

## **Much Obliged**

Mike Johnson, Steele County Emergency Manager  
Owatonna People's Press: 2009-Jan-20

I would like to thank our Steele County Citizen Corp Volunteers. The fourth CERT (Steele County Emergency Response Team) Annual Meeting was held Jan. 8, 2009, at the Steele County Community Center. 55 CERT members participated.

Also present were Citizen Corp CAER (Community Awareness Emergency Response) partners Tom Karnauskas - Amateur Radio, Matt Arthur - Ellendale Amateur Radio, Dave Purcell - Skywarn, and Duel and Deloris Potter - Skywarn and Amateur Radio. Attending officials were: Rick Hager - Medford Emergency Manager; Tom Kuntz - Owatonna Mayor, Doug Johnson - County Commission Chair, Dave Severson - County Coordinator, and Les Abraham - Owatonna City Council. The Community Leaders expressed gratitude to the CERT volunteers for completing training and for their many contributions to the community.

Volunteers were recognized for the many training hours they've committed to the program; various training sessions, completing projects, responding to local flooding, participating in local drills, and planning and performing business operations. Citizen Corp Presidential awards for volunteer hours served were presented. Bronze awards were given to Lois Conklin, Iris Johnson, Tim VanEngelenhoven, Dennis Hollatz, and Duel Potter. Silver awards were presented to Sandee Hardy-Hagen and Greg Lindholm. Gold awards were presented to Elizabeth Auppl, Barb Ruhter, Jeff Koplen, Raymond Truelson, Shirley Woodfill, Tom Karnauskas, and Dave Purcell.

The event also celebrated 5 years since Cert classes 1 and 2 graduated. Five year appreciation certificates were awarded to: JoAnn Eichten, Brian Haugen, Jeff Koplen, Greg Lindholm, Melissa Schlobohm, Elizabeth Auppl, Sue Jacobson, Duane Lennon, Samantha Aragon, Steve Reynolds, Barb Ruhter, Raymond Truelson, Roland Truelson, and. Graduates not in attendance: Kate Crowley, Jeff Dauffenbach, Jeff Gordon, Joel Groebner, Dallas Nelson, Don Nollet, Brad Olson, Marion Paxton, Chris Reynolds, Paula Abbe, Carrie Anderson, Tom Brage, Stephanie Ellingson, Dale Hoffstatter, Lisa Kunkel, Nicole Lindholm, Steve Mielke, Brian Shaw, Tracy, Ackman-Shaw, David Stern and Gary Wandrey. Thank you to the Annual Meeting committee members who put the celebration together: Sandee Hardy Hagen, Barb Ruther, Marliese Severson, Iris Johnson, Mohammad Kazemi, Shirley Woodfill, Sue Jacobson, Dennis Hollatz and Melissa Schlobohm.

Thank you to Wal-Mart for their gift card donation to provide refreshments and supplies for the event. I would like to thank our past CERT Board members and our 2008 Board members: Marliese Severson, Dennis Hollatz, Melissa Schlobohm, Sandee Hardy Hagen, Iris Johnson, Elizabeth L. Auppl, Shirley Woodfill, Barb Ruhter, Jeff Koplen, Tim Engelenhoven, Greg Lindholm and Mark Wilson for their dedication to making Steele County a safer place.

Mike Johnson  
Steele County Emergency Manager