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"Volusia Prepares Business"



Established in June 2005, Volusia Prepares Business (VPB) connects the private sector with the government in Volusia County. The need became apparent following the 2004 Hurricane Season.

Richard Moore, SART Member and County Liaison to VPB, says that even though there have been no threatening hurricanes recently, there have been massive fires, drought and tornadoes. Thus, VPB –

1. Creates a way to communicate information to employers and their employees regarding natural disasters, Homeland Security issues and health emergencies. *VPB can help avoid misinformation and even panic.*
2. Provides training to the private sector, anything from simple awareness presentations to specialized hazardous material and emergency response training. *VPB can help prepare for and mitigate the effects of a disaster.*
3. Provides a resource database, which can serve as a conduit of immediate information between government and the private sector. *The VPB "clearing house" can identify companies that need immediate help to stay in operation, for instance. By helping them continue to operate, Volusia County residents remain employed and the economy vibrant.*

“We’ve worked with Volusia County’s seven Chambers of Commerce, community colleges, the Center for Business Excellence ... even condominium associations,” Moore says. “We tested the concept during the statewide 2007 hurricane exercise and made a presentation at FEMA’s Emergency Management Institute in Emmitsburg, Maryland (<http://training.fema.gov/>). We’re going to take this plan to Tallahassee in October to discuss the concept with the ESF 18 ‘Business & Industry’ staff.



Working partnerships between its business community and government agencies will help a community prepare for, mitigate the effects of and recover from a disaster more effectively.

“One other note is that we try to keep VPB ‘meeting-free’ and work via Internet and telephone. Everyone I know already has all the meetings they can handle.”

To learn more about this innovative grassroots concept, visit this Internet site:

<http://volusia.org/prepares/default.htm>. Richard Moore, Planner II with the Volusia County Division of Emergency Management, can be reached at (386) 254-1500 x1031 or via email at rmoores@co.volusia.fl.us.

HAZMAT Training is FREE to SART members!

The U.F. College of Veterinary Medicine will offer a two-hour Hazardous Materials (HAZMAT) Awareness Training program in conjunction with Gainesville Fire Rescue on October 26th from 3:00 to 5:00 p.m. The course will include classroom instruction as well as static display of HAZMAT trucks and equipment that program attendees can inspect. Seating is limited, so please RSVP by contacting John Haven by email (havenj@vetmed.ufl.edu). The program is free to SART members.



Through the Grapevine

Local Initiatives

“One of our goals in Volusia County is to maximize our ability to respond to disasters locally. We recognize that the state and federal levels can bring much greater resources to bear in an emergency situation, but trained and prepared local first response is timely – it can almost be immediate – and highly efficient. Effective local response, supplemented by state and federal efforts, give us the best possible opportunity to mitigate the effects of a disaster in our community.”

Richard Moore
Planner II, Volusia County Division of Emergency Management

SART – What’s in a name?

State Agricultural Resource Team or State Animal Resource Team?

What about SAART – State Agricultural and Animal Response Team?

Or even SAARRT, the State Agricultural and Animal Response and Resource Team?

Between John Haven’s discussion of initiatives at the College of Veterinary Medicine, U.F. and Art Johnstone’s discussion of regional cooperation opportunities in disaster preparation, the September meeting of the Advisory Board, meeting at the Florida Farm Bureau Building in Gainesville, Wednesday September 12, 2007 briefly discussed matching the name with the mission.

What do you think? We would like to collect ideas from members. Should we change the name of our loose-knit, but powerful organization to more accurately reflect our mission? After all, SART is a MAC, a multi-agency coordination group, not a group of first responders. Do you have an opinion and would you share it with the group?



Vet School, FVMA and FDACS Launch Veterinary Reserve Corps



"Florida veterinarians and animal health technicians have often volunteered to assist animal owners and local officials responding to animal emergencies," says John Haven, Director of the University of Florida College of Veterinary Medicine in Gainesville. "Now we are recruiting more volunteers to help protect our state. Anyone who would like to learn more about or join the Veterinary Reserve Corps should contact FDACS for an application [850-410-0900 or vetcorps@doacs.state.fl.us] as soon as possible."

According to their recently printed brochure, the Florida Veterinary Corps has been established to enlist vets (and vet techs) who are willing to volunteer their services in responding to animal emergencies in

Florida. During activation, volunteers will work within an incident command structure under ESF-17 as part of the State Emergency Response Team.

