

Alabama Emergency Management Agency Summer 2009 Newsletter

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AMAS exercise by Yasamie Richardson



Imagine working until 10:30PM or 11:00PM to accomplish demanding and challenging tasks. When the challenges have concluded you are not headed home to get in your bed, rather you are sleeping in a tent in late May in Tuscaloosa County with the temperature in the upper 90s. Then you add one more challenge, fighting off mosquitoes and the possibility of snakes lurking near your tent. That was only one portion of life at the May 27-29 Mutual Aid Exercise at the Alabama Fire College in Tuscaloosa.

The exercise validated the readiness status of 7 teams in the Alabama Mutual Aid System. The teams were selected because they have not demonstrated their ability through deploying to an actual disaster. If you were on the campus of the Fire College during late May, you would not have known the events were only simulated. On the first day the Alabama Department of Public Safety flew in one of their rescue helicopters to assist

the teams with their search and rescue efforts. You could also see a separate rescue effort underway across the campus; although mannequins were used the effort exerted by the teams made the operation seem very real. In addition to the rescue efforts, the teams performed other drills that included structural collapse and shoring, lifting and moving, cutting and breaching, grid and search missions.

Despite the mosquito and snake warning teams were informed prior to arrival they would have to be self-sufficient. That meant camping outside, providing your teams' meals and having a place to shower and bathe if you chose to do so. The concept of the drill beyond testing their capabilities was to ensure the teams are not dependent on the city or county they are coming to assist during a disaster.

The state incident management team managed the flow of resources and teams and also assigned tasks to the teams. The AEMA

Communication team played a dual role in the exercise; one as the interoperable communication center and secondly as the communication leader with the IMT. They used the state communication vehicle for this effort.

Plans are being made for Alabama Emergency Management Agency to utilize the Alabama Fire College for a future exercises. The seven teams who participated in the AMAS exercise are: Florence Heavy 2, Birmingham Medium 3, Moody Medium 10, Mountain Brook Medium 12, Montgomery Heavy 7, Homewood Medium 4, and Vestavia Medium 5. The exercise was funded by the Alabama Department of Homeland Security.



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For the love of it

When they finish their work at AEMA Les Brown and Wes Mallery serve their community. They are both a part of the K9 Search and Recovery Team at Southeast Shelby County Rescue. Les is the Captain and Director.

The K9 Team is made up of four dogs and their handlers. The remaining rescue team members train in search disciplines such as cave rescue, high angle rescue, swift water, confined space, urban and wilderness search. They all have full time jobs including nursing assistant, housing manager, fire fighters, and AEMA employees. Every one of these people involve themselves in rescue operations because they care.

In addition, they train on their own time and sometimes at their own expense. They use classes that are available online through the National Association of Search and Rescue and through the Alabama Fire College.



(left to right) Wes Mallery, Ryan Tallie, Wanda Kirkland with K9 Alex, Frances Jones with K9 Luke, Rena Cole, Les Brown with K9 Daisey, Balinda Hanscom, Amanda Moon with K9 Monkey, and Chief Mark Bray. Team members not present are Kyle Jordon, Steven Isbell, Terry Miller, Ben Hoffsteter, Jim Darmouth, Kelly Saunders, Ethan Isbell, Carl Brown, Jason Ingram, Katie Brown and Nick Shoggen.



Les Brown and his K9 partner, Alex, went to Perry, Florida, to a certification seminar in the spring. The Perry, FL event was sponsored by the North American Police Working Dog Association. Les and Alex were both certified in Human Remains Detection by a national organization.

The training has paid off for law enforcement and for families who need to know what happened to a loved one. Alex has been involved in the location of two bodies in the last couple of months.

Southeast Shelby County Rescue provides EMS services over 270 square miles and seven fire districts. The search teams, including K9, have been involved in searches in a variety of counties.

The organization has been fortunate to get some funding and equipment but they don't really have a budget. Because they are not a fire department they are not eligible for Fire Grant funding.

