

NEIGHBORHOOD NETWORKS

Neighborhood Networks have already been organized in some areas of the Canyon, and new networks are continuously forming. These networks provide a way for neighbors to communicate with one another in the event of a disaster. Volunteer Neighborhood Coordinators will receive accurate and timely information directly from T-CEP about road closures, direction of a fire, areas that are most threatened, locations of Safety and Survival Areas, etc. The Neighborhood Coordinators can then pass that information along to each of their neighbors. Groups of residents, organized by street, have held neighborhood meetings and devised plans of action that include:

- 1. Caring for children or assisting people with mobility problems or disabilities.**
- 2. Rescuing pets.**
- 3. Creating a neighborhood phone directory and phone tree.**
- 4. Organizing tours of neighbors' homes to show utility locations.**
- 5. Making arrangements to turn off an absent neighbor's utilities in an emergency.**
- 6. Acquiring permission to enter a neighbor's home to retrieve items of value.**
- 7. Organizing First Aid and CPR classes.**
- 8. Taking CERT (Community Emergency Response Team) training.**

***To find out whether your neighborhood is currently organized,
call T-CEP at 310-455-3000.***

If your neighborhood is not currently organized, NOW is the time to get started.

***If your neighborhood is currently organized, be sure to meet annually
(at a minimum) to update neighborhood information and planning preparations.***

Developing an Equine Emergency Plan

Brandi Augello and Georgeann Erskine have taken the lead in creating a plan to evacuate the forty-plus horses in the Cheney area. The dilemma was how to get such a large number of animals out in a very short amount of time when the roads could be clogged with hordes of other evacuees. So it was decided that they would first gather the animals into a pre-built holding pen in a big open field—and then see if there was enough time to take them out safely.

Planning began at a T-CEP neighborhood gathering at The Mermaid in 2001, featuring T-CEP chair Pat MacNeil and Alli Acker, the team leader of the Equine Emergency Response Team. Alli told of her experience in Cheney Canyon during the 1978 fire when she gathered up a herd of horses and led them to safety through the “S curves.” Following the T-CEP presentation, neighbors broke up into groups, largely defined by streets and geography. The horse owners formed their own group. The Mermaid Great Room was abuzz with strategizing residents.

Georgeann and Brandi have been evolving an evacuation plan ever since. Both speak Horse fluently and are members of the State Park’s Mounted Assistance Unit (MAU). A neighbor has generously donated an enormous field where the temporary corral will be erected during fire season. Pipes will be driven into the ground for fence posts and then strung with wire; temporary hitching posts will be added. Horse owners in Cheney meet periodically for dry runs to practice evacuation procedures, such as calmly leading horses to the holding pen area, as demonstrated below left.

