



THE GREEN HELMET

Neighbors Helping Neighbors | July 2026

CONTENTS

- 2 | Dana Powers is Retiring
- 3 | The Elvia Era
- 6 | All-Hands Meeting
- 7 | Gwyneth's Gift
- 8 | National CERT Conference
- 8 | Welcome Sheila
- 9 | Canteen Corner
- 10 | Fire Station Open Houses
- 11 | CERT Class 208
- 12 | Libyan CERT Class #209
- 13 | Safety Corner
- 14 | September's Preparedness Month
- 15 | Preparedness Cycle
- 15 | Five 'Wellness' Habits for Life
- 16 | Tax Free Weekend
- 17 | Upcoming Training & Activities
- 18 | Fairfax CERT Association
- 19 | Volunteer Side Quests
- 20 | Trivia Quiz
- 22 | Acronyms & Abbreviations
- 23 | Calendar

Celebrating Two CERT Legends



Dana Powers is Retiring!

Julie T.

Dana Is Retiring This Summer.

Dana started in the Office of the Volunteer Liaison before Fairfax County CERT even existed. She has been with CERT for our whole wild ride, through all of our lead instructors and volunteer leads.

When I started in CERT, Dana was the first contact you had. She deciphered the interest signups, sent out class announcements, and registered you for classes (pre-VMS). Aside from being there for all of our drills, she worked tirelessly behind the scenes to make things work for us. She was in charge of many things from inelegant ones like arranging porta-potties for drills and ordering backpacks to printing and presenting CERT graduate certificates, and processing background checks and IDs. She also kept us connected to all of the correct Fire Department personnel and kept us apprised of news and happenings in the Office of the Volunteer Liaison. She fixed all kinds of problems before most of us even knew that there was a problem!

One of her most important roles was to reel in Jeffrey Katz and know when his ideas were too crazy.

CERT celebrated her contributions at the June program meeting and presented her with a shadow box with CERT memorabilia. **We Will CERTainly Miss Her!**



Annual FCFVRA Volunteer Picnic

August 15th, 12-4 pm at Burke Volunteer Fire Station 14

9501 Old Burke Lake Road, Burke, VA 22015.

The Volunteer Fire Departments Will Recognize Dana

CERTs are welcome to attend

See Invitation: <https://lal.so/e/zW4TCi6dV8V>

Hosted by the
Fairfax
County
Volunteer Fire
and Rescue
Association and Burke
Volunteer Fire
and Rescue
Department



The Elvia Era

Jim McP.



Elvia Shepherded and Nurtured Our Fairfax County CERT

Within the Fairfax County CERT Program, the volunteer leadership frequently resorts to a regional shorthand to identify a particular period in our Program's growth and development, such as "before Bob," "after Missy," and "when Jeffrey was here." These labels not only connote a period of an individual's service and key events along the timeline of our CERT history, but these 'tags' can also serve to remind us of particular CERT challenges and achievements during our Program's 20+ years of service to the County and its many communities.

After more than six years of inspired leadership, Elvia Foil has turned over the duties and responsibilities of Fairfax County's CERT Program Volunteer Lead to Watkins Gray. Building upon the work of volunteer leaders who preceded her and, collaborating with County and regional professionals as well as various levels of talented leadership within the CERT community, Elvia shepherded and nurtured our Fairfax County CERT program into a nationally recognized program of emergency preparedness volunteers.

Coincident with her turnover of duties in the winter of 2020, CERT and the County joined the rest of the world in a steep learning curve about all things COVID. Everyone was faced with accommodating changes across every aspect of our daily lives: how and where we worked, raised our families, socialized, and volunteered. Before really having a chance to get her feet on the ground in her new position, Elvia arrived on scene just in time to lead the CERT community through the COVID crisis, in part, by realizing the Art of the Possible. With COVID, CERT suddenly had niche services to provide Fairfax County communities with additional food distribution sites and vaccination centers. These services showcased the CERT portfolio of citizenship from event planning and site layout, to Traffic and Crowd Management, food staging and distribution, home site visits and face mask manufacturing. While actually participating in these many COVID response activities herself, Elvia's key role lay in facilitating the significant transition in CERT's product line – from primarily training emergency preparedness volunteers to also delivering community services. Elvia was one of the first to see CERT's future.





While managing all the COVID-related noise and distractions, Elvia set her administrative sights on updating the CERT organizational chart (org chart) to map the way forward. She anticipated a visual tool that clearly documented CERT's various functions, with their specific roles, responsibilities, and reporting relationships. And, as with her efforts related to COVID response operations, she capitalized on her skills in being collaborative and inclusive. Realizing the magnitude of the CERT Volunteer Leadership position's responsibilities, Elvia proved to be a master at delineating authorities, delegating responsibilities, and inviting fresh approaches to emerging CERT challenges. The org chart clarified our CERT workload management and facilitated the streamlining of numerous standard operation procedures and CERT protocols. The Elvia Era was upon us.

The post-COVID CERT Program rapidly evolved as it continued to transition from its adolescence phase of "train and forget" (graduating Basic CERT students into our community and then allowing their skills to lie dormant) to a more complex, and more imaginative, agile resource for Fairfax County. As numerous subject matter experts with a passion for select CERT specialties developed domains such as Training, Moulage, Operations, Safety, Administration and Radio, Elvia recognized the power and potential of veteran CERT leaders and invited them to collaborate as an advisory, decision making body. These "movers and shakers" from each functional area evolved as the CPLC (CERT Program Leadership Council). This council continues to meet at least monthly to collaborate on administrative and operational issues affecting the CERT Calendar, resource procurement and utilization, prioritization of events, training, community operations, and emerging issues. 'Resource managers, proactively sharing their expertise to achieve common goals.' The Elvia Era!

