

Emergency Preparedness Committee
Bel Air Ridge Center - 2760 Claray
Wednesday August 20, 2014 7pm

Call to order:

7:20pm

Roll call

Present

Chuck Maginnis
Hildreth Simmons
Maureen Smith
Irene Sandler
Donna Larson
Dr Phil Larson
Ron Cornell
Matt Stevens
Capt John Ignatczyk
Capt AJ Gonzales
Capt Scott Compos
Art Kirkland
Kurt Kainsinger

Affiliation/Title

BABCNC Safety Chair, Bel Air Resident
Residents of Beverly Glen
Bel Air Resident
Bel Air Crest
Casiano Park
Casiano Park
Bel Air Ridge
LA Times
LAFD
LAFD
LAFD
UCLA Emergency Management
UCLA Emergency Preparedness

Introduction of Attendees:

Everyone introduced themselves and their association, or residential area. New to our group is Donna Larson, who is a retired UCLA operating room nurse, and her husband Dr Phil Larson, a retired UCLA Doctor. LAFD Capt John Ignatczyk is the Disaster Preparedness Officer responsible for CERT and took Capt Christopher Cooper's place. Capt Scott Compos from Fire Station 39 is attending for the first time after having to leave a previous meeting for a call and Fire Station 39 Capt AJ Gonzales presented escape routes to our group in February, 2014. Matt Stevens, LA Times reporter for the Westside, is covering our EP committee and the advancements in preparedness of our HOAs. Art Kirkland, Director of Emergency Management, covers UCLA campus and facilities, while Kurt Kainsinger, Director of Emergency Preparedness, is responsible for health systems including Ronald Reagan Hospital.

Approval of minutes:

Irene Sandler motioned to approve the June 18, 2014 minutes, Maureen Smith seconded, minutes approved.

Art Kirkland – UCLA Director of Emergency Management

Art has been at UCLA for the past 2 years and prior to that was at Tulane University in New Orleans for 11 years in emergency management experiencing Hurricane Katrina, Gustav, Isaac

and other emergencies. Tulane is prepared as they know they can expect a hurricane every 2 years. Prior to that Art was in the US Army.

UCLA has three offices that does emergency response: the campus office, the medical center, and the school of medicine. Their mission is protection of life, preservation of University Property, self-sufficiency in a crisis and resumption of normal activities. The Sunset water pipe break was cited as their most recent crisis. Everything was back to normal the following day with the exception of the 2 parking structures and Pauley Pavilion, as attested to by Chuck who swam in the adjacent Sunset recreation pool. They are a 2 individual unit in normal times but in emergencies, they surround themselves with Government and public agencies and have an Incident Commander and other support tools similar to CERT. They had 900 autos in the parking structures and look at all potential hazards. UCLA maintains 87% of its own power with 13,000 residential students in addition to hospital patients.

Below, Art Kirkland is presenting while Kurt Kainsinger, seated, is waiting to speak on UCLA health and the Ronald Reagan Medical Facility.



Virginia Tech's shooting tragedy changed the outlook of universities around the country. Prior to Virginia Tech the biggest fear of emergencies was generally fire in dormitories. Their evacuation plan that gets students right up to the edge of campus which allows them to tackle the crisis. Each disaster has its unique characteristics. But after Virginia Tech, things broadened with the need for increased awareness of hazards, communications, knowing what to do and to respond immediately. His biggest challenge is having to wait for the chancellor to approve the message, and that was a learning curve with Virginia Tech where it took 1 ½ hours to broadcast the shooting was taking place. The Higher Education act of 2008 makes universities interface with local and state agencies, have emergency notification, submit reports on fire safety and provide missing persons notification for those living on campus. Getting out an emergency notification sounds simple but who does it, what is said, do you first verify the details and who does it affect, are just a few answers needed to properly complete any warning. Chuck asked what notification devices were alerted and that was the next slide. Campus emails, desktop pop ups and text are sent along with siren warnings, while their 1630am Radio Station can broadcast more detail information. Facebook and Twitter are other alert vehicles with Twitter being the quickest.

There are various threats and vulnerabilities that require different plans. What can they do to help outsiders like BABCNC neighbors? They can't notify us as they have 82,000 email addresses and cell numbers in their system as it already takes 15 minutes to get all the text messages out. They have water for 4 days for all students and patients. They have CERT trained volunteers who are available to the community, but not authorized on campus. They cannot provide a sheltering place for neighbors as they have responsibility for 13,000 on site individuals as it is, and don't have supplies, food or water for neighboring communities.

