

# CERT NEWS

COMMUNITY EMERGENCY RESPONSE TEAM

WINTER 2021

## 2021 CERT ACTIVITIES

*We sometimes offer new training opportunities and other events between newsletters that that we put on Better Impact. Please check your email and Better Impact regularly!*

*Did you know that CERT is still active, albeit virtually? We will be out and about soon and be able to engage the public in person so please be patient. Meanwhile, we are offering refresher classes in radio use, sanitation, safety, winter storm preparedness and much more. Oh, and don't forget, our CERT Happy Hour meetings. Keep your eye on Better Impact for more information!*



## CERT Board

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## A Note from the EOC

**A**s we weathered a terrifying onslaught of COVID in Southern California through the New Year, we now watch anxiously as the County, State, and Nation roll out the vaccines we've been waiting for. While the vaccine roll out has been beset with challenges, every inoculation gets us one step closer to the end of this pandemic. I know that many of you continue to wait for your shot, a chance to return to normal, while watching others celebrate on social media. Maybe you're over 65 and are in the 'virtual waiting room'? Maybe you're under 65, not a healthcare worker, without underlying health conditions, and find yourself asking, "When is it my turn?" The only reprieve I can provide is that it will be your turn, eventually. More vaccine becomes available every day, the production and supply chain are improving and more vaccine variety is entering the market. While we're *only* vaccinating 55,000 per week in Orange County, that number will start to increase, opening up appointments and new tiers soon.

Many of you have asked why CERT isn't being used to support these vaccine sites (Points of Distribution POD). I will tell you all we had weeks of discussions around this very issue, many of us CERT program managers encouraging the County to use the volunteers who have been vetted, trained, and who've participated in POD exercises over the years. Ultimately the decision was made for the County to hire staff in lieu of using volunteers. They recognized that many people are out of work, and the opportunity to hire hundreds of workers and put people to work greatly outweighed the use of volunteers. The OneOC volunteer sign up has only been used for medical providers looking to volunteer. No non-medical volunteers are being used for Operation Independence to date.

Now, that's the County efforts. Here at the City, we continue to explore and plan for vaccine distribution options in Laguna Beach. We have updated our POD plans, applied for a license from the State, and stand ready to open a local vaccine site as soon as the County or State will allow. For now, the County is putting all vaccine supply resources toward the Super Sites. If and when we can get vaccines for a local POD site, we will absolutely be looking to CERT to help support. You're all trained and many have experience in POD deployments (anyone remember the pumpkins?). You'll be a critical piece in our local deployment when vaccine becomes more readily available at the City level.

Lastly, the winter storm last month reminded us how we can't ignore those other risks constantly hanging over us here in LB. I spent quite a bit of time going through stories and articles about the 1998 storm that took the lives of 2 residents, and was humbled by the scale of the event. Your personal and neighborhood preparedness are critical, and be-it storms, fire, or pandemic, we must always remain vigilant.

Please continue to stay safe, keep each other safe, and reach out if there's anything we can do.

Brendan Manning, *Emergency Operations Coordinator*



PHOTO COURTESY OF BRENDAN MANNING

## CERT to Offer More Virtual Training

By Sonny Myers, Director

**O**ur CERT Board is working closely with the City of Laguna Beach to vet alternative training in a virtual realm. I'll be the first to admit it hasn't been easy but we hope to continue offering relevant topics of interest to keep our volunteers engaged. Log in to Better Impact for the latest news and virtual class opportunities.

And while I'm at it: now would be a good time for you to update your profile in Better Impact. Has your address changed, new phone or emails? Current information helps target our activity notifications so take a moment and please review your profile.

We just completed a survey of our volunteers to see how they view the CERT program. Thank you for your input. It will be very useful in helping us offer classes and programs to you in 2021.

Some good news. During the last City budget review, funds were allocated to purchase a new generator for CERT. We now have a clean, quiet Honda generator that can provide emergency power, charge cellphones and power computers safely. Thank you, Mayor Whalen and Assistant City Manager Shohreh Dupuis!

Stay safe, refresh your go-bag and check your emergency supplies. Check your smoke and carbon monoxide alarms.

Being prepared is no accident!



Sonny Myers says Thank You for CERT's new generator!

PHOTO BY SONNY MYERS

## From the Director

By Sonny Myers

**W**hat a long strange trip it's been...328 days so far since the National State of Emergency was declared. It has been tough. All of us have used different methods to cope with the gathering, dining, shopping, masks and the myriad of restrictions necessary to quell the pandemic. From what I am hearing, our CERT volunteers are doing a great job following the directions for our safety.

It looks like the numbers are getting better and if the trend continues, we'll get out of the purple stage and into the red stage. Now is the time to double down and remain mindful of all of the safety protocols.

Wash your hands, wear a mask, don't gather with those outside of your "Bubble". Please be safe and thanks for being strong.

