

Benicia Emergency Response Team



Newsletter



Volume 4, Number 1

Benicia, California

November 2007

Annual Muster November 8th, 2007, 7:00 PM

Benicia Senior Center

**All BERT members and Class Applicants are requested to attend
See Page 8 for details**



**Marion McKown,
Chairman,
BERT Support Group**

For the uninitiated, in the beginning we planned to put out a quarterly newsletter to the BERT membership. That never happened – in the best of circumstances it takes just about a year for my "creative juices" to surface – hmmm- that may not be a very good analogy. Okay, back to the beginning of

BERT, very early in 2002, to the first class that graduated after 9/11. About 25 of us. Now we have over 250 Benicia residents trained by the Benicia Fire Department as neighborhood emergency responders.

Dr. Constance Beutel has established a very successful quarterly continuing education program. Her staff consists not only of professionals but also some very talented amateurs. Her article in this newsletter will contain more details about her "faculty" and the training for next year. What she has accomplished during this past year is no less than a miracle. I have so ordained!!

And in Addition!! She has put the training and other events on video! Check out YouTube at: www.youtube.com/user/cmbeutel She has put us on the map!!

Jean Colomy has also written about her job as our "Zone Coordinator," but I'm sure she's left out a few things.

Imagine if you will, your home office – Now – imagine a city map the same size as the one in the BFD training room, covered with plexi-glass and framed, hanging on your wall where framed photos of all of your loved ones used to be. Now add small dots: a blue dot for every BERT member, a green dot for every staging area, yellow dot for "hams", and a red dot for caches. Of course all of that changes when someone moves, or we add new members, or

cont'd on page 2



Class 13 graduate Kathy Clausen participates in skills Saturday on March 10th, 2007 at the Fire Museum



Class # 13



Class # 14



Class # 15

Congratulations to 2007 BERT Classes 13, 14 and 15. Welcome aboard!

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if you die. Awesome. Well, that's what Jean's office looks like. We should all make a pilgrimage to her home.

In August of every year BERT partners with Neighborhood Watch and several of us are chauffeured by the Police Volunteers to each of the National Night Out parties around Benicia where we have an opportunity to promote the BERT program. This past year was no exception and we addressed six groups.

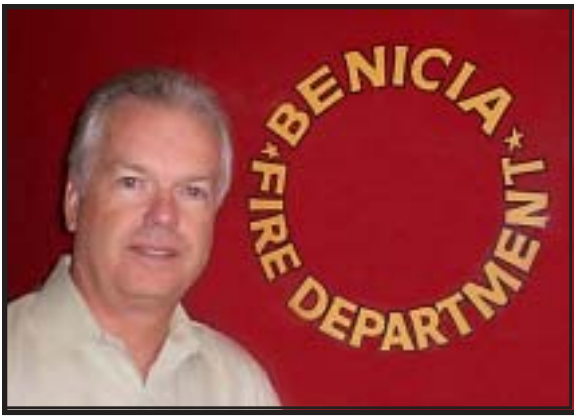
We have so much talent in our public safety organizations and a lot of cross-overs from BERT to Red Cross, Volunteer Fire, Volunteer Police, Neighborhood Watch and the Solano County Sheriff's Office of Emergency Services.

We have accomplished all of this, even with some stumbling along the way. Yes, it's true!! It really is!! Meetings that are too long (sometimes), trying something that doesn't work! "Well, that didn't work, did it?" So – try something else! Next year you can expect us to visit your area, with our yellow legal pads, walk with you to see where the cache is, the staging area, what geographical challenges that you have and find out how we can help you.

Thank you for all of your support in the past, and just wait until you see what we have planned for 2008, and beyond.

It's going to be fun! Trust me.





Chief Ken Hanley

Hello BERT Members:

As I write this, lots of BERT related activity is taking place. Preparations are being made for our important Annual Muster, this year taking place on November 8 at the Senior Center. Training; socializing; guest speakers; refreshments and raffle prizes will all be part of the Muster. I hope all of you can make it. The membership has been surveyed regarding the current capability of the team members as well as the program and the results are being analyzed. Your input will be incorporated in our future plans. Another DVD class has just concluded, with more planned for next year. We will be spending some of the latest grant money we have been approved for with news that next year's grant funding will look even better.

