

DISASTERCom



DERA Newsletter

37 Years of Service

July, 1999

Geneva Hosts

World Disaster Reduction Forum

GENEVA, SWITZERLAND — Ms Chiara De Vita represented DERA this month at the United Nations's International Programme Forum on World Disaster Reduction in Geneva. The July 5-9 forum, sponsored by the UN Secretariat, International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction (IDNDR), met to evaluate world progress on disaster reduction over the past decade and to make recommendations for future investments in world disaster reduction.

Chiara, an architect engineer from Rome, Italy, reports that she was interviewed during the conference by French national radio regarding DERA's role in providing disaster information over the internet.

Look for Chiara's synopsis of the forum's most significant outcomes in the next issue of *DisasterCom*.

Chiara also represented DERA at council meetings of the governing body of the Global Forum of Non-Governmental Organizations for Disaster Reduction (GFNDR), which was held in conjunction with the United Nations' meetings. The GFNDR governing body met to develop a long range strategy for worldwide disaster mitigation and emergency response following the dissolution of the United Nations' IDNDR structure later this year.

GFNDR efforts will be guided by the principle that NGO's are uniquely positioned to lead such an effort, particularly in areas of political volatility, but that the world community must accept the challenge for financial support of mitigation efforts and disaster response and recovery missions.

Three significant policy statements were previously issued by GFNDR. The "Call from Kathmandu" in 1996 invited NGOs to cooperate in a sustained international disaster reduction campaign and to establish a register for disaster resources to catalog individuals and agencies who could be mobilized for disaster related activities. In 1997, GFNDR met in conjunction with the

International Association of Emergency Managers in Phoenix, AZ and committed to developing an organizational support structure that would support preparedness efforts following the end of IDNDR activities. In October 1998, GFNDR issued the "Geneva Declaration" which called on governments and NGOs to develop a worldwide *Culture of Prevention*.

As its contribution toward GFNDR programs, DERA holds a seat on the governing council and Ms De Vita is our primary delegate. In addition, DERA provides a Web Site for GFNDR and regularly supports GFNDR emergency humanitarian assistance missions.

The GFNDR Web Site may be accessed at:
<http://www.disasters.org/gfndr>

Y2K Preparedness *Materials Now Available*

After nearly a year in preparation and coordination, we now have our **Y2K Individual and Family Preparedness Guide** available. In late July, DERA will send five copies of the publication to each member for distribution in local communities. An additional 50,000 copies will be sent to libraries and emergency planning agencies.

The outlines potential Y2K consequences and provides suggestions for preparedness and mitigation. At this time, the pamphlet is available only in English, but we would welcome assistance in translating the material into as many other languages as practical. If you can assist in this effort, please contact us at the address below.

Non-members may receive a copy by sending us a stamped, self-addressed envelope.

Also, many government officials and business leaders find themselves bombarded with tough questions from the public regarding Y2K preparedness issues. To assist leaders in

answering these questions, DERA distributed a 120-page **Y2K Citizen's Action Guide** to all members in March, and is including the guide with all new membership welcome packages.

The **Y2K Citizen's Action Guide** is free to all DERA members. While supplies last, copies for non-DERA members are available at \$5.95 postpaid within the U.S. Overseas requests should add \$4.00 for airmail postage.

Also, be sure to access the DERA website, www.disasters.org, for an informative Y2K checklist and links to other resources on the net.

Nelson Mears **Warehouses Hope**

LITTLE ROCK, ARKANSAS--DERA member Nelson Mears of Little Rock has found a new calling in life--bring hope to Arkansas citizens who have been devastated by tornadoes and other disasters. In January 1999, Mears resigned as vice president of his corporation in order to head up the warehousing of tons of donated goods that had come into Arkansas to assist citizens who had been ravaged by a series of devastating tornadoes earlier that month.

Nelson had attempted to maintain a full-time career while devoting his vacation time and free time to assisting disaster victims near his time. Convinced that his disaster assistance work must take precedence over his full-time job, Nelson resigned from his company and split his holdings among his employees.

Within weeks of resigning, Nelson found himself managing a huge warehouse in downtown Little Rock and coordinating the efforts of hundreds of volunteers. The Multi-Agency warehouse is now the focal point for extensive storage of supplies and equipment for future regional disasters.

DERA provided Nelson with copies of Supply Management System (SUMA) software, which tracks and manages inventories, emergency needs and offers of assistance. SUMA was developed by the Pan American Health Organization, and DERA began training SUMA teams in 1994.

