Autauga/Prattville CERT Newsletter

Volume 2 Issue 1 January 2014

... doing the greatest good for the greatest number.

- **Ben Reddoch, CERT Chairman**
- **Allen Cotton, Vice Chairman**
- **Roy LaPorte, Secretary**
- **Vacant, Treasurer**
- **Everett Flynn, Safety Coordinator**
- **Bonnie Temple, Member at Large**
- **Gary Barron, Medical Reserve Corps Coordinator**

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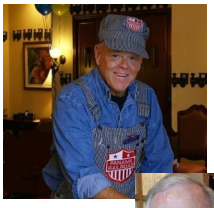
Meet Your Council - By Allen Cotton, Vice Chairman

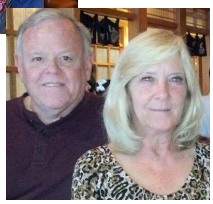
Hi, I'm Allen Cotton, your vice-chairman of the CERT council. As vice-chairman I am prepared to stand in for our Chairman, Ben Reddoch should he be unavailable during a CERT deployment. I also have the lead in keeping the CERT Facebook page current.

I was born and raised in the Panama Canal Zone and I am a third generation Canal Zonian and hold dual US and Panamanian citizenship. Both of my Grandfathers were among the builders of the canal and after the canal opened for business, on August 15, 1914, they stayed on to help run the canal.

I am a graduate of the University of Iowa and I spent most of my adult life in the US military starting in the US Navy as a Cryptologic Technician Interpretive branch, North Vietnamese linguist, doing communications studies which required knowledge of a foreign language. During my 12 years in the Navy I was usually stationed with the Army or the Air Force spending only 15 months with the Navy. I decided that since I was going to be assigned with the Army I might as well join them and when the Army offered me Officer Candidate School I switched services. As an Army Officer it was my honor and privilege to serve as a Communication Electronics Officer in both tactical and fixed station units. In addition to stateside duty stations I was stationed in the Republic of the Philippines, Republic of Panama and did several tours in the Republic of Korea. I retired from my 41 year military career in March 2010.

I joined the CERT in 2007 and have been privileged to be trained in several disciplines within the CERT. I have been deployed to serve the citizens of Autauga, Elmore and Chilton counties in the aftermath of tornados and floods. I have used my Spanish language skills in the aftermath of the Chilton County tornado and during the H1N1 inoculations offered in Prattville. I have enjoyed utilizing the skills taught by the Prattville Police Department to direct traffic at community events. I have taken advantage of many training opportunities such as Shelter Operations, and chainsaw utilization and participated in many of the tri-county training exercises to hone my skills to better serve the citizens of Autauga County. I highly encourage all the members of our Prattville Autauga CERT to take advantage of the many hands on and on-line training opportunities. Also please encourage your friends and neighbors to join and be active members of the Prattville Autauga CERT. The life they save may be yours!





What's Ahead For 2014

Happy New Year to all our CERT and MRC members!! As 2014 gets off and running, we are looking forward to a great and exciting new year.

In addition to all the CERT training and educational possibilities, we now have our MRC division in place and ready for action. We are also in the beginning stages of implementing the VMRC division and accepting volunteers for both.
Several events are being planned throughout the year, including community involvement opportunities, continuing education classes, disaster preparedness, CPR training, among many others.

We are also looking forward to a new CERT class later in the year and welcoming many new members to our organization.

Stay tuned to our CERT and MRC newsletters, Facebook pages and/or emails for updates and additional information on all events, programs, training and activities planned for the upcoming 2014 year.

As always, you may contact the Autauga County EMA, any CERT or MRC council member, or send us an email at autaugacountycert@yahoo.com regarding any questions, suggestions or comments.

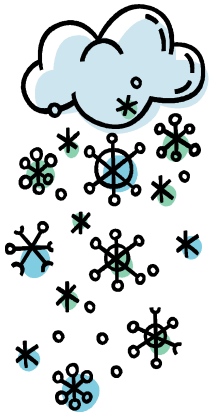
By: Tracy Savage-Barron

The Science Behind CERT(4) By Ben Reddoch

What is white… And Eskimos have hundreds of words for? I don't know, but it isn't snow.

What is clear, is a mineral just like salt… And in bulk has the power of 120 atomic bombs?

Snow!



But whether it is spittin' snow, a thundersnow, or a full on blizzard, it is a sure sign of winter. And there are a lot of myths about snow. And that fluffy stuff can have a lot of hazards associated with it as well. Let's look at some of the things we learn about snow that aren't necessarily true.

