



CITY OF HUNTINGTON BEACH CERT NEWSLETTER

SINCE 1991

May 2021

Huntington Beach Fire Outreach Foundation (HBFOF)

By Phil Burtis



Founded in 2019, the mission of the Huntington Beach Fire Outreach Foundation is to promote fire safety and emergency preparedness through community outreach programs. The vision is to financially support the first responders and volunteers of the Huntington Beach Fire Department.

Historically, we had always hoped we could create a 501c3 non-profit for CERT, but it just never was possible. In 2019 we were able to create the HBFOF and were just getting things started when COVID hit. So, during 2020, the HBFOF started obtaining funding and was able to actually procure some much needed particulate hoods for the HBFD fire fighters. But we did not get much publicity.

As the first Huntington Beach Fire Department volunteer group to be set up under the HBFOF framework, CERT has a dedicated account within the HBFOF financial system and has already received some extremely generous donations that were specifically earmarked for CERT. We actually even used a small portion of that to purchase some training visual aids for the spring 2020 class. (Yes, the attendees are still waiting for day three to be scheduled to graduate!).

With luck, we'll get CERT rolling again later this year and start having events and classes. As our existing programs restart, along with our new initiatives, there may be items CERT needs that the HBFOF can provide.

Also, we hope the HBFOF will be able to get some fun fund-raising events going. There is a pickleball tournament planned for October so, if you're into pickleball, stay tuned!

Visit <https://www.hbfof.org> to get a better overview, and come back in a few weeks as the website is getting a fresh new look sometime in May!

HB CERT Communications Leader

Paul La Greek (KI6TJM), current lead of HB CERT Communications, is turning over leadership of the team to Bob Dow (KG6VDI). This change is effective April, 2021. Paul has been lead since 2016. Paul and Peter Petrelis (KI6AEH) will be providing assistance to Bob in his new role.

Bob joined HB Communications in 2004 and has taken part in CERT activities as a communicator since then. He also volunteers as a communicator with HB RACES.

What is Listos Social Bridging Project? The State of California

<https://www.listoscalifornia.org/community-projects/social-bridging-project>

The Social Bridging Project is the state of California's pioneering public health and safety outreach campaign. By re-engineering tech and tools usually used for voter engagement, we counter social distancing through direct phone calls to people at risk from COVID-19 and natural disasters.

Our callers, known as Bridgers, connect the most vulnerable Californians with government resources, emergency alerts and other life-changing—and lifesaving—referrals. With innovation and heart, our Bridgers are rising to meet 2020 and 2021 historic confluence of pandemic, economic and wildfire disasters.

With every call, the Social Bridging Project assures Californians facing adversity: "You Are Not Alone".

"What kind of calls do "Bridgers" make?"

Wellness Calls

Bridgers conduct wellness checks with older Californians, and others most at risk from COVID-19 and related economic hardships. We refer people in need to state and local resources that address food insecurity, housing insecurity, healthcare, mental health and COVID-19 concerns, such as avoiding exposure or getting tested.

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What is Listos Social Bridging Project? (continued from page 1)

Prolonged isolation and social distancing pose grave threats to the physical and emotional well-being of older Californians. Our Bridgers aim to connect on a personal level, especially with older adults sheltering in place who relish a caring conversation to share their wisdom, troubles, happy memories and more.

Disaster Calls

Social Bridgers contact Californians who are most vulnerable to wildfires and other natural disasters. These include those in harm's way and those whose socioeconomic and other vulnerabilities make them more likely to suffer from lack of preparation.

We explain how to get free emergency alerts, make an evacuation plan, fill a go bag or stay box with supplies, and reunite with loved ones. Everyone we call is offered the free Listos California Disaster Ready Guide, in any of seven languages, to help individuals and families get ready for disasters.

Where Bridgers are Calling

More than twenty California counties have partnered with the state's Social Bridging Project to reach their most vulnerable residents:

Colusa , Del Norte, Fresno, Glenn, Humboldt, Kern Kern, Madera, Mann County, Mendocino, Mono Monterey, Orange County, Riverside, San Benito San Bernardino, San Diego, San Francisco San Joaquin, San Luis Obispo, San Mateo Santa Barbara, Santa Clara, Santa Cruz, Siskiyou Trinity

Partners

The Social Bridging Project is proud to partner with service-driven organizations and the individuals who become Bridgers. Each gives generously of their time and spirits to be a bridge to Californians who might otherwise be left out or left behind:

- AmeriCorps
- California's Community Emergency Response Teams (CERT)
- Department of Water Resources
- Fresno State University
- Sacramento State University

A Thank You from Carol Burtis

Huntington Beach CERT has had several members participate in this program over the last year; they include: Phil Burtis, Stephanie Deagle, Barbara Scott, Jill Senecal, Valerie Spingola, Jeffrey Turlis, Maria Young, Russ Dohrmann and Raji Shunmugavel. While some of these volunteers helped in the early days of the Social Bridging project and others are still helping, I would like to thank each of them for volunteering to make a difference to so many people.