With all this progress taking place however, the most important thing you can do as members is to stay active in the program. I would urge each of you to attend the scheduled training sessions and participate in the drills as much as possible. We must not allow ourselves to become complacent and not as ready as we should be when (not if) the next disaster occurs.

I would also like to take this opportunity to again thank you all for your interest and participation in the BERT Program. Your combined efforts continue to make our community one of the most prepared in the area.

See you at the Muster!

Hundreds of photos taken at BERT classes and refreshers along with training videos can be viewed online. Visit the BERT Website at: www.BeniciaBERT.com



Surgeon, Dr. Lyn Lobo discusses triage at a recent refresher class

Are you a registered Disaster Service Worker?

Have you received your new BERT Disaster Service Worker (DSW) ID card yet? In order to receive one, you need to have your photo retaken and you need to complete a Disaster Service Worker registration form. See page 8. DSW workers are covered by Workers Comp insurance during drills and actual disasters.

Berton J Member
Benicia Emergency Response Team

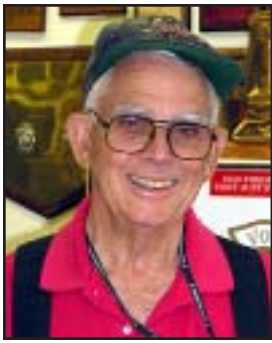
BERT Tee-Shirts are available for \$11 at
TeeShirts@BeniciaBERT.com

Stay Informed - Join the BERT Forum
<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/Beniciabert/>

The BERT Newsletter is edited by BERT member



Art Mayoff, 746-5858 and published by the Benicia Fire Department, 150 Military West, Benicia, CA. Articles without attribution are written by the editor. Stories, articles, photos and profiles are invited. Submissions may be sent to the editor at: Art@BeniciaBERT.com



Len Corbaley
BERT Trainer

FIRE SAFETY

How safe are you?

Remember the Fire Triangle: FUEL, OXYGEN, HEAT. Have you made your home safe by eliminating FUEL sources? Rags, oil, and gasoline - anything that will burn should be reduced, controlled or eliminated as much as possible. Look at any thing that might be a HEAT source,

such as electrical wires, lamps and appliances. Many household fires occur because of faulty wiring. Do you have extension cords used in many places? Cords under carpets are a no no. Not much we can do about the third part of the triangle OXYGEN.

The classes of fire are simple as ABC. Class A – A is anything that will leave an Ash... Class B – B is for Bilges. What?? Bilges? Bilges on a boat or ship often contain oil. Oil is flammable. So B relates to oil. Kind of a stretch, but easy to remember. Class C – C is Circuits. Electrical circuits carry electricity which can be very dangerous. Overloading a circuit can cause it to overheat and start a fire. There are two other classes, but they are more specialized. Class D is combustibile metals and Class K – K is for Kitchen, but the commercial variety.

Types of fire extinguishers and how to use them

On Class A fires, which are ordinary solid materials, the extinguishing agent can be water, foam or dry chemicals. Water removes the heat. Foam smothers the fire and dry chemicals break the chain reaction. Class B fires are flammable liquids and can be extinguished with foam, CO₂ and dry chemicals. DO NOT use water on an oil fire, because the water will spread the fuel and things will get worse not better.



Class 14 debris pile rescue training



Class 13 extinguisher training

A Class C fire starts as a Class C, but the material around the wiring is Class A or B material. However the source of the electrical power has to be stopped or the fire will continue. Know where the circuit breakers are and open the circuit breaker to stop the flow of electricity. The fire extinguishers that we have in our homes are generally the multipurpose dry chemical type and effective against Class A, B, and C fires. The capacity of the dry chemical extinguisher is only about 20 seconds discharge time. It is recommended that you have two extinguishers on hand. The recommended size is a 3A40BC or sometimes referred to as a 5 pound extinguisher. Mount the extinguisher away from any probable fire source such as the kitchen stove. Turn your extinguisher upside down periodically and tap the body with a wooden mallet or 2 x 4 to move the dry chemical in the cylinder to keep the chemical loose.