DisasterCom is the quarterly newsletter of DERA International. News items and articles are always welcome.

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Editor: Kathryn Dunlevy-Wilson

Membership in this Nonprofit Association is open to all who share our commitment to effective disaster preparedness and response.

See Back Page for Membership Application

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Director's Comments

Dear Members:

I am deeply moved as I reflect on all that's happened since our last newsletter.

On March 16th, DERA lost one of our most distinguished life members, **Colonel Ronald G. Martin**, of Napa, California. He was also my very dear friend and mentor. Please see his memorial article in this issue for some of the highlights of his remarkable career. Although he had been quite ill for the past year, he still maintained a strong interest in DERA activities and kept up a steady stream of encouraging notes, letters and radiograms. At the age of 92, he had seemingly boundless spirit, determination and clarity of vision. I have a hard time imagining DERA without the guiding hand and conscience of Colonel Martin, but those of us who knew him well can never be far from his presence. I know that everyone in DERA joins me in sending sincere condolences to his wonderful wife, Fran, and his loving family.

Mike Taylor and his family were deeply affected by the tragedy at Columbine High School in Littleton, Colorado, on April 20th. Mike was in Los Angeles preparing to teach an airline safety class when he learned of mass shootings and numerous bomb explosions at the high school where his two daughters attend. Although Mike's older daughter had quickly escaped from the building, the younger daughter was not accounted for. Four hours into the ordeal, the SWAT team rescued her and 59 others from a room into which they had barricaded themselves. Fifteen people died in the tragedy and many others were seriously wounded. Mike shares the following: "Our thoughts and prayers are with our grieving friends and neighbors and those who have injured loved ones. I am thankful to my Father in Heaven for the safety of my own girls, yet profoundly saddened for the families that have lost children, and for the family of the teacher who perished at Columbine." Your friends in DERA share those feelings, Mike.

Sincere thanks to **Jerry VeHaun**, Fire Chief **Dick Minor**, Lieutenant **Dave Dodson** and **Thom Wendling** for assistance with the Y2K Preparedness Guide. I also want to give special recognition to **Nelson Mears** for having recruited sixteen new members for DERA so far this year.

Beth Armstrong is a mom again! Daughter **Caroline Grace Armstrong** was born on June 22nd. Besides being a dedicated parent and DERA member, Beth is Executive Director of the International Association of Emergency Managers (IAEM).

Tom Heiting suffered a stroke recently but is making a strong recovery. Tom is a former disaster preparedness officer and airfield operations manager. He is widely known as a quality program developer currently working with federal agencies to improve management processes.

Congratulations this month to life member **John Crawford** upon his retirement from FEMA Headquarters following a long and distinguished career.

Finally, we are still looking for volunteers to fill the following positions. Please contact me if you can help.

Director, NIAR/India Joint Project.

This multi-year project initially involves recruiting amateur radio operators and other technical specialists for 2-3 week teaching sessions in India. The project will eventually include emergency planners, firefighters, search and rescue specialists, and flood mitigation specialists. The Director is responsible for coordinating with NIAR, our partnership organization in India, recruiting and scheduling volunteers, and transitioning the program to a larger scale. Expected work hours are 5-10 hours per week in 1999, growing to 20 hours per week within two years.

Newsletter Editor. We are seeking an editor for this newsletter, so that Kathryn can devote more time to our monograph series and other special publications. On average, the job takes about 4-5 hours per week. There is no salary for the job, but expenses are reimbursed. While we'd like a volunteer somewhere near Denver to facilitate coordination with the home office, we would consider applicants who have a workable strategy for "virtual officing" this job. We're planning a 3-6 month transition period.

Best wishes to you all.

Jay Wilson
Executive Director

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CPTI, P.O. Box 351057, Westminster, CO 80035

Welcome New Members

Welcome to DERA!

Our aim is to meet your professional needs as we work together in dedication and service.

