



CERT



NASSAU COUNTY

BRUCE A. BLAKEMAN  
NASSAU COUNTY EXECUTIVE

MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

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COUNTY, STATE  
&  
FEDERAL  
ONE TEAM



THE CREW OF OEM AND DPW WORKERS SENT TO BUFFALO

# Shuffled Off To Buffalo

-R. DeLucia

Christmas Eve and making preparations for the coming holiday when a text comes through on the work phone. I swipe, open the phone to check the message expecting to see the usual Merry Christmas or Happy Holiday. Instead I see a request for volunteers to head up to Buffalo to help with the massive snow storm that just dumped multiple feet of lake effect snow on the entire surrounding area. The word we were receiving was that Erie County was hit hard and in desperate need of help ASAP. Within only a few minutes we had a team of four from The Office of Emergency Management (OEM) that were willing and able to make the long journey up the New York State Thruway to assist Buffalo with whatever it was they needed us to do in order to return to some semblance of normalcy. We would be accompanied by another team of Nassau County employees with the equipment to handle just such an event. Nassau County's Department of Public Works (DPW)

CONT. ON NEXT PAGE



answered the call and were also about to sacrifice a week away from their families for what we all considered a great cause. Fortunately we were all able to spend Christmas day and the remainder of Hanukkah with our loved ones before embarking on our mission. The scheduled departure was set for 6am on Monday December 26th.

Erie County had requested two of our Argo crafts which are eight wheeled amphibious vehicles that can accommodate tank like treads which would allow it traverse even the deepest snow.

These were expected to be used for possible search and rescue operations. They also asked for vehicles to assist in snow removal. This request was handled by DPW who brought two large Payloaders. All equipment was loaded onto trailers and assembled at Christopher Morley Park to await a Police escort that would take us the distance up to Buffalo. Due to the size and weight of the trailers being towed, we were limited to a speed of between 50 and 60 miles per hour. Needless to say, it was a long arduous journey lasting about 11 hours. Upon arrival into Buffalo, we were all excited to begin the work which we were called on to do but after a long day of driving we were also happy to get settled into our hotel rooms and rest up for the long days that were to come.

Bright and early the next morning, Tuesday December 27th, we were heading the hour and fifteen minutes from Rochester back into Buffalo. The highways into the city still remained closed to normal traffic and now with daylight we were able to get a better understanding of how bad the snow actually was. Driving in we were surprised at how little snow was on the route but as we approached downtown it became clear that our help was desperately needed and our arrival was greatly appreciated. Cars were buried, frozen in place on whatever journey they were attempting to make.

Homes had snow covering windows and doors making an exit next to impossible. CONT. ON NEXT PAGE



OEM's Argo vehicles at the staging area in Buffalo.



DPW Payloader awaiting deployment.



Residents attempting to dig out.



Car buried in the middle of the road





Argo blocking road for DPW to clear snow



Snow mounds as high as traffic lights



DPW payloaders working to move snow so trucks can make deliveries



A gracious welcome homes

The people that were able to get out faced extreme cold that lingered and were forced to walk in the streets to make it to their destinations. Pedestrians made DPW's job of clearing snow even more difficult and dangerous. Wondering why so many people would be wondering the streets and attempting to drive in these treacherous conditions, we rolled down a window and asked. The response was heartbreaking and was almost always the same, they had run out of food, milk, formula and diapers for their children and were desperate. This gave us more incentive to get the job done but it also drove home the importance of being prepared. Preparedness is something we try to impress on new CERT members and this storm made it all too relevant.

By the end of the week, we had helped clear over fifty roads in the effort to get Buffalo back on its feet. Working in primarily residential neighborhoods, we were able to interact and speak with the locals who for the most part were extremely thankful and happy to see us.

I think I speak on behalf of all of us from OEM and DPW when I say that we are extremely proud to have been able to help out and would do it again without hesitation if necessary.

I cannot stress enough the importance of preparedness. Having a bag in your car that has necessary supplies to last a few days. Having extra food and water on hand at home for extended periods when outside travel may be impossible. Also, you cant forget the importance of your own health. Keeping yourself in condition to be able to shovel deep snow or walk through inclement weather is an aspect of preparedness that we often overlook.

