

# DISASTERCOM

DERA Newsletter

49 Years of Service

December 2011



## 2011: Year of Record Disasters

By Bascombe J. Wilson, CEM  
DERA Executive Director

The April 2011 issue of *DisasterCom* presented preliminary lessons-learned from Japan's devastating earthquake-tsunami-nuclear disaster, as well as the New Zealand earthquake and Australia's widespread flooding from earlier in the year. Unfortunately, as 2011 unfolded, catastrophic natural disasters continued to make headlines around the world. Regions that had not been affected by natural disasters in generations found themselves in the midst of serious emergencies. Many towns that enjoyed seasonal rains were parched by drought followed by devastating fires, while others were awash in seemingly endless rains and record-breaking floods. Violent weather patterns brought unprecedented swarms of tornadoes and particularly damaging hurricanes, cyclones and typhoons. The shift from El Niño to La Niña caught many unprepared.

If there is any one lesson to be learned from the events of 2011 it is probably this: Individuals and communities who base their preparedness programs simply on recent history and optimistic risk assessments are much more likely to suffer hardship than those who take a detailed look at historical events in the region and prepare to deal with maximum credible events.

That said, sometimes you can do everything right and still be in the wrong place at the wrong time. As individuals and as communities, we can only do so much to reduce risk; we can never eliminate it entirely. Nevertheless, a systematic approach to identifying and mitigating hazards, combined with comprehensive preparedness programs and appropriate response capabilities literally can mean the difference between life and death.

The concept of risk management isn't new--it's been around in one form or another for most of recorded history--but it certainly has been refined and institutionalized in many countries over the past six or seven decades, as exemplified by the U.S. National Incident Management System and National Response Framework. What is shocking, however, is how often lessons-learned by one generation are forgotten by the next.

In Colorado, a horrific flashflood in 1976 killed about 145 people in the scenic Big Thompson Canyon. Today, new homes have been built in that canyon and around the debris field at its mouth. In Utah, newly constructed mansions sit literally on the edge the Wasatch Fault. Up and down coastlines and rivers of the world, people who have other choices decide to put their life savings into homes and businesses seemingly without ever doing a serious risk analysis.

Often, it seems, if tragedy hasn't struck an area within the past five or ten years, awareness of the hazard fades away quickly. At the same time, around the world as many as a billion people have no real choice where to live and work. Poverty, conflict, laws and customs often dictate where individuals, families and clans can live, and what kind of work they can do. So very often, the poorest of the poor live in the most dangerous places and are affected most by natural disasters, epidemics, technological mishaps and the ravages of conflict.

With that as background, the following brief synopsis outlines some of the key preliminary lessons-learned from recent disasters:

**Thailand Floods.** The worst river and urban floods in over 60 years seriously impacted 40 of 47 provinces, with a death toll approaching 1,000, and millions of families displaced or out of work. The city of Bangkok and the ancient capital of Ayutthaya received extensive damage. Many ancient cultural sites remain underwater in what may be a 500-year flood in some areas. Two months of extremely heavy rains came in September and October, after the usual rainy season which had saturated the ground, filled lakes and pushed rivers to the tops of levees.

(Cont'd p. 4)

## EMForum: CEU Credits For Emergency Managers

By Amy Sebring, EEIP Vice President

Emergency managers and other participants may now receive Continuing Education Unit (CEU) credit for attending free EMForum Webinars. The Emergency Management Forum (EMForum.org) and Jacksonville State University (JSU) have partnered to run this one-year pilot program. There is no cost to attend EMForum.org programs and no cost to register with JSU. A \$35.00 service fee is charged by JSU at the time the student requests a certificate.

JSU's Institute for Emergency Preparedness (IEP) offers both undergraduate and graduate programs in emergency management and this partnership was made possible through the efforts of Dr. Jane Kushma, Associate Professor and Director of IEP's Doctoral Program.

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

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

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## **DERA International**

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Longmont, CO 80502

DERA is a Nonprofit, U.S. IRS 501(c)(3) Disaster Service and Professional Association Established in 1962  
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## **New Member Roster**

**Welcome to DERA!**

**Joseph R. Ashby, CEM, CDRP**  
Oceanside, California

**William Wright**  
Denver, Colorado

**Rev. Robert L. Rector, PhD**  
Dade City, Florida

**Maria Lopez-Fernandez**  
San Juan, Puerto Rico

**Team Network Emergency and  
Crisis Management Consultancy**  
Quezon City, Manila, Philippines



## **Letter from the Chair**

DERA will celebrate our 50th anniversary this coming spring. I am planning a celebration meeting in early summer with activities that will be both refreshing and professionally valuable.

