THE SENTINEL
NEWSLETTER OF THE FLORIDA STATE AGRICULTURAL RESPONSE TEAM

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January 2015

It's here! SART 2015 Planning Meeting

It's here and it's time. 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 cast in concrete. Registration is complete and now it's time to get to know your fellow responders. The meeting begins at 1:00 pm on Monday, January 12th and concludes at noon on Wednesday the 14th. The host hotel is the Embassy Suites, Lake Buena Vista South, 4955 Kyngs Heath Road, Kissimmee, FL 34746: (407) 597-4000**.** For last minute conference related questions contact CMC & Associates (850) 224-7775 or jchapman@cmc-associates.com.

Monday, January 12

1:00	Call to Order – David Perry, FDACS/SART Co-chair Welcome – Stephen Watts, 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

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Stephen Watts is a Certified Emergency Manager with more than 25 years of experience in emergency management, homeland security, fire/rescue and other life safety programs. He is experienced in all phases of comprehensive emergency management including: plan development, procedures and operations; development and delivery of training programs and exercises; management of homeland security related grant programs; coordinating multi-agency responses to a myriad of disasters and emergency events; management and direction of Emergency Operations Centers.

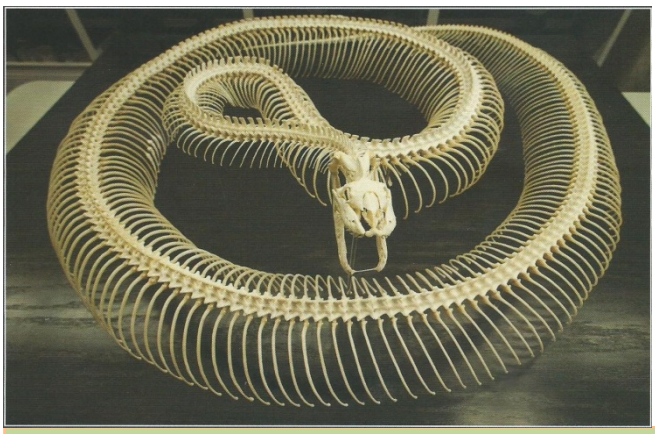
Tuesday, January 13

8:00 Announcements – David Perry, FDACS/SART Co-chair
8:15 Radiological Planning – John Williamson, Administrator, Bureau of Radiation Control, Florida Department of Health
11:30 SART Awards Luncheon
1:30 Radiological Planning with John Williamson, 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" – Denise Feiber, FDACS/DPI
9:30 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. Cris Young, Veterinary Services
Dr. Allan Hogue, Animal Care
Rick Dantzler, Farm Service Agency
Dr. Ty Vannieuwenhoven, U.S. Dept. of HHS
12:00 Adjourn

Watch Where You Step!



Florida Museum of Natural History herpetology researchers spent several months reconstructing the skeleton of a Burmese python that was 17 feet 7 inches long. The animal was brought to the museum after it was captured in Everglades National Park in 2012. When museum researchers performed a necropsy they discovered it weighed 164.5 pounds and contained 87 eggs, both Florida state records for this invasive species.

Native to Southeast Asia and first found in the Everglades in 1979, the Burmese python is one of the deadliest and most competitive predators in South Florida. With no known natural predator, population

estimates for the python range from the thousands to hundreds of thousands.

Photo above by Kristen Grace: View a 2:30 video of this snake being removed from the Everglades in April, 2012: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Nco5y7TQfn0.
Video and capture by U.S. Geological Survey and National Park Service personnel.

Cattle on the Turnpike

At about 2:30 a.m. on December 10, a tractor-trailer carrying 130 calves overturned on the northbound inside shoulder of the Florida Turnpike at mile marker 231 in Osceola County. Spilling out, the calves ran loose on both sides of the highway. Both north- and south-bound lanes were closed for the safety of the responders attempting to herd the calves from the travel lanes and to prevent collisions with the cattle.

Animal control officials from Osceola County helped herd the cattle and the tractor-trailer owner sent another truck to haul the calves away. Responding Florida Highway Patrol (FHP) troopers estimated that half the calves were killed.