According to Les, "Bill Atchison has been really great in advising me in which direction we need to go as far as training and funding is concerned." He also commented that Bill Filter, Don Greene, and Sandra Lucas have been good resources for information and encouragement.

People who do something just for the love of it have a lot to give. Les and his team at the Southeast Shelby County Rescue give themselves to their community.



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New County Directors

Susan Carpenter returns in Covington County

Ronnie Adair, Mobile County

Kathy Russell, Lee County

William Alexander, Russell County

Bob Franklin, Deputy Director, Russell County

Retired County Directors

Walt Dickerson, Director of Mobile County Emergency Management Agency retired as Director of Mobile County Emergency Management on July 1, 2009. He became the Director of Emergency Management in May 2005 after spending seven years as the agency's Director of Plans and Operations.

He will remain in the Mobile area and has opened his own company in the emergency management field, which will perform tasks dealing with emergency disaster planning, operations, response, preparedness and mitigation.



Deedie Matthews retired as EMA Director in Lee County in March.

County Briefs

Good Work Jackson County!

Victor Manning worked with two Scottsboro High School Students regarding preparation for CERT for an Alabama Health Occupations Students of America (HOSA) competition. The Scottsboro students won first in State!

Randolph County has a new EOC. Open house was held on Friday March 6.



Eric Jones, Elmore County EMA, and his family welcomed baby Hannah on July 1



Monique Smith, Autauga County EMA, got to bring baby Daeja home at long last.

Dragonslayer

The Poarch Creek Nation was the site of a historic exercise this spring. The exercise included the Poarch Creek responders, the Alabama National Guard and State responders.



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The 2009 Conference theme was the **Logistics of Disaster Response**. We hope all who attended learned something new!



Awards

2009 Director's Awards

Phyllis Little
Ken Gibson
Allen Kniphfer

Presidents Award

Mike Evans



Pat Neuhauser Spirit of EMA Award

Deborah Gaither from Gadsden/Etowah County

Volunteer of the Year

Tom Cash



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Mark your calendar

AAEM Certification packages for the next conference will need to be received by the certification committee before close of business on September 25

AEEMA—Alabama's Coordinating Agency for disaster, response, recovery, and preparedness

Certification

Advanced Level Emergency Manager

Jack Busby	Mobile Fire & Rescue
Amanda Capps	American Red Cross
Colin David Cauble	Plano TX
Marieke R. Fendley	AEEMA
John H. Griscom Jr.	Jefferson Co. EMA
Debra Hughes	AEEMA
Michael James Kelly Jr.	Port Royal, SC
Robert Mann	Auburn University
Robert D. Marsh	Dale County EMA
Laurissa Jones Millican	AEEMA
Jimmy Mills	Marion Co. EMA
Kerri Minor	AEEMA
Mary Moore	Lee County EMA
J. Frank Price	AEEMA
Jon W. Sandburg	FEMA
Julie Schoening	American Red Cross
Paul R. Smith	Mobile Fire & Rescue
Christopher Tate	Lee Co. EMA
Mike D. Thoen	Las Vegas NV

Intermediate Level Emergency Manager

Lydia A. Brooks	AEEMA
Dan L. Foy	Valley, AL
Robert B. Smith	Autauga County EMA
Paige Soehren	Huntsville/Madison County EMA

Basic Level Emergency Manager

Debbie Avery	Hackleburg, AL
Rachel Cordes	Autauga County Sheriff's Office
Kathy A. Hornsby	Chambers County EMA
Rita Weeks	Morgan County EMA

Recertified

Don Hartley
Michael Johnson



2009-2010

Board of Directors

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Secretary

Mindy Nash, Shelby

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Jessica Tomlin-Seabrook, Crenshaw

District 3 Director

Wayne Hayes, Bibb

District 4 Director

Eric Jones, Elmore

District 5 Director

Scott Porter, Fayette

District 6 Director

Phyllis Little, Cullman

District 7 Director

Deborah Gaither, Gadsden/Etowah

District 8 Director

Don Hartley, AEEMA



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Counties receiving PA

Baldwin, Bullock, Butler, Choctaw, Clarke, Coffee, Covington, Crenshaw, Cullman, Dale, Dallas, DeKalb, Elmore, Geneva, Henry, Houston, Jackson, Jefferson, Lamar, Marengo, Marshall, Perry, Russell, Washington, and Wilcox Counties.

