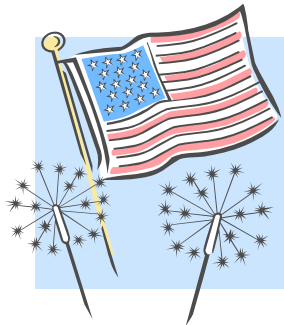


READY..



Volume 4 Issue 6
July 2007

An update on Homeland Security in Montcalm County



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Montcalm County Sherriff's Department receives a new K9 Dog

What's Blazin'

Submitted By: Steven D. VanHolstyn

I start off this month remembering the “**Charleston 9**” who lost their lives in mid June this year. What a tragedy to hit the fire service that affected firefighters across the United States. To watch the Memorial Service brings to light how quickly our lives can change, forever. The loss of these Brothers should be a lesson to all of us, especially Fire Officers; we need to make good decisions based on the risk/benefit analysis of sending firefighters in to any building with a heavy fire load. Is the cost and sacrifice we are making worth the price of losing yet another firefighter, particularly one of yours?

The next Firemen’s Association training is scheduled for July 18th at Home Township Fire Department beginning at 7:00pm. Please make plans to attend these trainings; they are held for the firefighters to learn about new and innovative training.

The County Fire Chiefs will meet just before the Firemen’s Association training on Wednesday, July 18, 2007 at Home Township Fire beginning at 6:30pm. Please send an appropriate representative, if a Chief Officer is unable to attend. They will be discussing how to address some financial challenges facing both organizations.

The Chief’s will meet again, Wednesday, August 15th, 2007 at 7:00pm in the Stanton City Hall. All Fire Officers are invited to attend. Contact your Chief for details.

Stanton Fire Department held a 12-hour state certified (OFFTC) Detection of Arson and Suspicious Fires class in June instructed by Retired Fire Marshall Thomas Kelly of the Kentwood Fire Department.

Greenville Department of Public Safety hired a new Director this month. Mike Stuck is the department’s new director and hails from the Milan area. Director Stuck attended the last Chiefs meeting on his third day of employment with the city. He spoke about his background in public safety and looks forward to addressing many of the same issues that we all share in the fire service. Welcome to Montcalm County, Director Stuck. We wish you well!!

The Incident Command Post Committee met a week ago and the plans for the FEMA Command Trailer are coming along. We have asked for nearly \$26,000 of equipment including radios, computers, telephones, printers, furniture and lighting equipment to outfit the trailer that will be available to all first responder agencies including Police, Fire and EMS.

There is a lot of upcoming training yet this year. As the announcements come out, make sure to watch your bulletin boards in your firehouses for dates and locations.

Additionally, there are still many festivals this year including Dizzy Days in Six Lakes, Crystal’s 4th of July Celebration, Stanton Old Fashion Days, Danish Festival in Greenville and Trufant’s world-famous Stump Festival Labor Day weekend. Make sure to catch all the parades and show your support for your Brothers and Sisters! **Steve**

You can reach me at mcert1@yahoo.com or call me at 616.835.3243.

“The glory of friendship is not the outstretched hand...; it is the spiritual inspiration that comes to one when you discover that someone else believes in you and is willing to trust you with a friendship.”

-Ralph Waldo Emerson



Montcalm County Sherriff's Department receives a new K9 Dog

By Ryan Jeltema

Retiring at age 10 would be a dream for many people. For Xill, the Montcalm County Sheriff's Office's former K9 dog, that dream became reality earlier this year. But he is about 70 in dog years. Xill's retirement in May has paved the way for Rex, the department's second K9 dog, to take his place later this year. Bred in the Czech Republic and purchased from Vohne Liche in Denver, Ind., Rex is training with K9 Deputy Mike Williams in anticipation of entering active duty this fall.

The nearly 2-year-old German Shepherd is learning to sniff out illegal narcotics and track fleeing or hiding suspects. Rex still acts like a vivacious puppy, unlike Xill's more laid back personality common with older dogs. "It's like going from a dog that works on autopilot to a dog that basically knows nothing— or going from an old reliable Cadillac to a Ferrari," Williams said. "Rex is coming along really well."

