

Newsletter

November, 2008 – April, 2009



Navarre CERT was founded in 2005 and has grown to a total membership of 103. Among our members are 25 licensed amateur radio operators and 13 state certified CERT trainers. Navarre is an unincorporated area of Santa Rosa County, Florida, and is situated on the beautiful Gulf of Mexico. We have been fortunate to have been missed by major hurricanes over the past three years after being hit by Hurricane Ivan in September, 2004, and Hurricane Dennis less than ten months later. But we remain active and prepared to respond to any disaster in our area.

SAR Activation - April 26, 2009

Santa Rosa County (SRC) DEM alerted Navarre CERT at 0811 hours, Sunday, April 26th for possible activation to assist in a search on Navarre Beach for a missing swimmer who had disappeared the previous evening. Activation occurred at 0818 hours by DEM Logistics Section Chief Steve Mewborn and Navarre CERT's IC was up and running on the beach by 0845 hours under the command of CERT Training Coordinator, Ralph Agnew. By 0915 hours, three SAR strike teams had been deployed by Navarre CERT to begin the initial search.



During this SAR, Navarre CERT came under the direction of the overall SAR IC, SRSO Sgt. Snow. Sgt. Snow had Navarre CERT control all volunteers associated with the SAR effort. Navarre CERT rapidly deployed multiple SAR strike teams to cover the entire Gulf Coast beach from Eglin AFB property in Okaloosa County to Opal Beach – a distance of approximately 8-10 miles. These strike teams provided continuous beach and surf surveillance from 0930 hours until the SAR was suspended at 1730 hours.

Sixty-three volunteers responded to this SAR effort and fell under Navarre CERT's command. 44 of those volunteers were members of Navarre CERT, 7 were from SRC SAR (who primarily manned observation posts in various condominiums along the coast), 4 were from the St. Sylvester's Knights of Columbus, 5 were from Navarre High School's NJROTC Detachment and 3 were Navarre CERT family members. The American Red Cross provided meals for all volunteers and professional responders.

At the time of the SAR suspension on April 26th, the swimmer had not yet been found. He was found (deceased) the following afternoon in the surf to the west of Opal Beach.

Recognition for Volunteer Service

22 members of Navarre CERT were presented with Presidential Service Awards at a ceremony April 17, 2009. There were recipients at each level and Operations Section Chief Mike Sandler received a Lifetime Achievement Award for volunteering more than 4,000 hours to the community, through his involvement not only with Navarre CERT, but also with Caring & Sharing, Friends of the Navarre Library, and many other area organizations. We are proud to have him on our team.

Receiving Gold Service awards (500+ hours of service) were: Ralph Agnew, Ray Crepeau, TJ & Oud Doherty, Judy Ertl, Sue & Bob Ferson, Lou Greene, Lenore Nicholson, and Nancy Sandler. Silver Service awards (250+ hours of service) were presented to Daisy Crepeau, Nancy Morgan, and Don Nicholson. Chris Arnold, Ed Blick, Lee Harmon, Rick Morgan, Howard Piansky, Don Shopmyer, Gene Simmons, and Steve VanDenAkker received Bronze Service awards (100+ hours of service).

At the same ceremony, Navarre CERT was presented with a Community Service Award from the Santa Rosa Board of County Commissioners, jointly with SRC's ESF-15 lead agency, the Retired Seniors Volunteer Program. The certificate reads "In recognition of outstanding service for 25,000 volunteer hours in order to better the lives of Santa Rosa County citizens." The team was founded in 2005 between Hurricanes Ivan and Dennis with just a

Newsletter

November, 2008 – April, 2009



few members and in 2008, with the team membership approaching 100, members contributed 11,579 volunteer hours.

Ham Radio in Navarre CERT

The Navarre CERT Amateur Radio Club (KC4ERT) sponsored technician-class training and a licensing exam in January, 2009. Eight Navarre CERT members (Paul Huppe, KJ4JDN; Rick Morgan, KJ4JDO; Mark Pokroy, KJ4JDP; Robert Lekanidis, KJ4JDQ; Brian Woodman, KJ4JDR; Peggy Armstrong, KJ4JDS; Mike Sandler, KJ4JDT; and John Askill, KJ4JDU) received their technician licenses. More recently member Don Nicholson passed both the technician class exam and the general class exam, to bring the Navarre CERT ham total to 25.

Special events station N4F will be manned by Navarre CERT members at the 25th annual Navarre FunFest, a yearly festival. Hams from all over the US are expected to make contact with N4F on Saturday, May 16, 2009, between 0900 and 2100 hours.

Introduction to CERT Training

In November, 2008 and April, 2009, Navarre CERT in conjunction with Santa Rosa County Emergency Management conducted Intro to CERT classes. The schedule for such classes consists of classroom work and hands-on training on 2 consecutive weekends (Friday evening, Saturday, and Sunday afternoon) with the final afternoon normally devoted to a disaster exercise. The November class graduated ten, most of whom joined Navarre CERT.



The April, 2009 class did not have the luxury of a disaster exercise, which had been scheduled for April 26. Instead, the seven students participated in the real-life search and rescue activation (above) and received their certificates, caps, and congratulations after the search was suspended. Pictured, left to right: Mark Griffith, Liz Jarrell, Kevin Banks, Jackie Moore, TJ Ball. Not pictured: Danny Welch, Patty Wan.