The Corps will be a component of Florida SART under the U.F. College of Veterinary Medicine and FDACS-DAI and volunteers will be kept informed as to the status of emergencies and the need for volunteers. Volunteers may serve in infrastructure assessment teams, in triage or emergency animal treatment teams, or in animal disease surveillance or control teams.

Corps volunteers will be required to serve only when activated but must adhere to all state regulations and rules. Minimal training online and during activation is required. Volunteers will need to stay informed as to emergency status and volunteer needs, but they will only be activated in response to specific emergency situations. Volunteers called upon may decline service at any time depending upon their personal needs and circumstances.

Rationale:

Natural disasters are unpredictable and cannot be prevented.

Animal agriculture in Florida is highly vulnerable to severe disruption and financial loss through natural disasters and exotic or zoonotic diseases.

Florida is at high risk for an outbreak of an exotic animal disease.

County and state agencies must be prepared to respond to animal disasters through planning and identification of human and material resources.

Protecting agriculture begins locally, because outside assistance may not be available for hours or days.

FDACS-DAI and the College of Veterinary Medicine will provide training in NIMS and foreign animal and zoonotic diseases through on-site and online courses. This training is required for credentialing by DHS and FEMA. For those interested, additional training in various topics will be provided.



Interested individuals may contact John Haven at the College of Veterinary Medicine: (352) 392-4700 x 3154 or havenj@mail.vetmed.ufl.edu. (A pdf copy of the application is attached for downloading, but it is not an interactive form and will need to be printed, completed and mailed to Joe Kight, Division of Animal Industry, Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, 407 S. Calhoun Street, Mayo Building, Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0800.)

FSA News

Closings for Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program Now Set by Regions

FSA can now set application closing dates for its Noninsured Crop Disaster Assistance Program (NAP) based on geographic region. This allows producers to report crops in a timelier manner without having to guess what kind of crops they will be planting in advance. The state's NAP regions will be split into three areas: North, Central and South. This requires changes in the National Crop Table with regards to NAP application closing dates.

NAP provides financial assistance to producers of non-insurable crops when low yields, loss of inventory or prevented planting occur as a result of natural disasters. Eligible producers must apply for coverage of non-insurable crops using Form CCC-471, "Application for Coverage," and pay the applicable service fees at their local FSA office. The application and service fees must be filed by the application closing date as established by the producer's FSA state committee (<http://www.fsa.usda.gov>).

One-Month Extension of MILC Payments

USDA's Commodity Credit Corporation (CCC) has extended the Milk Income Loss Contract (MILC) program payment rate calculation at 34-percent for September 2007. MILC compensates dairy producers when domestic milk prices fall below a specified level.

The "U.S. Troop Readiness, Veterans' Care, Katrina Recovery, and Iraq Accountability Appropriations Act, 2007" extends the MILC payment period and rate for one month. Previously, the payment period and 34-percent rate expired at the end of August 2007, and the payment rate for September 2007 was zero.

Through the Grapevine

Good Planning and still, Unintended Consequences

"An example of that type of unintended consequence is what happened during the 2001 Foot-and-Mouth outbreak in the United Kingdom. They were so overwhelmed with massive volume of animal carcasses needing disposal that they often opted for open pit burning. Unfortunately, in their rush, using creosote-soaked railroad ties in open pyres created serious public concerns over potential health effects, air quality, and release of environmental contaminants."

Dr. Loerzel added, "Every emergency is a little different and it is very difficult, if not impossible, to have a specific plan for every potential variable. However, planning ahead and trying to address difficult issues such as carcass disposal is extremely important in reducing the need for making difficult choices in the midst of an urgent situation. There are no perfect solutions to mass carcass disposal so having a plan ahead of time is all the more important."

Susan Loerzel, DVM, PhD
Area Emergency Coordinator
APHIS, USDA

Editor's Note: The 2001 foot-and-mouth outbreak in England, which lasted 221 days, cost an estimated £8 billion and resulted in the slaughter of more than six million animals. (www.telegraph.co.uk)

Florida EARS Team Helps in Texas

When Raquel Aluisy received a call from Liz Wang, Executive Director of the Texas State Animal Resource Team (TXSART) in Austin on Monday August 20th to set up a pet-friendly shelter ahead of the anticipated arrival of Hurricane Dean, she immediately applied for vacation from her "full-time" job with Verizon. Accompanying her as part of the United Animal Nations' EARS Shelter Management Team were specialists in Shelter Operations and Logistics.



