



Spotlight

Association of Illinois



98.3 WRLR CERT PRESENTS SHOW

Preface

We heard about a FM radio station with a regularly scheduled program on CERT broadcasting in the State and inquired if we could interview them. We thought this would be of interest to our Association members. The station agreed and I had the opportunity to speak to Lou Bruno, program host, and discuss his program. The following story is that interview.

- Michael Moos, Interim Board Member

Introduction

WRLR FM CERT Program The CERT Presents Show is a presentation of the Fremont Township Community Emergency Response Team and provides the public with safety tips and up to date news of local emergencies and preparedness information. The program provides information helpful for the Public Health and Safety, as well as community news and information. The CERT Presents show is heard on alternate Thursdays from 6:30 pm to 8:00 pm, in addition to special shows based on local emergencies.



Join Lou Bruno and the CERT team and our special guests as we share information on emergency preparedness and other issues that are relevant to the community's health and safety. Get the latest information on breaking weather news in Lake County and around the nation. Learn what to do in emergency situations to help your family, your neighbors, and your pets. We also share information on local events such as pancake breakfasts, community parades, farmers markets, and concerts. The program can be found at: <https://wrlr.fm/shows/page/5/>

Interview

CERT: Morning Lou and thanks for talking to me. Could you tell me a little about yourself and about your background with CERT?

Lou Bruno (LB): Thank you. I am a lawyer by trade and joined CERT about 10 years ago to increase my community involvement. After about a year into the program I had shown some talent for outreach and was soon appointed director of outreach at Fremont Township CERT.



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CERT *How did the idea of creating and hosting a weekly CERT related program get started?*

LB: Well, I always had a liking for radio even in these days of video media being dominant. A local radio station in Lake County that I would listen to offered free airtime since they were a 501(c) volunteer station. So, I thought it would be a good outreach concept to have a CERT radio show.

CERT *How long have you been hosting this show?*

LB: The origin of it was in 2015 and we have been on the air ever since. While I am the host the original radio team has been there all along. They consisted of Ann Walker, Terry Cox, Mary Bateman and Jill Hughes.

CERT *What is the goal of your program?*

LB: What are you trying to accomplish? Our goal is to educate and inform the public on safety and preparedness issues. We also like to get out community news and events especially for other volunteer efforts for charitable purposes.

CERT *What has changed since you started?*

LB: Well of course it must be the pandemic. While Lake County has suffered heavy snow and cold, flooding on a large scale and major fires and explosions, the Covid pandemic has changed the nature of our broadcasts as well as so many other things.

CERT *During the current pandemic, how has your CERT show and WRLR evolved?*

LB: When the pandemic first hit the station was going to shut down live. I spoke up and said this was an emergency which was exactly the event we needed to broadcast during. So the Station management allowed our CERT Radio unit to set up emergency broadcasting of two daily shows to inform the public. Those broadcasts lasted about 8 weeks.

CERT *How can other CERT members/teams suggest topics for your program?*

LB: Contact me and we will get you on. Call or e-mail. We enjoy featuring what other teams are doing and learning from it.

CERT *What is the "typical" format for your program and the use of guests?*

LB: We have a 90-minute show that we divide up into three 30-minute segments. We try to have three guests either in studio in normal times or on the phone during the pandemic. We also have announcements of community news and events. Some interviews are recorded.



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CERT What are the topics of discussion? Can listeners call in with questions? How is that done?

LB: Well, we do not usually take phone calls, but I would like to. Topics vary but we try to get practical safety advice out. For instance, we will have the Coast Guard Auxiliary discuss boating safety, Operation Lifesaver to discuss railroad safety, and also topics like suicide awareness and drug safety.

CERT What is your program schedule?

LB: Alternating Thursdays from 6:30pm until 8:00pm. Then we do special shows to cover current events, as necessary.

CERT Is the program only available "over-the-air" or can people anywhere listen in via their computer?

LB: Over the air in Lake County on WRLR 98.3fm and streaming worldwide on WRLR.fm and streaming on Radio Garden and TuneIn Radio.

CERT Is there an archive of programs people can listen to? If so, how do they access them?

LB: We have some available upon request but not freely accessible. We hope to do that in the future.

CERT The program can be found at: <https://wrlr.fm/shows/page/5/>



Programming occurs in the station and in the field.

