

Chairman Bruce's Newsletter

1/2/2008

Since the official public release of the county's new CodeRED Emergency Notification System, many of you have signed up either online or by calling in and leaving your information. We envision using this system for important emergency weather warnings, flood notifications, local AMBER alert incidents, other missing persons announcements as well as hazardous materials spills or road closures. Future uses could include information about water and electrical service issues and disaster situation communications.

At roughly 6:00 PM on Christmas day, I sent out a test message to our entire phone database in the CodeRED system. I chose this time in an effort to reach as many people as possible at their residence. A couple of items came to light as a result of this test and I want to pass them along to you. The caller ID for any CodeRED message will be (999) 911-9999. This is the number all CodeRED alerts will show. Please add it to your listings or be aware that this is a call you need to answer. Also, depending on the number of calls going out, there will possibly be a short delay before the message starts. This will be potentially longer when more calls are being attempted and therefore shorter (if any at all) when fewer numbers are called when we have a more specific-area emergency issue.

Continue to encourage your family, friends, neighbors and even your employers to sign up for this important service. As I mentioned in the press release, many residences and their phone numbers have already been entered through publicly available sources but others have not. Also, the system will not have any cell phone numbers associated with specific addresses or individuals unless you inform us by either signing up those numbers through our county website, www.fannincountyga.org, or by calling 706-632-2011.

Last month, I attended the funeral of a young friend. Reggie Burnette was 32 years old and passed away after a lengthy battle with cancer. He leaves behind a wife and one year old son. To many, including myself, it seems that the period between Thanksgiving and New Year's Day sees an unusual number of deaths in our community. I'm not sure whether this period of time has a statistically higher number of deaths or whether that the deaths combined with the emotional and sentimental nature of Thanksgiving and Christmas make us feel like there are more during this time.

Whatever the case may be, the death of a loved one during this time of year is especially difficult for friends and family. Over the years, I have had several members of my extended family pass away during the holiday season and one always then tends to associate this time of fun and joy with a little sadness and loss. I write this to remind you to be mindful of the losses of others and to remember them in your prayers. Pray for their strength and understanding. Be available to pass along your comfort when possible.

Reggie was a kind, upbeat and fun loving guy. My thoughts are with his family. All of us who knew him will miss him.

As we end the Christmas and holiday season, remember to enjoy the company of your friends and family and remember to be thankful we live in a country where we are free to celebrate this special time. I thank you all for the opportunity to serve you and I wish you all a safe, healthy and prosperous New Year. In the coming weeks I will recap some of the accomplishments from this last year as well as discuss some of the plans and projects for the coming months. God Bless.

More information is always available at the county website, www.fannincountyga.org.

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Howell (Howie) Bruce, Jr.
Chairman
Fannin County Board of Commissioners
www.fannincountyga.org