The EARS team spent three days in Laredo, an evacuation destination for people fleeing the Brownsville-McAllen area along the Rio Grande border with Mexico. The team reported to a Fire Chief who had responsibility for 26 people-shelters. At first the Texans wanted to keep animals in cages outside school buildings, but with their disaster experience the Florida EARS group understood that plan would not work and so located a separate structure.

Dean, eventually a Category 5 storm, slammed the Yucatan and Mexico, but Texas was spared and the team returned to Florida on Wednesday.

How does she reflect on the experience? “We did not have trouble using school buses to transport people with their pets,” she says. “That is an issue we have still not worked out satisfactorily in Florida.”

- Help Is Requested by SART Members -



Doctor Hank Stoddard in Dixie County:

“Yes, dog fighting is increasing and becoming better organized. Since Dixie County is the “golden buckle” on the dog fighting belt, we have contact routes to sponsoring organizations. I am currently acting as an expert consultant to the prosecution legal firm on a pit bull human attack event. If not too much trouble, I would appreciate any local information about the breed, organized fighting and human attacks that may

be useful.” Please respond to Doc Hank at: dochank@bellsouth.net.

Detective Annie Henderson, Clay County Sheriff’s Office – Animal Crime Unit:

“I don't know if other counties are having this problem but Clay County is seeing a lot of unqualified horse and dog rescues showing up that are not 501(3)c non profits. These are people that are taking animals from individuals that can no longer keep

them or care for them, mostly getting them for free due to poor condition of the animal. They are breeding old mares and telling people who adopt them they are pregnant. They are charging \$500 to \$800 adoption fees for horses that are old and in poor shape playing on their emotions and telling inexperienced horse people that the animal is only 15 or 16 years old. Only to have the horse get sick and have to be euthanized a short time later. Are other counties are having this issue?" Please respond to Detective Henderson at: ahenderson@claysheriff.com.



Through the Grapevine

Help is on the way!

"Individual vets want a place to help in an emergency and the Veterinary Reserve Corps is a place to plug 'em in. Plus, the Corps can help bring independent groups and freelancers efficiently into the response system, especially for legal and liability issues. The Veterinary Reserve Corps can give us a high number of organized and well-trained boots on the ground following a disaster. We had 40 interested veterinarians on our first day of organization!"

John Haven
Director, U.F. College of Veterinary Medicine

What is "US&R?"

According to FEMA (www.fema.gov/emergency/usr/), urban search-and-rescue (US&R) involves the location, rescue (extrication), and initial medical stabilization of victims trapped in confined spaces. Structural collapse is most often the cause of victims being trapped, but victims may also be trapped in transportation accidents, mines and collapsed trenches.

Urban search-and-rescue is considered a "multi-hazard" discipline as it may be needed for a variety of emergencies or disasters, including earthquakes, hurricanes, typhoons, storms and tornadoes, floods, dam failures, technological accidents, terrorist activities and hazardous materials releases. The events may be slow in developing, as in the case of hurricanes, or sudden, as in the case of earthquakes.



A US&R Task Force consists of two 31-person teams, four canines, and a comprehensive equipment cache. (The FEMA site does not, as of this date, refer specifically to humans or animals, but speaks of "victims.") If a disaster event warrants national US&R support, FEMA will deploy the three closest task forces within six hours of notification, and additional teams as necessary. The role of these task forces is to support state and local emergency responders' efforts to locate victims and manage recovery operations.

FSA: New Livestock/Crop Disaster Programs

Three new ad hoc disaster programs will soon be available to assist farmers and ranchers who suffered losses caused by natural disasters in recent years: the Livestock Compensation Program, Livestock Indemnity Program and Crop Disaster Program.

Livestock Compensation Program

Apply to receive benefits beginning September 10.

Compensates for feed losses between January 1, 2005 and February 28, 2007, due to a natural disaster. Producers may also receive compensation for calendar year 2007 grazing losses caused by wildfire.

Livestock Indemnity Program

Apply to receive benefits beginning September 10.

Compensates for losses between January 1, 2005 and February 28, 2007 that resulted from natural disasters.

Crop Disaster Program

Apply to receive benefits beginning October 15.

