

Emergency Preparedness Committee  
Bel Air Ridge Center – 2760 Claray  
Wednesday December 11, 2013 7pm

**Call to order:**

7:12pm

**Roll call (no new attendees)**

**Present**

Chuck Maginnis  
Buddy Jolton  
Gary Plotkin  
Joel Moss  
Leslie Stojka  
Irene Sandler  
Maureen Smith

**Affiliation/Title**

BABCNC Safety Chair, Bel Air Resident  
Casiano Estates  
Casiano Estates  
American Jewish University Resident  
Bel Air Ridge  
Bel Air Crest  
Bel Air Resident

**Introduction of Attendees:**

Everyone introduced themselves, and new at the meeting was Joel Moss who has a Master's in Public Health for Emergency and Disaster Management, has graduated from AJU and is interested in safety for surrounding communities.

**Approval of minutes:**

Buddy Jolton motioned to approve the October 16, 2013 minutes, Irene Sandler seconded, minutes approved.

**Nextdoor.com & White pages:**

Buddy asked what the benefits would be of these two tools for EP. Chuck responded that they are essential for Neighbor Watch and Emergency Preparedness (EP). Unless a community has most or all of it's resident's information, these tools would be very useful for filling in the gaps, or for individual use in meeting neighbors. As an example, he used Bel Air Association on how they split their 2700 residents into 12 block captain areas where Chuck was responsible several years ago for upper Bel Air Rd, along with arteries consisting of 250 homes. Each block captain was to plan a party to get to know their neighbors. Invitations were sent and mail boxes stuffed to involve the community. Covering subjects presented in earlier EP meetings this year, Chuck showed a few sample invitations where he felt having neighbors meet in a social setting with dinner and cocktails, would allow for neighbors to get to know each other and bind. He has since continued to write EP news to a list of 40 participants he has maintained and calls them "Masters of Disaster." He distributed a sample of his last email blast to them. From various emails, participants often responded with a variety of concerns ranging from trucks hogging the roads, lack of flag men, potholes, to HOA and political issues, which were of primary interest to homeowners at the time. Since all participant names and addresses were CC'd on each correspondence including doctors, nurses and individuals with other skills needed in an emergency, it would be easy for any of the 40 recipients to alert the others for an emergency by

placing a copy into "AOL Mail to be Sent" or as a "draft" in Gmail or Yahoo. This is the same model our EP Committee uses.

Buddy then mentioned that he had a few more pointed questions regarding his homeowners association and the terrific email Capt Johnny Green sent out to everyone on our list. Buddy asked how Capt Green received his email address. The explanation is that Capt Green is on the EP list and since everyone is CC'd similar to Chuck's list mentioned above, Capt Green simply responded to all on the list and the warning was issued to everyone, which is exactly how emergency notification is supposed to work. Warning everyone about strong dry winds and Red Flag alerts should be important to us all as the LAFD activates around 90 additional firemen on these occasions.

Buddy then explained that he and Candy Mintz received responses from their Casiano Estates mailing questionnaire with various information and are investigating their next course of action. Who will provide notifications, how do they avoid getting 5 messages from different people when corresponding and who should have access to their HOA list of names and phone numbers for notification purposes. Chuck's response was that Buddy and each HOA control their own distribution list and that the EP Committee list is an overlay and conduit to the HOA's for emergency notification and for meetings. The purpose behind the open list is networking so everyone can be notified from anyone on the list which gives all of us a greater probability of being notified on a timely basis.

Irene asked Buddy what he would do if he saw a fire coming. She suggested calling 911 first so they can advise you, and then, should you sound the alarm (notify residents) or wait for the fire department to do so. Joel suggested having a list moderator. The question is whether everyone should have access to the list and Gary suggested they could be blind copied (BCC'd). If Buddy was the team leader, he could notify Casiano, but should he notify the other HOA members on the EP list? Chuck suggested that the NC is again an overlay where it could help everyone to be alerted but that alerting their individual community is their decision to make, along with who in their community should be notified. Gary mentioned that he gets hundreds of emails a day with many duplicates citing other examples and how blind copying (BCC) might reduce unwanted emails. Irene mentioned that it is his choice to be removed from any lists and is Gary's personal preference to receive the emails he does. Irene also mentioned that you have to be careful about information distributed so as not to cause a panic. She feels that the fire dept is in a better position to make the decision on notification and to whom should be notified. Misinformation can also be detrimental. Joel suggested that we let the professionals like firefighters make their assessments and act upon their suggestions. Maureen said she would have welcomed an email mentioning to turn on the TV when the Getty fire struck 10 months or so ago, rather than smelling smoke and having no idea if there was an immediate threat, although it was on every local news channel.

