THE SENTINEL
NEWSLETTER OF THE FLORIDA STATE AGRICULTURAL RESPONSE TEAM

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SART – Turning Visions into Action

Registration is Open: The theme for the 4th Florida SART Planning Meeting is *SART – Turning Visions into Action*. Conference speakers, seminars and opportunities to get-to-know other responders and response agencies have been established and registration is open online at http://www.cvent.com/events/2015-sart-planning-meeting/event-summary-1526774928984f449cfffe546cc1cc77.aspx. (For conference related questions, or help with registration, contact CMC & Associates -(850) 224-7775 or jchapman@cmc-associates.com. Because up to 150 people are expected, it is recommended that you schedule attendance and book a room as soon as possible. The meeting will begin at 1:00 pm on Monday, January 12 and will conclude by noon on Wednesday.

Host Hotel: The host hotel is the Embassy Suites, Lake Buena Vista South, 4955 Kyngs Heath Road, Kissimmee, FL 34746. To make reservations, please contact the hotel at (407) 597-4000 and let them know you are with the "2015 SART Planning Meeting**."** Alternatively, you may click here to book your hotel room online. The group rate for a standard room is $123 per night plus tax. The cut off date for the group room rate is May 5, 2014.

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Monday, January 12

1:00 Call to Order – David Perry, FDACS/SART Co-chair
Welcome – Richard Collins, Director, Osceola Co. Emergency Management
Greetings – Dr. Lisa Conti, FDOH
1:30 SERT Program – Bryan Koon, Director, FDEM
2:00 Brevard County Large Animal Plan – Lacie Davis, Coordinator, Brevard Co. Emergency Management
2:30 New Animal Courses
LECALE: Dr. Matt Hersom, Dept. of Animal Sciences, UF
Animal Emergency Sheltering – Operations Level: Consie von Gontard, SARC
3:00 Break
3:15 Social Media in an Emergency – David Merrick, Director, Center for Disaster Risk Policy, FSU
6:00 Attendee Gathering
7:00 Adjourn

Tuesday, January 13

8:00 Announcements – David Perry, FDACS/SART Co-chair
8:15 Radiological Planning – John Williamson, Administrator, Bureau of Radiation Control, FDOH
11:30 SART Awards Luncheon
1:30 Radiological Planning (continued)
5:00 Adjourn

Wednesday, January 14

8:00 Breakout Session: Invited IFAS and FDACS staff personnel – Dr. Mike Short
8:15 "Don't Pack a Pest" – Richard Miranda, FDACS/DPI
9:30 The Lee County Animal Decontamination Workshop – John Haven, Director, College of Veterinary Medicine, UF
10:30 Break
10:45 Federal Partner Reports – USDA
Dr. George Chambliss, Moderator
Dr. Chris Young, Veterinary Services
Dr. Allan Hogue and Kim Duffiney, Animal Care
Rick Dantzler, Farm Service Agency
* Dr. Ty Vannieuwenhoven, U.S. Dept. of Health & Human Services
12:00 Adjourn

A recent addition to the Planning Meeting Agenda, Dr. Ty Vannieuwenhoven is Chief Veterinary Officer, National Disaster Medical System, U.S. Health & Human Services ASPR/OEM. He is stationed in Washington, DC. As a colonel, he is also Emergency Preparedness Liaison Officer with the U.S. Army and is an adjunct faculty member in the University of Wisconsin School of Veterinary Medicine. From 2003-2011 Dr. Vannieuwenhoven served as Area Emergency Coordinator with USDA APHIS Veterinary Services. He has additional Army veterinary service and worked with the IAMS Company as Academic Affairs Manager/Technical Services Veterinarian.

Texas A&M Training

John Haven, Director
Disaster Response Programs
Director
College of Veterinary
Medicine
University of Florida

Over the course of October 8-12 2014, a combined class of Texas A&M College of Veterinary Medicine faculty and staff, and Texas Engineering and Extension (TEEX) instructors, gathered for a “train the trainer” program provided by the University of Florida's College of Veterinary Medicine disaster response team, VETS. This course, an Operations Level Course comprehensively matches the 2014 release of the National Fire Protection Association 1670 standard for Technical Rescue. This new standard incorporates animals for the first time. This course addresses both large and small animal situations. The “instructor/students” had previously received Awareness Level training from UC Davis College of Veterinary Medicine, and internationally recognized TLAER Inc. instructor, Dr. Rebecca Gimenez, which prepared them to assist in animal technical rescues.

As an Operations Level Course, the UF classes are kept small, usually 16-20, with lots of time over two days for students to build skills and confidence using the equipment and acting as an active member in the technical rescue team. According to lead course instructor John Haven, the goal of the course is to bring together a team of rescuers, animal handlers, etc. and at the end of the course, to have a team capable of performing rescues over a variety of challenges safely and successfully. At the end of the course the students are given a capstone experience, to perform a rescue using most of their available equipment. The instructors only intervene in the event of a safety issue.

