



The Beacon

Nebraska Emergency Management Agency



In This Issue

Page

- 1-3 Mardell Hergenrader Retires
- 4 Applicant Briefings, National Flood Insurance Program Class and Ice Meeting Held
- 5 Chili Cookoff Winners Honored
- 5 Citizen Corps Contacts
- 6 Ft. Calhoun Nuclear Station Evaluated Exercise Held, Mary Baker Named State Hazard Mitigation Officer and Tim McConnell Named McPherson County Director

COVER PHOTOS Above: Maj. Gen. Daryl Bohac, director of NEMA, and Al Berndt, assistant director, congratulate Mardell Hergenrader, grants and preparedness manager, at her retirement recognition. Below: Mardell's husband, Allan, joins in on the celebration.





Maj. Gen. Daryl Bohac, director of NEMA, presents Mardell Hergenrader, manager of the grants and preparedness section at NEMA, with an adjutant general's coin in honor of her retirement.



Assistant Director Al Berndt extends his appreciation to Mardell Hergenrader at a recognition event for Hergenrader who retired from NEMA on Dec. 27, after 24 years.

NEMA Honors Mardell Hergenrader on Occasion of Her Retirement After 24 Years

Three months shy of 25 years with the Nebraska Emergency Management Agency/State Civil Defense Agency, **Mardell Hergenrader** is hanging up her checkbook as grants and preparedness section manager.

When she started as a secretary with the agency in April 1989, Hergenrader said she didn't know much about the job. She had worked in the private sector previously.

"I didn't know there was civil de-

fense or emergency management when I started," she said.

Despite not initially knowing much about the agency, she had a successful career. Hergenrader was named Employee of the Year for the Military Department in 1999 and Supervisor/Manager of the Year in 2011. NEMA is part of the Military Department.

First Time P.C. User

Hergenrader began her career with NEMA as a secretary. As a staff assistant for the training department in her early years here, she was the first and only staff member with a P.C.

"I didn't know how to use it," she said.

After working as a staff assistant I and II, Hergenrader became a federal aid administrator and worked



In addition to co-workers, friends and family were among those who honored Mardell Hergenrader at her retirement party at NEMA on Dec. 20. From left, her friend Linda Dabelstein, husband Allan Hergenrader, Mardell Hergenrader, son David Hergenrader, daughter Jolene Crawford and son-in-law Jay Crawford.

[Continued on page 3](#)

and the citizens of the State of Nebraska since starting with the agency on March 13, 1989.

The contributions she has made to the agency in her role as Grants and Preparedness Manager are greatly appreciated. Furthermore, the dedication she has shown first to the State Civil Defense Agency and later to NEMA is commendable.

On behalf of the staff of NEMA, congratulations are in order for a job well done. As a well-deserved recipient of both the Employee and Supervisor/Manager of the Year, her approach to retirement will surely be as spectacular. Best wishes for a happy and relaxing retirement."

When asked what she will miss most, Hergenrader says simply:

"The people I work with."

Hergenrader doesn't know how many local emergency managers she has worked with through the years, but knows she's worked with about

150 different agency staff members.

The job also gave her an opportunity to see the State of Nebraska.

"I've been to every corner of the state and in between," Hergenrader said. That's been rewarding."

New Facility

"One of the bright spots of my career is moving to the new facility and being able to finish my time in such a beautiful, clean space.

After years in a bunker 20-feet underground, a little sunlight shining in her office has been a welcome change.

Hergenrader is looking forward to organizing photographs, spending time with her grandchildren (a six-year old granddaughter and one on the way, arriving in May).

Hergenrader has visited all the states except North and South Carolina, North Dakota and Alaska so she hope to do some traveling with her husband to add those states to her list.



From left, Mardell Hergenrader, Sue Krogman and Dan Hiller (all current NEMA employees) were recognized in 1995 for completing the emergency management professional development series.

with the office of domestic preparedness, on grants. In 2002 was promoted to the preparedness section manager.

Assistant Manager Al Berndt said he had to convince Hergenrader that she was the right person for the job. Eleven year's later, Berndt knows he made the right call promoting Hergenrader to the position.

"She has done a tremendous job," Berndt said.

Greatly Appreciated

Berndt awarded Hergenrader a certificate honoring her for her contribution to the agency. The certificate read:

*"With best wishes and great admiration the staff of Nebraska Emergency Management Agency expresses heartfelt thanks and congratulations to **Mardell Hergenrader** for her commitment and service to Nebraska Emergency Management Agency*



Mardell Hergenrader in her NEMA office at the Joint Forces Headquarters building on the National Guard Base in Lincoln.

Nikki Weber Named New Grants and Preparedness Section Manager

Nikki Weber will start as Grants and Preparedness Section Manager on Dec. 30.

Weber has served as exercise training officer and federal grants administrator/grants unit supervisor while at NEMA. She was recognized as the Military Department's Manager/Supervisor of the Year for 2013.





Applicant Briefings Held

NEMA Public Assistance Unit Supervisor Donny Christensen speaks at an applicant briefing for Federal Disaster 4156. Briefings were held in Wayne, Grand Island and Chadron for the declaration which provides assistance for emergency work and repair or replacement of disaster-damaged facilities in nine counties impacted by severe weather Oct. 2-6.