Kurt Kainsinger –Director of UCLA Emergency Preparedness

Kurt has responsibility for the health system which includes the Ronald Reagan Medical Center. He's worked at UCLA for 16 years, initially with the campus police department, then an EMT and eventually received his Master's in Public Health from UCLA. The Medical Center has 525 inpatient beds for various use and 23 operating rooms. They are a Level I Trauma Center along with being a disaster resource center, one of 14 in the county. In this situation, they have government funded supplies which they have first right to use but they could be shifted to other locations as needed. Earthquakes are prioritized as their largest potential danger while mass casualty, wildfire, floods, and epidemics are the next four. Disaster planning is federally monitored requiring a mandatory emergency plan with 4 day sustainability. They have triggers to activate an emergency situation ranging from a level 1 to level 3 which in the event of a major earthquake, involves 10 individuals with "all hands on deck." They too have an incident commander to establish priorities, just like CERT. Admitting and discharging patients is equally important so they provide the most efficient handling of multitudes of patients. They prioritize patients by the severity of their injuries. Only during emergencies can they place additional beds in rooms flexing their number of government licensed beds. A map was used to show areas outside the hospital for triage centers and additional treating facilities. Trauma surges have predictable characteristics with 85% of injuries being minor to moderate, while 15% are serious injuries. The less injured usually arrive before the seriously injured, so with this knowledge for a large emergency, some patients are not admitted to the Emergency room and staged, to allow

room for the seriously injured. Additional triage areas can be set up depending on the magnitude of the danger. Chuck asked how and if patient information including medical insurance is needed to be admitted even to outdoor triage locations and the response was yes, that instead of admitting electronically on computers which would be almost impossible, individuals receive a paper packet which requires handwritten information. Input admitting specialists and computers will likely be used for seriously injured patients. Kurt also responded that the hospital has ample power backup and the triage centers have connectivity to this power source, or portable generators, as Chuck joked, by saying they are like Bel Air Crest. Maureen asked if there are other emergency hospitals nearby and Kurt said there are 83 emergency hospitals in LA County where we can visit.

Below, closest, Irene Sandler, Maureen Smith, Matt Stevens, Captain John Ignatczyk, Ron Cornell, Donna Larson & Dr Phil Larson listen to Art and Kurt's presentations



The Federal Government contributes funds for hospital's emergency supplies and preparedness. Donna then asked about flu season and when droves of people come in at the same time, whether helicoptering people between facilities or to the Santa Monica facility is possible. Kurt responded to say that Santa Monica does not have a landing pad, and that excess flu victim's treatment would be delayed but treated at Ronald Reagan, a triage area or Building 300. They

look at all their facilities and make appropriate decisions. Tents and trailers are available for outdoor or mobile care sites. They have ample medical supplies and 23 full size ventilators available. They put all the pieces together for surge capacity. A map was displayed with the 9 other medical alert centers, with Cedars Sinai being closest to us.

They can communicate with each other to share patients and supplies. Ron mentioned that UCLA appears to be self-contained and asked whether they have any way of communicating outside of their facility. Being a hospital in LA County they are required to provide status reports to the LA County EMS health service and report their status as to whether they are full or partially closed as example, and can communicate via satellite. They also have Ready Net terminals which communicates between other hospitals which is backed up with satellite. The ambulances have this where they can ask the closest hospitals for emergency availability. It is a computer console that with 3 strokes, give instant results. Ron mentioned that communications is the biggest issue in any emergency and Bel Air Ridge performs CB radio communication drills monthly. They are trying to expand communications to other hillside groups, so are Ham Radios or Satellite Phones the best to communicate? UCLA has used microwave and was not effective so the new method is Satellite operated which is very good, and they also use MSAT which is a Satellite devise push to talk which can emulate radio communications or 10 digit dialing to phones. Art contributed that the first thing to go down is cell phones and redundancy is needed with Satellite Phones being great, but don't work in buildings. You have to go outside. VHS radios, which boats use, are also great and as are Ham Radios. They also have access to digital, analog and VOIP phones to cover every possible communication outlet available. There is a Ham Radio club at UCLA and they are gurus on radio communications. With no other questions, everyone applauded Art and Kurt for excellent presentations.

Emergency Preparedness placards and HELP /OK signs

Chuck distributed samples of both items that were funded by the BABCNC so HOAs might consider deployment of these tools in their communities to spread our getting prepared theme. At the same time he asked Ron & Hildreth who arrived late to introduce themselves, and proudly thanked Ron Cornell for allowing the BABCNC EP Committee use of their Bel Air Ridge facilities for the past 1 ½ years for meetings. Otherwise in jest, Chuck said we might be meeting by candlelight in some nearby park. Ron who is dedicated to supporting others through being prepared, mentioned that they have an emergency preparedness group that has been meeting for over 23 years. They also have a very active group who are CERT trained and have monthly CB Radio monthly drills, where they communicate with nearby LAFD Station 99 at times. Chuck has come to a number of our meetings and with Ron trying to communicate with various other organizations and HOAs, Ron said that when Chuck came to him inquiring about a meeting place, Ron was open to this as Chuck's group represented the best vehicle to reach other communities. Bel Air Ridge had the accommodations and desire to participate in this group. Hildreth introduced herself and mentioned that she and Dan Palmer are very active on the committee and that her residence is the focal point of their radio communications network for Residents of Beverly Glen, as the solar panel charges 6 batteries and allows for the repeater to function.