Provides benefits for quantity and quality losses – minimum 35 percent – to 2005, 2006, or 2007 crops from natural disasters if planted before February 28, 2007 or, in the case of prevented plantings, for crops that would have been planted before that date. Producers must have insurance or NAP coverage. Multiple commodities eligible.

Information about LCP, LIP and CDP is available in a fact sheet titled “Agricultural Assistance Act of 2007,” on FSA's web site, <http://www.fsa.usda.gov>; click on Disaster Assistance Programs.

Paintball Toxicosis in Dogs

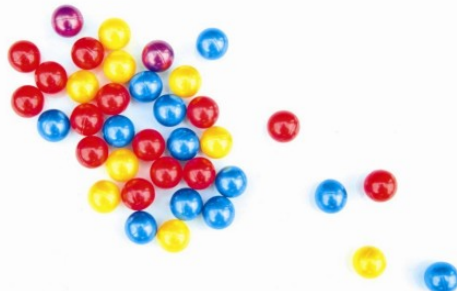


Our Ocala friends Wayne and Jackie Dollack of Wayne's World of Paintball (www.waynes-world.com) forwarded a note recently about “paintball poisoning” which was originally sent from Caroline Donaldson, DVM. According to Donaldson's note, “From January 1998 to January 2003, the ASPCA poison Control Center (APCC) received 44 calls regarding paintball ingestion by dogs that subsequently developed clinical signs. In some cases, the dogs may have ingested as many as 500 (!) paintballs at one time. Paintball ingredients vary depending on the manufacturer.

“In dogs, the most common clinical signs reported to the ASPCA APCC were vomiting (with or without paint), ataxia, diarrhea and tremors. These signs occurred as early as one hour after ingestion. In two cases, the dogs were euthanized because their central nervous system signs were unresponsive to treatment; no other deaths were reported. The exact number of ingested paintballs required to cause clinical signs is unknown. In one case, a 90-pound Labrador retriever showed clinical signs after ingesting 15 paintballs.

If you believe that your dog is a victim of “paintball poisoning” direct your veterinarian to www.asPCA.org/site/DocServer/toxbrief1203.pdf?docID+1521.

[Editor's Note: In 2004 I researched and wrote a book called “*Paintball Digest: The Complete Guide to Games, Gear and Tactics*” for Krause Publications. Paintball manufacturer DraXxus told me that, “...modern paintballs are made entirely of non-toxic, food-grade ingredients, although oil-based paintballs are still made for foresters and farmers.” Actually what is inside the hollow gelatin ball is polyethylene glycol and wax. Used in substances like toothpaste, polyethylene glycol has a “low toxicity.”]



Through the Grapevine

The Next SART Conference

“Feedback we’ve gotten based on this year’s SART Conference in Clearwater was overwhelmingly positive. Many people have kicked around the idea of the timing of our conferences, remembering that their purposes are to educate and inform and help people who attend form networks for cooperation and mutual assistance. I’d like to propose that we have them every other year. In other words, our next conference would be held on around June 1st 2009. We would like to hear your thoughts and ideas ... and suggestions about where the next conference should be held.”

Joe Kight, Senior Management Analyst II
ESF-17 ECO
Division of Animal Industry, FDACS

Broadening the Exotic Discussion

The world of invasive plants, animals and insects balances among conflicting forces as precariously as a tightrope walker in swirling fog. How far could she fall? Perhaps only inches or perhaps that slender rope stretches across a dark and bottomless chasm.

How much harm does an introduced species cause? No one can be certain in advance, but the ecosystem was roughly balanced before Columbus’ day, and new species alter a balance. The common carp have altered it enormously; the Muscovy duck has apparently had little effect; an infestation of brown tree snakes might be terrifyingly destructive.

Florida Statute 372.265 “Regulation of Foreign Animals” prohibits the release of animals into the wild that are not native to Florida.

What if a new butterfly with shimmering iridescent violet, magenta and yellow wings were proliferating in Florida; first, by the thousands and then by the hundreds of thousands? The butterfly lays eggs only on roses, its larvae consuming them voraciously? You could reasonably expect a significant, perhaps a heated public debate. Neither the butterfly nor the rose, as we grow it in our gardens, are native to Florida.