Don't try to be a hero and save the world. If you have a fire call 911 on a land line and get the firefighters on the way, then size up the situation in a matter of seconds to determine if you can use the extinguisher. Speaking of 911, don't dial 911 on your cell phone. Cell phone 911 calls go to the CHP. Program your cell phone for the Fire emergency which is (707) 745-2424 and/or Police emergency is (707) 745-3411. Both go to the same dispatch center.

Review Unit 2 in your BERT Training manual. Stay safe.

Easy-to-remember BERT email addresses

- | | |
|------------------|----------------------------|
| Marion McKown | Marion@BeniciaBERT.com |
| Jean Colomy | Jean@BeniciaBERT.com |
| Constance Beutel | Constance@BeniciaBERT.com |
| Art Mayoff | Art@BeniciaBERT.com |
| Len Corbaley | Len@BeniciaBERT.com |
| Tom Clausen | TomClausen@BeniciaBERT.com |
| Tee Shirt Orders | TeeShirts@BeniciaBERT.com |
| Catchall/misc | Info@BeniciaBERT.com |



Constance Beutel, Ed.D.
Quarterly Training/
Curriculum Coordinator

BERT Quarterly Training:

A report for 2007 and the Plan for 2008

In 2007 we exceeded all expectations in our Quarterly continuing BERT training.

We continued the format of Quarterly topics: First Quarter – Disaster Scenario tabletop exercise and emergency communications protocols; Second Quarter – Search and Rescue;

Third Quarter – Triage and Emergency Medicine; Fourth Quarter – Disaster Preparedness.

Over 200 BERT members gave up either a Friday evening or Saturday morning to attend one of the two per quarter scheduled Quarterly Training sessions. Additionally, expertly qualified BERT members assisted as faculty in each of the training sessions: Marion McKown, Jean Colomy, Sandra Collister, Tom Clausen, Joyce Gray, Ray Pereira, Len Corbaley, Peggy Terry, Leslie Kvasnicka and Dr. Lyn Mary Lobo. Third Quarter training on Triage and Disaster Medicine was developed and delivered by Dr. Lyn Mary Lobo, BERT member and practicing Bay Area surgeon. This session was highly praised by all who attended!

Training on Demand

Realizing that many BERT members are overwhelmed in their daily lives and that attending even one of two regularly scheduled training sessions is difficult, with the generous help of Roger Smith of Walnut Creek, we filmed each session, compressed the video and uploaded it to YouTube Video (it is easiest to find these videos by searching for cmbeutel or go to: www.youtube.com/user/cmbeutel). Literally hundreds of views of our training videos have been watched locally AND globally. There are now subscribers to our BERT training videos in Canada and the Philippines. It just goes to show that our efforts in emergency response training are having a wide and positive effect!

Taking to the Streets in 2008!

We will continue to drill on Communications Protocols, Disaster Scenarios, Search and Rescue, Triage and Emergency Medicine and Disaster Preparedness . . . However! We will be taking the training to the streets, literally.

Our plan is to scale back the Quarterly training to just 4 Saturday mornings (and not an additional Friday evening session).

Our Saturday morning session will be held for all interested BERT members at a specified BERT member's home address. (And no, we won't just show up at your house on a Saturday morning with the BERT trailer and dozens of BERT members . . . you will have to volunteer your house/location to participate – more on that later).



BERT trainer Peggy Terry demonstrates airway restoration techniques

The rationale for this change is this. Most of the BERT regulars who show up for training have really honed the basics AND for those who need the basics, we have them pretty well covered in our YouTube videos. Additionally, we need to get our classroom training situated in the settings we will most likely find ourselves, i.e., our residential quadrants. Finally, it's a good time to link our natural allies, Neighborhood Watch groups, and neighbors in general to participate (if interested) in our training in the streets.

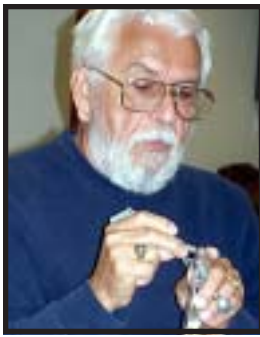
Over 2008, we'll use our own driveways to:

- Set up staging area and command center
- Deploy Search and Rescue Teams
- Establish Emergency Medicine area and drill site
- Launch home hazard inspections and mitigation efforts
- Practice emergency leadership skills

To volunteer your home as one of the four quarterly training drills, contact me: Constance Beutel at cmbeutel@sbcglobal.net or 746-0561. Our First Quarter training will be scheduled in March, so stay tuned to our BERT Yahoo Groups forum for updates.