The FHP says a second, follow-up crash involving three tractor-trailers and an automobile created additional traffic problems. About an hour following the first accident, a southbound truck failed to slow as it approached stopped traffic and collided with another tractor-trailer. Seven people were hurt, none with life-threatening injuries.

Straying cattle had also caused the north and southbound lanes of the Turnpike to shut down at Yeehaw Junction and US-192 three days earlier.

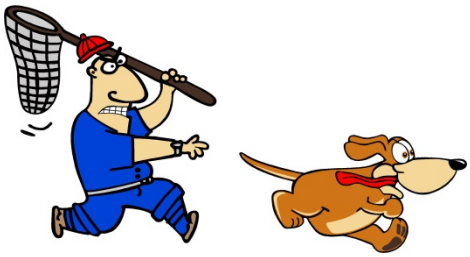
Relief Organizations Need to Think Long-Term

"We need to rethink the way we respond to disasters. We need to rethink the approach that basically says you come in, do good deeds for a little while and then you walk off and leave the problems with the people that are still there. It's easy to go in and do good deeds for a short period of time. What's hard is sustainability."

Glenn Morris, Director, Emerging Pathogens Institute, UF

You can read Julia Glum's summary of her interview with Dr. Morris
in the Fall 2014 issue of *Explore: Research at the University of Florida* online at
http://research.ufl.edu/publications/exploremagazine.html.

Fancy name for "dog catcher" … or not?



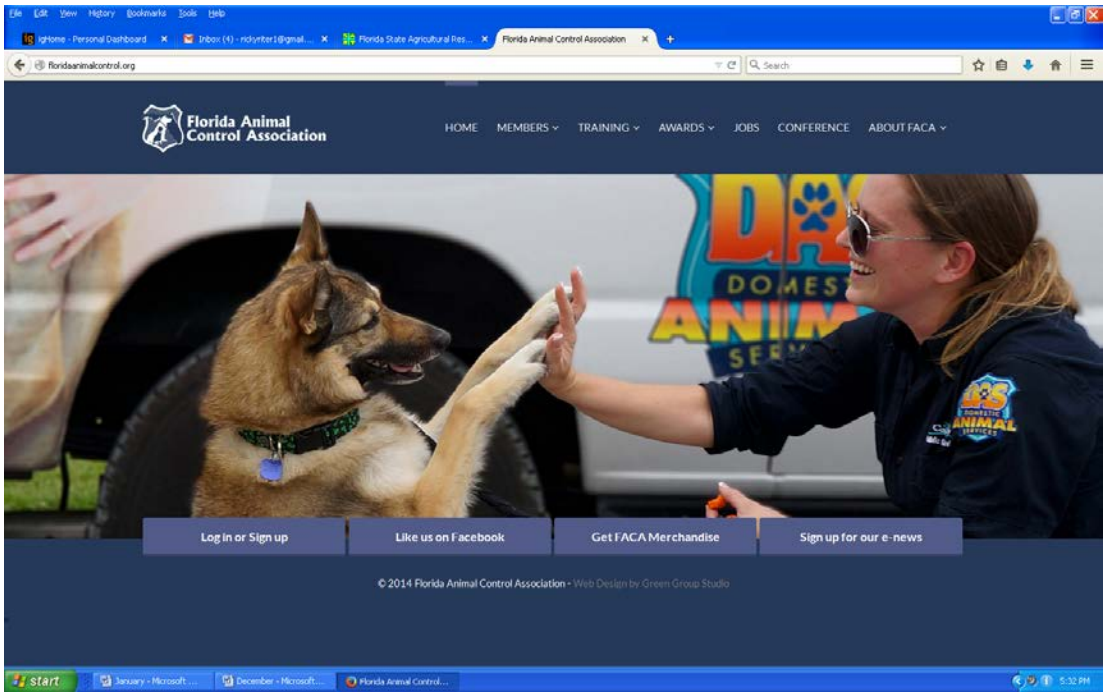
Times change. Vocabulary changes. The recognition of a public need and the subsequent funding to address it evolve over time. When your Editor was growing up in the 1950s and 1960s, animal control specialists were referred to – in a general manner – as "dog catchers." It was not a particularly respectful term, but times change … Today's "dog catcher" is a skilled animal control specialist, a man or woman who is interested both in animal welfare and that difficult intersection of human-animal contact that is often difficult for most pet owners to understand. The animal control task is a mixture of love, dedication, public service and training, and the skills are often practiced in the spotlight of public critique. Not a job for the faint of heart.

