

Common Vision

Newsletter for the Emergency Management Agency of Summit County

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Summer 2002

James B. McCarthy, County Executive

Specialist Catches Coveted Award

Cathy Mitchen



April 21, 2002, was the 3rd Annual Summit County Public Safety Telecommunicators' Recognition Dinner. As with each year, there were more attendees than the previous years. Cathy Mitchen, a communications specialist with the Norton Police Department, received this year's Tom Weiss Award. This award is given to a public safety communications specialist who has shown their dedication and hard work over the years. This was very special for Cathy, since the award is named for Tom Weiss who had work as a dispatcher for the Norton Police Department for 28 years. Tom lost his battle with cancer in 1999.

A message from James B. McCarthy, County Executive

During the last several years Summit County has worked hard to secure an agreement between all of our political subdivisions to coordinate mutual aid during disasters. This agreement, along with the Emergency Operations Plan, was designed to provide an efficient and practical response to communities requesting assistance. The State of Ohio is now considering a bill to create an Intrastate Mutual Aid Compact that will provide response between all Ohio Counties and their political subdivisions. We will continue to work with state officials to see that the citizens of Summit County will receive the fastest, most efficient assistance when disaster strikes.



Blossom Blooms in Light of Doom

Blossom Music Center, Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio, hosted a Mass Casualty Incident exercise,



Blossom exercise victim Sharon Ulman (EMA) assists fellow volunteer Willmary Dill (Community and Economic Development) until help arrives.

Thursday evening, May 16, 2002. This exercise was designed by representatives from the Summit County Emergency Management Agency, Blossom Music Center, Summit County Sheriff's Office, Cuyahoga Falls Police and Fire Departments and the Akron Regional Hospital Association. Participants included several fire departments from Summit County along with public safety communications centers, the Medical Examiners Office, Metro Regional Transit Authority, Akron/Summit Red Cross Chapter, Akron General Medical Center, Akron Children's Hospital, Summa Hospitals, Salvation Army, Amateur Radio personnel and 55 volunteers.

The exercise scenario was a severe thunderstorm with lightning strikes causing a panic driven, sold-out crowd to suffer injuries from falling trees, trampling and being struck by lightning. Blossom Music Center is very community oriented and tries to conduct some type of public safety exercise every couple of years. Exercises help build relationships between all facets of emergency response and also test the plans that already exist in Summit County.



Mission

Summit County Emergency Management leads, coordinates and supports the emergency management system, in order to protect lives and prevent loss of property from all hazards.

Training

"Animals in Disaster"

July 23rd

Oliver Ocasek Government Building
Open to the Public

"Disaster Mental Health"

July 23rd at 6:00 pm

Summa Professional Building South

Or July 31st at 3:00 pm

Akron General Medical Center
Open to the Public

"Emergency Operations Center"

July 24th

Akron/Summit EOC

EOC Representative and elected
officials

White House Shuffles The Deck

On June 6, the White House announced plans to reorganize a number of federal agencies that deal with homeland security issues into a single cabinet-level department. FEMA, the Immigration and Naturalization Service, the Customs Service, the Secret Service, the Federal Protective Service and the Transportation Security Administration would fall under the Department of Homeland Security. Although the proposal will not harden into reality until the end of the year, the Department of Homeland Security has generated support from first responder organizations and other groups involved in homeland security issues. It is hoped that the proposed change will provide better information, communication and resources to local communities. There are still many unanswered questions but this reorganization has set up one central point of communications at the federal level.

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Visit us on the web at:
www.co.summit.oh.us/executive/ema.htm

How Do You Get To Carnegie Hall? Practice, Practice, Practice

Summit County Emergency Management conducted a Weapons of Mass Destruction SWAT training for 60 SWAT members. Participants included personnel from the Akron Police, Barberton Police, Critical Response and Rescue Team, Cuyahoga Falls Police, Ohio State Highway Patrol and the Summit County Sheriff's Office. The three-day training was held in March 2002 and was instructed by Foreign Travel Intelligence Training Institute (FTI) of Texas. The crew of six instructors covered a wide variety of topics dealing with weapons of mass destruction including chemical and biological weapons, protective intelligence, medical threat assessment, operator care considerations, decontamination concerns, operations planning in a hazardous

environment and physical defense. At the conclusion of the classroom training, the SWAT members were able to test their new skills with a hands-on practical training held at the old Brown & Graves site in Akron. Each team was able to preplan their entry into the building and use any resources that they may have needed to perform the task at hand. Different techniques were used by the teams to approach the same scenario.



Trainers Dave Harville and Doug Smith assist SWAT members with personal protective equipment.

✓ Disaster Supplies Checklist ✓

The next time disaster strikes, you may not have much time to act. Prepare now for a sudden emergency. Assemble supplies you may need whether you are sheltering from a tornado or

winter storm or if you need to evacuate your home.

Store items in an easy-to-carry container such as a backpack or duffle bag.

- ✓ Radio and flashlight (battery-powered) and plenty of extra batteries
- ✓ Water-3 day supply (1 gallon per person per day), store water in sealed, unbreakable containers; Identify the storage date and replace every six months.
- ✓ Food, non-perishable packaged or canned and a non-electric can opener
- ✓ First aid kit and prescription medications
- ✓ Blankets or sleeping bags
- ✓ Extra pair of glasses
- ✓ Credit cards and cash
- ✓ Extra set of car keys
- ✓ Family physicians list
- ✓ Clothing, rain gear and shoes
- ✓ Important family information; the style and serial number of medical devices such as pacemakers
- ✓ Special items for infants, elderly or disabled family members