As org charts and Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) were being written and implemented, and operational protocols and policies established, Elvia invited the CPLC to envision and coalesce around strategic Mission and Vision Statements that would guide CERT through continuing, long-term change. She steered CERT along a trajectory that would launch CERT well beyond the accolades of the COVID years. Beginning early in her CERT experience, Elvia had been recruited onto the committee that initiated the Fairfax County CERT Volunteer Association. This entailed serving on the small group that drafted the Association's By-Laws, filed the required documentation,, and eventually served as the inaugural Board of Directors. (Today, the CERT Association is an integral affiliate of the leadership team and serves as CERT's legal entity (501(c)(3),

providing financial support to the CERT Program, holding property for the benefit of the CERT Program, and raising funds in support of the CERT mission.) The Elvia Era has indeed been a time of operational growth, organization

sophistication, and enhanced capabilities.

If COVID and the Org chart were to anchor the beginning of the Elvia Era, and award-winning volunteer service was to highlight the ensuing years, then there could be no better bookend to mark Elvia's departure as the CERT Volunteer Lead than the inauguration and success of the CERT Canteen. Over a period of years, the Office of Volunteer Services for the County's Fire and Rescue Department explored opportunities to realize a synergy between career personnel, Volunteer Companies, and CERT Volunteers. As the dynamics of each emergency response community evolved, it became apparent that there was a requirement for a select cadre of CERT Volunteers to train and qualify to drive, staff, and administer Canteen operations in support of the County's Fire and Rescue responders. Under Elvia's administration, a now-familiar, collaborative process was applied to realize this opportunity. Passionate CERT activists were recognized and empowered; CERT Association support was obtained; and training requirements were satisfied while protocols and procedures were developed, documented, and practiced. Based upon feedback from the County's emergency responders and the Canteen cadre, Canteen operations proved to be an unqualified success, demonstrating growing CERT capabilities for the County and inviting additional collaborative initiatives. The Elvia Era – CERT poised for continued excellence and growth.

And by what objective external metrics can the current Fairfax County CERT Program be judged? During the Elvia Era, the Program has been recognized in multiple annual competitions by Volunteer Fairfax as the County's premiere volunteer organization. Neighboring counties and municipalities from across the National Capital Region have subscribed to this CERT Program's subject matter experts, SOPs, training materials, and documentation as templates for their jurisdictions. And as a Gold Standard measure of the Program's success, the County Board of Supervisors unanimously voted for continued financial support of the CERT Program amid cost-benefit discussions and challenging budget priorities.

It is a fortuitous time to have been able to train and volunteer with the CERT community. A time of seemingly ever-increasing community requirements for emergency preparedness resources, and emerging opportunities for new initiatives and fresh faces. And CERTainly, a time when the leadership of Elvia Foil has fueled the Program; one of those visionary, detail-oriented, always appreciative, persistent, consistent, and "they broke the mold" leaders. For all of the other moving parts necessary to coalesce into the magic of the CERT engine, there still needed to be the "Elvia touch" to serve as the spark plug to propel the Program.

But, for a woman who consistently eschews the limelight in deference to the efforts of the CLPC, it would be inappropriate to celebrate the Elvia Era merely as a record of one woman's exceptional abilities, gifted leadership style, or visionary organizational achievements. It is a label that recognizes the excellence of Fairfax County CERT in this time and place. This has been a time of collaboration, synergy, and exceptional creativity by a host of CERT volunteers spanning more than 200 CERT Basic Classes. It has been fueled by a culture of respect for individual ideas, experiences and passionate ownership of supporting functions where contributions of time and initiative are recognized and appreciated and, where achievements are celebrated.

A lot has happened in our world since the onset of COVID in late-2019; to our communities, to our region, and to our CERT Program. It is fair to say that these past 6 years or so have been a dynamic period for the Fairfax County CERT Program and its members, both experienced veteran CERT volunteers and new Basic graduates. In the years to follow, with an anticipated continuation of successful Basic CERT classes and, as-of-yet unimagined CERT events, we will be able to share memories of incredibly gifted CERT career professionals, CERT colleagues and our lasting friendships, and countless CERT operations, classes, and experiences that served our communities well.

"Ah, yes! That was the Elvia Era!"

All-Hands Meeting

Ginny K.



Come to the August All-Hands Meeting!

August 18th at 7 pm
The Public Safety Headquarters

Hopefully everyone is enjoying some summer fun this July. In August, CERT will be gearing up for a busy Fall season. Join us at the August All-Hands Program meeting on August 18 at 7:00 p.m. at the Public Safety Headquarters.

- ▶ Come find out where Fairfax County CERT is heading, and how you can be a part of it.
- ▶ See things that you may have been missing.
- ▶ Divisions and Sections will have information to share about their area and answer any questions that you might have about what they do to support CERT.

Learn about:



Outreach



Radio



Role Players



Speakers Bureau



Canteen



Traffic & Crowd Management



Strategic Planning



Moulage



Training

- | | | | |
|-------------------------|-------------------------|----------------|------------------------|
| ▶ Safety | ▶ Welcome & Orientation | ▶ Shelter Team | ▶ Area Community Teams |
| ▶ MWAA K9 Decoys | ▶ Facilities | ▶ Newsletter | ▶ Website |
| ▶ Welcome & Orientation | ▶ CERT Association | ▶ Marketing | ▶ Cyber Team |

& Many More!

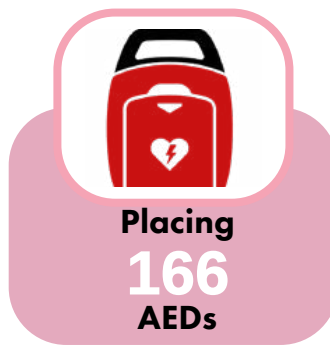


Ginny K.

Building a Culture of Action

Jennifer and Joel Griffin started the Gwyneth's Gift Foundation after they lost their 13-year-old daughter to sudden cardiac arrest. The Foundation provides free Hands Only CPR and Automated External Defibrillator (AED) awareness training in Virginia, as well as providing free AEDs to locations that need them. Their training gives students, parents, teachers, and members of the community the confidence to act in an emergency.