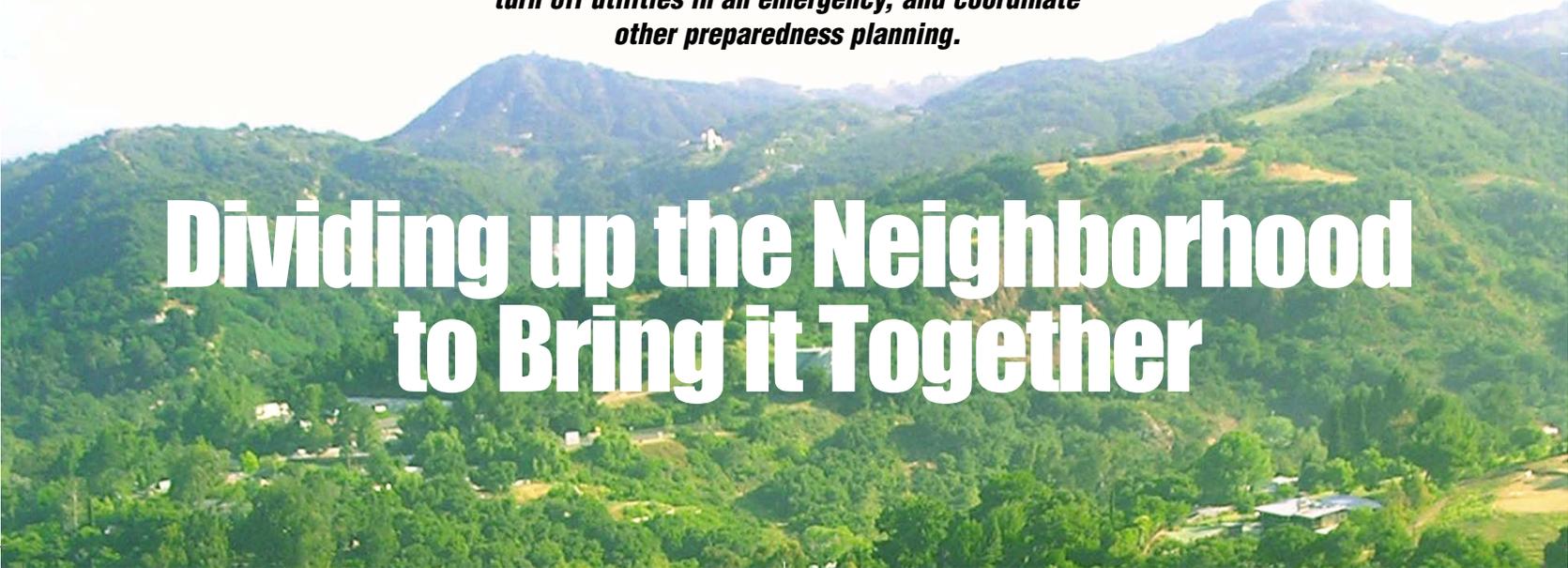


During the chaos of an emergency, horses can easily be separated from their owners. Two methods of identification are shown above: ID tags on the halter and writing one’s phone number directly onto the animal’s body with special crayon markers.

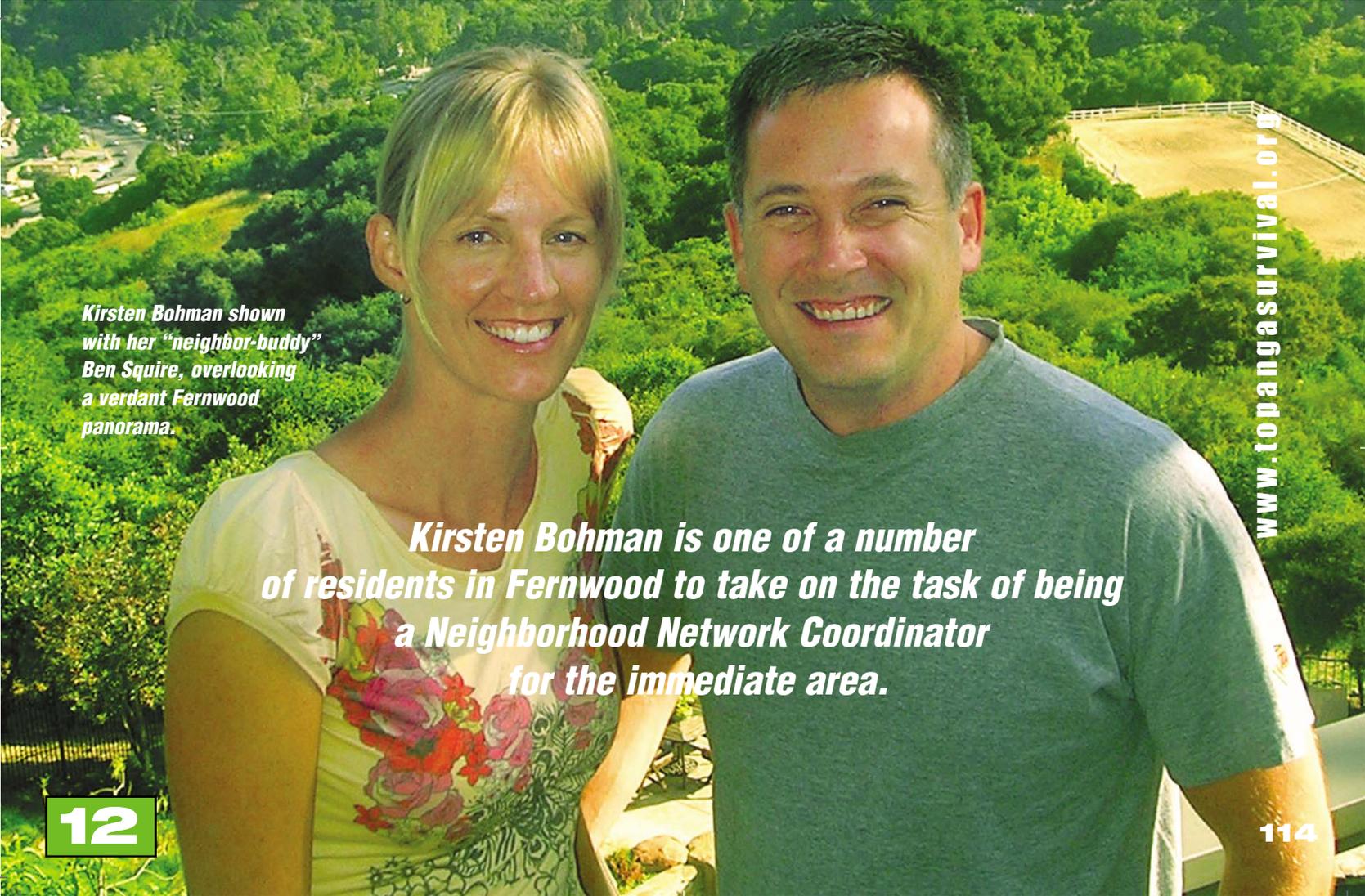
During trial runs, the marker numbers have dissolved. Duct tape with written contact info stuck into the horse’s mane is now being tested.