It was then mentioned that not every community would have people like Rick at Bel Air Crest to make wise decisions on sounding the alarm, and then it depends on how much information each individual has to make a good decision regarding notification. The question was poised to Chuck as to what he would do if he received a call that a fire was near. Chuck said after asking for as much information as possible if possible and things were unclear, he would call 911 to

verify if it had been reported and if other information was available noting to the dispatcher that he is involved in EP and could help notify others in the area of an emergency. Joel felt that calling 911 without a known emergency might deprive someone else of reaching 911, and to call your local fire department first. Gary suggested having a list of all our local fire department phone numbers distributed. The problem with this is that if there is a fire or emergency, most calls will be unanswered as personnel will be unavailable or in transit to the fire.

The fire dept handling Bel Air Crest, Casiano and Roscomare is west of the 405 on Mulholland, Fire Station 109. If there is a fire in the area, Susan said that she was told the local fire station personnel would be out fighting the fire and would not be answering the phone. Most seemed to agree that if there was a fire reported to any of us, that it would be worth investigating further and someone suggested alerting Chuck who could then alert the others on the list. Chuck responded that suppose he was unavailable, then what. He then said that is the reason for needing redundancy, multiple contacts and why we have open copying so everyone can see the message and act accordingly.

Gary mentioned that their emergency kiosk could be available to send the information to the HOA representatives. In this situation it was said that the guards should not be given the authority to notify everyone. Gary and Irene helped refine this to say that the security guards should call their boss, who would then make those decisions. It was mentioned that having everyone call the guards would just produce busy signals and frustration. Buddy then referenced what Joel said earlier in setting up a chain of command. Chuck suggested ideally there would be 3 quadrants in the NC boundaries being east, central and west. Although ideal, this is not feasible, as there are not enough participants to make this work. In addition, a chain of command is highly unlikely since no one has volunteered to assist Chuck in sending an alert should an emergency arise, although Emergency Notification has been instituted. Chuck is unfortunately the only individual with instructions and password to perform verbal announcements in the event of an emergency.

Revisiting the agenda items of white pages and Nextdoor, Buddy, Gary and a few others found the White Page's link included with the agenda quite interesting as it lists all your neighbors by name and addresses, where you can see an aerial view of each home in the neighborhood. Nextdoor was then described by Chuck as having a social media format similar to Facebook, where neighbors could exchange directly with other neighbors as to what's happening in their community, social news and any alerts. The limitation of Nextdoor is that it's effectiveness depends on how many neighbors join Nextdoor. If you are the only one to sign up (which is free) or there are only a few neighbors who have joined, then it appears to have limited value. Chuck discussed aspects of Nextdoor for close to an hour with Marquis Olison, the Nextdoor.com representative. A few communities like one group in Cheviot Hills with 700 participants and a few other areas which have had issues like a strings of robberies, have had tremendous success in adding participants, and also deploying surveillance cameras from Dropcam, a different company, where videos can be shared or uploaded to youtube via wi-fi, for others to watch.

Chuck then summarized the other agenda items which have appeared in more detail in previous month's minutes available on the babcnc.org website, as meeting time became a factor. These

subjects included Placards, Satellite Phones, Sprinkler Systems, Supplies, EPAC drill from BA Ridge, Incident Map, Schools, the 5-Point Plan & Questionnaires. These topics will be reviewed again when more time permits.

Adjournment at 9:05 pm

Chuck Maginnis  
Submitted: January 5, 2014  
cmaginnis@babnc.org