The Foundation has been responsible for:



Even before the Griffins started their foundation, they worked to get Gwyneth's Law passed in the State of Virginia. This law requires all public school teachers in the state to take annual Hands Only CPR training; all public schools in the state must have an accessible AED; and all public school high school students must take Hands Only CPR training in order to graduate.

Veronica Gutierrez, Executive Director of Operations and Community Engagement, has been bringing her team to schools in Fairfax County since 2021. Fairfax County CERT, along with career and volunteer members of Fairfax City and Fairfax County Fire & Rescue, has been helping with the mission of Gwyneth's Gift Foundation to deliver Hands Only CPR and AED awareness training to students in our County. Our volunteers help ensure that the students are performing Hands Only CPR correctly and following the commands of the AED training device to deliver a "shock" to the patient. In 2026 alone, 2,641 students at four schools were trained.

Students in Fairfax County that were trained by Gwyneth's Gift Foundation have gone on to use their skills. A student in Herndon used CPR on a family member. Three students from Longfellow Middle School performed CPR on their scoutmaster, to save his life, when he collapsed on a bike trip shortly after they had done the training.



To learn more, go to gwynethsgift.org



The National CERT Association Conference

Julie T.

The 2026 National CERT Conference will be held

August 24-29 in Irvine, California

[Learn More: NationalCERT.org/2026_national_conference.php](https://NationalCERT.org/2026_national_conference.php)

This year's theme, "Stronger Communities Start Here" plays homage to CERT's roots and the foundation of resiliency that CERT plays in its communities across the country. There are three full days of pre-conference training and two and a half days of continued learning and breakout sessions.

The National CERT Conference is generally a good place to see how other CERT programs function and why their approaches may differ from ours. It can also be a good source of information on improving or expanding our program. Registration is ongoing.

Welcome Sheila!

Robby D.



Meet Our Community Training Coordinator

Fairfax County CERT is excited to introduce Sheila Ribeiro as our Community Training Coordinator!

Sheila serves as the primary point of contact for community organizations, nonprofits, homeowners associations, businesses, and other groups interested in requesting CERT training. Whether you're looking to host Hands-Only CPR, Stop the Bleed, Be Stroke Smart, the Emergency Preparedness Workshop, or another class, Sheila is here to help connect your group with our volunteer instructors.

These community education programs are an important part of CERT's mission to build a more prepared and resilient Fairfax County.

**To request training or learn more, contact Sheila at:
CommunityTraining@FairfaxCountyCERT.org**

Canteen Corner

Julie T., Kelly O., Ray K.

New Canteen and Goodbye to the CERT Green Machine (CGM)

The Fairfax CERT Association recently purchased Annandale's canteen which had been out of service for about 2 years. This represented a significantly newer vehicle than our other vehicles V099 (CGM) and V021 (our newer canteen vehicle). This purchase began as a last proposal by Jeff Katz, and eventually ended up with a good deal on a custom outfitted canteen vehicle.



Due to the County's one in, one out vehicle rules, this meant that we had to get rid of the CGM quickly before the County dropped insurance coverage. Robby found a volunteer group in Richmond looking for a new canteen vehicle, and we were able to donate the CGM to the Metro Richmond Flying Squad which provides canteen services to the greater Richmond area.

The Incredible Journey of Canteen 417 (CGM): A True Circle of Life!

1989

A GMC stepvan is born. Custom-outfitted by Winfield Lacy, it began its life as Canteen 417 for the Centreville, VA Volunteer Fire Department.

2021

After decades of firehouse service, the rig is generously donated to Fairfax County CERT to serve as a command outpost and rehabilitation hub, fondly dubbed the CERT Green Machine (CGM).

Today

The mission continues! The vehicle has been officially donated to the Metro Richmond Flying Squad, where it will continue its life as a rehab unit and canteen for first responders.



Here's to decades of service, adaptation, and resilience!

Join the Fun at Fire Station

Ginny K.



Fire Station Open House is happening on October 10, 2026

Fire Station Open House is happening on October 10, 2026. This is when the Fairfax County Volunteer and Career Fire Stations open their doors to visitors.

Each Volunteer station celebrates in its own way with family activities such as food, games, bounce house, and safety demonstrations. CERT brings an Outreach table to about a dozen of the stations. This requires two to three volunteers for each of the two shifts at each station.

While many Career stations do not get many visitors, they also want to be prepared. This is where CERT volunteers can help. We place a volunteer at each station for the day, usually from 10:00am to 4:00pm, to be sure that the station is covered if all units leave. This way, visitors can still enjoy the station.

Last year we had 38 volunteers working Outreach at Volunteer stations, with a total of 180 hours put in. We also had 143 hours put in by 23 CERT volunteers to cover the Career stations. That is a lot of hours and many volunteers! In both cases, we could have used a few more volunteers. (**Note:** a background check is required to cover the Career Stations. [Fairfaxcountycert.org/members/fairfax-cert-program-organization/policies-procedures/cert-background-check](https://fairfaxcountycert.org/members/fairfax-cert-program-organization/policies-procedures/cert-background-check))

This event is a great opportunity for CERT to work with, and get to know, those working for Fairfax County Fire and Rescue. The CERT Program is seen by many that may have never heard about us – both within Fire and Rescue and the public. CERT volunteers have been able to help the stations set up for their activities, as well as assist in keeping visitors safe when department vehicles are called out. It is a fun and festive event!

Look for the VMS opportunity, which should be up in August, to sign up for a shift (or two!) to do Outreach, or to sign up to cover a Career station. Not in town that day?