Tim Adamson
South Lake Tahoe, CA

Jeannette Barnes
Mabelvale, AR

Michael E. Biesen, KF6HQH
Hydesville, CA

James Brann
North Freedom, WI

Keith Brown
Salt Lake City, UT

Donald L. Campbell
Elon College, NC

Josephine A. Cano
Garden Grove, CA

Thomas J. Carney
Boulder, CO

Sherry Crooks
San Francisco, CA

LeRoy Denniston
Leavenworth, KS

Disaster Preparedness, 11 CES
Bolling AFB, DC

Dwight Fender
Cape Canaveral, FL

Jimmy Finley
Little Rock, AR

Angie Ford
Malvern, AR

Dwight Ford
Malvern, AR

Helen Ford
Malvern, AR

Neil Forsyth
Sydney, NSW, Australia

Lawrence A. Griffin
San Diego, CA

Bob Grist
Portland, OR

C. Michael Hamilton
Framingham, MA

Sarah Heinrich
Maumelle, AR

Glenn Iannaccone
Norwalk, CT

Robert J. Koester
Charlottesville, VA

Margaret T. Lapham
Bethesda, MD

Thomas Loree
Lillington, NC

George B. Melder
Pasadena, TX

Dr. Aubrey K. Miller, M.D., MPH
Denver, CO

Paul G. Munch
Alexandria, VA

Alejandro Nieto
Boulder, CO

Bob Powell
Fairfield, CA

Robert Ryan
Amazonia, MO

Robert Swanson
Syosset, NY

Ghogomu Richard Tanwi
Yaounde, Cameroon

Natalie Tomlinson
Alexander, AR

Walden W. Wagner, Jr.
APO AE 09139

Dadan Wardhana, H.S., YD1VZE
Jakarta, Indonesia

Rev. Harold O. White
Little Rock, AR

Call for Papers

The International Review of Public Administration (IRPA) is requesting submissions of manuscripts for possible publication. IRPA (ISSN 1226-4431) is a scholarly journal published biannually by the Korean Association of Public Administration.

There are no particular limitations on subject areas as long as a manuscript is related to public administration and public policy, and has not been previously published. Manuscripts should be analytic in nature. Timely subjects are particularly welcomed. Papers should be written in English and be about 5,000 words in length, double spaced, and have an abstract of less than 150 words. Please send four copies of manuscripts to:

Professor Pan S. Kim, Editor
International Review of Pub. Admin.
Dept. of Public Administration
Yonsei University
Wonjoo, Kangwon-do 220-710
South Korea

For more details, contact:
FAX: +82 (371) 766-2341
Email: pankim@dragon.yonsei.ac.kr
Web: www.dragon.yonsei.ac.kr/~pankim

In Memoriam

Ronald G. Martin

1907 - 1999

Ron Martin, Colonel U.S. Air Force (Retired), died on March 16, 1999 in Napa, California, at the age of 92. He was a life member of DERA and had been a member of our Executive Council for several years. He was a native of Clearlake, Iowa.

Colonel Martin learned Morse Code from his father at the age of 9 and received amateur radio license 9HW in 1918, when he was 11. Before he finished high school, he went to work as a wireless operator on a lumber schooner on Lake Superior. After his family moved to Berkeley, California, he became a radio operator for Dollar Shipping Lines and made nine trips around the world.

In 1928, he was hired as a communications supervisor for the *San Francisco Examiner*, where he ran press wireless station HUP for the Hearst newspaper chain. During that period, he took part in many historic events such as the around-the-world flight of the Graf Zeppelin. He set up wireless stations at Hearst Castle near San Simeon, CA so that Mr. Hearst could maintain continuous contact with his extensive news network. From 1936 until World War II, he worked for Pacific Telephone Company as a systems engineer in California.

During WW-II, he managed worldwide communications for the Army Airways Communications System. He met his future wife, Fran, while assigned to the AACS headquarters in Asheville, NC, during the war.

During the 1950's, he was assigned to the Global Airways Station at Andrews Air Force Base, and served as a senior telecommunications policy advisor at the Pentagon. During this time, President Truman appointed him to the special task force that created the White House Communications Agency.

He was one of the chief architects of the post-WW-II Military Affiliate Radio System (MARS), which continues to serve emergency communications needs of the Department of Defense. He continued to be very active with the Air Force MARS program from his home station AFA6ZF.

Colonel Martin served as Pacific Division Vice Director for the ARRL during the 1960's. He retired from the Air Force in 1967 and then returned to his old position with Pacific Telephone Company until 1972.

Widely known as operator of Amateur Radio Station W6ZF in Napa, CA, he provided disaster communications and engineering support to worldwide relief efforts.

Final 73, W6ZF/SK. You will be greatly missed but never forgotten.

(Thanks to WorldRadio and AC6LE for permission to reprint.)

Position Announcements

Chief of Party Zimbabwe

The International Development Group seeks a seasoned Chief of Party for a proposed USAID-funded legislative support project in Zimbabwe, starting in the fall of 1999, lasting up to five years. Candidates must show a mix of technical, legislative, and management skills. The project will develop components to render the committee system and legislative process more effective and efficient, and will help the Parliament work with civil society organizations through public hearings and other outreach mechanisms.