## Wesley District's Neighborhood Efforts Result in Upgrades from the City

By Sandi Cain

**W**esley District resident DJ Owen organized a neighborhood meeting last fall after she and others on Marilyn Dr. and Driftwood Dr. realized the extent to which their area was a challenge for first responders. That meeting was attended by 50+ residents and members of city council as well as representation from the Police, Fire and Public Works sectors. Owen followed the time-tested method of using hand-delivered flyers to residents and some HOAs to encourage residents to attend.

In addition to learning about fuel modification plans from the city, this group was able to convince city officials that more 'no parking' areas and red curbs were needed in order to give first responders a better chance to, well, respond in an emergency and help

get people out. Those changes went into effect early this year. Next up will be a renewed focus on evacuation plans for this area of many dead-end streets.

I have worked on these issues with both the city and private property owners in the Wesley District for the past decade as there is always room for improvement and a need to educate new residents. New meetings and programs making readiness a priority are always welcome and necessary ways to keep our residents knowledgeable and safe.

CERT members can follow this



Wesley district residents along and adjacent to Ocean Vista Way worked with LBPD and LBFD to improve access through the addition of new 'red curb' zones.

PHOTO BY DJ OWEN

meeting model (if they haven't already) to improve both resident readiness and plans for evacuation when (not if) the time comes that those plans are needed in their own neighborhoods. You can check with the CERT leadership and EOC Brendan Manning to find out current plans in place and what actions can help the first responders when and if they are needed in your area—and then get that word out to your neighbors!

## The Covid-19 Effects on CERT

By Sandi Cain, newsletter editor

**I**t's one full year since Covid-19 was identified in the U.S., and when the first restrictions were issued the general thinking was that they'd be in place for a few months. We know better now. The pandemic has had dire consequences for many people/families/businesses and organizations and Laguna Beach CERT has been among them.

The virus has been a game-changer for everyone. We see it every day via media reports, among friends and sometimes during that properly masked shopping trip where the highlight might be waving at a neighbor. For CERT members, group training classes are no longer in-person; social events like the holiday party were cancelled; and even short callouts to help with things like traffic control or Red Flag patrol were restricted to just a few volunteers to meet social distancing protocols.

But under our new Emergency Operations Coordinator Brendan Manning, some CERT activities were able to proceed using (what else?) Zoom. To date we have had three refresher classes and a holiday "happy hour" using the Zoom platform, which filled the need for a little action and camaraderie.

We also used some of the 'down' time to contact each and every person who took the Laguna Beach CERT class to learn whether they have a continuing interest in the program (or not). Our little team of Sue Reese, Shannon Bryant Martinez, Janice Hayden, Sonny Myers and Sandi Cain glued their ears to the phone in order to contact every person who has taken the Laguna Beach CERT training, with some interesting conversations stemming from those calls. Some had moved away, a few said they took the class just for the skills and didn't want to be on regular email lists; and some happily suggested ideas for us to pursue once we are set free from Covid19. We also got suggestions for programs and training topics and feedback about social events. In all, it was a good way to touch base and talk about something other than "the virus."

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DO YOU REMEMBER THIS? FROM LA TIMES, FEBRUARY 9, 2021:

### "50 Years Ago, the Sylmar Earthquake Shook L.A., and Nothing's Been the Same Since

The Sylmar temblor, which struck 50 years ago, marked a keystone in the long arc of seismic knowledge and the practice of earthquake safety. The quake might not have been the Big One, but it still managed to wake California up to a danger that was largely unrecognized. The modern era of earthquake awareness and preparedness is deeply rooted in Sylmar."

Please go to: [LA TIMES SYLMAR EARTHQUAKE STORY](#)

*"I hope I don't ever see an earthquake like this, but I want to be prepared just in case!"*

—Shannon Martinez

*"I lived in the South Bay (Hermosa Beach) during the quake, changed my life forever."*

—Sonny Myers

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President Carter signed Executive Order 12127, effective April 1, 1979, establishing FEMA (8 years after Sylmar earthquake). Shortly after, in signing Executive Order 12148 on July 20, 1979, President Carter gave the agency the dual mission of emergency management and civil defense.

## CERT Staying in Touch While Staying at Home...

### Ideas Always Welcome!

**I**f you missed our survey calls and didn't get a chance to contribute, your time is NOW! We want members to suggest interesting, useful or fun ideas for CERT to consider. If you have something in mind, please email your idea to [lagunacert@gmail.com](mailto:lagunacert@gmail.com) for the board and EOC Brendan Manning to consider. If we use your proposal, you will get local notoriety with an interview in this newsletter as well as a useful item for your go-bag!

### Keep CERT Skills Fresh

**F**or those still going stir-crazy in this seemingly never-ending pandemic, here are some ideas of things you can do at home to keep CERT skills fresh and alleviate boredom until we are allowed to meet in person again.