Part of what makes the course unique, besides its full NFPA standard integration, is that it is a DHS-recognized and approved course, which makes teaching it eligible for Federal training dollars to pay for course delivery. It is the only DHS course of its kind. Florida SART www.flsart.org provided funds for course development. While it is in the Florida catalog, it is available nation-wide. All of this led to the request to have an instructor cadre for the course established at Texas A & M for the UF course. Recognizing the Aggie CVM and TEEX team would create a uniquely excellent delivery platform, Haven agreed to credential them as instructors. This was conducted via the delivery of the two day class by Haven and assistant instructor Joshua Fleming, followed by a two day teach-back by the Aggie team to a group of CVM students, supervised by the UF instructors, and Dr Gimenez as an evaluator of the teach-back process.

The UF course is primarily used for the training and support of seven

multi-agency Regional Domestic Security Task Force teams in Florida, each of which is equipped and trained for performing animal technical rescue. Veterinary students at UF are regularly engaged in learning technical rescue with the goal of becoming assets in their communities after graduation. Haven's cadre of instructors, besides collaborating regularly with TLAER Inc, are rope rescue instructors, confined space rescue technicians and swift-water rescue technicians. For more information about the UF VETS Team, or the UF Operations Level Animal Technical Rescue Course, contact John Haven at havenj@ufl.edu or (352) 294-4254.

Ebola – Veterinarians, SART …

On October 9th, Dr. Kristi Henderson published an article online through the AVMA web site titled "Ebola virus – AVMA's working to find information for you." The article is posted at http://atwork.avma.org/2014/10/09/ebola-virus-working-to-find-answers/. We have excerpted from her story (below) which was written following the death in the U.S. of an international traveler with the Ebola virus disease (EVD) and precautionary measures taken by Spain to euthanize the dog of an exposed nurse – since recovered. Dr. Henderson asks:

1. How will the U.S. react if faced with an increased number of EVD patients?
2. Is there any chance that what happened in Spain could happen here?
3. Is it even possible for dogs to get EVD or spread it to humans?

Key points:

- The relative risk of exposure to EVD in the U.S. is extremely low, as there have been only a small number of isolated human cases and no known animal cases.
- Although EVD is a zoonotic disease, there has not been evidence of its transmission to humans from dogs. Indeed, it is not even known if dogs are capable of contracting and then transmitting the disease. A study analyzing the 2001-2002 Ebola virus outbreak in Gabon found antibodies against the virus in about 25% of dogs in the affected area, but no virus was found in them. Furthermore, none of the animals showed signs or died of the disease during the study period. The study only indicated that the animals had encountered the Ebola virus.
- The CDC recommends that if a pet is in the home of an EVD patient, veterinarians, in collaboration with public health officials, should evaluate the pet's risk of exposure (close contact and exposure to blood or body fluids of an EVD patient). Appropriate measures, such as closely monitoring the exposed pet while using necessary precautions, should be taken based on that evaluation.

About Dr. Kristi Henderson

Dr. Kristi Henderson received her DVM from the University of Illinois, College of Veterinary Medicine.

After years in practice and serving as a federal Veterinary Medical Officer, Dr. Kristi Henderson is currently an Assistant Director of the AVMA Scientific Activities Division where her responsibilities include areas such as environmental, wildlife, biosecurity and animal agricultural issues.
In addition, she provides technical and scientific expertise to the Committee on Environmental Issues (CEI) and the Animal Agriculture Liaison Committee (AALC).
Dr. Henderson grew up on her family's farm in central Illinois and was active in 4-H and FFA. Before becoming a veterinarian, she was an EMT and medical officer on her hometown's fire department. http://atwork.avma.org/2014/10/09/ebola-virus-working-to-find-answers/

Aptly Named Dog, "Dicey," Rescued from Dicey Situation

On Tuesday evening, George Fryar's two dogs made a break from the family's fenced backyard, but only one returned. The six and a half month old, fifty-five pound female Rottweiler puppies "did everything in tandem," according to Fryar. He immediately began to search the woods and fields surrounding his home near County Road 349 in O'Brien.

Left: Josh at hole.
Above: Josh and Jon digging.

His search continued into Wednesday, October 15th with Fryar now investigating nearby wells and sinkholes. That afternoon, his calls to Dicey were answered with barks and whines from the bottom of a sinkhole in a nearby field. Distraught, Fryar contacted his veterinarian, Dr. Donald Wolfersteig, of Suwannee Oaks Animal Clinic in O'Brien. Quickly a team was assembled, made up of UF's Veterinary Emergency Treatment Services (VETS) Animal Technical Rescue Team, Suwannee Fire Rescue, and Animal Control. The agencies pooled experience and resources to find a way to rescue Dicey from her predicament.