I'll see you in March!

Constance Beutel, Ed.D.
BERT member
Continuing Training Curricula Coordinator



Ray Pereira
BERT Trainer

Preparation

There has been much talk lately in the various media about "Are you prepared?" "Are you ready?" "Do you have a plan?" and "What are you going to do?" not if, but when the next natural or man made disaster occurs in your community.

Being prepared can reduce fear, anxiety, and losses that

accompany disasters. Families and individuals should know what to do in the event of a fire, earthquake, landslides or flooding. They should be ready to evacuate their home and take refuge in public shelters and also know how to care for their basic medical needs.

Basic Preparedness:

- Get information about hazards and emergencies that may affect you and your family.
- Develop an emergency plan.
- Collect and assemble disaster supplies kits.
- Learn where to seek shelter from all types of hazards.
- Identify the community warning system and evacuation routes.
- Include in your plan required information from community and school plans.
- Learn what to do for specific hazards.
- Practice and maintain your plan.
- Take protective measures to protect yourself, your family and your property prior to the event of an earthquake:
 - Get appropriate professional help to identify and repair defective electrical wiring, leaky gas lines, and inflexible utility connections.
 - Bolt down and secure to the wall studs your water heater.
 - If recommended by your gas company, have an automatic gas shut-off valve installed that is triggered by strong vibrations.
 - Place large or heavy objects on lower shelves. Fasten shelves, mirrors, and large picture frames to walls. Brace high and top-heavy objects.
 - Anchor overhead lighting fixtures.
 - Be sure the residence is firmly attached or anchored to its foundation.
 - Hold earthquake drills with your family members: Drop, cover, and hold on.
 - Locate safe spots in each room under a sturdy table or against an inside wall. Reinforce this information by moving to these places during each

drill.

- Continually check your living and work areas for possible hazards during an earthquake, eliminating or securing those you can.

Utility shut-off and safety:

- Natural gas leaks and explosions are responsible for significant number of fires following disasters.
- It is vital that all household members know how to shut off natural gas.
- When you learn the proper shut-off procedure for your meter, share the information with everyone in your household.
- Be sure not to actually turn off the gas when practicing the procedure.
- If you smell gas or hear a blowing or hissing noise, open a window and get everyone out quickly. Turn off the gas, using the outside main valve if you can and call the gas company from a neighbor's home.
- Caution – If you turn off the gas for any reason, a qualified professional must turn it back on. Never attempt to turn gas back on yourself.
- Water quickly becomes a precious resource following many disasters. It is vital that all household members learn how to shut off the water at the main house valve.
- Cracked lines may pollute the water supply to your house. It is wise to shut off your water until you hear from authorities that it is safe for drinking.
- The effects of gravity may drain the water in your hot water heater and toilet tanks unless you trap it in your house by shutting off the main house valve (not the street valve in the cement box at the curb – this valve is extremely difficult to turn and requires a special tool).
- Locate the shut-off valve for the water line

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Class 14 teenagers learn about Utilities on June 2nd, 2007



Jean Colomy

BERT Database Manager

Database Management

"Help Wanted"

As a Database Manager it is very important to get to you all information necessary to keep you up to date on what is going on in the BERT world. Therefore if there is a change to your address, phone number or e-mail address, please let me know right away. You can contact me at any time – Jean Colomy, 745-1544, kg6syj@

comcast.net. I also maintain the waiting list for those who want a hands-on or DVD class. There are files on where the caches are and who has them - and who wants them. All of these are also divided in categories to be able to make mailing labels. After a class graduates, those members have to be put into the different categories where they belong. Then there are all the rosters for the different Zones along with map pages for the zones. This is a big job and I'm looking for some help. As it is now, it takes many hours of my time and sometimes it doesn't get done in a timely manner, so if you'd like to volunteer to help, give me a call.

