

# CERT MONTHLY

The newsletter of the Hays County  
Community Emergency Response Team

[WWW.HAYSCOUNTYCERT.COM](http://WWW.HAYSCOUNTYCERT.COM)



May 2024



CERT members at the May meeting in Dripping Springs

## Thanks for all you do!

Have we told y'all lately how much we value you? Each meeting, each training, each event - you show up. And we are grateful!

Hays County CERT (HCCERT) is one of the most active volunteer organizations in the area. We are sought out by other CERT groups regionally to help those members get things off the ground or to take their group to the next level.

That's what HCCERT is - next level. Our dedicated volunteers take the lead and help us better serve our community.

We have many events, trainings and happenings throughout the summer and fall. We would love to see more of you out and about! Join us for regular monthly meetings. Attend a training. Come out to a special event. There is a job for you!

Thanks to each of you. Your time, talents and effort are appreciated!

## In this issue

Welcome	Pg 1
Message from the Program Manager	Pg 2
Volunteer Spotlight	Pg 3
CERT at Kyle Fair	Pg 3
May CERT Meeting	Pg 4
AMVETS Appreciation Breakfast	Pg 5
CERT at the HaysCo Health Fair	Pg 6
National CERT Conference	Pg 7
CERT Calendar	Pg 9
Community Partners	Pg 10



## CERT Members at Health Fair

Evan LaVigne and Rowe Ray at the Hays  
County Health Department Fair



CERT volunteers Mel Barrentine and Chuck Koenen at the AMVETS First Responder Appreciation Breakfast

## May Spotlight

This month we're spotlighting Prescilia Kengni (pronounced Ken-ee). Thanks, Prescilia, for your contributions to Hays County CERT!

Read the full spotlight on Pg 3



## Message from the Program Manager

It's May and CERT has already accomplished so much in 2024. But we're not done yet!

The rest of the year promises to be even better. We have so many opportunities to help create more resilient communities in Hays County.

June brings the SFFMA Annual Conference, two Juneteenth events, and the active shooter exercise at San Marcos High School.

Check the CERT calendar for all the details on these events and more.

Thanks again for everything you do for CERT!

Sincerely,  
Candy Lonie  
CERT Program Manager

### Candy Lonie, CERT Program Manager







CERT member Rachel Maldonado working the CERT table at the Kyle Fair

# CERT at the Kyle Fair

Attending an event like this is a great opportunity for CERT to share preparedness tips, helping us create more resilient communities!

## Volunteer Spotlight

by Rowe Ray

Bringing a background of service, an interest in the medical field and even a bit of international perspective, Prescilia Kengni has made her mark with Hays County CERT in a short time.

A resident of San Marcos since January, this Texas State University student's first few months have been busy - and that's the way she likes it.

Prescilia entered Texas State as a junior and jumped into the CERT G-317 class in March.

"I thought the CERT course was really interesting," she said. "I'm a visual and hands-on person and I like how every unit had a different instructor. When it came time for the final, I remembered everything because y'all were so interactive in class."

She added, "I especially liked the 'Stop the Bleed' training."

### Meet Prescilia



Prescilia Kengni (left in both pics) became a CERT volunteer earlier this year.

Cont'd on Pg 4

Prescilia said her favorite part of CERT is being around people.

“In CERT I get to work with people of different ages and experiences,” she said. “That’s how the world works and that’s how I’m going to be as a family physician.”

Another benefit of joining CERT is that it takes her out of her comfort zone.

“I never volunteered before college,” she said. “So it’s nice. It teaches you how to be a leader.”

Prescilia has already been involved with CERT at Texas State’s River Fest, Buda’s Weiner Dog Races and Kyle’s Texstravaganza. She also volunteers at Santa Christus Hospital in San Marcos at the front desk.

And if you think this college student’s summer will be spent kicking back at the river all day, think again.

Prescilia will be taking 20 hours of classes at Texas State and four hours at Austin Community College in subjects like physics lecture, physics lab, cancer biology, evolution, juvenile delinquency, social deviancy and chemistry.

She is grateful for her experiences growing up in the U.S. but also for her family roots reaching back to the Central African Republic of Cameroon. Both her parents are from Cameroon, and she spent her early years there with her grandmother. She tries to visit her extended family regularly.

“I’m grateful for so much because I know how my mom has struggled,” she said. “When I go back to see my aunts and cousins in Cameroon it’s just not the same as here. That’s what got me interested in medicine. I just think about my family and how some health issues can be prevented with the right medical help and adequate resources.”

In CERT we like to say there is a place for everyone, and Prescilia has found that to be true for her.

“Ya’ll are so nice,” she said. “I don’t see all the members of CERT at meetings or events but those who do show up are really a close-knit team. I like being a part of that.”

