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2009 SART Conference



View of The Holiday Inn Oceanfront Resort, Cocoa Beach, Florida.

Florida's 2009 SART Conference kicks off at 1:00 pm Wednesday March 25, 2009 and ends at Noon Friday at the Holiday Inn Oceanfront Resort, Cocoa Beach www.hicocoabeachhotelsite.com/. The theme for the Conference is "Home, Ranch and Farm – Working Together Works!"

A link to registration and complete details about the conference agenda is available near the top of the home page for the SART web site at www.flsart.org.

2009 SART Conference: Tentative Agenda-At-A-Glance

Wednesday Morning

Registration (and possible AR-151 Course "Understanding the Dangers of Agroterrorism" – WIFSS)

Wednesday Afternoon

- 1:00 Welcome – Brevard County
FL SART “Where are we?”
- 1:30 FACA, a SART partner
- 2:15 ESF 11, USDA (FEMA)
- 3:30 Citizen Corps (DHS), animal responders
- 4:15 DOACS, agro-terrorism



Thursday Morning

- 8:00 Agriculture economic impact
- 9:00 Livestock industries concerns
- 10:30 Bio-security on the farm
- 11:30 Awards luncheon

Thursday Afternoon

- 1:00 County ESF 17 – panel discussion
- 2:00 Pet-friendly sheltering
- 3:30 Florida VET Corps “How to use it.”
- 4:30 Using SART/CART – panel discussion



Friday Morning

- 8:00 The honey bee crisis: an update
- 8:30 USAR and animals
- 9:00 HASMAT training
- Noon Conference Adjourns

Alachua County Station 16 Fire Rescue Technical Rescue trains with the UF VETS Technical Rescue Team in 2008. Here, they learn to connect an Anderson Sling. (John Haven photo)

A Florida “green hotel” with a one-palm designation, the Holiday Inn Oceanfront Resort – Cocoa Beach, offers a conference rate of \$99 single/double. The hotel is located at 1300 N Atlantic Avenue in Cocoa Beach. By special arrangement, this rate is available three days prior to and following the conference for those who wish to extend or perhaps begin a family vacation. To make hotel reservations, call 800-206-2747 or (321) 783-2271. Ask for “Florida SART Conference” to get the conference rate. The cut-off date for reservations is February 24, 2009.

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Advisory Board Minutes Posted

Minutes of the December 3rd SART Advisory Board meeting held at the new USDA offices in Gainesville are now posted in the member area of the Florida SART web site at www.flsart.org/SART/login.

Highlights of the meeting:

- A. SART member survey results (Tim Manning, Joan Dusky)
- B. 2009-2010 SART funding (Art Johnstone)
- C. FDACS initiatives: meeting with county emergency planners, mobile animal response equipment caches and tentative June 2009 training exercise (Joe Kight)
- D. Updated agenda for March 2009 SART Conference (Joe Kight)
- E. Texas' Emergency Response Structure and 2008's hurricanes (Liz Serca)



Advisory Board meetings are ideal for SART Super Heroes.

Accompanying the Minutes is a PowerPoint presentation prepared by Liz Serca, Executive Director of the Texas State Animal Resource Team (TXSART). Liz' presentation describes the structure of the Texas state response community (which is quite different from Florida's) and discusses the 2008 Hurricane Season during which Texas coped with Dolly, Edouard, Gustav and Ike. (Liz has deleted the pictures so that this interesting and informative presentation loads rapidly.)

Liz Serca can be reached at the Texas State Animal Resource Team (TXSART), 8104 Exchange Dr., Austin, TX 78754 (512) 452-4224 eserca@tvma.org. The web site is www.txsart.org.

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Animals and Airplanes

Animals and airplanes do not mix unless the animals are safely and comfortably caged inside. So what are the chances that a bird will hit your airplane and cause damage that is serious enough to force an emergency landing? Las Vegas odds-makers probably would not bet on this one, but here are a few facts from a recent USDA-APHIS newsletter:

1. Wildlife strikes cost the airline industry approximately \$625 million per year and result in nearly 600,000 hours of aircraft downtime.
2. From January through June 2008, more than 3,000 bird strikes were reported in the U.S. and Canada.
3. Approximately 82,000 wildlife-aircraft strikes have been documented since 1990.