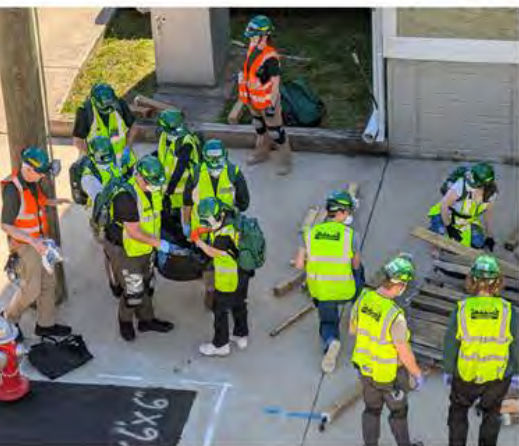
We have opportunities to help with logistics and recruiting prior to the event, contact Ginny at outreachdeputy@fairfaxcountycert.org



CERT Class 208

Julie T.

The CERT 208 final was held on May 16th at the Fairfax City Training Facility. This class was our largest single class to date.



Libyan CERT Class #209

Julie T.



CERT 209 A Unique Experience

Fairfax County CERT was asked by Georgetown University to teach a CERT class to a group of Libyan emergency personnel. These included doctors, paramedics, and emergency managers. They were in the United States to learn about revamping their emergency response.

The class was interesting in many ways. The most obvious was the language barrier. We had a translator, and you had to take frequent breaks to allow the translator to translate. Many of them also had a good grasp of many of the skills to start with. There were interesting group dynamics and cultural differences to deal with. Some of their leadership didn't want to be victims for their employees. On the day of the final, they decided that they didn't want to treat women in an exercise, although they would treat women in an actual emergency. That meant that most of our victim actors were relegated to being bystanders (although one of them did an excellent job as a concerned neighbor).

Initially, they were unsure of the concept of CERT and thought we would be reporting to the EOC or similar station. They left with a grasp of the CERT concept, and the idea that this could be widely applied in Libya. They described Libya as having a unique culture of community assistance and thought CERT would be a good fit. One of the students planned to write a children's book and try to incorporate CERT or components of it into their schools.

This was their last exposure before they went back to Libya, and they definitely came away with ideas to improve their response.



Safety Corner

It's Hot Out There!

Ginny K.



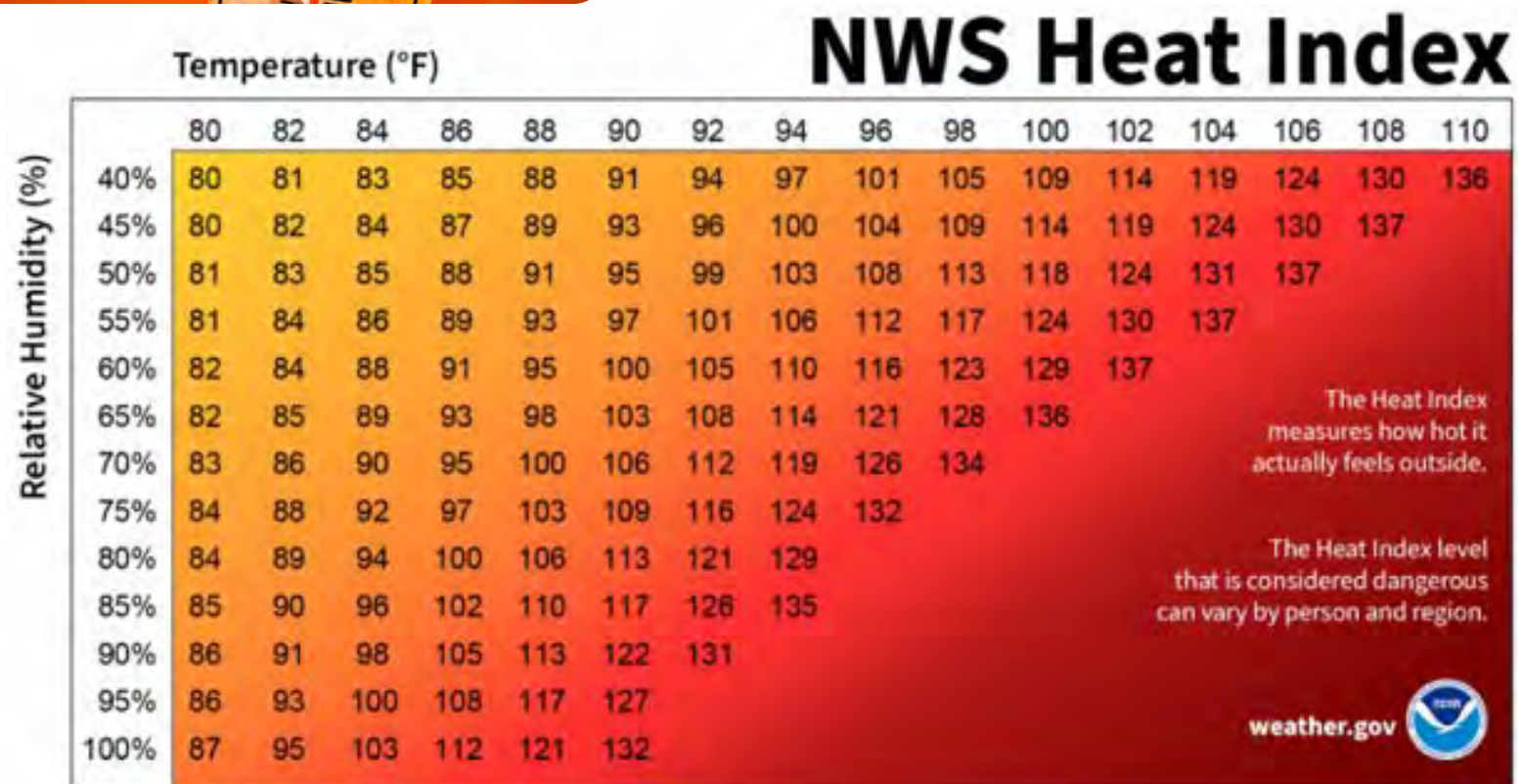
Summer in Northern Virginia is hot and humid. That is a given. All the more reason to plan ahead for outdoor activities. Whether it is a backyard barbeque, working at a CERT Basic final, or responding to a real-world incident, we need to be prepared. Heat stress and heat stroke are very real risks to the health of those working or playing outside.