While many things have changed since DERA was formed, we remain firmly rooted in our original mission of comprehensive disaster preparedness and effective emergency response. We continue to recognize the worldwide importance of organized and trained volunteers as a critical resource. We also continue to provide opportunities for professional development for those with careers in the entire range of disaster preparedness and emergency services, public health, development and environmental protection.

We continue to view the original technology which brought this organization together--amateur radio--as a vital resource far into the future and will continue to work diligently to find the best ways to link amateur radio capabilities with the needs of communities.

While the future is challenging, the occasion of our 50th anniversary gives us the opportunity to celebrate a history of accomplishment, remember our missing friends, and renew our commitment of service, focusing on new realities and instilling our values in a new generation of DERA leaders.

For myself and a large number of our members, this has been another very busy year of providing disaster assistance to very large numbers of survivors, their families and communities. Like many of you, I spent most of this year travelling, both for preparedness activities as well as response and recovery missions. My immediate family was also affected by disasters this year, making the experience very real and personal.

This August, the New England states had the remnants of a hurricane with high winds and massive flooding.

**(Cont'd p. 3)**

## **Members:**

**Please send us  
news and photos.**

**Everyone is interested  
In what you are doing.**

(Continued from p. 2)

## **Message from the Chair**

Areas that typically are not prone to power outages were dark for up to a week. Five weeks later, a winter storm marched across the country and caused significant damage to trees, power lines and communications. Additionally, many of the areas where trees had been weakened by the earlier storm were hard hit again, resulting in even longer outages of power, communications, heat and in some cases, water.

I was in Alabama when tornadoes cane through the state. The first set in the morning took out electrical power, communications and warning sirens. Late in the afternoon, another set of tornadoes came through, causing major property damage and loss of life. Damage was so extensive that many areas could not be reached for days.

Earthquakes, tsunamis, violent storms and flooding pummeled communities throughout the world. Events that supposedly do not usually occur happened on a large scale this year. In reality, these types of events do happen all the time. If they haven't occurred recently, we tend to either forget about their possible consequences or push the memory to the back of our consciousness. These dramatic events should serve as a reminder to us all to be ready at all times to provide life's essentials for ourselves for at least three days, if not longer. Moreover, we must resolve to support our neighbors near and far, have an out of town contact as a central point for the family to communicate through, and keep loved ones apprised of our situation. We can replace material goods and shelter, but we cannot replace ourselves or our loved ones. Even as professionals in this field, it is sometimes necessary to remind ourselves of the basics.

I look forward to exciting changes and challenges in the new year. DERA will have a new look on the web and I will be sending you some great announcements in the coming weeks!

Best Wishes,

*Howard F. Pierpont  
Chair, Board of Directors*

Email:  
howard.pierpont@disasters.org

## **Member News**

### **Lee W. Champagne, CEM**



*Lee Champagne currently serves on the DERA Board of Directors and has been an active member since 2006.*

Lee has served since June 2007 as Chief of the Mobile Emergency Response Support (MERS) Detachment in Bothell, WA, one of six DHS/FEMA facilities strategically located across the country to provide rapid command and control, communications, transportation, logistics and technical support to federal disaster operations. Bothell MERS primarily supports FEMA Regions 9 and 10, which includes the far western states, Alaska, Hawaii, Guam and American Samoa. Prior to this position, he served as a FEMA Federal Coordinating Officer (FCO), where he was the on-scene coordinator for many major federal disaster efforts, including floods, severe storms, tornadoes, hurricanes, and snow emergencies in places such as Virginia, Michigan, Ohio, Illinois, Idaho, Alaska, Oregon, Washington, Florida and Louisiana.

Lee served as a Deputy FCO under VADM Thad Allen for the Hurricane Katrina and Rita response and recovery efforts in Louisiana, including an appointment as Katrina "Debris Czar" to coordinate the massive \$4B state wide clean up. Lee also participated in the 2004 Hurricane Charlie response in Florida, the 2003 Hurricane Isabel recovery in Virginia, and many other disaster related preparedness, mitigation, anti-terrorism exercises and special events.

