

Emergency Preparedness Committee
Bel Air Ridge Center - 2760 Claray
Wednesday February 19, 2014 7pm

Call to Order & Roll Call:

7:15pm

<u>Present</u>	<u>Affiliation/Title</u>
Chuck Maginnis	BABCNC Safety Chair, Bel Air Resident
Buddy Jolton	Casiano Estates
Candy Mintz	Casiano Estates
Joan Herman	Bel Air Ridge
Nickie Miner	Benedict Canyon Association
Susan Reuben	Holmby-Westwood Association
Irene Sandler	Bel Air Crest
Maureen Smith	Bel Air Resident
Shelly Steier	Roscomare Valley Association
Nancy Fagan	Roscomare Valley Association
Valerie O'Brien	Laurel Canyon Association
Dan Palmer	Residents of Beverly Glenn
Barbara Rapoport	Residents of Beverly Glenn
Captain AJ Gonzales	LAFD Station 37

Introduction of Attendees:

Everyone introduced themselves, and new at the meeting is Joan Herman who is a member of BA Ridge Emergency Committee. Shelly Steier is heading up EP at Roscomare while Nancy Fagan who was the UCLA Emergency Nurse Manager for 25 years has interest in serving as the triage nurse should the need arise. LAFD Captain Gonzales has 25 years of experience being originally assigned to Station 71 for 9 years. He is currently at Fire Station 37 with Chief Campos and Capt. Telles, both of whom could not attend due to a last minute emergency. Nickie Miner is a board member with Benedict Canyon and is also a member of the BABCNC. Barbara Rapoport is a Member at Large on the board of Residents of Beverly Glenn and works with Dan Palmer on EP. Valerie O'Brien of Laurel Canyon Association, mentioned they are trying to increase awareness of EP and that our committee was a good place to learn more on how to accomplish that. They have just finished a large CERT campaign, and hopes to learn more from our experience and successes. Valerie works at Wonderland Elementary school and is also interested in Nextdoor.

Approval of minutes:

Buddy Jolton motioned to approve the January 15, 2014 minutes as amended, Maureen Smith seconded, minutes approved.

LAFD fire preparation presentation –escape routes & leaving early

Captain AJ Gonzales mentioned brush clearance is very important as LAFD stresses CERT and emergency preparedness. During an emergency both the police and fire dept will be stretched thin so we need to be prepared to be as self sufficient as possible, allowing them to take care of the fire. Irene asked if Captain Christopher Cooper is still in charge and Susan confirmed that he is and has also moved downtown. Susan asked if they were the only one implementing the City's 5 point plan Eric Garcetti recommended and if LAFD was going to help with this. Captain Gonzales responded that depending on the emergency, LAFD is relying on the communities to implement the plan on their own as they are short handed. Susan plans to ask Capt Christopher Cooper to send a letter to HOA heads asking them to participate. The website is www.lafd.org. Captain Johnny Green was transferred to another position downtown in charge of the fire inspectors. Chuck mentioned that everyone loved his Red Flag warnings to our 80+ EP list stating a concise informative summary of warnings and hopes one of the Chief's or Captain's will take his place warning us in the future. Susan agreed how valuable this has been, as did Candy. There are 2 on-duty Captains each day for the Battalion Chief which oversees 5-7 fire stations, with 3 shifts. And the Chief's rotate every 2 years or so as Chuck noted that Chief Campos will be leaving next month. Capt Gonzales said he would try to implement Red Flag day warnings hopefully in a daily plan as he has been added to our list. LAFD.org has a login to alert on red flag days which usually occur in September through December but are still flowing this year. Santa Ana winds usually blow 2-4 days. Valerie O'Brien was asked to introduce herself as Chuck welcomed her and commented that Tony Tucci had updated him on the positive results from LCA's CERT attendance and their striving to improve EP in their community. Their involvement will help us with emergency notification and other facets while implementing EP.