The Florida Animal Control Association, Inc., (FACA) was originally organized in 1961 as the Florida State Animal Control Officers Association. In 1984 the Association was reorganized and chartered as the Florida Animal Control Association. In 1994 the purpose statement was changed to include "protection" as well as "control."

FACA's mission is:

- To cooperate with public agencies dealing in animal control and protection.
- To provide assistance to local animal organizations through supporting disaster planning and post-disaster operations.
- To promote justice and equity in enforcement of local and state laws and regulations.

According to its web site at http://floridaanimalcontrol.org/, "Through this mission, [FACA] hopes to improve the methods and standards of the animal control and protection profession while informing the public of the importance of work performed by these professionals.



"A non-profit organization, FACA is composed of individual, organizational, related associate, and corporate members.

Membership fees, voting privileges, and other requirements of membership are delineated in the Constitution and Bylaws of FACA and policy-making is vested in the Board of Directors."

Under the Radar

Update Yourself!

You've moved. You have a new job, a new title. You have a new email address or cell phone number. Congratulations, but look … it's 2015. You probably entered information in the SART database 6 or 8 years ago. Now is the time to visit the SART web site and update your contact information. Go to http://www.flsart.org and enter your username and password to click into the site; click on MySART, then View Member Information and your alphabetical listing. You are a modern, electronically-gifted professional. You know the drill here. Please update now. Your SART partners are counting on you!

Risk and Crisis Communication: When Things Go Wrong

By Dr. Ricky Telg

Dr. Ricky Telg, professor, Dept. of Agricultural Education/Communication, FL Cooperative Extension Service, IFAS, UF

No matter how careful and safety-conscious an organization is, if it's long-lived enough, some crisis or another will occur sometime in the life of the organization. When an agricultural organization fails to plan for potential disaster, the outcome can be severe — even tragic. Think about some crisis situations that could happen in an agricultural setting. Did these come to mind?

- Bacterial pathogen resulting in a food recall
- Food contamination
- Chemical run-off
- Pesticide poisoning
- Soil erosion and crop loss
- Weather catastrophes
- Disease

You name the bad luck scenario, and it *could* happen. And yet many agricultural organizations operate without a plan for what they will do when things go wrong. Still more organizations have no plan for communication during a crisis.

Why are organizations not prepared for things to go wrong? Being prepared for a crisis ahead of time will help your

organization get through the rough times when things go wrong. And part of that overall crisis plan should be the integration of crisis communication. In this publication, we will examine an extremely important aspect of communication practice: crisis and risk communication.

Read Dr. Telg's complete analysis at http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/wc093. Telg is professor and Director, Center for Public Issues Communication, Dept. of Agricultural Education and Communication, Florida Cooperative Extension Service, IFAS/UF. This document is WC093 was originally published in July 2010 and reviewed in September 2013.

The Florida Strawberry Industry

In December, FDACS launched a new "Fresh From Florida" marketing campaign that features Florida strawberries, tomatoes and sweet corn. To promote these domestic edibles FDACS leased billboards in Tampa, Orlando, Jacksonville, Gainesville, Boynton Beach and Tallahassee. The strawberry billboards will remain visible through February, followed by tomatoes and sweet corn.

Florida Commissioner of Agriculture Adam Putnam promotes Florida strawberries in Plant City and poses with the 2013 Florida Strawberry Festival Queen and Court. From left: Maddy Keene, First Maid Ericka Lott, Queen Kelsey Fry, Putnam, Madison Astin and Jamee Townsend.

