

*Putting the Challenge  
in the CERT Challenge*



# Topics

- History of the CERT Challenge
- Contributing partners
- Goals of CERT Challenge
- Event planning

# Topics

- Activity Stations
- Successes
- Room for improvement
- Advice
- 6<sup>th</sup> Annual CERT Challenge

# History of CERT Challenge



- Began in 2005
- Hosted by Palatine Citizen Corps & Palatine Emergency Management Agency

# History of CERT Challenge

- To date more than 300 CERT volunteers from Palatine, various neighboring communities, and local corporations have participated



# Contributing Partners

- Palatine Citizen Corps
- Palatine Emergency Management Agency
- Palatine Fire Department
- Palatine Park District
- Arlington Heights Fire Department

# Contributing Partners

- Evanston Emergency Management Agency
- Lake in the Hills Citizen Corps
- Algonquin Citizen Corps
- Rolling Meadows CERT
- Wauconda Fire Department

# Contributing Partners

- Northrop Grumman:

Major financial partner, contributing \$1000 per year to the event



# Goals of CERT Challenge

- Review and practice of CERT skills
- Continued training opportunities
- Introduction of new, practical skills
- Getting to know other CERT volunteers
- Learning to work in a team environment

# Event Planning

- Monthly organizational meetings begin three to four months in advance
- Venue and date are selected
- Sub-committees are formed to handle medium to large tasks (food, registration, marketing, etc.)

# Event Planning

- Station activities are proposed, selected, and assigned to a hosting team
- T-shirts and patches are designed and ordered
- Sponsors are secured to cover food, door prizes, and other hosting expenses

# Event Planning

- Marketing is planned and executed
- Registration forms are updated and distributed
- Completed registration forms are received
- Teams of seven to ten participants are formed from registrations

# Event Planning

- Team station rotation is outlined
- Event supply list is created
- Day of the event timeline is created
- An organizational meeting is held a week prior to the event to review plans

# Activity Stations

- Six to eight activity stations are utilized during the event
- Activities are 40 minutes in length, with five minutes allowed for movement between stations
- Stations may be indoor or outdoor venues dependent on space requirements

# Activity Stations

- Hands on activities are a priority
- Participant surveys support the concept...  
“doing is better than listening”
- When a lecture station is necessary, a practical use station immediately follows

# Activity Stations

- Search & Rescue Techniques



# Activity Stations

- Triage



# Activity Stations

- First Aid



# Activity Stations

- Emergency Carries



# Activity Stations

- Cribbing



# Activity Stations

- Communications: Personal and Ham Radio



# Activity Stations

- Using Fire Extinguishers



# Activity Stations

- Orienteering: Using a map and compass



# Activity Stations

- Rescue knots and throwing a rope



# Other Activity Stations

- Aiding professional responders
- Team building exercises
- Severe weather preparations
- Traffic control
- K-9 Search & Rescue Unit Demonstration
- Fire Department Decontamination Demonstration

# Successes

- CERT Challenge has successfully engaged volunteers in...
  - Review and practice of CERT skills
  - Learning new, practical skills
  - Activities with other CERT volunteers
  - Working in a team environment

# Room for Improvement

- Marketing
- Expanding participation
- Gaining corporate and community partners
- Expanding instructor base

# General Expenses

- Event Budget is \$2000
  - Including \$1000 donation from Northrop Grumman
- Registration Fees are \$10
  - Fee includes a Participant T-shirt, Event Patch, Donuts / Coffee / Lunch

# Advice

- Begin organizational meetings early, especially in the first year of the event
- A solid core of ten to twelve volunteers are needed for event planning and execution

# Advice

- Engage neighboring Citizen Corps programs in hosting the event
- Engage local professional responders as advanced skill instructors
- Plan for variety in activity stations

# Advice

- Keep participants active in practical skills training
- Encourage exceptional participants to become instructors in future events

# 6<sup>th</sup> Annual CERT Challenge

- April 2010, Date TBD
- Local CERT teams are invited to participate

# 6<sup>th</sup> Annual CERT Challenge

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