NEWS

CERT volunteers honored with presidential award

By Matthew Nash • April 27, 2022 1:30 am

Sequim Gazette photo by Matthew Nash A few Community Emergency Response Team members were honored under the President's Council on Service and Civic Participation last week for their thousands of hours of volunteer service. From left, Keith Koehler, Butch Zaharias, Assistant fire chief Dan Orr (presenter), Cindy Zechenelly, Judi Chapman, and Blaine Zechenelly received presidential awards. Not pictured are John Anzalotti, David Johannssohn and John Viada.

With thousands of hours of combined volunteer service in 2021, eight members of the Sequim area Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) received the 2021 President's Volunteer Service Award last week.

Keith Koehler, Blaine and Cindy Zechenelly received Gold awards for volunteering more than 500 service hours while John Anzalotti, Judi Chapman, David Johannssohn, John Viada, Butch Zaharias received the Silver award for working 250-499 hours.

Three of the eight award recipients were unavailable for the presentation on Thursday, April 21.

Dan Orr, Clallam County Fire District 3 assistant fire chief, presented the awards from KSQM 91.5 FM's meeting room in front of CERT's leadership.

"I'd give you all awards if I could," he said.

CERT, which trains citizens to better help the fire district during major emergencies, started in the Sequim area in 2016 and currently has 16 teams with 523 members.

Last year, some of their efforts included assisting with the COVID-19 vaccination drive-thru and the Community Point of Distribution food care packages during the pandemic.

The awards are part of the President's Council on Service and Civic Participation program led by AmeriCorps and Points of Light so that certified organizations can recognize volunteers. Read more at presidentialserviceawards.gov/about.

For information about CERT, visit ccfd3.org and click the "Services and Programs" tab.