**March 12th, 2024 GP-CERT Meeting Minutes:**

**Holtby welcomed everyone and offered a special welcome to those residents attending their first GP-CERT meeting. There were some venue challenges and Holtby apologized that our meeting ended up in a sub-divided billiards room. We had given up the craft room so the BOD could hold a Board workshop in a better location. Holtby mentioned that tonight’s meeting will be quicker than normal due to not having an education teach-back and the noise from the poker club adjacent to us. Holtby requested that everyone sign-in, and noted there were copies of tonight’s agenda on the pool table.**

**Kicking off tonight’s agenda, Holtby noted that at our January meeting we recapped the expected weather for the first quarter of 2024 – cooler and wetter than normal. Certainly cooler – and we had 4X the rainfall in January 2024 compared with the prior year. Longer range predictions were that the ongoing El Nino would finish up in the spring and neutral conditions would return by the May/June timeframe, with La Nina taking hold in July/August. Models currently show about a 75% chance of La Nina developing by August.**

**Holtby advised that unfortunately it means that the stars are aligning for a very busy hurricane season. The Tropical Atlantic remains much warmer than average – in the development region near the African coast, sea surface temperatures are currently hovering right around 80F – which is 3 to 4F above average, and as warm as this region generally is in July. The only question at this time appears to be whether a stronger La Nina will develop more quickly, or a weaker La Nina will develop more slowly. Right now, there are some early indications that the stronger/faster case may have the edge, which is the somewhat more threatening option for Atlantic hurricane season. Either way you look at it, La Nina is much worse for us, as major hurricane landfalls occur three times more frequently compared with El Nino seasons.**

**Holtby than asked everyone a question: what do Gordon, Chris, Patty, Sara, and Tony have in common? Steve Phillips knew the answer - they are five of the names which will be used for 2024 Atlantic storms. The full list, which is recycled every six years, is as follows: Alberto, Beryl, Chris, Debby, Ernesto, Francine, Gordon, Helene, Issac, Joyce, Kirk, Leslie, Milton, Nadine, Oscar, Patty, Rafael, Sara, Tony, Valerie, and William. Names can be retired if they are associated with destructive hurricanes, but otherwise these names will reappear in 2030.**

**The second Update item concerned the “The GP Responder”.**

**Holtby noted that we are going to publication this month with our fifteenth issue. We are still looking for at least one article for this month, so please consider contributing an article – we are looking for 100-150 words on anything with a safety or weather focus that would be of interest to the GP community. A suggestion was made to profile members of the Command Team in each issue, and Rich MacCready volunteered to be featured in the March issue.**

**The third update item on the agenda was Training & Education.**

**Holtby mentioned that the next City of North Port hurricane expo is on Saturday, April 20th from 9 am to 1 pm at the George Mullen Activity Center @ 1602 Kramer Way, North Port, FL. He noted that it is about a 25 minute drive from GP, and the event is free. There will be presentations on what to expect for the upcoming hurricane season, an opportunity to meet the new EOC for Sarasota County and a number of freebies from exhibitors.**

**Holtby also mentioned that several GP-CERT members attended the North Port Fire Rescue Open House back in January. Just an amazing training tower facility that Holtby would like to see if we can utilize at some point in the future. NPFR did some excellent demonstrations, which included accident victims being airlifted out by ambulance helicopters after a simulated car crash. GP- CERT has reached out to Fire Marshall Peter Marietti and Chief Titus to start the wheels rolling for a joint training exercise with additional CERTs. A number of us also attended an all-Sarasota County CERT meeting up at the EOC in early February which involved the new SRQ CERT Consortium. Rich MacCready is the President, and the goal is better communication and working together more effectively. MacCready noted that there are 58 CERTs in Sarasota County**

**Kristi Loret then provided an update on education and training plans. She advised that CERT Basic training can be taken on-line, and then followed up with the required “Skills-only” 16 hours of training (over two days) tentatively scheduled for June 22/23, 2024; August 24/25, 2024; November 9/10, 2024; and April 26/27, 2025. Loret advised that In-house classes were proposed for 2X each year, with the first in October of 2024 and the next one in March of 2025. Classes would be 4-6 hours each day. Loret also advised that “refresher” courses would be offered at GP for 4 hour classes.**

**The fourth Update item was Communications, and our Communications Officer, Richard MacCready, provide a brief update on the Net Radio Check-in, with 10 of the Command Team responding of 18 total. Rich noted that several were in the Board of Directors workshop and unable to participate.**

**The fifth Update item was Recruitment – which continues to be a challenge. Holtby requested that anyone with ideas on ways to do this better would be appreciated. He noted that we have started the Gran Paradiso At Wellen Park cap sales and we had sold 88 caps for $1,590. That meant we have 112 caps left to sell. The grey cap with blue lettering has been the top seller to date, followed by the grey cap with silver lettering. The white caps with red and silver/grey lettering are the slow sellers. GP-CERT sold caps at the last GP Board meeting, and Paddy Padmanabhan had done a fabulous job selling them. Holtby also noted that quite a few caps had been sold to the GP golf group.**

**There was a discussion on recruitment and getting the tri-fold updated, which Holtby took responsibility for. The BOD has agreed to have a GP-CERT trifold and a “one-pager” included in all new resident packages, and we need to take advantage of this opportunity.**

**Agenda Item 3 was Q&A and Open Discussion:**

**Holtby mentioned at our last meeting that we really need to get started on events for 2024 - and to get them on the schedule well in advance. We have not yet had a Family Safety Day or Yellow Box drill, and the earlier we can plan and schedule them the better.**

**There was also a robust discussion as to what items we need for the upcoming 2024 hurricane season, and it was recommended that Zone Leaders and the Triage Lead go through their respective boxes. The following were noted preliminarily: caution tape, long-life batteries, waders (two minimum per zone) , and an identifying banner for golf carts utilized by GP-CERT members. Brian Sheftel will look into the golf cart GP-CERT “banners”.**

**That date for our next meeting is Tuesday, May 14th, 2024 at 6:30 pm. It may go a little longer than normal, as Brian Sheftel will be going through the GP-CERT Operational Plan at that meeting (approximately 30 minutes).**

**Agenda Item 4: Holtby thanked everyone for their attendance and adjourned the meeting.**