Neighborhood Network Success Story—LOWER FERNWOOD

Kirsten Bohman began organizing her neighborhood in 2002 by putting together a meeting at Abuelita's with about forty residents from the "Valley View Loop," a part of lower Fernwood. She invited T-CEP Neighborhood Network Coordinator Randy Neece, Allen Emerson of Arson Watch, and a representative from the County Fire Department to speak. Since Fernwood is such a large area, the importance of a "divide-and-conquer" approach was urged by the advisors. So the "Loop" was broken down into twelve more manageable areas, with one lead individual for each section. Kirsten is head of the Summit Drive area and encourages residents to find a neighbor-buddy to exchange keys with, turn off utilities in an emergency, and coordinate other preparedness planning.



**Dividing up the Neighborhood
to Bring it Together**



*Kirsten Bohman shown
with her “neighbor-buddy”
Ben Squire, overlooking
a verdant Fernwood
panorama.*

*Kirsten Bohman is one of a number
of residents in Fernwood to take on the task of being
a Neighborhood Network Coordinator
for the immediate area.*

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Family Radio Service

During a major disaster, it is highly probable that phones will be out in many parts if not all of the Canyon.

***CELL PHONES MIGHT ALSO BE USELESS** since they rely on transformers, which will no doubt be affected by power outages. That's why it's important to know how to use a HAM radio or an FRS (Family Radio Service) radio in order to stay informed and to communicate with neighbors. FRS radios are inexpensive (average \$30 per pair) and are similar to the walkie-talkies we used as kids. Ham radios are even better but cost a little more and require a license.*

During and immediately after a major disaster, information will be transmitted by T-CEP's Disaster Radio Team (DRT) on FRS channel 7. These announcements will contain information about road closures, details about the disaster, evacuation routes, and other important information, and will be updated at the top of each hour or as often as possible.

DO NOT TALK ON THIS CHANNEL—IT IS FOR RECEIVING INFORMATION ONLY.