Counties receiving PA and IA

Autauga, Bullock, Covington, Elmore, Geneva, Houston and Montgomery Counties

All counties in the State of Alabama are eligible to apply for assistance under the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program



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Recent visitors to the SEOC include (clockwise from top left) PIOs from State Agencies; Romanian Fire and Emergency Management representatives; Col. Kris Beasley, Commander of the 42nd Air Base Wing, Maxwell-Gunter Air Force Base; Coast Guard Rear Admiral Mary Landry and members of her staff.



AEMA—Alabama's Coordinating Agency for disaster, response, recovery, and preparedness



This is what the SEOC looked like when it snowed in March.



Col. J. Christopher Murphy, Director of the Department of Public Safety, and AEMA Director Brock Long, recently presented certificates of appreciation to Joe McClellan and Chance Corbett for instructing ICS classes at the State Trooper Academy.

Note of interest!

The Alabama Emergency Management Agency Emergency Operations Center was recently cited as a success story of Energy Efficiency in Alabama.

Representative Greg Wren (District 75) informed House Energy Committee members about SEOC efforts that will result in a reduction of 45% energy use.

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Department of Transportation employees took an ICS course in Montgomery in March.



Advanced PIO Class, Emmitsburg, MD
Rita Smith, Lee County EMA,
front row right side in orange shirt

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

- September 3
Alabama Be Ready Day
in Florence
- October 21
Fall Severe Weather
Awareness Day
- November 16-20
Winter Weather
Awareness Week



(left) Planning
Process Workshop

Internal Training Schedule

As part of the Professional Development series of AEMA's Internal Training Program we are pleased to announce the upcoming schedule.

If you are interested in attending please notify Kyle Eskridge or Judy Woods for registration.

Hazard Mitigation Assistance Briefing

Wednesday, August 12
1:30 until 2:30 pm
Training/Media Room

Recovery Section Overview

Wednesday, August 26
1:30 until 2:30 pm
Training/Media Room

Future Training

G290 Basic Public Information Officer Course

August 18-20
AEMA, Clanton, Alabama
To register contact
Kyle Eskridge or Judy Woods
kyle.eskridge@ema.alabama.gov
judy.woods@ema.alabama.gov
205-280-2468

ICS 100/200/700/800

Sumter County
August 20-24
Contact Kyle Eskridge for
more information.

ICS 300/400 Class

December 7-10, 2009
Public Safety Training
Academy, Huntsville
To register contact
Don Deschaine
don.deschaine@hsvcity.com
Huntsville Fire/Rescue,
Training Division
256-851-4049



Storm Spotter training
for AEMA Staff



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Mitigation Office Contacts

Call (205)280-2297

Debbie Peery

Senior Hazard Mitigation Officer

Kelli B. Alexander

Senior Planner

Lydia Brooks

PEDS

Zakiya Darby, Planner

Robert Baylis, Planner

Janice Doucet, Planner

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Mitigation is the effort to reduce loss of life and property by lessening the impact of disasters. Mitigation efforts provide value to the American people by (1) creating safer communities by reducing loss of life and property, (2) enabling individuals to recover more rapidly from flood and other disasters, and (3) lessening the financial impact on the Treasury, States, Tribes, and communities.

from www.fema.gov



Culverts are an everyday sight in communities all over Alabama. It should never be taken for granted because an inadequate drainage system can be disastrous. Hazard Mitigation Assistance programs present the opportunity to reduce risk to communities resulting from drainage problems.

This picture is one of a series taken of projects in Red Bay, Alabama. The Franklin County Hazard Mitigation Plan stated that there were areas in Red Bay that were prone to flooding.