Arriving back in Nassau County on Friday December 30th to a crowd of cheering people and news media was more than we expected but seeing this helped us to realize the importance of our mission and also left us with a great sense of pride and accomplishment that we won't soon forget.



# How to Protect Yourself from Winter Weather

**IF YOU ARE UNDER A WINTER STORM WARNING, FIND SHELTER RIGHT AWAY**

Know your winter weather terms:

## Winter Storm Warning

Issued when hazardous winter weather in the form of heavy snow, heavy freezing rain, or heavy sleet is imminent or occurring. Winter Storm Warnings are usually issued 12 to 24 hours before the event is expected to begin.

## Winter Storm Watch

Alerts the public to the possibility of a blizzard, heavy snow, heavy freezing rain, or heavy sleet. Winter Storm Watches are usually issued 12 to 48 hours before the beginning of a Winter Storm.

## Winter Weather Advisory

Issued for accumulations of snow, freezing rain, freezing drizzle, and sleet which will cause significant inconveniences and, if caution is not exercised, could lead to life-threatening situations.

## Know Your Risk for Winter Storms

Pay attention to weather reports and warnings of freezing weather and winter storms. Listen for emergency information and alerts. Sign up for your community's warning system. The Emergency Alert System (EAS) and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Weather Radio also provide emergency alerts.

## Preparing for Winter Weather

Prepare your home to keep out the cold with insulation, caulking and weather stripping. Learn how to keep pipes from freezing. Install and test smoke alarms and carbon monoxide detectors with battery backups. Gather supplies in case you need to stay home for several days without power. Keep in mind each person's specific needs, including medication. Remember the needs of your pets. Have extra batteries for radios and flashlights. If you are unable to afford your heating costs, weatherization or energy-related home repairs, contact the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) for help.

## In Case of Emergency

Be prepared for winter weather at home, at work and in your car. Create an emergency supply kit for your car. Include jumper cables, sand, a flashlight, warm clothes, blankets, bottled water and non-perishable snacks. Keep a full tank of gas.

## Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)

Sign up for email updates about coronavirus from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Learn the symptoms of COVID-19 and follow CDC guidance. If you are able to, set aside items like soap, hand sanitizer that contains at least 60 percent alcohol, disinfecting wipes, and general household cleaning supplies that you can use to disinfect surfaces you touch regularly

# CERT Continuing Education

## What is a Compass, how do you use it, and why you should have one?

A compass is a fairly simple device. Usually a circular instrument with floating magnetic needle. The needle is influenced by the earth's magnetic field and is attracted to and points to earth's magnetic north. By knowing where north is, you now can find the other cardinal directions.

### **KNOWING THE PARTS OF A COMPASS**

What's known as the 'housing' encases the moving parts - most importantly, the needle. The needle will usually have a red end or a more ornate design, and it is this end that will point to magnetic north (more on that later). The housing will usually sit on a rectangular base plate, on which will be marked scales in both metric and standard units for taking accurate distance measurements on maps, and a 'direction of travel arrow' to aid in orienting yourself. For reading a compass, it's helpful to think in terms of degrees (north being 0 or 360 degrees, and south being 180 degrees) rather than cardinal directions, as those terms don't allow you to be quite specific enough.

### **USING YOUR COMPASS TO FIND NORTH**

The first thing you'll need to know is how to find north. The earth's naturally occurring magnetic field causes the north and south poles to have opposing charges, allowing the magnetized needle to point the direction of magnetic north.

It's important to remember that magnetic north is not the same as true north, which would point toward the Earth's exact rotational axis. The difference in degrees between the two directions is known as declination. (While determining declination is a skill any seasoned navigator must possess, we'll leave that until you acquaint yourself with the basics.) Any USGS map will note the declination in the top, and you'll simply need to adjust all readings by the number of degrees specified.

When you are ready to use your compass to take a reading, make sure you're clear of metal structures and power lines or anything else that could influence magnetism and prevent your compass from working properly. Even small objects like batteries, watches, flashlights, and pocket knives can influence your needle if close enough.