Qualifications: Masters in political science, public administration or related field. Ph.D. preferred. Solid experience working with emerging legislatures or parliaments; thorough knowledge of legislative processes, functions, structures, staffing, information systems and services. Substantial management experience administering budgets, staff, communications and reports; knowledge of USAID rules and regulations. Regional experience in southern/eastern Africa very desirable. Political acumen and cultural sensitivity.

For immediate consideration, submit cover letter and extended resume, referencing Position 9899OIP8 to: Human Resources, Research Foundation of SUNY, State University Plaza N520, Albany, NY 12246-0001.

Email submissions welcome. Send plain, unformatted text application to: personnel@spo.rf.suny.edu.

We offer Equal Employment Opportunity and support Affirmative Action programs.

In-Country Advisors *International City/County Management*

The International City/County Management Association seeks advisors for the Newly Independent States and Central/Eastern Europe with experience in at least two of the following areas: Intergovernmental finance; municipal financial management; budgeting; public credit financing; association building; strategic planning; water/wastewater treatment; public service delivery.

We desire persons with previous experience living and working in developing countries and 7-10 years professional experience. Send resume and cover letter as soon as possible to:

ENI Recruitment
ICMA

777 N. Capitol Street, Suite 500
Washington, DC 20002-4210
FAX (202) 962-3681
EMail: intl_recruit@icma.org

Emergency Management Coordinator *City of Irvine, California*

The City of Irvine's Public Safety Department seeks an enthusiastic and motivated individual to plan, organize and coordinate citywide emergency management efforts including the development of emergency response plans, implementation of public education and training programs and to act as a liaison with local, county, state and federal agencies involved in emergency preparedness and disaster planning.

Pay rate for this position is \$45,529-\$64,428, depending on qualifications and City Council approval.

The ideal candidate will possess a Bachelor's degree in Public Administration or related field, and three years full-time experience in emergency preparedness, disaster response, or public education programs, preferably in a municipal agency—or an equivalent combination of education and experience, providing essential knowledge skills and abilities.

Interested individuals are invited to submit a fully completed City of Irvine employment application, supplemental questionnaire and resume. For application materials and additional information, call (949) 724-6201.

Completed applications must be received no later than 5:00 p.m., Monday, August 9 1999. Mail or deliver to:

City Hall Receptionist
City of Irvine
One Civic Center Plaza
Irvine, CA 92606-5208

Transportation Planners and Transportation Planning Manager *Los Angeles, California*

Three positions require BA degree and 3-5 years professional experience in transportation modeling or GIS applications related to transportation, urban planning, or engineering. MA desirable.

Positions work for the Public Transportation Services Corp., an entity of the Los Angeles Metro Transportation Authority. Salary ranges are:

Transportation Planner (GIS Modeling)
\$43,616-\$65,422.

Transport. Planning Mgr III (GIS Models)
\$55,975-\$83,961

Transport. Planning Mgr IV (Modeling)
\$61,422-\$92-134

To apply, call (213) 922-7153 or 922-3900 for TDD and request application package. EOE. Open until filled.

Faculty Vacancies

The University of North Texas in Denton offers two tenure-track faculty positions at the Assistant Professor level in Emergency Administration within the Department of Public Administration.

Applications will be accepted until the positions are filled. Appointments begin either September 1, 1999 or January 1, 2000.

Preference to applicants with work experience in emergency administration and planning. Candidates should hold an earned doctorate at the time the appointment begins.

Submit a letter of application, vita, three letters of recommendation. Mail to:

**Faculty Search Committee
Dept. of Public Administration
University of North Texas
P.O. Box 310617
Denton, TX 76203-0617**



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Emergency Response and Disaster Reduction: Can One Single Agency Handle Both?

Are the same institutions that have been created to provide an immediate response to disasters also suited to the task of promoting disaster reduction? The experience in Latin American and the Caribbean seems to suggest that the answer is no, and that distinct mechanisms are necessary for disaster prevention and mitigation (disaster reduction) on the one hand, and disaster preparedness and response on the other.

Emergency response to disasters requires logistical skills, speed, decisive action and a disciplined structure. It is essential that the responsible agencies have operational expertise and can deliver rapidly-needed services under adverse conditions. In most Latin American countries these skills and assets are found in the armed forces, and traditionally, the Ministry of Defense provides the resources, the personnel and the leadership in national civil defense systems. As an extension of their role, the same institutions responsible for response often become responsible for preparedness both at community and national levels, and rightly so, as disaster preparedness and response are, indeed, mutually dependent.

