

Community Safety Preparedness

If you would be interested in cohesive neighborhood safety, Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) is a volunteer citizen's interest group made up of people with many different backgrounds.

"Not just medical or law enforcement agencies, but people who are interested in community resiliency in the event of a disaster. And not just 'the Big One,' but a storm or power outage; any event where services aren't readily available for whatever reason," said volunteer, Pat Wollner.

Volunteers don't have to go through specific CERT training, which is certified by the Federal Emergency Management Administration to belong to the team. Outreach liaisons are most welcome.

Following a disaster, CERT's main thrust is to put your own house in order, and then go into your neighborhood checking on and reporting on the neighbors who need help. This is where you live, this is what and where you're aware. "It's a citizen's eyes and boots on the ground," said Wollner.

Another of the group's tasks is preparing local citizen readiness. Each household needs an emergency three-day supply of food, water and sanitation supplies per person, plus individual go-packs at the ready, should the need to get to higher ground present itself — as in run for your life.

Gearhart is one of several towns up and down the coast that considers emergency planning a must. CERT welcomes new volunteers. For more information about the group, contact Sharon Kloepfer at 303-817-8450 or learn more at <http://bit.ly/2Vm1B8M>

Continuing Education

No tests. No homework. No compulsory attendance. Exploring New Concepts of Retirement Education (ENCORE) is continuing education without pressure, plus a chance to feel smarter around your kids and/or contemporaries (or yourself). ENCORE with the backing of Clatsop Community College offers short courses run entirely by its ENCORE members.

ENCORE was founded in 2001 by people interested in adult education for folks 50 and older. \$50 is the cost for as many classes as you wish during the three-term college calendar year, and scholarships are available. Try out a class — two sessions of any of the wide range of classes offered free. Subjects run the gamut from science, health, art, music, literature, history, writing, religion and current events.

President Dave Zunkel said, "A trip committee plans a couple of trips out of the area. We went to Oktoberfest in Mt. Angel and a Native American reservation in Quinalt, Washington. We have a group that meets for lunch each Friday, plus a couple of social gatherings for all of our members during

the year.

"The fellow who got me interested in ENCORE is a retired professor of linguistics. He's currently teaching a six-class course: 'Germany from 1870 through today.' Absolutely fascinating. We bring in one major speaker each year." Zunkel said. "Last year we did the history and impact of the Chinese in this area. We don't offer any courses that would compete with the college's courses and we stay away from anything political," Zunkel added. Learn more at encorelearn.org.

Kid and Adult Team-Building

The Beerman Creek Critters is a Seaside 4-H Group with a way cool name. It's made up of boys and girls ages 6-16, who meet once a month.

"The first year we had 20 kids. Now we're up to 32 and going strong," said co-leader Seana Fields.

Fields with her partner, Jeremy Strimple, and his sister and co-leader, Mindy Adren, are all about crafts, critters and youth leadership. The Critters bake, they sew and they get to know all about animals.

"If the kids have their own animals, they purchase them, do all of the feeding, shaving beddings, cleaning pens and pay any vet bills with money earned from the auction sale of their animals at the county fair," Fields said. "Animals always have some kind of something needing a vet's attention."


New this year is a junior leader program. It encourages the kids to be leaders of tomorrow. At the beginning of the year, members elected leaders in different categories. The older youth lead the meetings and are available as go-to sources for younger members.

More Critter information is available by contacting Seana Fields at seana.fields@ticortitle.com

Creative Knitting and Bonding

This tight-knit knitting group is closed to newcomers. It's not that they don't ask people to drop in to visit and view their projects — in fact they welcome it. It's just that their good juju works well. The six members meet most Saturdays at noon for two or three hours in Gearhart at Susan Thomas' A Great Gallery, an art and gifts, plus yarn gallery.

"It's a closed group because we meet in a business setting so we need to keep the group small and respectful of the environment," said member Claire McIntyre. Needles flying, stitches stitching and information exchanged, be it health and wellness of members, what's new in the area and of course a little "over the back fence" gossip every now and then.

Interested in any local interest groups? We full-timers have lots to choose from. To find other groups, visit the Life section of The Astorian and search for Community Groups. 



ENCORE photo

ENCORE President Dave Zunkel introduces Clatsop Community College liaison Leah Olson during the 2018 annual meeting.



ENCORE photo

Kit Ketcham leads a science class discussion.



ENCORE photo

Jane Francis on how to use our "smart" phones.