*Your neighborhood has been assigned a specific FRS channel, which will allow neighbors to communicate with one another without hearing cross-talk from surrounding areas. It is important for everyone to have an FRS radio and to learn how to use it. After the updates are broadcast on channel 7, **each neighbor should tune their FRS radios to their neighborhood channel and talk with one another.***

• *Encourage your neighbors to purchase an FRS radio (you too, if you haven't already done so).*

• *Have extra batteries on hand. Those little radios eat them like candy. Remember, rechargeable ones won't help if the power is out.*

• *Conduct FRS radio drills with your neighbors from time to time and make sure they know how to use them and the neighborhood frequency.*

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FRS Neighborhood Channels

- 8** — TOP O' TOPANGA
- 12** — VIEWRIDGE ESTATES
- 10** — CORRAL NEIGHBORHOOD & SANTA MARIA RD.
- 10** — ENTRADO
- 10** — ARTEIQUE
- 9** — CHENEY, CALLON, PARADISE
- 11** — WEST HILLSIDE, SUMMIT, MESA
- 12** — EAST HILLSIDE
- 9** — GREENLEAF
- 10** — UPPER SKYLINE DR., MARQUETTE
- 9** — LOWER PART OF SKYLINE AND OLD TOPANGA CYN.
- 9** — ROBINSON RD.
- 12** — LOWER OLD TOPANGA AND TOWN CENTER
- 13** — ENTRADA, ENCINA, COLINA
- 10** — LOWER FERNWOOD, VALLEY VIEW DR.
- 14** — UPPER FERNWOOD
- 11** — TUNA CANYON RD. AND SADDLE PEAK RD.



Having HAMS in Your 'Hood Is Good!

• Disaster communications with ham radio is a small part of the much larger worldwide hobby of amateur radio. Being a ham operator, or having one close by, is very good insurance. It will still be there when all the other means of communications have failed. Your life could depend on receiving or disseminating information in a disaster. In the Valley or on the West Side, there is more redundancy built into the roadways and lines of communication. In Topanga, we are more vulnerable. The recent floods are an example, when main roads were washed out, dramatically impacting ingress and egress.

• For information on getting your ham license or just to learn more, call T-CEP at 310-455-3000.

• Affordable and efficient classes are becoming more available in Topanga. Call T-CEP at 310-455-3000.

• Look for Web sites on the Internet that offer instruction.

• See "Now You're Talking," published by ARRL, the National Association for Amateur Radio, Web site www.arrl.org.

Some General HAM Info:

Ham radio is also referred to as amateur radio. A range of frequencies, from just above the AM broadcast band (1.6 MHz) to the microwave region, at several hundred gigahertz, have been designated for amateur use by the FCC.

Anyone with a radio receiver or a radio scanner can listen in on ham radio communications, but only an operator licensed by the FCC can transmit the signals. Typically, ham radio operators, or hams, do not use ham radio to broadcast in the way radio stations broadcast to large audiences. Ham transmission is usually two-way or among groups of people using a transceiver, meaning that two or more hams talk to each other instead of everyone listening to a single ham radio broadcast.

There are hundreds of thousands of amateur radio operators in the United States and millions around the world. Ham radio can be useful in spreading information during emergencies when other services such as telephones, television, or the Internet fail.

During a big disaster, you can probably kiss your telephone, cell phone, and TV good-bye. Chances are, radio will be the only reliable way to communicate with the outside world. One of the safest moves you can make is to be sure you to have one or more licensed ham operators, or "HAMS" in your neighborhood...



HAM
Andrea Makshanoff,
Project Manager
and Journalist

HAM
Bryce Anderson,
Sales Director

HAM
Joe Morrison,
Heating Contractor

HAM
Ken Smith,
Plumbing
Contractor

HAM
Cassie Fitzgerald,
Owner of a Company
That Creates Film Titles

HAM
Dick Norton,
Retired Electrical
Engineer

HAM
Barbara
Campbell,
Local Real
Estate Agent

HAM
Buz Tarlow,
Software
Engineer