However, risk reduction, or disaster prevention and mitigation present quite a different challenge. Any development action that society undertakes can either reduce or increase its vulnerability to natural disasters. Deforestation, for example, was a leading factor in the devastating impact of Hurricane Mitch in Central America in 1998. In addition, poor construction standards in schools, hospitals and housing (or lack of enforcement) have been a major cause of fatalities in earthquakes. Proper land use and urban planning, particularly with respect to the location of lifeline facilities such as hospitals in less vulnerable areas, have the potential to save many more lives than an effective relief effort.

Achieving a culture of disaster reduction (i.e., introducing the factor of vulnerability to natural hazards into the decision making process at all levels) requires an approach and skills that are different from organizing search and rescue, distributing emergency rations or setting up a temporary field hospital.

The actors in the field of disaster reduction include financial and governmental institutions such as banks and ministries who have the financial leverage and the ability to affect policy. Key politicians, long-term planners, architects and engineers must be engaged in the dialogue on prevention,

whereas field responders--the armed forces, police, firefighters, health services, Red Cross and other relief groups must address issues of first response, emergency plans and contingency operations.

Oversimplifying the problem at the political level by lumping everything related to disasters and emergencies--from prevention to preparedness--into one single response-oriented mechanism appears to be a major contributing factor to the low level of awareness and interest in disaster reduction on the part of the development sector.

Prevention can no longer be equated with simply maintaining a stockpile of emergency supplies. The participation of the banking system, the insurance sector, and trade and manufacturing industries can best be mobilized by an institution chaired by their peers rather than one staffed by professional planners, architects and engineers. To be sure, those best suited to issues of disaster reduction are definitely not the most appropriate to lead search and rescue teams and coordinate far-flung humanitarian efforts. In these cases, the experience and capabilities of the armed forces are essential.

The organizational models from the United States and other developed nations may not be the most suitable ones for use in other cultures and social settings. Despite the successes of FEMA in the United States, leaders in other countries must avoid the temptation to simply imitate the U.S. process.

If developing nations, and in particular the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean, are to reduce their vulnerability to major hazards, they must equip themselves with the right legislation and the appropriate institutions for disaster prevention and mitigation on one side, and strengthen the existing mechanisms for traditional preparedness and response on the other.

Failure to do so will only ensure that the countries' civil defense system or emergency response committee will be increasingly busy responding to disasters that never should have occurred in the first place.

This article has been adapted from an editorial published in DISASTERS: Preparedness and Mitigation in the Americas, by the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), dated April 1999. Used with permission.

GAO Reviews U.S. Response to Catastrophic Wildfires

Increasing numbers of large, intense, uncontrollable and catastrophically destructive wildfires have been occurring in the western United States. The U.S. Forest Service reports that 39 million acres of national forests in the interior West are at high risk from catastrophic wildfires. A large number of towns is at high risk, as are tens of thousands of homes, resorts, and cabins.

Partly, the present situation results from past forest management practices, including the decades-old policy of extinguishing small wildfires in national forests. This action disrupted the natural occurrence of low-intensity fires that removed flammable undergrowth without significantly damaging larger trees. Now, with the accumulation of decades of vegetation, much of the region has been transformed into a tinderbox.

Over the past decade, the number and extent of wildfires has increased, as have the costs of fighting them. During the 1990's, the Forest Service began to address these problems and to consider revisions to its forest management policies.

Recently, the House of Representatives directed the General Accounting Office (GAO) to review catastrophic wildfire threats and report on the effectiveness of management and mitigation programs.

In that report, the GAO concluded that the Forest Service lacks adequate data to develop a cohesive strategy for improving forest health. The agency recommends the Forest Service develop a plan that includes acquiring data to establish meaningful performance measures and goals for fuel reduction, identifying changes in contracting procedures to facilitate fuel reduction, and develop a schedule and cost estimates for different options to accomplish these goals.

The GAO report is entitled *Western National Forests: A Cohesive Strategy is Needed to Address Catastrophic Wildfire Threats*.

Copies of the 60-page report are free. Request Report GAO/RCED-99-65 from:

U.S. GAO
P.O. Box 37050
Washington, DC 20013

FAX: (202) 512-6061
Voice: (202) 512-6000

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