Jean Colomy



Marion McKown

Chairman,
BERT Support Group

Taking to the Streets

THANK YOU!!

To all of you parents, grandparents and other busy people with careers, chores, responsibilities, all of those soccer games, baseball games, dance lessons, school, activities and all of the other life affirming duties you have - - You STILL found time to come to quarterly training, help

with graduations, man a table for recruiting and educating our citizens and making BSG meetings!!

I'm impressed!!

Do you know how much we appreciate your participation?

More than you'll ever know!!

But now – Onward.

Our new step forward is "Taking to the Streets".

You'll hear from others in this newsletter some of our new directions. Including something different for next year's muster, but I'm just going to talk about what my goal is for this coming year.

Literally, "Taking to the Streets".

I want to make appointments with team members to walk the map page and quadrants, see where the caches and the staging areas are. Look at the geographical challenges in your areas, and find out how we can let your neighbors know what we are doing.

Yes, I know that I can look at a map and see where you have placed your caches and where your staging areas are, but nothing beats getting out of your chair and seeing for yourself.

So, what other help do you need from us and the fire department? What ideas do you have to improve BERT?

That's my chore (among others) for the new year. So, wait for my phone call!!

Thank you again. Marion McKown



Art Mayoff

Ham Radio Trainer

Ham Radio and BERT

Since March we have seen another dozen or so Benicians receive their Ham license. The Benicia Amateur Radio Club has arranged with the Benicia Library to stock several copies of an excellent self-study guide written by renowned California author Gordon West. All the exam questions (and answers) in the *Technician Study Guide* are published in advance. There

is even an interactive exam CD that allows the student to practice taking randomly generated tests and follow along with the material in the text book. The pass rate has been over 95 percent. BERT members with Ham Radio questions may email Art Mayoff at Art@BeniciaBERT.com

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that enters your house.

• Make sure this valve can be completely shut off. Your valve may be corroded open or it may only partially close. Replace it if necessary.

• Label this valve with a tag for easy identification and make sure all household members know where it is located.

• Electrical sparks have the potential of igniting natural gas if it is leaking. It is wise to teach all responsible household members where and how to shut off the electricity.

• Locate your electrical circuit box.

• Teach all responsible household members how to shut off the electricity to the entire house.

• Caution - For your safety always shut off all the individual circuits before shutting off the main circuit breaker.

Agenda for the Benicia citywide BERT Muster

Thursday, November 8, 2007, 7 PM

at the

Benicia Senior Center

187 East "L" St. (corner of East 2nd St)

Benicia



Please arrive 15-20 minutes early to allow for parking and seating assignments.

When you arrive

You will be directed to one of six card tables. Each table will be responsible for surnames beginning with different groups of letters of the alphabet, such as A-C, D-G, etc. A BERT volunteer will give you your packet.

Display Tables

We have arranged for various public safety agencies and local vendor *Easy Survival Kits, Inc.* to staff display tables. We have secured special BERT pricing should you wish to purchase a disaster kit.

ID Cards

Please bring and wear your BERT ID card. If you still haven't had your photo taken for the new DSW ID card, stop at the Volunteer Fire table.

Door Prizes

A partial list of prizes to be given away include Fire Extinguishers, Combo self-powered Flashlights with AM/FM/Weatherband Radios, First Aid Kits, Canvas bags, Jump Drive and many more. We will also have Two Grand Prizes: Backpack Disaster Kits. This is not a fund-raising raffle. Everyone gets a FREE ticket and an equal chance to win.

Agenda

- Doors open 6:30 PM - Check out the Display tables
- Short Film Presentation
- Boy Scouts - Color Guard and Pledge of Allegiance
- Welcome from Fire Chief Ken Hanley
- Introductions - Marion McKown

BERT Activities

On-going Education - "Take to the Streets in 2008" Dr. Constance Beutel

Keep your Contact Info current - Jean Colomy

Ham Radio - Art Mayoff

Guest Speaker: Doug Wisman, Emergency Services Coordinator, Coastal Region, OES

Break - 20 minutes Coffee and Cookies - visit Display and Volunteer tables

Future Class Plans - Survey Report - Captain K.C. Smith

Door Prize Drawing - Two Grand Prizes (see above)