Agriculture Commissioner Adam Putnam said the campaign will increase awareness about seasonal availability of Florida products. Last year, FDACS launched the first-ever statewide TV marketing campaign to highlight "Fresh From Florida" produce, seafood and more. The ads featured new recipes that consumers can use to make quick, healthy meals for themselves and their families.

Strawberry Production Stats

According to a United Nations report, world strawberry production has exceeded 4 million tons since 2007. In 2010, 28 percent of total production came from the U.S., the largest reported producer. Other major strawberry producing countries are Turkey, Spain, Egypt, Korea, Mexico and Poland.

In 2012 the National Agricultural Statistics Service reported U.S. strawberry production of about 27.7 million cwt (1 cwt = 100 pounds) from 49,300 acres. This translated to about $2.4 in sales.

California (25.5 million cwt) produces 92 percent of the strawberries in the U.S., followed by Florida (2.0 cwt) and Oregon (0.2 cwt).

Strawberry Trends

According to a 2012 report from UF's IFAS, the Florida Strawberry Growers Association says production is declining in Florida and is now below 10,000 acres. "The change is due mostly to Mexico competition and oversupply …. In February 2012, strawberry retail prices collapsed as Mexican strawberries poured into the market. In the coming years, strawberry production in Mexico, which has the same production window as Florida, will continue to increase, which will pose further challenges to Florida strawberry industry.

As U.S. exports stagnate while imports increase quickly, the net export has dropped dramatically (72 percent) during the last few years since it peaked at 126 million pounds in 2008 (most shipping to Canada). The U.S. Census Bureau data showed that U.S. net export in 2011 was 36 million pounds, down 56 percent over the previous year. The U.S. will turn into a net importer of strawberries in the near future if the current trend continues.

http://www.fred.ifas.ufl.edu/pdf/webinar/Strawberry.pdf

Imagining the end; preparing for the recovery

As a professional in response and recovery you plan for situations from hurricanes to droughts. Here's a scenario from Cormac McCarthy's 2006 dystopian novel *The Road* that begs for study. In the novel, something immense, totally unexpected seems to have happened with sudden consequences but the man takes immediate, best-possible action.

> The clocks stopped at 1:17. A long shear of light and then a series of low concussions. He got up and went to the window. What is it? She said. He didnt answer. He went into the bathroom and threw the lightswitch but the power was already gone. A dull rose glow in the windowglass. He dropped to one knee and raised the lever to stop the tub and then turned on both taps as far as they would go. She was standing in the doorway in her nightwear, clutching the jamb, cradling her belly in one hand. What is it? She said. What is happening?
> I don't know.
> Why are you taking a bath?
> I'm not.

Florida SARC Reports on 2014

Created in cooperation with SART, FDACS, UF and other concerned individuals and agencies to streamline the process of responding to a small animal emergency, the Florida State Animal Response Coalition (www.flsarc.org) notes that 2014 was a great year.

Program highlights from 2014

With more than 1300 trained volunteers, SARC has deployed more than 500 people to help other agencies or to participate in training exercises and workshops.

SARC presented its Awareness Level Small Animal Emergency Sheltering training a dozen times in Florida. Hundreds of students took the first step to becoming competent animal disaster responders. Several students traveled from other states, with the goal of taking SARC practices and protocols back to their communities.

SARC hosted a second Train the Trainer workshop. The registration was filled and with a standby list within days of posting. We now have more than 50 instructors trained in the course material, plus teaching methods to ensure high quality, practical and "real world" training.

SARC volunteers joined 14 other agencies in the Lee County Disaster Evacuation and Decontamination workshop. During this "full-scale" drill, team members put personal disaster response plans into action. Volunteers remained on site, sleeping in tents, personal vehicles or campers. They were self-sustaining with food and water.

Dozens of SARC member/volunteers deployed around the U.S., providing thousands of hours of personal time to care for animals.

Ahead in 2015

The Operations Level Small Animal Emergency Sheltering course is complete and will be tested in January. Once the evaluation process is complete, SARC will roll out pilot classes.

SARC is also scheduling Awareness Level Small Animal Emergency Sheltering classes for 2015.

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.

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