



CERT ALERT!

The newsletter for James City County CERT

Volume 1 Issue 1
Spring, 2008

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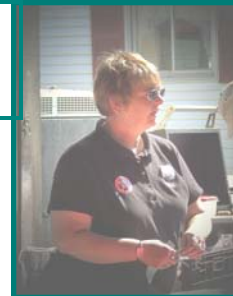
... and much more

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Notes from Margaret . . .



Wow! The first issue of our brand new newsletter, FOR CERT, BY CERT, and all about our favorite topic: CERT! This newsletter is for YOU, the kind, caring CERT volunteer who gave of your time and energy to take a CERT class, educate your friends and neighbors about the need to be personally prepared and those sweet, kind, much appreciated souls who have helped me at many community events! I can't thank you enough for your kindness. JCC CERT volunteers are the BEST!! Please send your stories, your accomplishments, and your pictures either to me or to Judith Davis, so all of James City CERT can celebrate your achievements together. It takes ALL of us to make a great CERT Team. Together, we are doing the greatest good for the greatest number in our own neighborhoods.

This year, may I ask you all to focus on the basics of CERT? Look at your student manuals, look at the questions for each chapter, and see if you can answer them. Review your notes and handouts; what have you forgotten? Sit in on a current CERT class to brush up on something you may have forgotten, or participate in a CERT class practical. Focus on the many things we don't have time to fully cover in class. If YOU want me to, I'll even create a quiz for this newsletter. If you have questions, ask me, I'm happy to help! For 2008, let's focus on **Back to Basics!**

Thanks go to Judith Davis, for being willing to help make this dream of a newsletter come true. Thank you, Judith! ♦

NAME THE NEWSLETTER CONTEST: We received many wonderful names for our new CERT publication! The one receiving the most votes is, as you can see, **CERT ALERT!** It was submitted by **Helen Davis** of Ford's Colony CERT. Helen received a copy of the **Informed Home Emergency Pocket Guide** for submitting the winning entry! Congratulations, Helen! ♦

Margaret

CERT Stats

Teams who report their volunteer hours have reported a total of **2,074 hours** from March-December of 2007!!
WAY TO GO CERT!!

CERT CELEBRA-



St. George's Hundred CERT is growing strong!

St. George's Hundred, a community of 237 homes, is located between Powhatan Creek and the James River. It's not surprising that the area can flood when a hurricane drives through our area, as did Hurricane Isabel in 2003. Many homes were flooded; the residents of the community needed to help each other.

Valerie Trovanto and Ken Sharp were the first residents to turn to the JCC CERT program to learn how to cope with these disasters. Then, in February, 2007, the team got a real boost in membership when Susan Wilk, Jim Samuelson, Ted Hale and Donna Dittman Hale became the newest graduates. They wasted no time getting the team together. Less than a month later, the newly formed St. George's Hundred CERT met for the first time at the Hale residence. Margaret Tucker and Judith Davis were there to share ideas and help the group get started.

Donna and the SGH team are quick to point out that one of their most valued members actually lives in neighboring Chanco's Grant. John Magda, a long-time CERT member (and extraordinary actor!) participates with St. George's Hundred until a team can be formed in his area. His expertise with ham radios (see article on Page 5) has enabled the group to maintain a radio link between the front and back portions of the neighborhood, and can provide a link to the EOC in a disaster.

"We've learned the value of table top drills and communication tests, and of getting to know each other . . . And the value of just walking around talking to people about being prepared."

Donna Dittman Hale

The team members have not been idle — they have visited over half of the homes in the community to introduce themselves, and to remind their neighbors to **BE PREPARED!** They have created and distributed a package of information about CERT and about preparing and maintaining a disaster kit. CERT training dates are posted on the sign board at the entrance to the community.