- **Snow is white!** Nope. Snow is clear however it reflects all colors of light therefore it looks white. But there are colors of snow. Snow can range in colors orange, green, brown, purple, and even pink. After snow falls, there are some algae that will grow on snow and the type of algae can give a distinctive color. Also dust in the air can give falling snow various colors of red, brown, orange, or even black. You still don't want to eat the yellow snow.

- **Eskimos have hundreds of words for snow!** Nope. The Eskimos or Inuit, have a lot of flexibility in their language for putting different roots together, but don't have many more descriptions for snow than the English language.
- **It snows a lot in Antarctica!** Nope. Antarctica is a desert. The blizzards they have there is actually old snow being blown around in very strong winds that are common.

- **No two snowflakes are alike!** Nope. Because of the water molecules and the way they form ice crystals, snowflakes are six sided and start off the same shape and the grown up snowflakes can look remarkably similar in many cases.

So why do we need to be concerned with snowfall? Snow can have many negative effects to our life and lifestyle.

Snowstorms can be expensive. Because of the effect on our society's infrastructure such as, transportation, utilities, and recovery, snowstorms can cost millions of dollars. For instance, the snowstorm that blanketed the nation from December 2009 to February 2010 had enormous cost. $60 million in damages, NYC spent $63 million in cleanup, airlines lost $150 million, and later in 2010, the December 26th blizzard cost retailers $1 billion in lost sales! (http://www.mint.com/blog/wp-content/uploads/2011/01/mint-blizzard-infographic.jpg)

A single snowstorm can drop over 39 million TONS of snow with the energy equivalent to 120 atomic bombs. With an event like this, widespread power outages with loss of heat, hazardous travel conditions, and property damage can all lead to a life changing event. (http://www.toptenz.net/top-10-fascinating-facts-about-snow.php)

Apparently snow can make you crazy, especially if you are an Inuit. For more information on this disputed condition, Google Pibloktoq and judge for yourself.

Though a snowfall can paint a beautiful scene, (and be, apparently, a great reason for cleaning out the local grocery store here in central Alabama) it can lead to serious pitfalls for the unprepared. So what should you do to prepare in the event of a significant snowfall? Visit http://www.ready.gov/winter-weather for complete instructions, but the main things you should address are:

Warmth. Have alternate heat sources for your home in the case of a power outage and plenty of fuel for your heat source. Also have on hand plenty of blankets to help keep warm. Always be aware of carbon monoxide buildup!

Travel. Don't! If you must, be careful and slow. Watch hills and bridges. With any snow event there could begin thawing during the day and refreezing at night creating icy conditions.

Personal temperature. When trying to recover from a significant snow and you find yourself outside, whether shoveling your driveway or building the biggest snowman on the block, be aware of the dangers of hypothermia and frostbite.

"There's one good thing about snow, it makes your lawn look as nice as your neighbors." Clyde Moore

Attention Members!!

By: Ben Reddoch

As most of you know, our CERT program lost our federal funding from Homeland Security via Citizen Corps in the summer of 2011. Since that time, the CERT Council has been investigating ways in which to supply material to our program for training and deployment purposes. After an exhaustive review, the Council decided on forming a non-profit organization for fund raising and donations of money and material. This has been a common way of CERT organizations around the country providing what their programs need. There are filing fees for the government and legal fees for the creation of a non-profit, so the next hurdle the Council faced was raising the money for this aspect.

The Council decided on a fairly new concept call "crowd funding." This is an internet based fund raising technique through a web based company. The Council decided to use the service of a highly rated company called GoFundMe.com. Our first step was to raise $100 through our own contacts via Facebook and email. We have now reached that goal! The Autauga / Prattville CERT fund raising site is now under review for public release which will expose our fund raising to anyone interested on the World Wide Web.

If you would like to see the site, please go to gofundme.com/5rsdfk and visit. Thank you to all that have donated to our cause! Please like and share this information on Facebook. You can find recent postings on our Facebook page, Autauga/Prattville CERT. The more exposure that we get, the better! If you have any questions regarding the non-profit, it's formation, or use, feel free to contact Ben Reddoch at reddochb@charter.net.

Alabama Weather ~ From One Extreme to Another

Living in the State of Alabama can present some pretty extreme weather conditions, depending on the region you live in, the season it is or the type of weather year we are having. Because the state of Alabama is made up of several types of terrain, weather phenomena can range from snow/sleet/blizzard conditions in the north to twisting tornadoes through the central plains to tropical hurricanes near the Gulf to extreme heat and severe drought conditions to torrential rains and flash flooding.