Heat stress results from many different factors such as the air temperature, humidity, air movement, and sunlight. Also involved are clothing, physical activity, additional heat sources, and personal risk factors. Our bodies can adapt to higher heat, but we need time to get conditioned – this can take a week or two.

Our best protection is prevention. Drink cool water; take rest breaks in the shade or a cool area; dress for the weather; if wearing a face covering, be sure to change it if it gets wet or soiled; and watch out for each other. Watch for signs of heat illness – abnormal thinking or behavior, slurred speech, seizures, or loss of consciousness. At the first signs of illness, call 911, cool with water or ice on the outside of the body, and stay until help arrives.

To help calculate the risk see the NOAA's NWS Heat Index chart below or download the NIOSH/OSHA Heat App

Sources: www.osha.gov/heat



The Heat Index is a product of NOAA's National Weather Service (NWS).

September is

National Preparedness Month

Preparedness Starts At Home

Julie T., Dot B., & Ginny K.

Here are some ideas of things to do. Do several. I recommend at least one a week. If anything doesn't sound familiar or you don't know where to start, take CERT's Emergency Preparedness Class.

Pack / repack / update your bags and supplies:

(all items in date and/or with working batteries, all clothes fit and are seasonal)

- ▶ 72-Hour go bag
- ▶ Your CERT response backpack
- ▶ Car emergency kit
- ▶ Your financial information
- ▶ Pet supplies

Shelter in place supplies:

- ▶ Restock / rotate food supplies

Spread the message of preparedness

- ▶ Talk to your neighbors

Review your escape plans – has anything changed?

- ▶ Escape from your house
- ▶ Routes to leave the area

Keep your skills up to date:

- ▶ Participate in CERT training or volunteer as cadre
- ▶ Meet with your area team

Protect Yourself from Disease in a Disaster

Source: CDC.gov

Disaster recovery brings many opportunities for transmission of diseases. Prepare now to take care of yourself. September is National Preparedness Month, so check your supplies and maybe add missing items that could protect your health.

Start by making sure that you have non-latex disposable gloves, N95 masks, protective eyewear (Z87), work gloves, and knee pads. Adding a face shield can't hurt. Insect repellent is a must to protect yourself from ticks and mosquitoes that can carry disease. Boots are good protection against sharp objects and wetness (if waterproof).

Floodwater poses many health risks. Don't walk through floodwater, as there could be pathogens, chemicals, and other hazards. Dump standing water whenever possible to reduce mosquitoes. Always wash your hands with boiled or treated water and soap before eating or preparing food, after toilet use, after cleanup activities, or handling contaminated items. (Treat water by adding 8 drops or 1/8 tsp. unscented household bleach to 1 gallon of water; then let stand for 30 minutes.) Do not let a wound touch floodwater. Immediately clean any wounds with clean water and soap. When cleaning up a home after flooding, disinfect with a mixture of 1 1/2 cups of household bleach and 1 gallon of water, and dry the building and items in it. This can prevent the growth of bacteria, viruses, mold, and mildew that can make people sick.

Carbon monoxide can also be a health risk during a disaster. Generators must be placed at least 20 feet from all buildings. Only use grills outside, away from buildings.

Be sure to drink enough water to prevent dehydration. Check with authorities before using tap water. Don't use untreated water. Use bottled water if not sure.

Avoid wild or stray animals. Dispose of any dead animals as soon as possible. Secure food supplies to prevent attracting animals.

Preparedness Cycle

Julie T.



In an area that hasn't experienced recent disasters, it may be difficult to think about how to prepare for a disaster. Think about likely disasters (flooding, tornadoes, hurricanes, fires, etc.) and how to prepare for them. You can also get ideas from reading or listening to the news. As you watch stories it can be easy to think that many people are simply not prepared, but make sure you learn from that and improve your situation.

Ask yourself a few questions for what you would do in that situation:

- ▶ **What would I do?**
- ▶ **What am I prepared to do?**
- ▶ **What else would I like to do / need to prepare to do?**

And follow up on what you find. Musing about other situations is a great way to prepare, but only if you act on it.

Five 'Wellness' Habits for Life

Alex V.



Whether dealing with everyday life events, or natural and manmade disasters, we all experience different levels of stress. The too-frequent release of stress hormones affects our cardiac system, brain, sleep patterns, etc., all of which have consequences for our health in the long run. There are scientifically proven methods/practices that will improve our health and well-being. Dr. Wynne Armand, a PCP at Harvard-affiliated Mass General Brigham healthcare in Boston, recommends five simple habits to boost health in everyday life.

- 1 Bring mindfulness into your day. Meditation and mindfulness are overlapping techniques proven to ease stress, improve sleep and enhance concentration. Mindfulness practices such as appreciating nature on a walk or using apps like Calm and Headspace, anchor you in the present moment. This can ease anxiety, improve focus and concentration leading to a positive mental attitude and feeling calm. One exercise that works well is 'box' breathing. It is used by first responders as well as military members in high stress scenarios. One simply inhales for four seconds, holds their breath for four seconds and exhales for four seconds. This rhythmic pattern of breathing helps regulate the nervous system, reining in anxiety and stress, lowering your heart rate and blood pressure and boosting mental focus.

2 Prioritize good sleep. Restful sleep supports the immune system, helps control weight and aids physical as well as mental well-being. Most adults need between seven to eight hours of restful sleep per night. However, sleep quality consisting of uninterrupted sleep versus fitful tossing and turning all night, may be more important than nailing seven hours. It's worth noting that too much sleep - nine hours or more in one analysis of multiple studies - is linked to a higher risk of early deaths.

