



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) Volunteers at BP MS 150

New Braunfels, Texas –New Braunfels CERT members volunteered at last weekend’s BP MS 150, which was a two-day fundraising cycling ride organized by the National Multiple Sclerosis (MS) Society. This ride is the largest event of its kind in North America. CERT is an emergency preparedness program supported by the Department of Homeland Security. Volunteer citizen members receive special training to enhance their ability to support City first responders and all other City departments during emergency/disaster events.

The 180-mile journey for MS from Houston to Austin had breakpoints positioned every 8-15 miles. Over 13,000 riders participated, with 3,000 volunteers supporting the breakpoint stop efforts. NBCERT sent a 10 person team to help at breakpoint #2 in Buescher State Park, in Bastrop. Riders paused in the park, having work done on their bikes, getting refreshments or taking a quick break before trekking forward.

Volunteers included Vicki Brown-Adams, who joined NBCERT in February 2012 as part of the 4th class of volunteers trained. She is also currently enrolled in City University, an annual program that provides citizens with the opportunity to learn about the City’s services and operations first-hand. Vicki has a BA in Sociology and works full-time for The San Antonio Council on Alcohol and Drug Abuse. She volunteered with the American Red Cross prior to becoming a CERT member and is so dedicated that she took three days of vacation to attend the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Public Information Courses provided by the Texas Department of Public Safety Emergency Management Division during a training in San Marcos earlier this month.

“New Braunfels is a great place to live and I want to give back by assisting others in being prepared in the event of a disaster,” said Vicki Brown-Adams. “CERT members prepare continually to be called out to respond to a disaster by training on various topics. We gained hands-on experience during the bicycle breakpoint by guiding bicyclist safely on and off the race course. Event layout, proper positioning of volunteers, use of flags, hand signals, radios and bull horns were some of the skills learned at the BP MS 150 ride.”

She went on to say, “These skills will be utilized in training other CERT members and valuable when assisting emergency responders in the future with traffic control, fire scenes, motor vehicle incidents, or large scale community events.”

“Vicki has been identified to support the City’s official Public Information Officer designees by delivering and monitoring information through various social media outlets during a CERT activation in an emergency situation,” said Sheri Masterson, New Braunfels Public Information Officer. “CERT members bring

a variety of existing skills and consistently demonstrate a willingness to broaden their knowledge and training in order to facilitate a wide range of support roles.”

Approximately 85 New Braunfels volunteers have been trained in the previous six classes and the next session is offered from April 26th – 28th. Topics covered during the training included: emergency preparedness, disaster psychology, light search and rescue, medical operations, basic fire suppression, terrorism and information on the CERT organization.

“CERT is a 501c3 nonprofit and is soliciting donated materials and equipment to help them be a better equipped team when they are called upon to assist in emergency situations here in New Braunfels,” said Steve Harris, City of New Braunfels Emergency Management Coordinator. “I encourage community members who are willing to contribute resources or become involved in the program to contact CERT at info@cnbcert.org or 830-221-5518.”

Additional information on the program is available at www.nbtexas.org/cert or by contacting Steve Harris at sharris@nbtexas.org.

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Photos attached – Note, Vicki Brown-Adams is pictured third from the left in the group photo.