Since the team was formed, members have attended the Pandemic Flu training, the Terrorism class, Skywarn class, Disaster Communications, and much more. And as of this publication date, two members are in training to earn their ham radio licenses. Congratulations to the St. George's Hundred team (and John Magda) for getting off to a running start. We look forward to hearing more from you in the future! ♦

Participating with a neighboring team is just one way CERT "singles" can stay involved and connected. For more ideas, see the next issue of **CERT ALERT!**



CERTEX08 CERT Drill

April 19 - Save the date! JCC CERT has been invited to a HUGE regional drill on Jeffrey Wilson Parkway in Portsmouth. Hosted by their local emergency planning commission, this regional drill has many regional and federal partners. This drill is for the benefit of all CERT volunteers throughout the Tidewater and Peninsula region.

The drill will be real-world and include mass casualties, fire, entrapment, etc. to give the CERT personnel an opportunity to test what they've been

taught. *There will be over 150 victims.* CERT is running the whole event for the first hour or so. Then, fire and EMS people will respond, and CERT will interact them, just as they would in reality. CERT volunteers from as far away as Henrico County have indicated they will participate. ***Margaret is committed to this drill as long as 20 of us intend to participate.***

Look for more info via email from Margaret soon. **PLEASE** let Margaret know as soon as possible if you are willing to commit to this great opportunity! ♦



The main JCC CERT web page:
<http://www.jccgov.com/fire/cert.php>

Ready Virginia winter issue:
<http://www.vaemergency.com/threats/winter/index.cfm>

Virginia Corps (Citizens Corps site for Virginia):
<http://www.virginiacorps.org>

On-line education on emergency issues:
<http://training.fema.gov/IS/crslist.asp>

Amateur radio information and licensing: www.arrl.org and www.qrz.com.

2008 Training Schedule

CERT trainees work as a team to prepare for the final exercise.

February 2008

Date	Module	Time
Feb. 5	Disaster Preparedness	6:30-10:00 PM
Feb. 7	Fire Safety	6:30-10:00 PM
Feb. 12	Medical Ops 1	6:30-10:00 PM
Feb. 14	Medical Ops 2	6:30-10:00 PM
Feb. 16 (Sat)	Search and Rescue	9:00AM-1:00PM
Feb 19	Disaster Psychology & CERT Organization	6:30-10:00 PM
Feb. 21	Terrorism	6:30-10:00 PM
Feb. 23 (Sat)	Final practical	9:00AM-1:00PM



June 2008

Date	Module	Time
June. 10	Disaster Preparedness	6:30-10:00 PM
June 12	Fire Safety	6:30-10:00 PM
June 17	Medical Ops 1	6:30-10:00 PM
June 19	Medical Ops 2	6:30-10:00 PM
June 21 (Sat)	Search and Rescue	9:00AM-1:00PM
June 24	Disaster Psychology & CERT Organization	6:30-10:00 PM
June 26	Terrorism	6:30-10:00 PM
June 28 (Sat)	Final practical	9:00AM-1:00PM

CERT Refresher Training

March 25: 6-8pm Pandemic Flu
 June 11: 6-10pm Psychological First Aid

All classes are held at the James City County Training Center at 300 McLaws Circle, Suite 201, unless otherwise notified.



CERT ALERT!

Many people have asked for more information about the Citizen Corps Council — who are they, and what do they do? **Jack Wilson** has the answers!

CITIZEN CORPS COUNCIL 101

by Jack Wilson

After the events of September 11, 2001, President George W. Bush launched the U.S.A. Freedom Corps as an initiative to inspire all Americans to serve communities and country.

Citizen Corps is the component of Freedom Corps that creates the opportunities for individuals to volunteer to assist their communities in being prepared to respond to disasters and incidents of all types. This is done by assisting First Responder Organizations such as Fire, Police and Emergency Medical personnel.

The Citizen Corps Council is the umbrella organization that oversees the funding that is received from Homeland Security via the State and funnels it to the five programs under its oversight. These programs each have their own coordinators and they have representation on the Council. The programs and their coordinators in James City County are:

Council Chairman - **Jack Wilson**

Community Emergency Response Teams - **Margaret Tucker**

Volunteers in Police Service - **Tony Dahlman**

Medical Reserve Corps - **Jennifer Freeland**

Neighborhood Watch - **Tony Dahlman**

Fire Corps - **Jack Wilson (temp)**

The coordinators have total responsibility for their programs.