3 Pay attention to nutrition. Dr. Walter Willett, professor of epidemiology and nutrition at Harvard University's T.H. Chan School of Public Health, offers healthy eating tips. A wealth of evidence shows that diets rich in vegetables, fruits, legumes and pulses like lentils, peas and beans, and minimally processed foods, support longevity and vitality. We can look at people living in so-called 'blue zones' worldwide (regions where people live significantly longer, often reaching age 100 or more). Their diets focus on whole foods, including fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and lean proteins. They limit processed foods high in added sugars, sodium, and unhealthy fats. They stay hydrated by drinking plenty of water throughout the day. They practice portion control to avoid overeating and maintain a healthy weight. They incorporate regular physical activity to complement their nutritional choices. Educate yourself on food labels to make informed dietary decisions.

4 Move more, sit less. Aim to incorporate movement into aspects of your daily life. Try to stay mobile. Do stretching exercises to maintain flexibility. Exercising for a 30-minute block once a day is great. However, you can get as much benefit if you have to break up your exercise time into shorter increments, as long as you maintain the proper intensity.

5 Protect your body from everyday toxins. Air pollution, microplastics and the forever chemical known as PFAS are difficult to dodge in modern life. Try to follow these tips to help you reduce harmful exposure:

- ▶ Use a water filter.
- ▶ Swap out kitchen plastics with glass (such as mason jars), stainless steel water bottles and lead-free dinnerware.
- ▶ Run an air purifier with a MERV 13 or higher filter when brush fire smoke or pollution is at an unhealthy range.
- ▶ Vent gas stoves when cooking. Opening windows to get fresh air can also help when cooking with gas.

Tax Free Weekend

Ginny K.



Don't miss out on the Virginia Sales Tax Holiday! This year, it starts at 12:01 a.m. on August 7 and runs through 11:59 p.m. on August 9. This means that you can buy qualifying hurricane and emergency preparedness items without paying sales tax. Also eligible are school supplies, clothing, footwear, Energy Star™, and WaterSense™ products. Some products have price limits.

Check out the website to find lists of qualifying products: [Tax.virginia.gov/virginia-sales-tax-holiday](https://tax.virginia.gov/virginia-sales-tax-holiday)

This means it is time to stock up on the preparedness supplies that we have been thinking about getting or maybe replacing the supplies that have expired. This includes everything from flashlights, batteries, 2-way radios, duct tape, smoke alarms, fire extinguishers, and first aid kits to portable generators and chain saws. The clothing and footwear covers items such as boots, coats and raincoats, gloves, hats, pants, shirts, and steel toed shoes. Unfortunately, items that are considered personal protective equipment (PPE) are not eligible for the exemption.

If you are in the market for a major appliance, such as a refrigerator, check out the guidelines to qualify for the exemption.

Training Schedule

See Calendar for more
[FairfaxCountyCERT.org/Calendar](https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/cert/calendar)

August 2026						
Aug 3 – 24; Final: Aug 29	CERT Basic Training 210	Fire and Rescue Academy (FRA) 4600 West Ox Rd Fairfax, VA 22030	Quad	210 Trainees: 7:00 PM - 10:30 PM; Aug 3, 5, 10, 12, 17, 19, 24 (Mondays & Wednesdays), Final Aug 29: Location TBD , 9 AM – 1:30 PM https://volunteer.fairfaxcounty.gov/custom/1380/#/opp_details/191539 CADRE for CERT 210: 6 PM – 10:30 PM; Aug 3, 5, 10, 12, 17, 19, 24 (Mondays & Wednesdays), Final Aug 29: Location TBD , 9 AM – 1:30 PM https://volunteer.fairfaxcounty.gov/custom/1380/#/opp_details/191501	45 15	Meika W.
10, 12	CERT Emergency Preparedness Workshop (Open to the public)	Public Safety Headquarters (PSHQ) 12099 Government Center Parkway, Fairfax, VA 22035	Online & PSHQ	7 PM – 9 PM, Aug 10 (Online), 7 PM – 9 PM, Aug 12 (In Person) https://volunteer.fairfaxcounty.gov/custom/1380/opp_details/189167 To sign up to be CADRE (Aug 10: 7 – 9 PM; Aug 12: 6 – 9 PM) https://volunteer.fairfaxcounty.gov/custom/1380/opp_details/191490	30 9	Marco J. Lani Y.
22	CPR/AED/First Aid for CERT	Fire and Rescue Academy (FRA) 4600 West Ox Rd Fairfax, VA 22030	Quad	8 AM – 4 PM, Aug 22 https://volunteer.fairfaxcounty.gov/custom/1380/opp_details/188080 To sign up to be CADRE for the class (7:30 AM – 4 PM, Aug 22): https://volunteer.fairfaxcounty.gov/custom/1380/opp_details/190521	20 6	TBD
September 2026						
12	Stop the Bleed (Open to the public)	Fire and Rescue Academy (FRA) 4600 West Ox Rd Fairfax, VA 22030	Quad	9 AM – 11 AM, Sep 12 https://volunteer.fairfaxcounty.gov/custom/1380/opp_details/188315 To sign up to be CADRE for the class (8 AM – 11 AM, Aug 29): https://volunteer.fairfaxcounty.gov/custom/1380/opp_details/190080	35 8	TBD
12	Be Stroke Smart (Open to the public)	Fire and Rescue Academy (FRA) 4600 West Ox Rd Fairfax, VA 22030	Quad	12 PM – 1:15 PM, Sep 12 https://volunteer.fairfaxcounty.gov/custom/1380/opp_details/189260 To sign up to be CADRE for the class (11 AM – 1:30 PM, Aug 29): https://volunteer.fairfaxcounty.gov/custom/1380/opp_details/189867	35 5	TBD
Key: All FRA Classes on weekdays start at 7:00 PM (earlier times are for set up and Cadre), Weekend class times can vary; Lead = Class Instructor; TBD = to be determined						
Color denotes PSHQ classroom	Color denotes FRA classroom	Color denotes emphasis	Color denotes online event	Color denotes not confirmed		



A Non-profit Supporting Fairfax County CERT

Julie T.