She added, “Everyone does have a place in CERT. I really feel like I belong.”

# May CERT Meeting

Thanks to all who attended the CERT May meeting in Dripping Springs!



CERT members Audrey Knight and Mamta Ganesan at the May meeting.



Various CERT members who attended the meeting earlier this month.



# First Responder Appreciation at AMVETS

All Hays County CERT volunteers were welcome to attend the Central Texas Amvets Post 115 in Kyle First Responder Appreciation Breakfast in early May. We are so appreciative of this organization!

Our community partners are critical to our success and we could not ask for a more supportive group than the Kyle AMVETS.

The breakfast was a full-on powerhouse of delicious food cooked by AMVETS members.

Thanks again, AMVETS, for including CERT in this event!



CERT member “Retired” Mel B. (Barrentine)



Back row: CERT members Gordon DeWitte (and his wife Dot), Mike Rubsam, and Chuck Koenen.



CERT members Gordon DeWitte (and wife) and Mel Barrentine speaking in the AMVETS parking lot



ESD#5/Kyle Fire Department Fire Marshal Mark Schultz and CERT member Gordon DeWitte



CERT member Dixie Davis at the AMVETS breakfast



# CERT at Hays County Health Fair

CERT members hosted a community outreach booth at the Hays County Health Department’s Summer Fair. At this event, the health department unveiled its new mobile unit.

Throughout the day, our volunteers met with attendees to share news and information about Hays County CERT and all we do for the community.

By being visible and active at these kinds of happenings, CERT can bring its positive message and show the community all the good work we do, as well as invite them to join us!



CERT members Rowe Ray and Evan LaVigne



Evan LaVigne at CERT’s info booth



CERT member Evan LaVigne helping members of the public at CERT’s info booth



Evan LaVigne and Rowe Ray watching the ribbon cutting of the health department’s new mobile unit



CERT members with the Hays County Judge at the health fair

The 2024 National CERT Conference takes place July 23–26 at the Walter E Washington Convention Center in D.C. This event is managed by the [National CERT Association](#). The theme, “Many Teams, One Mission,” highlights CERT’s ability to be flexible as a community resource as well as being inclusive to all community members. The conference will feature training and presentations for all levels of CERT including Emergency Managers, Program Managers, Instructors, Volunteers, and CERT Partners.

Registration is open. Hotel info will be available at a later date. Participants will be able to choose to take training or attend a breakout presentation during all four days of the conference.

**Early Bird conference registration:**

- \$300 for participants who are paid for their CERT duties
- \$150 for participants who are volunteers (register by May 31, 2024)

[Visit the website.](#)



**DATES:**  
July 23 - 26, 2024\*  
\*Possible Exercise on Saturday, July 27<sup>th</sup>



**LOCATION:**  
Walter E. Washington Convention Center

**CONFERENCE HIGHLIGHTS:**

- ♦ Meet & network with other CERT Leaders from across the US
- ♦ EMI L deliveries of CERT Train-the-Trainer and Program Manager
- ♦ CERT Master Instructor course
- ♦ TEEX Training
- ♦ Additional training courses

**WHY YOU SHOULD ATTEND:**

- ♦ Training Opportunities
- ♦ Professional & Personal Development Opportunities
- ♦ Learn how to make your CERT program more inclusive
- ♦ National CERT Conferences only happen once a year!

**EARLY BIRD REGISTRATION (REGISTER BY MAY 31, 2024): \$300**

50% discounts will be available to attendees who are volunteers and unpaid for their role in CERT.

**SIGN UP TO RECIEVE UPDATES ABOUT THE CONFERENCE:**

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/2024NationalCERTConferenceEmailList>



For more information about the 2024 National CERT Conference, visit <https://nationalcert.org>.

*Conference Registration will open soon*



# National CERT Conference

Register today!

## Hays County CERT Stats

- Total Accepted Members = 333
- At Large = 8
- Buda Division = 64
- Dripping Springs Division = 56
- Kyle Division = 47
- Buda/Kyle Combined = 111
- San Marcos Division = 130
- Wimberley Division = 21
- TXST Division = 74
- G-317 Field Deployable = 188

## **CERT Continuing Education: Incident Command System (ICS) for Beginners / National CERT Council**

Wednesday, June 19, 2024, 7–9pm Pacific (9– 11 p.m. Central)

The Incident Command System is flexible and designed to be as big or as small as you need it to be. Don't over think it or force it to be more than it needs to be.

The Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) Training teaches us about the Incident Command System (ICS) and it is one of the hardest chapters in the class. To be honest, ICS can be so big and broad that it is intimidating. But it doesn't have to be. It shouldn't be.