Example: Starling and Parakeet

Such debates are part of our daily conversation with one another and with nature in the Sunshine State. Consider the European Starling and the Monk Parakeet. Each is an exotic invasive, but perhaps their designation should change. Populations of both

are large and reproducing, although the starling is a “nasty pest” while the parakeet, perhaps because it is brightly colored, is generally thought of as a “charming new resident.”



A society dedicated to bringing to America all of the birds mentioned in Shakespeare released 80 starlings in New York’s Central Park in 1890. Today, there may be 200 million starlings in North America and you can find these adaptable, gregarious birds in flocks in your neighborhood parks. Roosts with more than a million birds have been reported. Thank goodness William did not write science fiction.... Loud. Messy. Invasive. We may despise them, but the starling is here to stay.

The latest information about monk (also called Quaker) parakeets in Florida can be found at (<http://myfwc.com/critters/exotics/exotics.asp>) but web sites from Chicago (<http://chicagowildernessmag.org/issues/winter2003/monkparakeets.html>) and New York (www.brooklynparrots.com) report established breeding colonies. Apparently this Argentine bird is now wild in the U.S. after escaping from pet stores or the cages of pet owners in the late ‘60s or being intentionally released. In other words, the charming green and white bird is similar to the starling but with huge, identifiable nests and, as its far fewer numbers and confining urban niche indicate, it is not as successful.

Cute. Messy. Invasive. We may thrill to see them, but this parakeet is apparently hanging on and a quick check of on-line sources indicates that this exotic has followers who file lawsuits on its behalf, write letters to the editor and form support groups.

According to the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (at www.myfwc.com), “The Monk Parakeet is probably the most widespread and successful parrot in Florida, due in large part to its highly colonial behavior.” Does this leave a great deal unsaid? Do we make evaluations about exotic species individually based on their “cuddle value” or their “prettiness” – as we sometimes do with endangered species? And should the starling and Monk parakeet now be considered “native?” Many questions. Few good answers.



SART Member, Veterinarian Passes Away

[NOTE: When we heard that Dr. Ernest Smith wished to be removed from the SART member rolls, we inquired about the reason. His daughter Mindy replied that the good doctor had passed away. "Dad volunteered with so many organizations we aren't even sure what they all are." Because Florida SART is a community we pass along Dr. Smith's obituary.]



Dr. Ernest Smith, of Tequesta, FL passed away at age 64. Born in Brooklyn, NY, he moved to Florida in 1966 at age 23 after graduating from Cornell University with a Doctor of Veterinary Medicine. Dr. Smith founded Animal Hospital by the Lake and the Animal Dermatology Clinic in West Palm Beach where he practiced for 23 years. He continued to teach, consult, and volunteer after his retirement. Dr. Smith was a past president of the Cornell Club and American Lung Association Southeast Region and an active volunteer with the Veterinary Medical Assistance

Team (VMAT) and other local and national disaster preparedness and relief organizations associated with Homeland Security and Defense. He also volunteered at Cornell's Sustainability and Biodiversity Labs in the Dominican Republic and Peru and taught at the University of Florida and Cornell University. Dr. Smith loved to travel and scuba dive. He will be sorely missed by the people and animals that he helped.

Dr. Smith loved his family, profession and alma mater, Cornell. He recently endowed the Dr. Robert W. Kirk Practitioner in Residence program at Cornell to honor an influential teacher and encourage practicing veterinarians to expand their knowledge and use their experience to educate students.

Dr. Smith is survived by his wife of 39 years, Abby Smith and children Jeremy (New Orleans, LA) and Mindy (Raleigh, NC), as well as his sister Lois Rubin and her husband, Richard Rubin; brother and sister-in-law, Barry and Arminda Perl; and in-laws, Hank and Marsette Perl. He was preceded in death by his parents, Saul and Ann Smith.

Donations in Ernest Smith's name can be made to the Palm Beach Synagogue (www.pbos.org) or to the Robert W. Kirk Practitioner-in-Residence Fund, Office of Alumni Affairs and Development, Box 39, College of Veterinary Medicine, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY 14853-6401.



Florida's Wildlife ... Signs

For an opportunity to win one of our coveted Elvis Memorial Bookmarks, can you tell us (rsa5@cox.net) where this sign is located? With the "Crocodile Crossing" warning posted in the Upper Keys on U.S. Highway 1, it must easily be one of Florida's most exotic traffic signs.

About the SART Sentinel

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If you have a story or photo that you would like to have considered for publication in *The SART SENTINEL*, please contact the Editors.