New Fairfax CERT Embroidered Items - fccertva.square.site



Job Shirt CornerStone

CSF635 (Adult) Black

This is a uniform item not for wear with civilian clothing.

- Left Chest embroidered FRD Crest with CERT below
- Right Chest Name
- Rear Common CERT Backing

S-XL \$105 • XXL \$108 • 3XL \$111



Soft Shell Jacket Port Authority

J921 (M), L921 (W) Black

This will be a uniform and non-uniform item. Can be worn as uniform or with civilian clothing.

- Left Chest embroidered FRD Crest with CERT below
- Right Chest Name
- Nothing on Back

S-XL \$85 • XXL \$89 • 3XL \$93



Tactical Polo

CS410 (Adult) Dark Green

This is a uniform item not for wear with civilian clothing.

- Left Chest embroidered FRD Crest with CERT below
- Right Chest Name
- Rear Common CERT Backing

S-XL \$75 • XXL \$78 • 3XL \$81

Dress Shirt Port Authority

W808 (M), LW808 (W) Dark Green

This is a uniform item not for wear with civilian clothing.

- Left Chest embroidered FRD Crest with CERT below

S-XL \$42 • XXL \$44 • 3XL \$46



Volunteer Side Quests

Alex V.



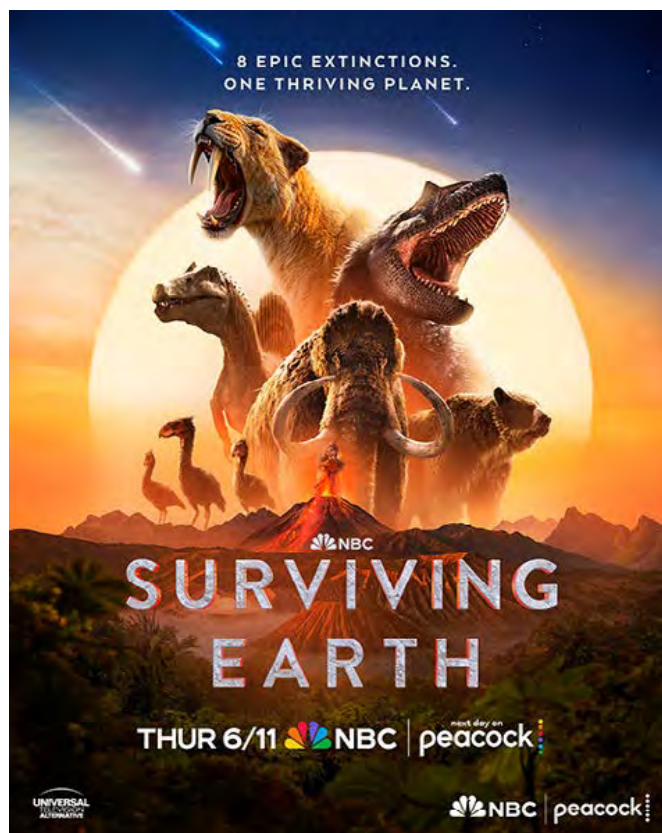
What We're Reading, Watching, and Loving off the Clock

"Surviving Earth": Bringing Prehistoric Worlds to Life with Creator Tim Haines

NBC has a new series starting 6/11@8:00 P.M.
(and streaming on PEACOCK after each episode airs)
Producer Tim Haines offers a new eight-part series,
"Surviving Earth."

"Surviving Earth" is Haines' magnum opus, a culmination of almost two decades of groundbreaking innovation since he created the "Walking with Dinosaurs" series. Haines returns to prehistory after more than 20 years of advancements in paleontology and technology. This time, his series reflects the growing interest in the environment.

Premiering Thursday, June 11, at 8 p.m. ET/PT on NBC, "Surviving Earth" explores how life has survived and thrived through Earth's most catastrophic environmental crises. Using cutting-edge CGI, the series transports viewers back to a world of never-before-seen creatures and their remarkable survival stories—from the giant sea scorpions of 450 million years ago to the mighty mammoths and saber-toothed predators of the Ice Age.



Earth's epic story is brought to life as the series traverses landscapes shaped by meteoric strikes, volcanic eruptions, plunging sea levels, and scorching heat storms, ultimately celebrating the resilience of life and the journey every creature has endured to still exist today.

**Discovered a great book, movie, or documentary off the clock?
Send your 'Side Quest' recommendations to the newsletter team
Newsletter@FairfaxCountyCERT.org**

Emergency First Aid Trivia Quiz

Alex V.

Put your first aid knowledge to the test with these multiple-choice questions. Choose the best answer for each scenario and tally your score at the end.

July's Quiz Questions

(Answers on Next Page)

1

The acronym BEFAST is utilized to determine if someone might be having a stroke. Which of these 'signs' of a possible stroke are part of the acronym?

- A. Balance
- B. Face drooping
- C. Arm weakness
- D. All of the above

2

Which of the following is a primary risk factor for stroke?

- A. Regular exercise
- B. High blood pressure
- C. Low cholesterol levels
- D. Adequate sleep

3

Which lifestyle factor can help prevent strokes?

- A. Smoking cigarettes
- B. Maintaining a healthy weight
- C. High alcohol consumption
- D. Sedentary lifestyle

4

What is a common long-term effect of a stroke?

- A. Improved memory
- B. Paralysis on one side of the body
- C. Enhanced vision
- D. Faster reflexes

5

What is the "golden window" for treating ischemic strokes?

- A. 24 hours after symptoms start
- B. Within 3-4.5 hours
- C. After 48 hours
- D. Immediately, with no time limit

6

What is the best immediate action if someone shows stroke symptoms?