National Flood Insurance Program Class Held

Shandi Teltschik, a Federal Emergency Management Agency specialist with the National Flood Insurance Program at Region VII, teaches a FEMA 273 course which was offered Dec. 2-5 at Papio-Missouri River Natural Resource District, in Millard. The course focused on managing floodplain development through the National Flood insurance Program. Participants learned about risk determination and mapping, base flood elevation considerations, floodplain regulations and permitting processes, the NFIP program and solving floodplain management problems. The other two instructors were: Brian Varrella, Ft. Collins, Colo. Floodplain Administrator and Wayne Berggren, Reg VI NFIP Group Supervisor. The class was hosted by the Papio-Missouri NRD, and the Association of State Floodplain Managers.



Annual Ice Meeting

Above: The Annual Lower Platte River ice preparedness meeting was held Dec. 17 at the Papio-Missouri River Natural Resources District. Top Right, Curtis Miller of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers discusses ice conditions reporting and bottom right; Amanda Grint of the Papio-Missouri River NRD discusses explosives procedures and a contract update.





NEMA Exercise Training Staff Win Military Department Chili Cookoff with Fabulous Cyclone Chili

Complete with cactus, serrano peppers and tomatillos, NEMA's team of amazing chilli chefs won grand champion and most original categories of the 2013 Chili Cookoff. Head Chef Chuck Chase earned the honor of wearing the prize apron. (His recipe, his honor.) Chase is already planning next year's recipe in hopes of repeat victory. Pictured above are Brandon Burton, exercise training officer (ETO); Dave Reisen, unit supervisor; Chef Chuck Chase, ETO, and Roger Conrad, ETO.



Points of Contact

Tri-County/Dodge

Tom McMahon – Director
United Way of the Midlands
1805 Harney St.,
Omaha, NE 68102
402-522-7930

Southeast Region

Wayne Svoboda – Director
Volunteer Partners
215 Centennial Mall S, Ste. 340
Lincoln, NE 68508
402-441-7441
director@volunteerpartners.org

East Central Region

Tim Hofbauer – Director
City of Columbus/Platte County
Emergency Management
2610 14th St.,
Columbus, NE 68601
402-564-1206
pccem@megavision.com

North Central Region

Lynn Beland – Director
343 G St., Burwell, NE 68827
308-214-0790
beland@nctc.net

South Central Region

Jon Rosenlund - Director
City of Grand Island/Hall County
Emergency Management
100 E. First St., Grand Island, NE 68803
308-385-5362
jonr@grand-island.com

Panhandle Region

Jessica Davies
Wellness/Volunteer Coordinator
Panhandle Public Health District
808 Box Butte Ave., Hemingford, NE 69348
308-487-3600
jdavies@pphd.org



www.nema.nebraska.gov

(402) 471-7421

Toll Free (877) 297-2368

Fax: (402) 471- 7433

Governor Dave Heineman

State Homeland Security Director

Lt. Governor Lavon Heidemann

NEMA Director

Major General Daryl Bohac

Assistant Director

Al Berndt

NEMA is charged by Nebraska statute to reduce the vulnerabilities of the people and communities of Nebraska in terms of injury, loss of life and property damage resulting from natural, technological or man-made disasters and emergencies.

NEMA is responsible for coordinating the state response in any major emergency or disaster including the support of local governments as needed or requested, and coordinating assistance with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and other federal partners.

The Beacon

The Beacon is published monthly and includes emergency management news and activities from across the state. Please forward story ideas or photos for inclusion to:

Jodie Fawl

Public Information Officer

2433 N.W. 24th St.

Lincoln NE 68524

402-471-7428

jodie.fawl@nebraska.gov



[@NEMAtweets](https://twitter.com/NEMAtweets)



Ft. Calhoun Nuclear Station Evaluated Exercise Held

Representatives from Douglas County, Nebraska Emergency Management and the City of Blair work in the Regions 5/6 Emergency Operation Center during the December Federal Emergency Management Agency evaluated radiological exercise for the Fort Calhoun Nuclear Station. No issues were found by FEMA at this bi-annual evaluated exercise testing command and control for off-site safety. *Picture submitted by Bill Pook, Director of Region 5/6*

NEMA's Mary Baker Named State Hazard Mitigation Officer

Mary Baker, a planning specialist with NEMA, has been named the State Hazard Mitigation Officer.

Baker joined the agency in 2011 as a public assistance planning specialist.

"Part of the reason I wanted to take this role is because I see mitigation as the main purpose of emergency management. The better we mitigate the less loss of life and property we will sustain in future disasters," said Baker.



Baker

Sheriff Tim McConnell Named McPherson County Director

Sheriff Tim McConnell began his job as sheriff and director of McPherson County Emergency Management, Nov. 1.

McConnell's background includes three years with the City of Scottsbluff as a lieutenant with the fire department, where he earned certification as an emergency medical technician B and trained as incident commander. He worked as a deputy in Howard County, beginning in 2005, and in Keith County, beginning in 2008. He was assigned to the Paxton area, and was a member of the volunteer fire department.



McConnell