And finally, we're ready to take a reading. Hold the compass as level as you can in your palm, elbow resting on your torso and bent to a 90 degree angle. Make sure that the needle is able to move freely (i.e., not touching the housing). Turn the compass dial so that the orienteering arrow points toward the north the needle has established. From this reading, you can establish any direction you need. This skill is the basis of navigation, and will be your first step on the path to becoming a master navigator.

**Continued in next month edition.**





# Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Services (RACES)



On December 1st RACES and the CERT communications group met for our monthly meeting. We were happy to welcome several CERTs from the last basic class join us. There was not much change in the business portion of the meeting. That said, we started 2023 off a little early with a roll out of a few minor procedural changes. In 2023, we will implement more of Roberts Rules and Procedures in order to maintain an orderly flow at the meetings. Simply put, the membership will need to be recognized prior to speaking or asking a question. Our meeting updated the membership with pertinent news and information related to RACES, CERT and as well as our sister organizations. Normally after the business portion we would turn to training, but we suspended the training in order to bring the membership a year end report.

In December, of each year we give our overview of the past year as well as a look forward to what is planned for 2023. This gave our members the time to ask question and/or voice concerns. This forum is very beneficial for us to gage what has worked in the past year and what we need to improve on in the future. We were very pleased to hear the member over whelmingly agreed they would like more hands-on trainings and exercises in 2023. After a brief discussion, RACES Officer also gave their year end reports. We also recognize a few members who have gone above and beyond. This year **Arnie KC2CTI** and **Gladys KC2YFT** received a certificate of appreciation for acting as net control operator or as the back-up NCS each week for the Monday evening ARES / RACES net. **Robin KC2SYM** received a certificate of appreciation for overseeing the Monday night net operations. **Rich KAE5537** (GMRS call) received a certificate for prefect meeting attendance. In closing, Nassau County Chief Radio Officer Bob Long KC2PSN gave his report as well as his closing comments. We look forward to continuing our mission in 2023.

If you are interested or just curious about Emergency Communications we invite you to attend our meetings and trainings. The next RACES / CERT Communications meeting will be held on January, 5th, 2023 at 7:30pm in the lecture hall at 510 Grumman Road West, Bethpage NY. Hope to see you there.

**“Wishing everyone a Happy Holiday Season and a Happy, Healthy and Prosperous New Year”**

73  
Bob Long, KC2PSN  
RACES Chief Radio Officer



If you SEE Something SAY Something



## Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Services (RACES)



### RACES

RACES / CERT Communication meetings are open to all and we offer two types of training in 2023. Our first training will be in the business portion of the meetings focusing on ICS forms, what they are used for as well as how to fill them out. The second training will immediately follow the meeting. This training will be on various subjects related to what we do as volunteers serving our community. Please check out our trainings and see what skill sets you may need to refresh or find interesting.

Meetings are held the first Thursday of each month in the lecture hall and start at 1930 hours (7:30pm). The first quarter trainings are listed below. Please note that we may need to adjust or change trainings if the need arises but we will do our best to stay on schedule.

#### *Business portion / After meeting training*

January ICS 201 / ICS 201

February ICS 202, 203 / Plain Language

March ICS 204, 205, 205A / Leadership

# Calendar of Events

## January

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1 New Years Day	2	3	4	5 RACES Meeting 7:30pm	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

## February

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2 RACES Meeting 7:30pm	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28				



**CERT Division 1 Meeting**  
**7:00pm**

CERT  
DIV1  
Meeting



**RACES Meeting**  
**7:30pm**

## Important Dates

RACES Meeting - 7:30pm Thursday January 5th, February 2nd

New Years Day - January 1





**NASSAU COUNTY CERT COORDINATORS**

**BOB CHIZ & RICK DELUCIA  
OEMCERT@NASSAUCOUNTYNY.GOV**

**DIVISION 1**

**DIVISION SUPERVISOR  
BILL PAVONE  
NASSAUCERTDIV1@YAHOO.COM**

**DIVISION 2**

**DIVISION SUPERVISOR  
MARVIN STEIN  
CERTDIV2NASSAU@GMAIL.COM**

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