

Martin also mentioned that the team's Facebook page was doing great with 727 "Likes" at the time of the meeting. Team members were encouraged to share the page with their Facebook friends.

Chairs of the following committees were then introduced and asked to provide an update on their efforts:

- Training Tricia Pakosz
- Public Information Randy Halach
- Shelter Management John Schuld
- Pet Preparedness Shelley Halach
- Emergency Preparedness (Daniel Martin)

In addition to providing an update of the committee's activities, the Committee Chairs also used the forum as an opportunity to recruit new members. Many volunteers met with the Committee Chairs after the meeting to discuss future activities.

Team Leaders for the 12 teams were introduced and a short discussion was held about leadership and how important it is to the team's success. Martin encouraged anyone with an interest in a leadership position to contact him after the meeting.

Various methods of team communication were discussed including email, Nixle, newsletters and the teams Facebook page. Martin asked that anyone not receiving Nixle messages should contact him after the meeting.

Lastly, time was spent talking about a benefit for the family of team member Naomi Carden. Members of the Carden family had recently experienced some serious medical issues, which has created a financial burden. As such, a candlelight bowl will be held on April 16th at Laraway Lanes Bowling Alley. All proceeds from the benefit will go directly to the Carden family.

The meeting ended at 8:30pm with the exception of those that stayed after to speak with Committee Chairs and Team Leaders. Thanks to everyone that attended the meeting and / or otherwise contributed to its agenda.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

- Thursday April 7, 2016 / 7:00pm – New Lenox SAR Monthly Training at Midewin Natural Tall Grass Prairie
- Tuesday April 12, 2016 / 7:00pm – New Lenox CERT Monthly Training at Lincoln-Way Transportation
- Saturday April 16, 2016 / 6:00am – Triple Play Concert Series Ticket Sales at the New Lenox Police Department
- Saturday April 16, 2016 / 9:00pm – Carden Family Benefit at Laraway Lanes
- Wednesday April 20, 2016 / 7:00pm – Severe Weather Preparedness Workshop at Lincoln-Way West High School
- Sunday May 1, 2016 / 12:00pm – Loyalty Day Parade at the New Lenox Village Hall
- Tuesday May 10, 2016 / 7:00pm – New Lenox SAR Monthly Training (Physical Agility Test) at Sugar Creek Preserve
- Wednesday May 18, 2016 / 7:00pm – New Lenox CERT Monthly Training at the New Lenox Village Hall
- Saturday May 21, 2016 / 8:00am – SAR Training with WCEMA at Sugar Creek Preserve
- Saturday June 11, 2016 / 11:00am – New Lenox SAR Monthly Training (Warrior Dash) in Channahon, IL
- Saturday June 11, 2016 / 4:30pm – Triple Play Concert (Buddy Guy) at the New Lenox Police Department
- Saturday June 18, 2016 / 8:00am – SAR Training with WCEMA at Location TBD
- Saturday June 18, 2016 / 4:30pm – Triple Play Concert (Daughtry) at the New Lenox Police Department
- Saturday June 25, 2016 / 8:00am – New Lenox CERT Monthly Training at Location TBD



SAR TRAINING / FIRST AID AND PATIENT PACKAGING – JANUARY 16, 2016

At 8:00am on January 16, 2016 eight members of the New Lenox Search and Rescue Team met at the Plainfield Police Department for the Will County Emergency Management Agency monthly SAR training. The training was an annual review of the American Medical Association Heart Savers First Aid Course. The first session of the review included the basics of first aid as well as key information on proper techniques for treating victims with various conditions such as choking, allergic reactions, heart attacks, strokes and diabetes. There were two hands-on demonstrations including the correct methods for wearing and removing non-latex medical gloves and using an epinephrine pen. The demonstrations included engaging conversation with the instructors and attendees on the Do's and Don'ts for appropriate procedures for each of these activities.



After a short break, the training continued with information on injury emergencies such as bleeding, applying tourniquets, broken bones and sprains, burns, insect bites and heat/cold related emergencies such as heat stroke and frostbite. There was another hands-on demonstration on the proper technique for applying dressing and bandages on arm and leg injuries. Applying pressure to the wound is key and adding extra dressing when necessary is critical to help stop the bleeding. When doing so, DO NOT remove the old dressing as it could take longer to stop the bleeding.

The final session of the training covered hands-on techniques for transporting victims using various backboards. Performing a brief head to toe assessment on the victim should be performed prior to rolling them onto the backboard. A team member should always stabilize the victim's head while treating and moving the victim.



Properly securing the victim onto the backboard using various straps was also taught. Learning to work as a team to lift, move and lower the victim is also key to ensure the victim's safety. Lastly, there was a good discussion amongst the meeting participants and instructors, which provided clarity on using the different types of backboards for various situations.