Chuck then got started with the handouts and tried to explain how to tie the yarn in the 2 hole punched placards for the best results. Explaining this was tougher than expected as there are

different way of accomplishing this. And for the safety placards which would act as a reminder by hanging them on door knobs and help in emergencies, Chuck stressed what LAFD Capt. Gonzales emphasized which was to get out early with any fire danger. He recalled that almost one half of the 26 individuals that died in the Oakland fire were in their automobiles, log jammed while trying to escape. With regard to the red HELP /green OK signs, Chuck thanked Susan Reuben of Holmby-Westwood Association for developing these and noted that they would need to be an entire community project to be effective. Without the entire community or block captain areas adopting this signaling method together, no one would be looking for these signs or know what to do, where to place them, or the concept for which they were intended. Ron really likes these signs and Chuck mentioned that this was likely part of the City's 5 step plan which Holmby-Westwood has successfully implemented. Ron asked how they could get more signs and Chuck agreed to provide source information with the next Committee agenda and copy of the minutes. The purpose of the BABCNC distributing both the placards and signs are to encourage their HOAs to consider investing in these tools for their community's safety.

Below, Ron Cornell, Captain John Ignatczyk Matt Stevens, Captain Scott Campos, & Captain AJ Gonzales listen to presentations.



Liability for HOA boards and groups for offering Emergency Preparedness

Chuck summarized the concern of liability from the previous meeting's discussion that some HOA boards were concerned that they might be liable for announcing their intentions to provide help to their community, in the event of an emergency. And Chuck mentioned the Good Samaritan Act was discussed and thought to be sufficient but that any legal advice would be more assuring. Ron echoed that their attorney said it creates a potential liability for their board. And Ron also clarified that the Good Samaritan Law applies to individuals or not to organizations who endorse group support. He has requested help from FEMA with no response, LA County who said they would request responses from 5 people who gave no responses and OES groups. Ron suggested going to the office of the county, Emergency Services, and ask them. He also faxed the state and legal counsel and received no responses. Ron clarified that if the group was formed prior to the earthquake, opposed to after the earthquake struck, the Good Samaritan Act reportedly does not pertain to the already organized group. Irene commented that with a large emergency with many people needing help as in the Northridge earthquake, that no community leaders should allow their community go unattended without a plan. Communities like BA Crest have block captains, CERT trained individuals, tents, and supplies to assist. And Irene continued to say that communities like ours are now to be held liable for our good will if there are failures? Chuck intervened to clarify that Ron is on our side to further help his community but his hands tied. Ron agreed and stated that he has ambitiously searched for an authoritative response that may bring a more convincing argument than their lawyer's advice. He felt it would be great to have the State office of Emergency Management, the mayor's office or the governor's office state that we should have a fiduciary responsibility to our homeowners to provide some type of plan. Chuck suggested that this should be something LAFD should seek as their CERT program teaches and promotes groups to do exactly this, to form Command Centers and triage areas to serve their neighbors during emergencies. Chuck asked Captain John Ignatczyk if he could help to find an answer and The Captain said he would get back with us on that. Ron mentioned that would be great as it is not only their HOA, but that their neighboring Bel Air Park community feels the way. Asking the UCLA presenters for options, Art stated that he has worked in similar organizations, and the lawyers always caution for them not to commit to anything they may not be able to deliver. He used Tulane as example saying that in a hurricane, may they plan to evacuate out of town students to return home. And although they may plan it, the lawyers say you may plan it but not to tell them this as you may not be able to make it happen. Never promise anything unless you 100% sure you can deliver it.

Susan Reuben was gracious to offer legal opinions from a few of her board members. Unable to attend, Susan gave Chuck the green light to share the remarks she received. One attorney wrote: What do you think of something like this? I don't think we need to cite to the Good Samaritan law. "Although Community Volunteers intend to assist others during an emergency in accordance with the Overall Plan, please be aware that circumstances following any disaster may preclude them from being available to help others, including at the Meeting Place or Medical Triage. Accordingly, residents are individually responsible for insuring that they and their families have sufficient food, water and other survival products to protect them in an emergency and cannot (should not?) rely on the Community Volunteers for this purpose." Another response stated that "Below is the link for the California Good Samaritan law. The intention is to encourage individuals to assist others in need during an emergency. You may wish to borrow this language from the statute in your disclaimer; e.g.: *Community Volunteers intend to assist