Capt AJ Gonzales then discussed the 1991 Oakland Hills fire where they were ill prepared and lost over 4000 structures. Over 3500 people were in those hills where 25 lost their lives and 400 were taken to the hospital. Residents made last minute decisions. The residents are actually the best judges as to how to get into or out of their neighborhoods. They know their area better than anyone else, including rush hour use of side streets. The maps are just a guide and include survival sites for those that could not evacuate. Survival sites are not designed for a large groups of people, like 100 and over. Winds often blow from the east to the west with fires traveling quickly. LAFD preaches evacuation and it might save your life. They try to save lives and homes but they are unable to put out most Santa Ana wind driven fires, as they will continue for days. He cited the Palisades fire a week ago where there was no wind and a small fire, but the traffic became a nightmare as residents were competing to get in and out disallowing the LAFD to get apparatus to the fire. It just takes one car to stall and all the rest are doomed as in the Oakland fire, many died in their autos. Know what your evacuation plan is. Irene asked when we should look to evacuate if a fire started in Griffith Park. Captain responded that if winds are blowing, it could take 30-45 minutes to get to us but not to wait on evacuating. Most people don't want to be inconvenienced so they wait. Then there's panic with 400 to 500 residents trying to get down a single winding road, where something is going to happen which will not be good. It also delays the fire trucks from arriving. Irene asked when Chuck or anyone else should sound the alarm for the BABCNC notification and his response is that it's a judgement call. Asked if the city will, Chuck mentioned that subject is later on the agenda with Alert LA County and Chris Ipsen was unable to make the meeting due to an important training situation but will attend our next BABCNC meeting on March 26. AlertLACounty.org is the recommended method for alert from the city. The message again is not to depend on the maps but to get out soon. Think of schools, churches and other large locations that might be safe if time does not allow evacuation, or an exit is blocked. Schools are typically good

because of large areas of concrete. Chuck mentioned John Thomas Dye, Harvard Westlake or even the Beverly Glenn Business Park which is more open with less trees.. Nickie mentioned that Benedict Canyon does not have anything in their area and Captain replied there is something on 1200 block of Meadbrook & 1200 block of Benedict Canyon are safe areas. They are noted on the map. Preplanning is again stressed verses using these places as being a last resort. Nickie asked about egress and ingress positions for traffic control and Captain told us that with smoke and fire, most people panic and it all depends on timing and availability of personnel as to what will be the best plans. Evacuate before it happens as personnel might already be dispersed in other areas to contain a fire. Joan asked if Beverly Glenn being congested already would be used disallowed for through traffic in an emergency to allow residents to leave. Captain used Palisades as example where they tried to block a street and almost got run over as people in emergencies what to get where they want to be. So there may be plans to have that but it takes personnel and we shouldn't count on it. The bigger roads will get you out but it all depends on conditions. There is no right or wrong answer other than get out early. It was suggested to make a list of what to bring, like pets and pictures, and have a plan before an incident, as panic sets in and our lives are the most important, we and our loved ones. It's human nature to want to get more and more and all of a sudden, we become part of the problem to the fire department providing help. Valerie mentioned the Kirkwood Bowl fire in the 70's was pretty big where over 35 homes were lost, there were pictures of people carrying their electronics. While at Station 71 he got many construction calls and emphasized being good neighbors. Maureen saw many similar situations with the San Francisco fire. Chuck said that on Bel Air Rd there is construction everywhere with cars parked up and down the street and with the winds, it would be a gridlock where a golf cart could not get through. Captain said that the residences above 1200 block of Bel Air rd are the ones in greatest danger. Although time is money, contractors should not have a parade of cement trucks blocking the street. They should be staged below Sunset. The Bel Air fire started on the valley side and blew over Mulholland. So even on Beverly Glenn, you might have only one way out which would be a mess with cars trying to turn around. Chuck asked if there was a gridlock, when might you get out of your auto with or without your keys and hoof it down to a more safe place near Sunset. A track runner can do a mile in just over 5 minutes and downhill, many might run in 10 minutes but another offered they can walk a mile in 20 minutes. It is a judgement factor but you won't outrun a fire with strong Santa Ana winds blowing. Asked if a swimming pool might be best and he suggested a house hoping the fire will over run the home as you don't know when to come up for air in a pool, and if the smoke will allow you to breathe. Valerie said that Bubba at their Laurel Canyon Association CERT training said plan and get out as the LAFD will likely not be able to respond in time. She heavily recommended CERT and that 11 people have been trained. Kirkwood Bowl is a good example of a potential hazard area. Chuck cited that CERT Captain Christopher Cooper has attended two meetings in the past. Irene asked about potential fires after a big earthquake, whether you leave your home. Chuck inserted that there are supposed to be over 27,000 isolated fires after a 7.2 earthquake. There is no blanket answer for the hills. A plan could be to relocate to a relative's home in the flat lands as an option but who knows which place is going to be safest or equipped with food, shelter and water. Captain Gonzales carries supplies in his auto. Participants then looked at the maps for 20 minutes for escape routes for their communities as this meeting was also designed to be a workshop. Captain AJ Gonzales then left to return to Fire Station 37 as they were short handed. He thanked everyone for being civic minded, caring, and helping distribute the message to our communities, again emphasizing to get out soon. He can be reached at

310.575.8537 with any questions. Everyone applauded for his great presentation and repeated warning to evacuate soon before it's too late.