After a brief wrap-up, the training concluded at approximately 12:00pm. Special thanks to our team members that attended this valuable training as well as to the instructors that provided the information!



NEW LENOX SAR ANNUAL MEETING – JANUARY 14, 2016

At 7:00pm on Thursday January 14, 2016 seventeen members of the New Lenox Search and Rescue Team met at the New Lenox Police Department for the Annual Meeting. Daniel Martin welcomed everyone in attendance and then turned the meeting over to Gary Cook who had developed the agenda. Gary did a great job providing a "2015 Year in Review," which included a synopsis of training, activations, as well as lessons learned throughout the year. In addition, Gary provided everyone with copies of the 2015 Participation Log, which included everyone's hours for meetings, training, and activations. Gary congratulated everyone for their contributions and noted that the total number of volunteer hours exceeded expectations.



Angela Burdelik and Linda Tomnitz were welcomed as new members and will be taking the 16-Hour GSAR Class with the team in 2016. In addition Phillia Mitchell was also in attendance as she was interested in finding out more about search and rescue, including how our team operates. Everyone welcomed Phillia as well.

Gary then went over the New Lenox SAR training dates for 2016. Potential topics were discussed as well as instructor(s). By the end of the discussion, training topics and instructors were assigned for each monthly training date. In addition, discussion was also held about our team's participation in the WCEMA SAR's monthly training. Training highlights include participation in a 16-Hour GSAR Class on March 5th & 6th, attendance at the April 23rd Forensic Anthropology Workshop, hosting the WCEMA SAR Physical Agility Test on May 21st and team members participating in the Warrior Dash on June 11th.

A short discussion was held about equipment and the consensus seemed to be that helmets and GPS units were important pieces of needed equipment. These items will be researched and purchased in the near future.

Gary then led a discussion about the team's Volunteer Manual, or Standard Operating Guidelines. Gary highlighted previous revisions and discussion was held regarding various sections and sub-sections. Notes were made about the changes, which everyone in attendance agreed upon. Daniel Martin advised that he would make the necessary changes to the manual and send it out via email to the team.

The meeting wrapped up at approximately 8:45pm with a number of team members sticking around to discuss additional SAR-related topics. Special thanks to Gary for leading the meeting and to those that attended!

Doing the greatest good for the greatest number of people . . .

Additional Information

Daniel Martin

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**COMMUNITY EMERGENCY RESPONSE TEAM
20-HOUR BASIC CLASSES**

We are now accepting applications for our (FREE) 20-Hour Basic CERT Class – dates and times TBD. Classes are typically held on weeknights from 6:30pm to 8:30pm in the Training Room at the New Lenox Police Department. Contact Daniel Martin, Public Safety Division Chief, at the New Lenox Police Department (815) 462-6100 or via email at dmartin@newlenox.net, to register for a class.

Congratulations to the following classes:

- Class 1 Graduation 10/17/2009
- Class 2 Graduation 12/05/2009
- Class 3 Graduation 02/27/2010
- Class 4 Graduation 10/30/2010
- Class 5 Graduation 04/09/2011
- Class 6 Graduation 11/12/2011
- Class 7 Graduation 10/20/2012
- Class 8 Graduation 10/19/2013
- Class 9 Graduation 10/25/2014
- Class 10 Graduation 10/31/2015
- Class 11 Graduation 03/12/2016

To learn more about the CERT program and the 20-Hour Basic Class, visit <http://www.citizencorps.gov/cert/>



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<https://facebook.com/safenewlenox>
<https://www.facebook.com/NewLenoxSAR>

**SPOTLIGHT MEMBER –
SCOTT THOMPSON**

Seventeen years ago, my wife Stephanie and I moved from the Beverly neighborhood to Mokena where we have been raising the most awesome three kids on the face of the planet; Seth (1998), Lena (2000) and Eli (2003). During the past several years we've had the opportunity to explore beyond ourselves in a bundle of ways, whether it be at the local shelter, serving at church (Hope in Orland Park), school events or other various charities.

Early last year I drove by my local fire department on my way home and noticed that they were advertising a first aid certification class. When I called to inquire, they broke the sad news that there wasn't enough interest and they had cancelled the session (obviously not the New Lenox FD). They also recommended contacting other communities to see if it was offered elsewhere. That's where CERT and I found each other.



What initially enticed me was the free 20-hour training. I'm a sucker for opportunities to hone my knowledge and skills, especially when it can be leveraged to benefit others. Since the next class (#10) wasn't set to begin for several months, I spent the summer months lurking at the monthly trainings and events. What I found during this time was a group of people who are passionate about serving the community as a team. This teamwork transcends the obvious goal of practicing and promoting preparedness. The group also works together to serve the community in various volunteer roles, support each other in times of need and continues to find opportunities to building beyond the basic skills that were acquired during the initial class.

It's this passion for others that makes me happy that I found a place in the New Lenox CERT program.