The hole was too narrow and too dangerous to safely lower a human rescuer. UF VETS team member, Joshua Fleming, and Suwannee Fire Rescue's Jon Cummings, tied in to rope systems for their own safety, worked together for two hours, carefully shoveling soil and chipping away at limestone in attempts to widen the hole; a delicate job to prevent further collapse.

The dog was pulled to safety shortly after 8:00 PM on Wednesday evening, after lying at the bottom of the wet sinkhole for more than 24 hours. Veterinarian responder Dr. Cassandra Fleming (Archer Animal Hospital, Archer, Florida) assessed Dicey and found her to be in relative good health, in spite of the conditions of their meeting. "She's very dehydrated and very hypothermic," reported Dr. Fleming, but a full recovery was expected.

Josh and Cassie assist Dicey.

Dicey heads home.

Fryar and his wife, Vaster, were overwhelmed to have their puppy returned safely to their arms. All involved hope that this is the last time that Dicey lives up to her name.

The UF VETS team can be dispatched to assist local first responders by contacting the Alachua County Communications Center (352) 955-1818. UF VETS is an all-volunteer, grant and donation funded team. It is trained in high angle, confined space, and swift water technical rescue. It is one of the few teams in the U.S. trained to this level, and capable of performing large and small animal rescue. Donations to support the UF VETS Team can be sent to the UF Foundation program code 013175 Veterinary Emergency Response: https://www.uff.ufl.edu/OnlineGiving/FundDetail.asp?FundCode=013175.
Brandi K. Phillips, Pre-Veterinary Advisor
Office for Students and Instruction, College of Veterinary Medicine, UF

FWC is Searching for CRAs

It isn't like the 1993 book (and subsequent movie) *Searching for Bobby Fischer* but the Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) is looking for Crocodile Response Agents (CRA) … in the upper Florida Keys. Applicants must live in the area from and including Long Key to Key Largo. CRAs assist FWC's Crocodile Response Coordinator with issues involving American crocodiles. The position is a part-time, non-benefited, hourly (OPS) position. Hours will vary with season and calls. CRAs must furnish their own vehicles and equipment. They are involved in site visits, carcass recoveries, and capture and translocations of American crocodiles. Preference will be given to individuals with experience capturing and handling crocodilians, place of residence in relation to work area, availability to respond to calls, and experience in customer service. Interested applicants should email SNAP@MyFWC.com with questions and to request an application. Include "Crocodile Response Agent" in the subject line of the e-mail.

Historic range of the American crocodile in Florida

According to FWC, American crocodiles (*Crocodylus acutus*) are a shy and reclusive species. They live in coastal areas throughout the Caribbean, and occur at the northern end of their range in south Florida. They live in brackish or saltwater areas, and can be found in ponds, coves, and creeks in mangrove swamps. They are occasionally being encountered inland in freshwater areas of the SE Florida coast as a result of the extensive canal system.

Like alligators, crocodiles are ectothermic, meaning they rely on external sources of heat to regulate their body temperature. Crocodiles control their body temperature by basking in the sun, or moving to areas with warmer or cooler air or water temperatures.

A basking crocodile may be surprised by an approaching person and quickly (and noisily) enter the water. This behavior might startle the person, but it should not be misunderstood. Crocodiles would normally enter the water quietly; splashing away indicates that the crocodile is frightened.

Crocodiles can also be seen sunning with their mouths open, or "gaping." This behavior is also related to regulating their body temperature, and does not mean that the crocodile is acting aggressively toward people.
http://myfwc.com/wildlifehabitats/managed/american-crocodile/