Damage to nose of jet airplane caused by bird strike. (USDA-APHIS photo)

APHIS reported the following recent examples:

June 20: A 747 bound for China dumped \$100,000 worth of fuel and made an emergency landing in Chicago after ingesting a red-tailed hawk on take-off.

September 21: A Delta Airlines 767 made an emergency landing in Orlando after striking several wood storks on takeoff.

September 23: A Northwest Airlines flight from Little Rock was forced to make an emergency landing after hitting a flock of starlings on takeoff.

October 27: A Delta Airlines MD-90 aborted takeoff

after ingesting a large bird into the right engine in Salt Lake City.

(And lest you think it is only birds that give airplanes fits, your *Sentinel* Editor personally knows of a flight out of Gainesville that struck a whitetail deer on take-off! The airplane continued to its destination.)

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Editor's Note: Climate Changes

In the October 2008 issue of the *SART Sentinel*, we quoted Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission Partnership Coordinator Doug Parsons in the brief "Climate Change and Wildlife Planning." In so doing, we failed to fully attribute his article "Adapting to Climate Change in Florida," which appeared in the Fall, 2008 issue of *Wildlife Professional* (pages 59-61). The quote we used was this:

"Predicted rise in sea level will affect nearly all ecosystems in [Florida]. Based on models, substantial portions of the Everglades could be flooded by 2060, which could severely affect species such as the already critically endangered Florida panther and the snail kite, which are found nowhere else in North America. May areas will be directly affected and others will feel the indirect impact of changing ecosystems and migrating species as they adjust to a possible dynamic and receding coastline. Essentially all ecosystems will be affected by climate change, either directly or indirectly, as both flora and fauna migrate northward."



This snail kite has its act together!
(FWC photo by Boyd Thompson)

Doug Parsons can be reached through the Florida Wildlife Legacy Initiative/Office of Policy and Stakeholder Coordination, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, 620 S. Meridian St., Tallahassee, FL 32399-1600, (850) 488-8792 <http://myfwc.com/wildlifelegacy>. For more information about what FWC is doing on climate change, contact him at Doug.Parsons@MyFWC.com.

Editor's Comment: SART's charter defines it as a multi-agency coordinating committee dedicated to "all-hazard disaster preparedness, planning, response and recovery for the animal and agriculture sectors in Florida." Thus most of the effort is directed either to plant and animal agriculture or to – following passage of the PETS Act – the pet and companion animal sector. Nevertheless, sea-level

rise, global warming, wildfires, hurricanes, acts of terrorism and other disasters, not to mention eco-system change caused by expanding suburbs and human infrastructural development, have immediate and dramatic effects on wild and natural Florida. And so as we work toward fulfilling SART's mission, it is worth taking a few moments to consider what kind of state we wish to bequeath to our children.

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Managing Spontaneous Volunteers in Times of Disaster The Synergy of Structure and Good Intentions

A tornado whips up out of nowhere or a new virus spreads swiftly through the local pet community....

"Spontaneous, unaffiliated volunteers – our neighbors and ordinary citizens – often arrive on-site at a disaster ready to help. Yet because they are not associated with any part of the existing emergency management response system, their offers of help are often underutilized and even problematic to professional responders. The paradox is clear: people's willingness to volunteer versus the system's capacity to utilize them effectively."



After Katrina, volunteers flooded New Orleans. At left, a group from Babson College, Babson Park, Mass. At right Hands-of-Hope volunteers from Eternal Love Missions, Inc. Were they and others trained and protected?



Want more information and ideas? The full-court-press treatment is available through the web site of the National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster web site at www.nvoad.org. This and other documents from the NVOAD group lay a broad and comprehensive framework for planning for such topics as the rush of Good Samaritans following a disaster, items as simple as collecting their contact information to the possibility of an insurance claim by an unaffiliated volunteer. Remember that effective mitigation of a disaster begins long before it looms and this document is excellent for that purpose.