BRIDGER SPOTLIGHT
Rajarajeswari Shunmugavel
Huntington Beach CERT

Raji has consistently been one of the "top" Bridgers in the State, as of the middle of April she had donated 774 hours in making calls for Listos! (Listos in Spanish means prepared.)



I majored in English and I've always been involved in learning languages, India has so many. After coming to California, and being so close to Mexico, I trained myself to learn the Spanish language. Every chance I get, I volunteer and work with Spanish speakers. Communicating in Spanish for bridging calls is important since we are talking about an emergency situation. We have to think about the needs of the families we are calling. It's far better to reach out in the language they speak at home.

If something happens, someone who has that information in Spanish can communicate to others in Spanish. Being a Naturalized US Citizen since 1994, I try to put myself in their shoes. If you show you really care, I noticed they tend to talk more with you. I recently spoke to a 96-year-old man and it was difficult enough for him to hear and talk with me in Spanish. If someone had called in English, he would not have been able to understand our disaster readiness messages. I don't want anyone to miss anything important.

Why is this project meaningful/valuable to me? To prevent isolation and depression due to self-quarantine for many months, to enhance my bilingual speaking skills, to apply the skills I learned in my CERT training, and to keep up with the community awareness by learning to adapt to the Bridging project. I have been staying home safe and healthy while doing this project, thus it became meaningful and valuable to me.



March CERT & RACES Zoom meetings

By Carol Burtis



For our March meeting Janice Van Mullem, our HB Fire Marshal, gave us a wonderful overview of what the Fire Prevention Department does; the command structure for it, as well as some great safety tips. Janice was sworn in as the Fire Marshal in October 2020, and loves to pass on information from her years of working in that department so we can all become more “fire safe”. The goal of fire prevention is to educate the public to take precautions to prevent potentially harmful fires and be educated about surviving them. It is a proactive method of preventing fire-based emergencies and reducing the damage caused by them. Janice also talked about our Fire Inspectors and how they have been able to find ways to do their inspections during COVID19 using a virtual format.

April CERT & RACES Zoom meetings



For our April meeting Leslie Schwene, Marine Safety Officer I and Kate Yasko Ocean Lifeguard III gave a wonderful presentation on Marine Safety, what they do and how they do it, as well as the revised command structure of that program. The Marine Safety Division

provides public safety to the City's Main Beach and Sunset Beach. Lifeguards patrol the 3.5 miles of Main Beach shoreline from Beach Boulevard north to Seapoint Street dawn to dusk, 365 days a year.

They showed us what a rip current looks like and what to do if you are caught in one! Rip currents are powerful, narrow channels of fast-moving water that are prevalent along the East, Gulf and West coasts of the US, as well as along the shores of the Great Lakes. Moving at speeds of up to eight feet per second, rip currents can move faster than an Olympic swimmer.

If you are caught in a rip current, the best thing you can do is stay calm. It is not going to pull you underwater; it is just going to pull you away from shore. Call and wave for help. You want to float, and you do not want to swim back to shore against the rip current because it will just tire you out. You want to swim out of the rip, parallel to shore, along the beach and then follow breaking waves back to shore at an angle. The red arrows below very clearly show the rip current!



May and June CERT & RACES Zoom meetings

There will not be a Zoom meeting in May as I will be unavailable that evening, but we are looking forward to our June 10 meeting when Virginia Clara, the Community Relations Specialist for the HB Police Department who will talk about Neighborhood Watch, preventive measures to limit crime in your area as well as what her department does. Please plan to join us for this great talk!

CiA (CERT in Action) April 18, 2021 CommUNITY Event

On Sunday, April 18 from 11 am to 3pm, the City held a Community Event in Central Park East around the bandstand behind the main library. The purpose was to promote diversity and cooperation. It was attended by city, county and state level officials who each had a chance to speak to the issues.

There were many groups of entertainers from different backgrounds that sang and danced for the crowd including Mexican, Polynesian, American Indian and more. There were three food trucks for lunch. Several different organizations had informational handouts.

It is hard to get an official attendance count, because some people just came through the park whereas others came specifically for the event. But a quick count at about 2pm came up with on the order of 300 people watching the hula dancers!

CERT was asked to staff two booths to hand out face coverings to anyone who asked and be available for first aid just in case. There were a couple of minor cuts treated, and one near-miss as a tree fell in the high winds and just lightly grazed a woman's arm.