others in need during an emergency. However, circumstances following any disaster may require volunteers to take care of their own families and homes or to assist their immediate neighbors, in which case they may not be available to help others at the Meeting Place or Medical Triage as planned. Link: <http://law.onecle.com/california/health/1799.102.html> In theory, if you place a caveat on your intentions and have everyone sign it, it should hold water. After Chuck mentioned that as example, Bel Air Crest certainly has lawyers available to them, and still provides a plan for emergencies. Irene agreed. She then asked how UCLA would get the doctors to their facility if roads were closed. Kurt responded that they have a plan to get doctors to medical facilities as needed. Donna asked if they had a list of retired or former nurses and doctors who may help in this situation. They currently do not have a list but would like to, and encourage medical professionals with licenses to sign up to help in emergencies. The City Office of Emergency Services was contacted and they said they couldn't provide a legal opinion.

Los Angeles Times discussion on potential EP Committee article

Chuck summarized that Matt was looking to do an article regarding how the HOAs have progressed in preparedness under the BABCNC umbrella over the years by pooling resources and through presentations like the one tonight. Chuck placed him in touch with BA Crest who Chuck refers to as the king of Emergency Preparedness supplies and organization, and would like Matt to speak with the king of communications, Ron Cornel at Bel Air Ridge, who runs monthly CB drills. Chuck also introduced Matt to a few other committee attendees that have successfully achieved inroads in their perspective HOA communities. Matt said you never know what a story is going to be until you write it but he is super interested in what the committee is doing. He met with Capt. John Ignatczyk the other day and firefighter Bubba Willis suggested that whenever you can find a model like BA Crest, to take advantage of it. Matt says that information gathering may start and finish in different places depending on where information leads him. So a few bullet points about what your community is doing is a great start. Ron Cornell started by explaining EPAC (Emergency Preparedness Advisory Committee) which has "advisory" in its name due to the liability issue. They hold events with LAFD and other providers like SOS, which offers emergency supplies. They also have seminars which instruct on how to turn on and off gas and water supplies, as examples. Their landmark is the monthly CB (Citizen's Band) Radio drills that have been going on for years. They have 2 bay stations and people check in. The technology uses line of sight which is very functional for them despite being in the hills. Cell phone coverage is often spotty in many hill areas. Ron also mentioned the need for redundancy. They also have another radio system for the Bel Air Ridge staff including board and security personnel. BA Ridge also has 2 generators along with medical supplies. The Captain was not aware of any other group who had monthly drills like this. Ron mentioned that they used to be part of ACS but they moved away. When asked by Matt if monthly drills like this were unusual, Ron answered he thought they were very atypical for a community, and Chuck concurred they were likely very, very atypical. Chuck offered that Michael Schlenker of BA Crest was interested in and applying for a ham radio license, with hopes of communicating with other communities. And perhaps he and Ron should speak about this. Ron mentioned that the best organization to work through is the ACS (Auxiliary Communication System) of the LAFD. Captain Ignatczyk took Captain Christopher Cooper's place and his title is Disaster Preparedness officer who oversees CERT and deals on local, state, and federal levels. Maureen Smith has been interested and active in the BABCNC and EP

Committee to help neighbors. Living in the Bel Air Association area, she was asked what her association has planned for its 2700 residents. Maureen was unaware of any community plan and Chuck, who received CERT training at the Bel Air Association office on Sunset 4 years ago, mentioned that a triage area was discussed to be near the office, but hasn't heard anything on this for years, so wouldn't count on it in an emergency. Being a block captain for the Bel Air Association years ago, he continues to maintain a list of 40+ nearby neighbors for emergency notification. His list includes contact information for neighborhood doctors, nurses, CERT trained individuals, and those with other skillsets needed in an emergency. And to Chuck's knowledge, the association still continues to build their online database, with frequent blogs and informational updates being sent regularly. Irene Sandler was introduced by Chuck with gratitude as the BABCNC member who was responsible for getting Bel Air Crest involved with our group and an individual who attends almost all the meetings. Irene complimented Chuck on his persistence and leadership skills in getting our group together, and keeping people proactively involved. The other person she credits is Susan Reuben who has been very active on the committee and a great influence, even dealing with their apartment complexes in Susan's association area. Both Irene and Susan's biggest fear is having to shelter in place for a prolonged period of time, as civil servants will likely be attending to other priorities. Hildreth Simmons was introduced and explained that that Residents of Beverly Glen's newly tested communication system from Sunset to Mulholland uses her house as a relay point which is powered by solar panel to charge the batteries, which in turn allows the repeater to work. They are also assigning block captains who will man the radios. They are using UHF "walkie talkie" construction type radios which need line of sight.

Adjournment at 9:10 pm

Chuck Maginnis
Submitted: August 23, 2014
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