(Caution: Instead of *talking* to someone, this recently revised document urges one to “coordinate and liaise;” instead of *put together* it is “prepare to establish;” instead of *suggest*, it is “emphasize the importance.” Although the tone is vague, bureaucratic, possessive and laced with jargon, it is nevertheless helpful as a basis for thinking about the subject – dealing with America’s wonderful volunteer spirit in an organized fashion – the “spontaneous volunteer” – fitting him or her into a response or recovery situation safely and effectively.)

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Horses, Hamsters & Hard Times

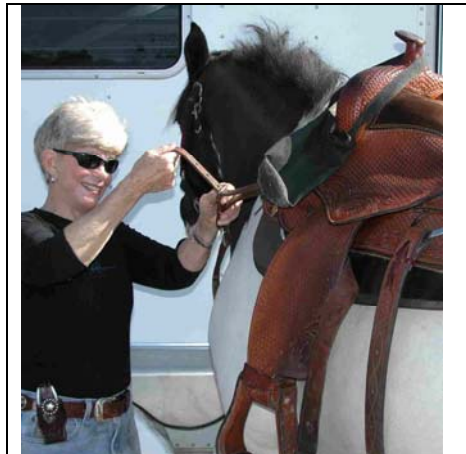
Reno, NV (UPI – Dec. 3) Domestic horses are being abandoned at an increasing rate, probably because of difficult economic times. Turned loose, tame horses either starve or are killed by predators, traffic or truly wild horses. Abandoned horses are sold at livestock auctions and may thus become saddle horses again or may be shipped to slaughter in Canada or Mexico; by law, US slaughterhouses may not accept horses, even those that are old, sick and/or abandoned. www.upi.com/Top_News/2008/12/01/Domestic_horses_being_abandoned/UPI-19041228173240/

Gainesville, FL (Independent Florida Alligator – Dec. 9) A difficult economy and the rising cost of feed is forcing some horse owners choose between feeding their horse or their children.

Andrea Asuaje quotes Marion County Animal Services director Jillian Lancon saying that her office takes two to three calls a week now, and that there is definitely a problem. Lancon’s office has received reports of numerous feral horses in the 383,000-acre Ocala National Forest.

www.alligator.org/articles/2008/12/09/news/local/081208_horses.txt

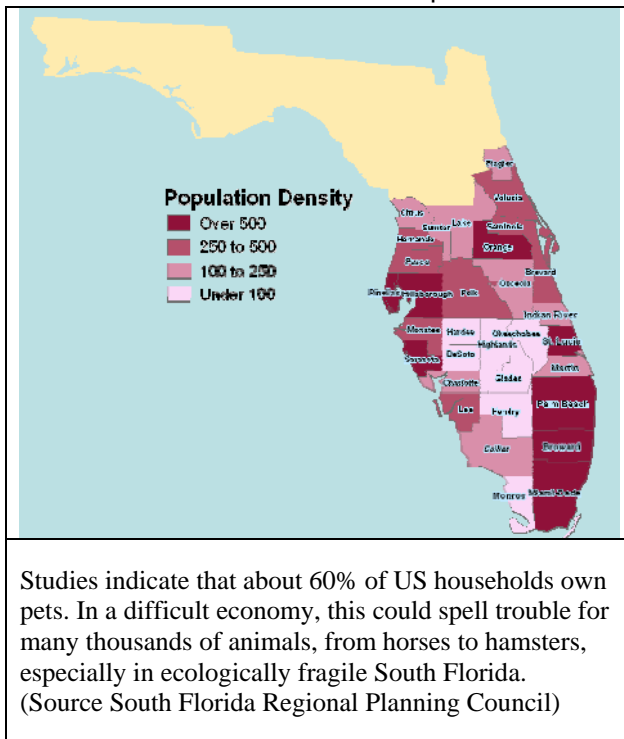
Across the US (Time Magazine – May 28) Pat Dawson’s story says horse abandonment has become epidemic in the recent flood of property foreclosures and disastrous economic circumstances wherein food and fuel have cycled higher in



SART Training Module “Introducing Florida’s Livestock & Horse Industries” estimated 1/3-million horses in Florida. (Rick Sapp photo: February 2007 www.flsart.org/library/index.htm)

price. Among others, he quotes Brent Glover of Idaho's Orphan Acres saying that the phone rings constantly; and Julie DeMuesy of Colorado's Dreamcatchers Equine Sanctuary saying that everyone was "stressed to the max."