Under the Radar

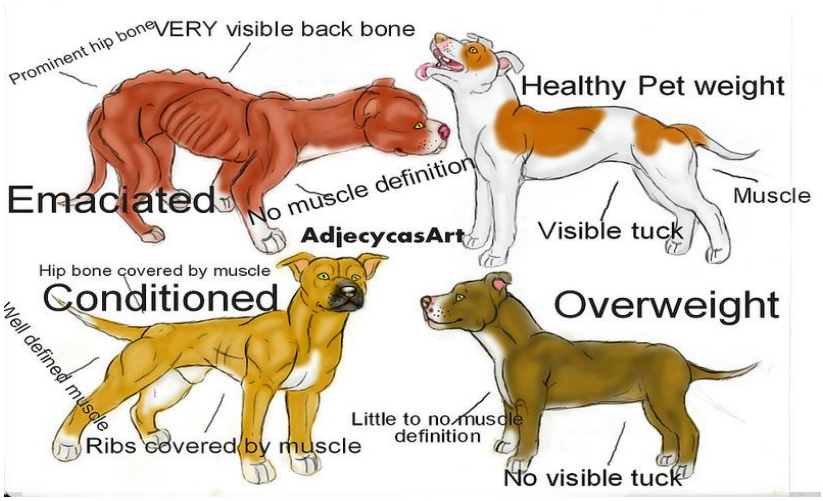
Florida SARC Course Schedule

Small Animal Emergency Sheltering – Awareness Level
The Florida State Animal Response Coalition is teaching this course to promote effective response for animals during disasters. Registration is required, but due to grants from Florida Division of Emergency Management and U.S. Department of Homeland Security, no fee is charged for attendance. This course is certified by FDEM as course code FL-003-RESP.

Date & Time: Saturday, October 25, 8:00 am – 6:00 pm
Location: Cat Depot, 2542 17th Street, Sarasota

For information and registration go to http://www.flsarc.org/Training.html or contact Melissa Forberg training@flsarc.org (352) 658-1224, Pam Burns pamburnssarc@gmail.com, Andy Bass training@flsarc.org or Consie Von Gontard training@flsarc.org.

Tufts Animal Care Scales



Developed by Dr. Gary Patronek, VMD, Tufts Animal Care (TACC) Scales ae used for assessing body condition, weather and environmental safety, and physical care in dogs. It was developed for veterinarians, animal control officers, police officers and cruelty investigators through the Tufts Center for Animals and Public Policy. A copy of the scale pertaining to dogs with diagrams and discussion can be found at http://vet.tufts.edu/hoarding/pubs/tacc.pdf.

First printed in the manual, *Recognizing and Reporting Animal Abuse: A Veterinarian's Guide*, published by the American Humane Association (AHA), the TACC scales were field-tested by officers with the Massachusetts SPCA and are now used by many other agencies.

With these guidelines in hand, an officer can objectively assess an animal's physical condition and determine the degree of neglect or level of care being provided by the owner. After the officer has evaluated the dog's health, he may simply offer the owner some care guidelines and discuss the potential health risks posed to the animal. But in more extreme cases, the officer might seize an animal, record the TACC score in his report, and submit the evaluation as evidence in a court case.

"The World Without Us"

As if we didn't have enough to worry about, a book the editor just got around to reading worried him enough to recommend it highly, perhaps make it mandatory reading for all humans (as if!). The book is *The World Without Us* by journalist and science writer Alan Weisman. Written in 2007, Weisman suggests that the human footprint on earth has become devastating and he carefully delineates the issues in almost every environmental niche.

What would happen to the earth, Wiseman asks, if humans vanished – due perhaps to some nuclear catastrophe of our own making or an unstoppable virus. After all, our genetic code is only 3.9 percent different than that of a chimpanzee and the recent Ebola outbreak (not to downplay the misery of many thousand deaths in West Africa) has been – hopefully – a wake-up call. Wiseman wrote what Albert Einstein called a "thought experiment." What would happen around the world if humans vanished? What would happen to Florida's polluted and fragile reef system? To Florida's endangered fresh water springs and endangered species? What would happen to exotic animals and plants flooding into the Sentinel State? What would happen to the millions of tons of nuclear and chemical waste?

Alan Weisman's *The World Without Us* is a "thought experiment" that is well worth your time … and perhaps your follow-up action.

Canker Update: Where is Canker now?

By Jamie Yates

Citrus canker has been a serious problem since the last Florida outbreak began in 1995. Numerous residents lost their only tree while commercial growers continue to burn trees on a daily basis due to canker. Canker is still a threat and [Florida must learn to live with it and control or modify it where possible].

It is vital that the citrus industry and Florida residents work together to

prevent further spread of citrus canker. It is not a job that can be done by one person or one company but [only by] everyone coming together. We must learn about citrus canker and apply basic preventative measures to protect the $9 billion dollar Florida citrus industry. To learn more about canker in Florida, go to http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/pp116 and to see the most recent canker finds, please visit the FDACS-DPI website at www.freshfromflorida.com/content/download/9901/135674/decnontamination.pdf.

About the SART Sentinel

The SART Sentinel is an e-mail newsletter prepared monthly by the members of the Florida State Agricultural Response Team. Past issues of the **Sentinel** are archived on the Florida SART Web Site *www.flsart.org*.

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

Editor: Rick Sapp, PhD, Technical Writer, under contract with the Florida Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services, Division of Animal Industry ***rsa5@cox.net***

Associate Editor: Joe Kight, State ESF-17 Coordinator, Florida Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services, Division of Animal Industry **Joe.Kight@freshfromflorida.com**