Williams, who worked with Xill during his entire career in Montcalm County, has already taught Rex the basics of tracking suspects and what various narcotics smell like. He hopes to train him in more complex situations this summer. Williams said Xill's unexpected retirement due to canine neuropathy, a nerve disorder affecting his hind legs, derailed plans to provide a continuous service to the county. Rex is unable to work on real cases until his training is completed. "We planned to get the new dog and train him this summer while working with Xill," he said. "Then we could slide the new dog in and there would be a seamless transition."

Rex was purchased with a \$10,000 grant from the Greenville Area Community Foundation. Sheriff Bill Barnwell said the K9 program, the only one in Montcalm County, is important since it allows for a more rapid deployment than if police had to wait for another dog from outside the county. "By having our own K-9 (so) we don't have to wait for another dog to come from another jurisdiction," Barnwell said. "Our K-9 team in the past has proven to be very valuable and has been available for all agencies in Montcalm County as well as surrounding counties."

Recently, the Greenville Department of Public Safety had to summon a K9 dog from Ionia to nab two suspects who had broken into the former Meijer store at 1220 N. Lafayette St. The dog easily located one person inside the store and another on the roof. Williams said that would have been a perfect call for Rex. Xill was able to catch numerous people and locate thousands of dollars worth of drugs during his career.

"The program has been a big success," Williams said. "He did hundreds of calls and caught a lot of people over the years."

Xill still lives with Williams and his family as well as Rex. He said both dogs are like members of the family.

S.E.R.T.

Submitted By: Steven D. VanHolstyn

Congratulations to SERT members Curtis Almas and Eric Christensen for passing their Firefighter I class this summer. Curtis and Eric are both members of the Greenville Department of Public Safety. Jerry Whitney and his wife are expecting a new baby boy very soon and we look forward to the new edition to the family.

SERT is submitting requests for equipment through Region 6 of the Homeland Security Grant. Some of the equipment requests are for confined space, structural collapse, trench and rope rescue operations. Communication and rescue tools are some of the projects that will be submitted. Some requests for training have also been turned in to the committee and are at the state level awaiting approval. If they are approved, there will be a posting for the classes on a first come first serve basis for all responders.

SERT has met with the Department of Public Work and County Road Commission Directors to discuss how the agencies can work together and share resources during an incident. The Committee is in the process of drafting a mutual aid agreement that will allow these agencies to utilize each other and share equipment. This is a tremendous step in first responder groups in developing a "regional concept" and working together during an incident.

The Greenville Department of Public Safety SWAT asked SERT to put on presentation of how the two teams might be able to share personnel and equipment during an incident. After the 30 minute presentation, the two teams left with a better understanding of how they will be able to augment each other's responses utilizing equipment and manpower. This is just another avenue to rural counties to share those expensive pieces of equipment and technology in an all-hazards approach to protecting our communities.

FEMA has released the guidelines to local emergency managers and Homeland Security personnel for completing the latest NIMS standards; IS300 and IS400. Classes have been scheduled in Montcalm beginning in July. Many of the SERT personnel will be taking these classes in the future, as they are not available on line. Contact Pamela Boody at MCES for details on who needs to complete this latest series of trainings.

I want to take a moment and acknowledge the efforts of particularly Jeni Williams. For those who missed the opportunity to attend the MCES Family Fun Day in June, you missed a great time. There was good food, games for the kids, demonstrations, and more. Jeni did a great job Jeni organizing this family event and at no cost to any of the employees. People donated food, prizes, and their time to make this a great summer time activity for our families. If you missed this year's event, make plans to attend next year's. It will be even better I am sure. Thank you very much, Jeni!!!

With the summer in full swing, it brings with it many celebrations and festivals throughout Montcalm County and West Michigan. Whichever events you plan on attending or celebrating, please remember to drink responsibly and buckle up for safety. We would like you to be around for next summer too.



ICS 300 and ICS 400 Offered in Montcalm County.

By Pamela Boody

Montcalm County Emergency Services office in Stanton is pleased to offer upcoming regional training courses in Incident Command System - ICS 300 and Incident Command System - ICS 400. This is the EMI version. The fire personnel are encouraged to take the NFA version that will be offered in September.

The ICS 300 - Intermediate ICS for Expanding Incidents course is scheduled for July 10-11, 2007 from 8-5pm and concluding July 12 from 8-noon.