Alert LA County Presentation

Chris Ipsen was scheduled to speak but was pulled at the last minute by his GM to instruct an Emergency Management course that only he was experienced to teach as a substitute. Chuck stepped for Chris first mentioning that Chris did not have the AlertLACounty pamphlets yet, perhaps due to budgeting. Candy received the print ready copy of the pamphlet (front and back) chuck sent out on Dec 12, 2013 to the safety group. Casiano told residents that they planned to explain what it is, how it works and as a heads up, to expect a copy with their next billing statement. A request was made for Chuck to place it on the BABCNC website and he said he would try. <http://www.lacounty.gov/wps/portal/alertla> is the website. Buddy mentioned that he signed up and it's relevant to your zip code. He luckily has had no warnings. Candy emphasized that it's for eminent problems or disasters, not Red Flag alerts. Chuck read some notes from a conversation with Chris and Candy mentioned that they can have up to 10 million recipients but only 40,000 have signed up. The way it works is that Chris and 4 other designated individuals can place street coordinates on a computer and the system could contact all the people in that quadrant. It will automatically send to all land line customers of ATT & Verizon. Residents using cable companies like Time Warner Cable, Charter or Cox, need to sign up as this is considered VOIP (requiring a modem which converts coax to voice). Cell phone users also need to sign up, which only takes 5-10 minutes including setting a password for first time users. Candy mentioned that they also send emails where they capture your email address when you sign up. Chris and the other gentlemen actually pull the trigger and their chain of command is for them to present to the GM. And with the GM's authorization, they release the messages. The voice messages can either be live recorded or computer synthesized. Capt Cooper told Candy that there are 14 parameters where we would be notified including fires, terrorist attacks, etc. Chuck again reiterated that BABCNC Safety Committee openly CC's their email announcements rather blind copying (BCC) for the purpose of emergency notification. He cited that the public information officers along with 911 all get the information from us, the public. So we are just another source of emergencies for our immediate communities in addition to Alert LA County. BABCNC uses Message Broadcast where Chuck can pull the trigger along with hopefully some other individuals to be designated. Chuck reiterated that if he received a quick emergency call that a fire was near with no other information, he would call 911 to further investigate the validity of any danger, Chuck feels the potential benefit of notifying hundreds to thousands of residents through our emergency notification list outweighs a call to 911 which was found not to be an eminent danger. He feels this is justified being in the communication business and knows that for every company which relocates or get a new phone number, the installing technician's call 911 as a test call to ensure it shows the correct address. If not, law suits could result from incorrect address dispatches. Alert LA County uses the same type of communication company that we use, Message Broadcast, except their's reside in New York verses in Newport Beach. He reiterated it's great for a NC where there is no monthly fee as the NC pay's it forward in \$25 increments with a ½ minute message costing 4 cents per recipient. That's \$4 for 100 messages. The council still has over \$45 left from it's \$50 investment after testing since last May, 2013. Irene asked for an update on having the kiosk security gate guards contact their manager to help pull the trigger and Candy responded that Gary contacted Centurion, and their Casiano security kiosk happens to be the command post for 10 different Centurion gated communities. Chuck asked how

many were in our boundaries and Candy was not sure. But Centurion said that if they got word from anyone including LAFD or LAPD, that they would spread the word to their Casiano Estates community. Irene asked if they would also contact our BABCNC EP list. Candy said to contact Gary if other communities had interest in getting plugged into this. Chuck said that Gary told him that he would speak with the manager at Centurion (Moshie?) for Casiano and would find out if he would also act to pull the trigger for the BABCNC notification list along with Chuck. For those signing up for the BABCNC notification, Chuck reiterated the disclaimer at the bottom of the sign up sheet relieving he and the NC of liability as it's a best effort approach. Candy mentioned that Centurion would get emergency messages from LAFD or LAPD, and have the command post send out notification. Chuck said we need to make sure there is a definitive process in place and Irene mentioned that she would like to make sure that the BABCNC list is contacted. It was suggested we try to agendaize this for the next meeting and Chuck agreed. Candy mentioned that this appears to be a work in progress project where further discussion is needed.