Marion County (Local6.com – May 30) Nearly 120 emaciated horses, donkeys and ponies were found on a Ft. McCoy ranch. Inspected by animal services officers, the animals had apparently suffered months of neglect at the hands of animal rescuers who may simply have been overwhelmed by the number of animals, the volume of food and the extent of care required.



Shelly Long, Event Director at Florida Agricultural Center and Horse Park Authority, Ocala, says they have not been contacted about abandoned horses – which they could not, in any case, accept – but they have heard stories about horses locked in trailers and abandoned in public places.

What do you do with an animal you can no longer care for? Long suggests calling friends and neighbors; and going on-line to research horse and riding clubs or pet services. The best possible scenario is to find the animal a new home. And the worst possible scenario? Simply abandoning it to its fate which will certainly be starvation or death in traffic. As the Florida economy tightens and with an

estimated animal population of approximately two per three human inhabitants, the abandonment of animals will unfortunately become a more significant problem.

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'GVFI – Monitoring the Peril of Pandemic

A recent telecast on CNN's *Planet in Peril* introduced the Global Viral Forecasting Initiative or GVFI (<http://gvfi.org/>), a pandemic early warning system which monitors the spillover of novel infectious agents from animals to humans.



This central African is butchering a monkey – “bush meat” – to feed a family. It is from such wild and unregulated sources that HIV and other infectious agents spread to humans. (Photo gvfi.org)

GVFI is the brain-child of Nathan Wolfe, a professor of human biology at Stanford. Under Wolfe’s direction, GVFI coordinates the activities of more than 100 scientists and staff and has active research and public health projects from China to Gabon.

According to gvfi.org, global disease control fails because it only responds to epidemics after they have already spread globally, such as HIV. Today, 25 years into this pandemic, hundreds of millions of people have suffered and died. Supported by a multitude of public and private grants, GVFI has “shown that most major diseases of humanity originated in animals and that exposure to wild and domestic animals leads to continuous spillovers of novel agents into humans.”

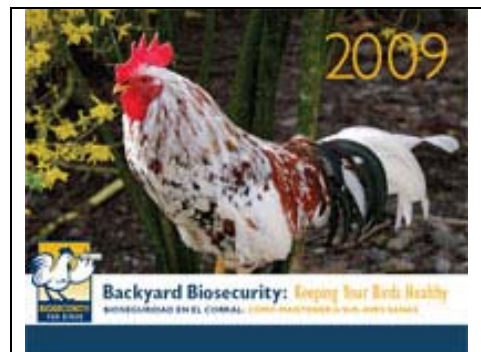
Thus, GVFI monitors humans exposed to animals to develop the first global early warning system to prevent novel pandemics. This includes field surveillance, identification and classification of viruses and other agents.

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APHIS Bird Calendar (Editor says, “I’ve got mine!”)

With colorful photos of a variety of pet birds and game birds, a **free** calendar from USDA-APHIS is an excellent way to raise awareness about avian diseases such as avian influenza (AI) and exotic Newcastle disease (END). Easy-to-read biosecurity information helps educate bird owners about biosecurity precautions.

APHIS believes that reaching out to backyard producers, especially non-commercial poultry and bird owners, is extremely important, and the calendar seeks to educate bird enthusiasts about practical steps they can take to prevent the spread of infectious poultry diseases. Previous calendars have been extremely well-received. In 2007, nearly 100,000 were distributed.



Great pictures – full color – and it’s free!

Calendars can be ordered on-line at APHIS' *Biosecurity for Birds* web site: <http://healthybirds.aphis.usda.gov>. (Note: Click "Yes" on any security warnings that may appear on your screen. This will not cause any harm to your computer.)

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About the SART Sentinel

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The SART SENTINEL is an E-mail newsletter prepared monthly by Rick Sapp and 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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