Through the HMA program the city was approved for HMGP funding to mitigate three of the flood prone locations.

Pipe sizes were increased and repairs and improvements were made to the culverts. The projects have been completed and have been proven successful in mitigating the flooding of the location.

Mitigation works!



pictured above: (L & R) Regional Planning Commission representatives, Kenneth Brooks and Carole Jo Turbyfill wrote the grant and managed the project. (Center) Red Bay Mayor Bobby Forsythe.

AEMA and FEMA representatives have recently been involved in HMGP briefings around the state. Information was presented about both disaster and non-disaster grants. There will be disaster-based funds available due to the three disasters that have been declared in Alabama.

Presenters had several quick points.



- Look at your currently approved plans for projects
- Send in Letters of Intent to AEMA **now** so that mitigation planners will know to expect your application
- There are deadlines for sending full applications to AEMA for review before the FEMA deadline
 - October 15 for non-disaster grants
 - December 31 for disaster-based grants
- All information is available on the AEMA website (www.ema.alabama.gov)
- Contact the AEMA Mitigation office if you have any questions.



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In Memory

Bill Klein, a former CSEPP Planner here at AEMA passed away on June 16. Bill was the CSEPP Program Manager from its beginning.

After retiring from the Air Force he continued to serve his state with the Emergency Management Agency until retiring to care for his wife. He was a longtime participant and supporter of the Kairos Prison Ministry. He was an avid golfer, and enjoyed camping and traveling and spending time with his family and friends.

Sam Guerrerra described him like this, "Bill was one of those rare people that always had a smile on his face and a kind word to say about everyone." What better word can one say?

Changes at AEMA

Benjie Abbott was named Recovery Section Chief

Fred Springall was named IT Section Chief

John Dennis started July 16 as an EM Planner in PA



AEMA employees are participating in Health Screenings offered through the State Employees Insurance Program.

AEMA Team Challenge

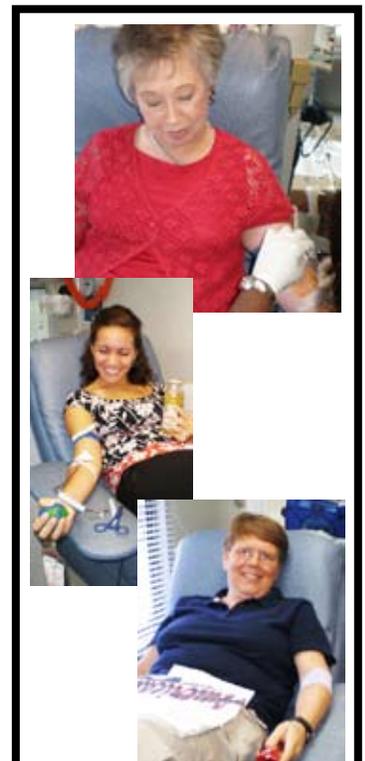


Efforts to be fit are never finished. Here are some preliminary standings. It is not over until the awards are presented.

43 have actually been participating
26 in the Active Lifestyle Program
2 in the Presidential Performance Program
15 in the Presidential Champions Program

- Group Rankings
- 1 Walkie Talkies
 - 2 Chosen Few
 - 3 Prep-Pacers
 - 4 MegaHurtz

Congratulations to **Sheldon Hutcherson**. He received the President's Champions Bronze Medal. He was enrolled in this program before the AEMA challenge started. He is also the top walker in the current challenge!



AEMA staff gave 24 pints of blood in the August 6 Blood Drive!

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Sandra Lucas traveled to Tiawan in June. She spoke and presented a paper on the activities of Alabama Emergency Management Agency.



July

5 Stanley
8 Zakiya
9 Dan
16 La'Tonya
24 Sandy
25 Terry D
26 Craig
31 Linda

Birthdays!