The average climate in the state is defined as "humid subtropical" or characterized by hot, humid summers and generally mild to cool winters. Although, at extremely rare intervals the thermometer has fallen below zero, as was the case in the remarkable cold wave of the 12th-13 February 1899, when an absolute minimum of -17 °F was registered at Valley Head. The highest temperature ever recorded was 109° F in Talladega county in 1902. Statistically speaking, Alabama on average has around 50 tornadoes per year, 80-90 moderate to severe thunderstorms/year which can and usually do result in some sort of flooding, and though extreme cold temperatures are rare, Alabama does have around 20-25 days/year with near freezing or below temperatures.

These extreme weather conditions can wreak havoc on the people of Alabama. It can cause a panic, of sorts, for those not accustomed to having to deal with these types of extremes. As, with any type of weather, we should always stay aware, informed and prepared.

The best way to stay prepared is to make sure you stay tuned to local TV and radio stations, have a weather radio, make sure you have an emergency kit on hand, watch for local EMA/CERT and MRC alerts through various types of social media and always have a plan of action and remember, safety, first.

Alabama weather can change on a dime, therefore, being prepared for any weather emergency can drastically lower the chances of serious injury to you, your family, pets and property.

CHAINSAW CERTIFICATION CLASS By: Ben Reddoch

On October 9th, 2013, Autauga / Prattville CERT participated in it's first Chainsaw Certification Class. This class offering was a joint venture between Steve's Service Center in Prattville and CERT and was a great success! The National Training Specialist from Husqvarna, Cary Shepard, was the instructor. The class was offered not only to CERT members, but also the general public and local municipality / county departments.

Topics covered in the classroom section included:

- Chainsaw design and how they work
- Chainsaw inspection and maintenance
- Chain sharpening
- Classroom training on felling trees

After lunch the class took a field trip to see the process of felling trees in the real world. The technique taught is quite different than just cutting through a tree. It is a safer technique that gives the cutter time to asses every aspect of felling before that final cut is made to the tree. Special emphasis was given on how to determine which way a tree will tend to fall and how to control and direct that using cutting techniques and felling wedges.

The class was so well received that every effort is going to be made to make this an annual training event for CERT. CERT is also putting together a digital library, thanks to Cary, on many of the aspects he teaches in class. If you are interested in going through the certification class, watch for email notifications as the time gets closer for registration.

A special thanks to Judy, at Steve's Service Center without who this would not have been such a great success. She not only facilitated communication with Husqvarna, but provided a great lunch for the students! Another thank you to Mike Thrower and Cary Shepard from Husqvarna for putting on such an informative and entertaining class!

Thank you for your support!!
From Autauga / Prattville CERT

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We're on the web!

Like us on Facebook at:
https://www.facebook.com/AutaugaPrattvilleCERT

Or online at:
http://www.citizencorps.gov/cc/showCert.do?id=44767

OBJECTIVE:

The objective of CERT is to assist State, County, and City Emergency Services in any and all emergencies and to assist the general public in such emergencies, as trained.

MISSION STATEMENT:

The mission of CERT is to educate the citizens of Autauga County to be prepared and to safely care for themselves, families, friends and neighbors in the event of a disaster of any type, until additional emergency help can arrive and establish CERT as an emergency management resource. To continue to provide training, education and support to volunteers in basic disaster response, such as fire fighting and safety, light search and rescue, basic disaster medical skills and to participate in non-emergency projects that promote and improve safety in Autauga County.

Disaster Tidbits: **Floods are the #1 natural disaster in the U.S. ~ The largest recorded hailstone measured 8" in diameter, 18 1/2" in circumference and weighed a total of 1.94 lbs. ~**

REMINDER TO ALL MEMBERS!!!!

If you have not done so… Be sure to renew your CERT ID badges and, if you are a volunteer with MRC, be sure to get your new MRC badge as soon as possible. All ID's are expired and not valid!
Please see Kristen Morgan at the EMA office as soon as possible!

GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

Be sure to mark your calendars for Tuesday, March 11, 2014 for the first General Meeting of the year. The meeting will begin at 6:00pm and will be held at St. Joseph's Catholic Church; 511 N. Memorial Drive; Prattville. We will be having a Pot Luck Dinner… So, please be sure to bring a dish for all to enjoy! See you all there!!!