Navarre CERT Assistance to Santa Rosa County

In January, 2009, the Santa Rosa County Health Department conducted a Pandemic Exercise, using the opportunity to provide free "drive-thru" flu vaccinations to county residents. There were two locations, one in Navarre and the other farther north in the County, and Navarre CERT personnel assisted the Health Department by having drivers complete necessary paperwork without leaving their vehicles and directing the flow of vehicles through the lanes.



On a sadder note, Chief Les Slocum of the Holley-Navarre Fire District passed away in November, 2008. Les had become an ardent supporter of Navarre CERT and often participated in our training classes, teaching fire safety and conducting hands-on fire extinguisher training. For the funeral service, a large number of attendees and vehicles from fire departments in Santa Rosa, Escambia and Okaloosa counties were expected, and Navarre CERT was asked to assist with traffic flow and parking. The team did a fine job in honor of Chief Les.



Newsletter

November, 2008 – April, 2009



Navarre CERT Assistance at Community Events

Requests for Navarre CERT assistance at community events are becoming more and more frequent, and we do our best to respond. We've even put a request form on our website to ensure we get the information we need to determine if we can help and recruit the appropriate number of volunteers from the team. We look upon these events as opportunities to exercise our organizational, communications and teamwork skills, as well as recruit new members and raise community awareness of CERT. Here are the events that occurred in the past six months.

Veteran's Day Ceremony



American Legion Post 382 in Navarre holds a ceremony in Navarre Park to honor veterans each November. Navarre CERT volunteers provided help with crowd control.

Caring and Sharing of Santa Rosa County Thanksgiving and Christmas Distributions

Each year, the Caring & Sharing organization collects food items, toys and cash from the community, and distributes food and toys and gift wrap to 300+ needy area families. Those families make their pickups on one Sunday afternoon at a local school. Navarre CERT provides a team of volunteers to guide traffic through the pick-up process and manage parking. 2008 was no exception, and Caring & Sharing has expressed its gratitude, saying that our assistance made a huge difference in their operation.

Navarre Christmas Parade and Christmas in the Park Celebration

Another annual event in Navarre, this one put on by the Navarre Beach Area Chamber of Commerce, is the Christmas Parade and a celebration in the park with a Santa Claus, refreshments, musical entertainment by choirs from various schools and a raffle along with the seasonal decorations and lights. The Santa Rosa Sheriff's Office relies on Navarre CERT to augment its officers by manning barricades along the parade route and directing pedestrians to a safe, manned crossing of US Highway 98, a very busy thoroughfare that runs by the park. This is enjoyable duty for team members as they get to watch the happy faces of the children. Our mobility trailer became part of the parade.



Mardi Gras Parade

At the annual, family-oriented Mardi Gras parade held in Navarre in early February, 2009, Navarre CERT volunteers assisted the Sheriff again by patrolling along the route to ensure that parade spectators, especially children, didn't run onto the route and risk getting hit by a float or vehicle. In addition, team members decorated our mobility trailer so that we could also participate in the parade.

Rotary Club 5k

To raise money for their many philanthropic endeavors, the Navarre Rotary Club sponsors a 5k run/walk. Navarre CERT again augmented Sheriff's personnel in April, 2009, by manning barricades along the route.

Newsletter

November, 2008 – April, 2009



Information Distribution Booths



In April, Navarre CERT personnel manned the Santa Rosa Citizen Corps table, distributing information about Citizen Corps programs along with disaster preparedness materials. Later in the month, at an area Publix supermarket, we set up our information distribution table and were available to provide free programming of public alert radios being offered at sale prices by Publix.

Upcoming Events:

- **Sunset Stampede** a 5k run/walk to benefit our beloved but financially beleaguered Zoo Northwest Florida.
- **25th Annual Navarre FunFest** Originally held to celebrate the coming of local phone service to Navarre, FunFest is a two-day festival held at Navarre Beach with attractions for children and adults alike, including live musical entertainment, fireworks, children's fun area, vendor booths, and food sales. Again this year, Navarre CERT will spend Friday, May 15, providing access control to the venue for vendor setup as well as setting up our own area. Our CERT coordinator, TJ Doherty, writes the operations plan for the entire operation of the event (put on by the Chamber of Commerce) as well as the Navarre CERT ops plan and we serve as communications central for the FunFest, coordinating between the Chamber of Commerce personnel, first responders and Navarre CERT as well as within the CERT volunteers. Our volunteers take on the tasks of parking access control, loading/unloading of parking shuttle busses, roving in teams to provide a "uniformed presence" and standing by to augment first responders in the event of a mass emergency. In addition, we will have a command tent, provide first aid for the event, distribute disaster preparedness materials, and host a special events ham radio station. In all, we will have three 10x10 tents and our mobility trailer on the venue.
- **Publix Information Booths and Weather Radio Programming** At two additional Publix supermarkets in Santa Rosa County, Navarre CERT will set up its information tables to distribute disaster preparedness materials and will provide free assistance to anyone needing help in programming public alert radios.
- **American Legion Memorial Day Ceremony** We will provide crowd control and be available to augment first responders in the event of a mass emergency.