- A. Wait and see if symptoms improve
- B. Call emergency services immediately
- C. Give them water
- D. Drive them to a clinic

1 Answer: D

Balance, Face drooping, and arm weakness

2 Answer: B

High blood pressure is the leading risk factor as it can damage arteries, making them more susceptible to blockage or rupture.

3 Answer: B

Maintaining a healthy weight reduces the risk of conditions like hypertension and diabetes, which are linked to strokes.

4 Answer: B

Stroke can cause paralysis or weakness on one side due to damage in the brain areas controlling movement.

5 Answer: B

Treatment like thrombolytics is most effective within 3-4.5 hours of symptom onset to minimize brain damage.

6 Answer: B

Immediate medical attention is crucial, as quick treatment can save lives and reduce disability from a stroke. Call 911.

Acronyms & Abbreviations

Kelly O.

Learn More:
FairfaxCountyCERT.org/faq-items/acronyms-abbreviations-definitions/

CPLC

CERT Program Leadership Council – Group of leaders within Fairfax County CERT

G.O.

General Order - A directive used to establish policies and procedures

PAR

Personnel Accountability Report

CCE

CERT Continuing Education (all classes after Basic CERT)

CERTCON

CERT Convention – there are local and national CERTCONs

EAP

Event Action Plan – Document that outlines plan for an event

Green Helmet Needs You!

Do you enjoy writing, research, photography, communications, PR?
Then join the *Green Helmet* team. Your skills are needed.

Contact: Newsletter@FairfaxCountyCERT.org

Follow us on Social Media • Go to our Website

Social Channels

[@FairfaxCountyCERT](https://www.instagram.com/FairfaxCountyCERT)

Website

FairfaxCountyCERT.org

■ Training
■ Outreach & Comm Engagement
■ Operations/TCM
■ Planning/Meeting
■ Lead Meetings
■ Moulage
■ Canteen
■ Fundraiser
■ Role Play/Victim Actors
■ Not CERT Related (Holidays/Special Days)

August 2026

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
						1
2	3 Class 210	4	5 Class 210	6	7	8
9	10 Class 210 CERT Emergency Preparedness Workshop	11	12 Class 210 CERT Emergency Preparedness Workshop	13	14	15
16	17 Class 210	18 Monthly Program Meeting	19 Class 210	20	21	22 CPR/AED/First Aid for CERT
23 CERT Radio Team Workshops 30	24 2026 National CERT Conference 31	25	26 Team Time Chat Virtual Monthly	27	28	29 Class 210 FINAL EXERCISE

September 2026

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12 Stop the Bleed Stroke Smart
13	14	15 Monthly Program Meeting CERT Association Quarterly Member Meeting	16	17	18	19 Sully Community Day
20 Yom Kippur Eve	21 Yom Kippur	22	23 Team Time Chat Virtual Monthly	24	25	26
27 CERT Radio Team Workshops	28	29	30			



FAIRFAX COUNTY CERT LEADERSHIP

NAME	CONTACT INFORMATION
Estee Warring	Esther.Warring@FairfaxCounty.gov
Robby Drapela	DeputyProgramManager@FairfaxCountyCERT.org
Watkins G.	Lead@FairfaxCountyCERT.org
Sheila R.	CommunityTraining@FairfaxCountyCERT.org
Robby Drapela	Training@FairfaxCountyCERT.org
Vacant	TrainingDeputy@FairfaxCountyCERT.org
Jim McP.	StratPlng@FairfaxCountyCERT.org
James S.	Operations@FairfaxCountyCERT.org
Vacant	Community@FairfaxCountyCERT.org
Doug G.	Outreach@FairfaxCountyCERT.org
Ginny K.	OutreachDeputy@FairfaxCountyCERT.org
Ross B.	Advisor@FairfaxCountyCERT.org
Kim S.	Orientation@FairfaxCountyCERT.org
Kim S.	RolePlayers@FairfaxCountyCERT.org
Marco J.	Teams@FairfaxCountyCERT.org
Char S.	CERTCanteen@FairfaxCountyCERT.org
Don T., Lani Y.	Logistics@FairfaxCountyCERT.org
Ginny K.	Safety@FairfaxCountyCERT.org
Susy L.	Rosters@FairfaxCountyCERT.org
Susy L.	Moulage@FairfaxCountyCERT.org
Marshall L.	Website@fairfaxcountycert.org
Kelly O.	Marketing@FairfaxCountyCERT.org
Jerry A.	CERTAdmin@FairfaxCountyCERT.org
Charlie H.	Facilities@FairfaxCountyCERT.org
Tyler S.	Speakers@FairfaxCountyCERT.org
Green Helmet	Newsletter@FairfaxCountyCERT.org



FAIRFAX COUNTY CERT ASSOCIATION

NAME	CONTACT INFORMATION
Marshall L.	President@FairfaxCERTAssociation.org
Mary S.	VP@FairfaxCERTAssociation.org
Julie T.	Treasurer@FairfaxCERTAssociation.org
Ray K.	Secretary@FairfaxCERTAssociation.org
Charlie H.	MAL1@FairfaxCERTAssociation.org
Char S.	MAL2@FairfaxCERTAssociation.org
Watkins G.	Lead@FairfaxCountyCERT.org

FROM THE NEWSLETTER TEAM

While we all wish we had journalism degrees to use in the production of this newsletter, we don't. We are volunteers just like you. We appreciate your feedback and input. Look for our upcoming newsletter in **OCTOBER 2026**

Do you have any questions you want answered? Have a story idea? Read a good CERT-related book you want to recommend? Want to contribute an item? Send them to us at Newsletter@FairfaxCountyCERT.org. Neighborhood teams – we'd love to hear what you are doing. Let us know!

More Contact Information

[FairfaxCountyCERT.org/members/
fairfax-cert-program-organization/leadership](https://FairfaxCountyCERT.org/members/fairfax-cert-program-organization/leadership)

Read Previous Editions of The Green Helmet:
FairfaxCountyCERT.org/news-events/newsletter