

SAVE MART CENTER HOSTS BUSINESS COMMITTEE



The October meeting of the Fresno Citizen Corps Business and Industry Committee was held at the Save Mart Center. The meeting was hosted by committee member, Pete Wenzel, who is director of operations and a CERT volunteer. In addition to conducting regular business related to disaster preparedness and business continuity planning, the committee was able to get a behind-the-scenes look at the massive and impressive facility. The recent hurricanes have thrust arenas and event centers into the forefront of disaster response as emergency housing and reception centers. Like the other Citizen Corps committees, the B&I group meets in locations throughout our area as a means of becoming familiar with the people and places that are not only great assets in the life of our community, but could also play a pivotal role in our disaster response. Thank you Pete.



As has been a recurring theme since Hurricane Katrina struck, the Citizen Corps team and community partners have been aggressively pursuing the “lessons learned” from the catastrophic events. CERT, Citizen Corps and Medical Reserve Corps volunteers who have recently served in the Gulf region have been exceedingly generous in sharing their experiences and insights with us. On October 6th a group gathered to document their recommendations based on their work in shelters and in the communities devastated by the hurricanes. Many of their recommendations center on the need for pre-planning (for both individuals and organizations), training and pre-registering disaster volunteers, and effectively managing and utilizing spontaneous volunteers who often arrive in very large numbers. A companion issue is effective donations management.

AMERICORPS MEMBERS RESPOND TO NEEDS CREATED BY HURRICANES



Volunteers and staff from the “Fresno Safe and Proud Neighborhoods” AmeriCorps program have recently put their civic and disaster-related training to use by establishing a call center and responding to hundreds of calls made to the disaster hotline. Other members have been assisting by providing support services to hurricane survivors in our area and supporting disaster training programs. The volunteers have done outstanding work with the Red Cross locally and others are prepared to deploy.