Actually, we were lucky too. A huge wind gust took the canopy flying and it was lucky nobody got injured! The canopy itself was injured though, but fortunately disaster first aid splinting came to the rescue with a tree branch and duct tape!



Susan McClaran's First Aid Corner

*In honor of some of the people I love, I dedicate this article to them and ultimately, to all of you. Please do not let the fear of COVID stop you from seeing your doctor to have proper screenings and procedures done. Cancer waits for no one and March was Colorectal Cancer Awareness month. This form of cancer **along with many others**, if caught early, can be treatable. So, treat yourself to a visit to your doctor as needed! Please stay safe and stay well!*

Fast Facts from the CDC:

Among cancers that affect both men and women, **colorectal cancer** is the second leading cause of cancer deaths in the United States.

- Every year, about 140,000 people in the United States get colorectal cancer, and more than 50,000 people die of it.
- Precancerous polyps and colorectal cancer don't always cause **symptoms**, especially at first. If you have symptoms, they may include blood in or on the stool, abdominal pain that doesn't go away, or losing weight and you don't know why. If you have any of these symptoms, see your doctor.
- There are several **screening test options**. Talk with your doctor about which is right for you.
- Only about two-thirds of adults in the United States are **up-to-date with colorectal cancer screening**.

CiA (CERT in Action) May 1, 2021 Vaccine Distribution

On Saturday May 1 from 9:00am to 3:00pm the City held a COVID19 vaccination distribution event in the Boys and Girls Club facility in the Oak View Community. A total of 14 CERT volunteers assisted at the event doing a variety of jobs including logistics, line control, check-in, registration and temperature checking. Lunch was provided by OC Health Care. 502 community members received their first dose of Pfizer vaccine with a follow-up event being held May 22 so they can receive their second dose.



Covid Stress Busters
by Susan McClaran

I don't know about all of you, but I periodically feel the stress on my psyche from the last year and I am so ready to be done with all of this. We have touched a little bit on psychological first aid but I think this is the time to maybe practice a bit on ourselves. Below are 5 tips and the science behind them, from the American Psychological Association:

Calm yourself

Slowly breathe in for four, hold it for four, and then breathe out for six. Repeat 10 times.

Why it works: Slowing our breathing allows our bodies to recalibrate and lowers levels of physiological arousal.

Focus yourself

Slow your racing thoughts by counting backwards by three in your mind from 100 (100, 97, 94, etc.).

Why it works: Focusing in a structured way and engaging your brain in a distracting task can disrupt unhelpful patterns.

Relax yourself

One by one, tense each muscle group in your body for 10 seconds and then release. Notice how it feels to let your muscles relax and have the tension leave your body.

Why it works: Actively relaxing our muscles can increase energy and flexibility, helping us feel calmer.

Ground yourself

Do a quick scan of your body and notice the air around you and any surfaces you are touching. If possible, close your eyes and focus on the sensations, textures, and temperatures.

Why it works: Focusing on our physical surroundings helps us become more attuned to details and make more balanced assessments of our environments.

Celebrate yourself

You are dealing with huge challenges. Think about three things that went well today. If they involved another person, recognize and thank them whenever possible.

Why it works: Slowing down to recognize even small successes can increase our sense of control over our environment and help us help others more effectively.

***Remember, in a disaster, things are going to be overwhelming and we may find ourselves in a stressful state after periods of time taking care of others have gone by. It is very important to remember to take time to step away and take care of yourself. Stay well.*

**CERT MASK DISTRIBUTION
BOOTHS**



CERT MASK DISTRIBUTION BOOTHS (continued)



CERT MASK DISTRIBUTION BOOTHS (continued)



CITY OF HUNTINGTON BEACH CERT

Neighbors-Helping-Neighbors

MISSION STATEMENT: The mission of the Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) Program is to provide information and training on disaster preparedness; provide leadership and coordination during an emergency, and assistance to help victims recover from an emergency.

Upcoming CERT Events & Activities

CPR Classes

To be Determined

To be Determined

CERT COVID –19 NEWSLETTER REMOTE STAFF: Virginia Petrelis (Editor), Peter Petrelis (Publisher),
NORMAL CURCUMSTANCES ADDED STAFF: Richard Batistelli, Anna Pinter, Cynthia Goebel, Carol Nehls,
Rajarajeswari (Raji) Shunmugavel, Cathy Stanfill

IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT!

CERT Website: www.huntingtonbeachca.gov/cert **CERT Contact:** CERT@surfcity-hb.org
CERT Message line 714-536-5974 (THIS IS A MESSAGE LINE ONLY!)