Since 2001, these programs have grown, nationwide, to the following totals:

Number of Citizen Corp Councils	2,288
Number of CERT Programs	2,800
Number of Fire Corps	687

Number of MRC	718
Number of Neighborhood Watch	14,791
Number of VIPS	1,636

As you can see, you are part of a very large group of volunteers nationwide (thousands) doing their best to assist their fellow citizens. For more information, go to www.citizencorps.gov.

Have more questions for Jack? Send your questions to jdavis4653@cox.net, and we'll ask Jack to address them here. ♦



Pat Wilson and her winning design.

Look what CERT is doing now!

In summer 2007, amateur and professional artists submitted their lily artwork to the annual Easter Seals' Seal Art Contest for consideration as one of six prestigious, spring-time seals.

Pat Wilson's beautiful lily watercolor has been selected as one of the six designs for use in the 2008 campaign.

Pat is a JCC CERT graduate from 2003. With her husband Jack's support and encouragement, she has pursued her passion and studied under several artists. Her work is displayed and sold in galleries in Williamsburg. To learn more about Easter Seals and the fine work they do to help people living with autism and other disabilities, go to www.easterseals.com. ♦

Disaster volunteers from all over Hampton Roads come together for a day of training and practical exercises on **Disaster Volunteer Day 2008**. **CERTs are welcome!** This year, the event is being held on August 16, 8:30 AM to 3 PM, at Liberty Baptist Church in Hampton. For more info, contact Jennifer Freeland at 757-594-8045.

Spring 2008



Ham Radio and CERT — a great partnership!

IF YOU ASK CHRIS COURSON why he works with ham radios, he will say: *“Because it’s a way to get help when there isn’t anything else.”*

Chris, who has been the Amateur Radio Emergency Coordinator for Williamsburg/James City County since 1990, says that amateur radio operators come from all walks of life, all income levels, all nationalities. In addition to having fun communicating with other ham enthusiasts, they share a common goal: to provide emergency communications when conventional systems like telephones are no longer operational.

By far the largest disaster response by U.S. amateur radio operators was during Hurricane Katrina; more than a thousand ham operators from all over the U.S. converged on the Gulf Coast in an effort to provide emergency communications assistance. Subsequent Congressional hearings highlighted the Amateur Radio response as one of the few examples of what went right in the disaster relief effort.

Here at home, when Hurricane Floyd devastated Franklin, Virginia in 1999, ham radio was the only means of communicating in or out of that area. At times like this, Chris Courson and his volunteer colleagues work tirelessly to collect and distribute information from other ham operators, sending out emergency information or health and welfare requests. He forwards information such as hazardous



road conditions to WMBG AM740 in Williamsburg, where it is broadcast as an emergency service, or to the National Weather Service in Wakefield.

According to Chris and John Magda, pictured above (at the JCC EOC station), interest in ham radios has increased dramatically in our area over the last year. In 2007, 25 **new** amateur radio operators were licensed locally, compared to the average 3 or 4 per year in the past. Chris attributes much of this interest to increased CERT activity, and the emphasis placed on emergency preparedness by James City County in its CERT training program.

In calmer times - when there isn’t a disaster - Chris, John and the other members of Amateur Radio Emergency Service (ARES) keep skills honed while providing a valuable public service. They regularly monitor during severe weather and provide

*Chris Courson and John Magda at the Emergency Operations Center in Toano, Virginia, where ham radio plays a prominent role during disasters.
(RACES: Radio Amateur Citizens Emergency Services)*

“A way to get help when there isn’t anything else.”

radio communication for events such as the William & Mary Half Marathon in February and the Colonial Parkway Bike Event in May. John says it’s a chance to practice and keep in touch with friends and colleagues, as well.

CERT graduates will be happy to note that a brief segment on ham radio use in emergencies will be added to the CERT curriculum with the 2008 classes.

To learn more, contact Chris Courson at KC4CMR@arrl.net, or visit www.arrl.org.



CERTs
get
the job
done!