Inter HOA Communication –Radio

Irene contacted Henry's radio's and it's around \$29 for a an FRS (Family Radio Service) radio and line of site is needed. This was brought up at our last meeting although it was not on the agenda. Chuck said we have discussed HOA communications with a big push last spring on purchasing used \$250 satellite phones for this very purpose. Ron Cornell at BA Ridge has a monthly drill using CB radio's and is the king of communications amongst our BABCNC communities. Susan asked how we can get line of sight as they have some rolling hills in their flat land Holmby Westwood area where they don't even know if it will work. Chuck is unsure but Dan at Residents of Beverly Glenn has been working on communications from Station 99 at Mulholland to Station 71 at Sunset and surprisingly informs us that a final test was preformed today with the equipment to be purchased. With the use of a repeater close to the 1603 Glenn Market grocery store, they had full communications from LAFD Stations at Mulholland to Sunset. They are using UHF "walkie talkie" Radios which cost \$185 each's which are used at construction sites which apparently do not require line of site but signal strength. So repeaters rebroadcast the signals in this case. Chuck asked how they were going to use it in their community and Dan replied that because of the long spread of their community area, they decided on walkie talkie's rather than handheld FMS radios and CB Radio's which require line of sight, so they could communicate after an earthquake as example. Chuck asked Dan if he could discuss that in another meeting as other HOA's might be interested and he said yes. They are starting with 5 radios and plan to expand that by allowing residents to join them through donations where residents would receive a radio and the correct frequency would be set up for them. Beverly Glenn is focusing on block captains like Susan is doing with Holmby Westwood and Chuck still does with 45 recipient list in a 250 home radius on upper Bel Air Rd. Irene asked if the fire department would use their frequency and Dan said no, that they will be to busy attending to their own priorities. Chuck asked if Residents of Beverly Glenn could communicate with Ron's BA Ridge group and Dan said CB Radio's and their UHF are different communication method. Irene mentioned she spoke with Skirball Cultural Center and they have instituted a sophisticated communication system with repeaters. They are upgrading their Emergency Preparedness Center and we would be welcome to learn from them and see what they are doing. Chuck suggested we have a count of hands as to would attend on a week day in the morning and the majority responded. Susan asked how high Dan's repeater is placed and he said around 500 feet (167 yards) up on Sandle Lane

placed on someone's deck. For our next meeting, we will try for the Cultural Center, and possibly have Gary along with the Red Cross to consider. Dan suggested holding off until April to allow more thorough testing prior to his discussion. Eight of the 11 individuals present would plan to attend Skirball. Regarding Chris Ipsen, he asked where he would get the most coverage on presenting Alert LA County and I suggested the NC meeting since almost all the HOA's are in attendance there. So Chris plans to attend our Next March 26 NC meeting. Chuck reiterated that Ron Cornell suggested that Casiano and Roscomare had line of sight with BA Ridge and Chuck has no idea how but Ron is usually very reliable on these matters. Although this agenda item was planned to discuss how HOA's would communicate after an earthquake while expecting little to no city response for 2-3 weeks, Ron's expertise on this subject was not available. And having inter-HOA communications after a large disaster is important for different communities to query others for certain medical supplies or apparatus which could be traded. It is predicted that a 7.0 or greater earthquake is almost a certainty to strike in the next 20 years. Susan echoed that a 7.8 earthquake could last 3 minutes. We might get a warning almost 60 seconds before the quake and LAFD would sound a siren where we will have less than a minute to react. There seemed to be confusion on sirens and perhaps we could gather more information for another meeting. Susan then shared that Holmby Westwood is altering their block captain plan as the required number of individuals is too hard to maintain. They will subdivide into 8 sections with 2 or 3 people in each sector to contact others with communications back to the central location for coordination with medical needs, etc. Susan said she found something at the boat show which are portable tricycles which folds up and you can pull it like a piece of luggage attaching baskets so they can navigate closed roads with individuals, and are much less expensive than ATV's. They have 1100 homes so can't afford radios for each of them. Chuck mentioned that the people in attendance care about others and that all communities are filled with individuals that primarily care about themselves. Susan agreed and said their primary goal is to get everyone to at least prepare for themselves. Susan also referenced an email from Mayor Eric Garcetti that asked everyone to take a pledge to prepare for disasters. It didn't go to everybody and wasn't compelling enough to make a difference. She expressed that the heads should get together and make a more definitive statement. Everyone seemed to agree this should be done.

Adjournment at 9:20pm

Chuck Maginnis
Submitted: March 1, 2014
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