The ICS 400 - Advanced ICS Command and General Staff-Complex Incidents course is scheduled for July 16, 2007 from noon-6:00pm concluding on July 17, 2007 from 8-5pm.

The class is open to the first 30 students that register. The classes are free of charge and are open to all disciplines that need the ICS 300 and 400 courses.

*******NOTE FOR ALL STUDENTS. Due to limited funds, lunch will not be covered by the region. We will be offering affordable lunch options at the beginning of the class.**

*******NOTE FOR FIRE PERSONAL. The NFA version will be as follows:**

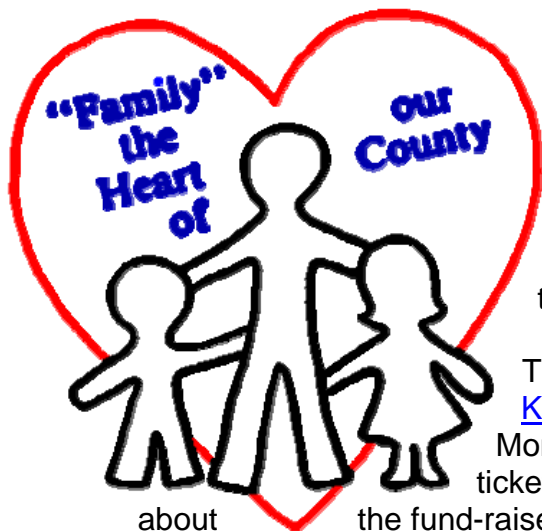
September 28, 2007	6:00-10:00pm	IS 300 FIRE
September 29, 2007	8:00-5:00pm	IS 300 FIRE
September 30, 2007	8:00-5:00pm	IS 300 FIRE
October 13, 2007	8:00-5:00pm	IS 400 FIRE
October 14, 2007	8:00-5:00pm	IS 400 FIRE

Terrorism To Tornadoes



On September 10, 2007 we will be hosting our annual Terrorism To Tornadoes at Montcalm Community College. This event will begin at 6:00pm and will conclude at 9:00pm. More details will follow in future READY issues.

WE CARE FOR KIDS COUNCIL




The last several years We Care For Kids Council has sold tickets for a Mustang car give away. This year the prize has changed to an all inclusive Hawaiian trip for 4. The prize package can be suited to fit the winner in regard to how much money is spent on food, accommodations, etc. with the cap being \$7,000.00. The winner has one year to book the trip and 18 months to use the trip.

Terry King has the tickets. He may be contacted by email at KingT2@michigan.gov or you may stop and see him at the Montcalm County Department of Human Service office. Cost is 1 ticket for \$5.00 or 5 tickets for \$20.00. The REALLY exciting thing about the fund-raiser this year is that WCFK will receive 70% of the proceeds from ticket sales made in this county. So basically if we sold \$1,000.00 worth of tickets WCFK Council would get \$700 back. We Care For Kids funds programs year round that assist local agencies, schools, etc. to help prevent child abuse and neglect. This is definitely a worthy cause.

Tickets will only be available for purchase until August 10th. Drawing is held on August 18th in Muskegon.

July

Sun	Mon	Tues	Weds	Thurs	Fri	Sat
1	2	3	4 	5 Regional Interoperable Comm. Committee	6	7
8	9 Regional Training Mtg. Regional Planning Mtg.	10 Regional Law Enforcement Committee	11	12 EMAC Mtg.	13	14
15	16	17 MEMA Mtg.	18 Regional Citizen Corps Mtg.	19 Region 6 Bio Defense Mtg.	20	21
22	23 Regional Coordinators Mtg. Region 6 Governing Board Mtg.	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

August

Sun	Mon	Tues	Weds	Thurs	Fri	Sat
			1	2	3 LPT Mtg.	4
5	6	7 Regional Law Enforcement Committee	8	9	10	11
12	13 Regional Training Mtg. Metro Planners Mtg.	14 Public Works Mtg.	15 CHEP Regional Citizen Corps Mtg.	16 Region 6 Bio Defense Mtg.	17	18
19	20	21 MEMA Mtg.	22	23	24	25
26	27 Regional Coordinators Mtg. Region 6 Governing Board Mtg. PEDS Conference	28 PEDS Conference	29	30 Full Scale Exercise	31	