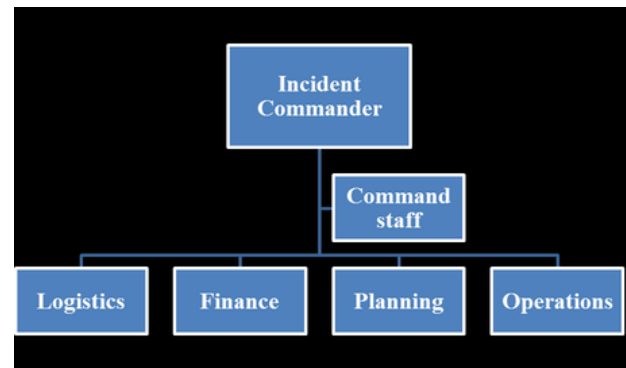
The most important thing to think about when it comes to setting up an Incident Command Structure is that it is exactly what you need it to be. No more, no less. There is no one right way to set it up. And if it works for your Incident, then your way isn't wrong.

Join us as we discuss how the Incident Command System starts from one person, the first person at an Incident, and grows to fit the needs of the Incident and the Resources you have.

We'll talk about the pitfalls we've seen and go over ways to Keep It Simple Stupid (KISS) instead of over thinking it and building out a chart that everyone is used to seeing and then trying to fill roles and positions that aren't even needed.

# **ICS for Beginners**

**June 19  
9–11 p.m.  
via Zoom**



**Topic: CERT Continuing Education: Incident Command System (ICS) for Beginners**

**Time: Jun 19, 2024**

**7:00 PM Pacific Time (US and Canada); 9 PM Central Time**

**Join Zoom Meeting**

**Meeting ID: 899 4374 7484**

**Passcode: grfahLU49\***

**This presentation will be live streamed on our YouTube channel at: Join Zoom Meeting**



# CERT Calendar

- **Trainings**
- **Events**
- **Conferences**

## Upcoming Events

June 1 – Wimberley Market Days, 7 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.  
601 FM 2325, Wimberley

June 1 – TSA/ABIA, 8–10 a.m.  
Austin-Bergstrom International Airport – 3600 Presidential Blvd, Austin

June 6, 8 a.m. – 5 p.m.  
SMISD Active Shooter Exercise\*  
Owen Goodnight Middle School, 1301 Texas Hwy 123, San Marcos

June 8 – CERT Training, 9 – 11 a.m.  
More info TBA; check CERT online calendar

June 19 – Juneteenth Kyle and Buda\*

June 22, 23 – Wilderness First Aid Day, 9 a.m.–5 p.m. both days  
First Baptist Church, San Marcos

June 27–29 – State Firefighters and Fire Marshals’ Association Conference  
Embassy Suites, San Marcos

## Conferences

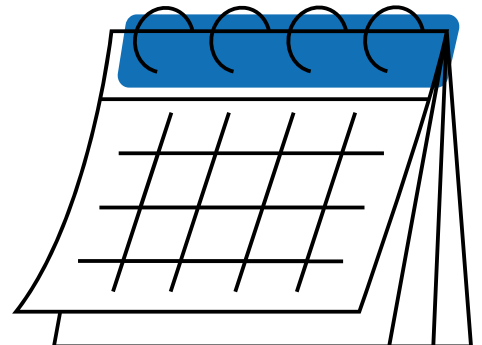
National CERT in Washington D.C. – July 23–26; 50% discount for volunteers

Watch the Calendar and your email for updates:

## Future events

July 11 – G-317 Class (four consecutive Thursdays plus Sat., August 3)  
Sept. 14 – Hays County OES Emergency Preparedness Fair, “Prep Like a Pro”, Kyle  
Wildfire Awareness – TBD

*\*More information coming soon!*



*Thanks for all you  
do as CERT  
members!*

Visit the [CERT calendar](#) for all the info and sign-up links

Hays County CERT appreciates every organization and business that so generously helps us. The continued support of the following businesses and organizations is critical to our mission.

We greatly appreciate how business owners rally to assist CERT, during emergencies and beyond.

Please accept our gratitude!

[AMVETS Post 115 \(Kyle\)](#)

[Buda Lions Club](#)

[Cody's \(San Marcos\)](#)

[Hill Country Trophy \(San Marcos\)](#)

[Industry \(San Marcos\)](#)

[Kyle Fire Department/ESD #5](#)

[Mudbugs \(Buda\)](#)

[New World Bakery \(Kyle\)](#)

[Fire Marshal Mark Schultz \(Kyle FD\)](#)

[Root Cellar \(San Marcos\)](#)

[San Marcos Emergency Management](#)

[Tea2go/TeaN'ergy \(Kyle\)](#)

[Wimberley Cafe](#)

## **CERT COMMUNITY PARTNERS**

**WE APPRECIATE  
YOUR SUPPORT!**



Want to be a CERT Community Partner? Email [Candy Lonie](#)