Don’t overlook donations and volunteers in your community when you are working on LEPC events. By leveraging volunteers, donations from local vendors, tribal partnerships and commitments from local, state and federal partners the Southern Southeast LEPC put on a preparedness event for less than $1,000 – almost all of which was used to provide starter “go kits” for 150 students and teachers who attended the event.

– Brian Templin, LEPCA Co-Chair
Someone you want to recognize? Send your message to Mariel Fonteyn at mariel.fonteyn@alaska.gov or 907-428-7024
LEPCS AROUND THE STATE

- Nome LEPC handed out safety vests at their recent fair; the vests have been seen in use throughout the community.
- North Slope Borough LEPC is continuing to grow their LEPC and has completed one SCERP so far.
- Northwest Arctic Borough LEPC has a weekly radio spot to discuss preparedness.
- Petersburg is working to convert their disaster response plan to an EOP.
- Sitka held a mass fatality workshop and is in the process of elevating the local dam, a process that has created ongoing water concerns for the town.
- Valdez has implemented ALICE training for their schools and hospitals.
- Fairbanks held another successful preparedness expo; they are partnering with UAF to provide training to people over 50 in the community.
- Matsu has reduced meeting frequency to every other month and tries to have a specific topic and guest speaker for each meeting.
- Copper River worked with RuralCAP and UAF to get preparedness training to their 7th and 8th graders.
- Anchorage held a youth summit with their sister city in Japan and partnered with AARP to hold a successful preparedness expo.
- Juneau updated bylaws to include a vulnerable populations representative seat. Planning has begun for 2015 biennial preparedness expo.
- Ketchikan held a successful full-scale airport exercise; their CERT program is growing and gaining community support.
- Kenai Peninsula Borough is working closely with industry partners to develop joint exercises; working with local amateur radio partners to address communications deficiencies.
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Lunch was prepared and served by the local Red Cross Disaster Kitchen team with food donated by the local Alaska Commercial stores. Every kid left with lots of good information, a fun day and a start to their very own emergency kit.

Friday night the community was invited to visit booths and hear Cindy Wortman, a local resident who survived more than a month in the Prince of Wales wilderness with her family after their boat sank off the coast in February of 1979. The family’s story was documented in the book Almost Too Late by Elmo Wortman. The family’s story inspired the movie Anything to Survive which was released in 1990. Cindy’s talk on the psychology of survival was fascinating. Cindy shared with the crowd that one of the things she credits her survival to is the simple fact that she never saw the outcome otherwise – she survived in large part because she believed she would.

On Saturday the community was invited to attend hands on classes on boat maintenance, local edibles, cold water survival and CPR. Kids and adults were also invited to attend Kids Don’t Float sessions at the Craig Aquatic Center.

The entire fair was done using donations and commitments from other agencies. The LEPC spent a total of $1,000 for the entire weekend and there was no charge for any session or class (other than the CPR class). LEPC funds were used to purchase items (bags, mini first aid kits and water bottles) that were included in the “starter emergency kits” that were distributed to every student. The kits also included flashlights, emergency whistles, space blankets and family emergency planning information. Leveraging volunteers, donations from local vendors, tribal partnerships and commitments from state and federal partners was critical to the success of the SSLEPC’s first preparedness fair. The LEPC has decided to do a public fair biannually and to conduct a fair dedicated to helping prepare Prince of Wales Island communities for organized emergency response on the off years. We are looking forward to working with communities in 2015 and another public fair in 2016.

For more information about the Prince of Wales preparedness fair please feel free to contact Brian Templin, SSLEPC Chair at planner@craigak.com or Stacey Mank, Public Health Nurse at stacey.mank@alaska.gov.