**Refresh your own go-bag—**replace old bottles of water, make sure your flashlights still work—and replace those year-old breakfast bars and other supplies that have run low. Don't forget a go-bag for your pets, too, plus safe crates/carriers/cages for them.

**Check your home** to see how you can better secure things like your TV, water heater and other heavy household items in case of earthquakes.

**Talk to your neighbors—**especially new ones—about easy things they can do NOW to be ready to leave in an emergency. Make sure they know the designated evacuation routes and are aware that the neighborhood might be subject to intentional power outages staged by utility companies. Just as important, since you may be sitting in traffic, is to make sure to have at least half a tank of gas in your car at all times.

**Watch Better Impact for an upcoming class on how to pack and maintain your Go-Bag!**



## An Out-of-Town Perspective from Former Member Pilar Hemry

By Sandi Cain

**L**ike other regular folks in town, sometimes a CERT member has to move away. Our former board member Pilar Hemry was one of those. Though she is lucky enough to be able to come back with some regularity, she can't be a member of our CERT group anymore.

We miss her enthusiasm and contributions to the group, so we figured we'd check in with her on a recent trip to see what she's been up to in her new digs.

Below are some tidbits from our conversation.

### Is there a CERT group where you live now? If so, have you checked it out?

Yes, we have CERT here but not at the City level as of right now. It's only at the County level, so more like CMAP. I've been a Yavapai County CERT member for over a year now. I spend a lot of time in our EOC office location volunteering. It's been a great learning experience and I'm ever so grateful for all our Laguna Beach CERT training and all those that have mentored along the way.

### What do you miss the most about Laguna Beach CERT?

Our Team! We are so blessed to have the folks involved that we do. I learned SO much and had an amazing time doing so!

### Have you used any skills you learned in CERT for your 'regular' life since you left? Such as using your CPR skills, directing traffic (something we know you love!), or administering first aid?

I had a chance to use my traffic directing skills twice (yes, you know I love that and had a blast).

- We did a backpack pickup for one of the school districts (POD)

style. Guess who totally changed the route of everything to keep it all flowing? Did I mention it was 100 degrees out?

- Helped one of the local charities distribute food (113 degree heat, no shade, set up the traffic direction then started handing out to keep things moving).
- POD style Covid-19 Testing; I was a runner & booth assistant.
- EOC events, call Centers and daily operations assisting. (Grateful for the Opportunity we had in OC to be a part of the POD drills— little did we know at the time right?! But Wow, that sure came in handy! Haven't had any "active shooter drill opportunities out here yet, but some of the stuff we did during those drills are burned into memory and I have used tidbits)

### What else have you been up to with your 'free' time in your new location?

Let's just say that I'm never at a loss for things to do! Between hikes in our beautiful mountains & lakes and playing in my gardens, I became a Certified TRX Fitness trainer which married perfectly with my Wellness

Coaching biz. I love showing my clients how to eat better by making healthy swaps with food. Oh, and since I wasn't busy enough, I decided to start fueling my creative side again by becoming a "Chalk Couture" designer (crafting).

I love volunteering and have three amazing organizations that I'm involved with: Yavapai County EOC, Granite Mountain Hotshot Center (as volunteer Coordinator) and of course my Relay For Life Event for the American Cancer Society!

I'd love for you to come visit me one day! It's beautiful here in Prescott Valley, AZ.

## FOR OUR RADIO BUFFS:

### ITU PHONETIC ALPHABET (International Telecommunication Union)

A – Alfa (Al-fa)  
B – Bravo (BRAH-voh)  
C – Charlie (CHAR-lee)  
D – Delta (DELL-tah)  
E – Echo (ECK-oh)  
F – Foxtrot (FOKS-trot)  
G – Golf (GOLF)  
H – Hotel (HOH-tel)  
I – India (IN-dee-ah)  
J – Juliet (JEW-lee-ett)  
K – Kilo (KEE-loh)  
L – Lima (LEE-mah)  
M – Mike (MIKE)  
N – November (no-VEM-ber)  
O – Oscar (OSS-cah)  
P – Papa (pah-PAH)  
Q – Quebec (key-BECK)  
R – Romeo (ROW-me-oh)  
S – Sierra (SEE-air-ah)  
T – Tango (TANG-oh)  
U – Uniform (YOU-nee-form)  
V – Victor (VIK-tor)  
W – Whiskey (WISS-key)  
X – X-ray (ECKS-ray)  
Y – Yankee (YANG-key)  
Z – Zulu (ZOO-loo)

## CERT — doing the greatest good for the greatest number of people.

Has your cell phone number, cell provider or email address changed? We need to have accurate information in Better Impact in order to contact you in a disaster. Please go to Better Impact to update your profile.

### Log into your Better Impact account:

<https://app.betterimpact.com/login/volunteer>

Username: your email ~ Password: cert92651 (unless changed)

**And, please put your photo in Better Impact. We can help you take one that you like!**