August

1 Diane
1 Debbie
2 Danyula
2 Lauree
4 Darrand
9 Nell
10 Phyllis
16 Charles
22 Jayne
23 Patrick T
29 Jimmy

October

1 Sherry
1 Kerri
15 Sam
20 Earl
20 Missy
23 Lesley
26 Frank P
30 Nancy
31 Wes M

September

2 Don
2 Michelle
2 Pete
2 Tim
3 Tony
10 Norma
10 Joe
11 Sheldon
19 Larry P
23 Valarie H

November

3 Michael J
4 Jamice
6 Peggy
7 Chris
11 Cherie
11 Livingston
18 Leigh
21 Sharon
25 Kelli
30 Angie S



Lydia Brooks, AEMA Financial and Close-out Specialist in the Preparedness Section, received her certification as a Federal Grants Manager through MCI (Management Concepts). She had to take six grants management courses. Congratulations, Lydia!



Debra Hughes and Kerri Minor were busy at the JFO during the AAEM Conference. Benjie Abbott honored them for earning their certifications as Advanced Level Emergency Managers.



AEMA depends on ASAs to keep things going. This spring we had the opportunity to honor them with a reception they did not have to arrange!



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Alabama has experienced three declared disasters in the last few months. In fact there are currently five open disasters beginning with Ike and Gustav. Thanks to the efforts of local emergency managers, residents, AEMA staff and FEMA employees recovery dollars are flowing into the state. We especially appreciate the work done by local emergency managers to advocate for their communities.

AEMA recognizes that all disasters are local in nature and that we are one part of a larger team consisting of local, state and federal partners. Collectively, we must work to identify gaps in our response and preparedness efforts and ultimately ensure that Alabama builds greater emergency management capability.

Forecasters are predicting a mild to moderate El Nino during the 2009 hurricane season. While El Nino does have the ability to suppress hurricane activity, history has shown that some of the most devastating hurricanes occurred during El Nino years. Alabama was directly impacted by Hurricane Ivan in 2004 during a mild El Nino year. Hurricane Andrew in 1992, one of three Category 5 hurricanes to hit the United States since 1851, impacted south Florida and Louisiana during an El Nino year that saw only six named storms. It is important for the emergency management community to remember that it only takes one storm to devastate a community. It is imperative that we not let our guard down despite a lower forecasted number of storms..

Our collective response is highly dependent upon the level of citizen preparedness. Residents of Alabama should always be seen as an emergency managers' first response team rather than as victims or survivors only. Use every opportunity to stress the importance of every family having an emergency plan and kit. The promotion and sponsorship of CERT and other community training is a critical element in the awareness and empowerment of our citizens. Set an example through your own family preparedness and preparedness in your neighborhoods, schools, churches and businesses.

H1N1 influenza is still active in the State of Alabama. Alabama Department of Public Health just confirmed its first H1N1 death in July. The number of active cases is predicted to increase in the fall as the new school year begins. The Alabama Department of Public Health has the lead in preparing for and responding to this emergency and AEMA stands by ready to support their efforts. We encourage you to build relationships with the public health officials and school officials in your county. This is one of those moments when teamwork at all levels will increase our response efforts.

Thank you for your dedication

Visit www.ema.alabama.gov and www.readyalabama.gov for information about citizen involvement and preparedness.

AEMA—Alabama's Coordinating Agency for disaster, response, recovery, and preparedness

Be Prepared!

5898 County Road 41
P.O. Drawer 2160
Clanton, AL 35046
Phone: 205.280.2310
Fax: 205.280.2490
Email:
info@ema.alabama.gov

Sometimes it's good to stop and reflect on who we are as an agency and also remind ourselves what our mission is each day. Our mission is to assist local government in preparedness. AEMA also works with state agencies to facilitate disaster readiness and response. As an agency we work with and maintain a partnership with all federal agencies.

Contact Information:

If you have an article, pictures or other information you would like to submit for the next edition of the newsletter contact Yasamie Richardson or Lauree Ashcom in the Public Information Office at 205.208.2275 or 2255.