Prior to FEMA, Lee was a program manager/consultant in the private sector. He also served in the U.S. Navy as a Surface Warfare Officer for almost 29 years, retiring in 1998 at the rank of Captain. His responsibilities ranged from command-at-sea, major shore command, to critical operational, staff

and intelligence assignments overseas and within the United States.

Born in New Orleans, Louisiana, Lee holds a B.S. degree in Communications from Oregon State University, in Corvallis, OR and a M.A. degree in National Security Affairs from the Naval Post Graduate School in Monterey, CA. He is also a Certified Emergency Manager (CEM). Lee has been married to his wife, Jonelle for over 38 years and they have a daughter, Andrea, who is a Major (JAG Corps) on active duty in the U.S. Marine Corps.

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### **Jamie Caplan**

Jamie, a DERA member since 2009, is principal at Jamie Caplan Consulting LLC (JCC), founded in 1997. The firm is a certified woman-owned consulting company that provides comprehensive emergency management services for all phases of disaster management, including mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery.

Jamie's firm provides solutions for reducing risk and increasing preparedness to individuals, communities, tribes and local and state governments. Jamie continues as a leader in providing access to HAZUS products and capabilities to groups and communities through her web portal, USEHAZUS, which provides free Web page development and maintenance to all HAZUS User Groups interested in this free service.

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## World Disasters (Cont'd from P. 1)

Virtually the entire nation of Thailand was affected by flooding in the second half of 2011, as shown in this graphic provided by the Thai Royal Air Force:



In many rural areas, the public cellular phone system failed as cell sites became inundated or fuel could not be delivered to emergency generators. The Thai National Broadcasting and Telecommunications Commission praised the role of Thai amateur radio operators for filling the communications gap, particularly for public health and emergency rescue. Stations individually recognized include HSØAB, HSØAC and HS4DDQ.

**Lessons:** (1) Thailand's extensive preparedness, public warning, information systems, and flood mitigation programs clearly saved lives and reduced property loss. For example, flood control measures protected Bangkok's main international airport and allowed disaster logistics and international support to continue even at the height of the crisis. (2) The rapid activation of auxiliary communications systems, including amateur radio and Public Health Ministry networks, were critical in managing the emergency and in directing the search and rescue effort which saved over 1,000 lives.

**Sikkim, India Earthquakes.** In September a magnitude 6.9 earthquake with epicenter in the Indian state of Sikkim, near the Nepal border, sent damaging shockwaves across northern India, Bangladesh, Nepal, Bhutan, and southern Tibet. Over 100 deaths were reported in India, seven in Tibet and eleven in Nepal, including three who died when a wall collapsed at the British embassy in Kathmandu. The earthquake was the fourth major

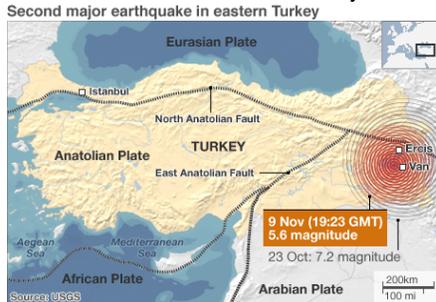
earthquake in India for the month of September.

**Lessons:** The government of India is undertaking a major review of the national preparedness strategy and has already convened a series of meetings dealing with disaster communications, housing, resilience and rehabilitation, and state-level emergency organization. Among the preliminary recommendations from these meetings are cabinet-level disaster management agencies within all state governments, increased integration of amateur radio capabilities into emergency plans, and development of housing strategies for catastrophic disasters.

One major workshop at Jamia Millia Islamia in November issued the following statement of intent: "Since public awareness is at the heart of preparedness, an intensive campaign must be waged from door to door and village to village, involving students, teachers and Panchayats [local self-governments]...to sensitize communities and to enable them to meaningfully participate in the reconstruction process."

**Turkey Earthquakes.** Eastern Turkey experienced a series of major earthquakes in October and November, beginning with a magnitude 7.2 earthquake near the city of Van that killed more than 600 people. In November, a magnitude 5.6 event collapsed 25 major buildings including a six-storey hotel where rescue workers, aid teams and journalists were staying, with heavy loss of life. Among those killed in the November collapse of the Bayram Hotel in Van was Atsushi Miyazaki, a Japanese physician heading an international relief team.

This map provided by USGS shows the areas most affected in Turkey:



Hundreds of aftershocks continue to cause damage throughout the impact zone. Turkish authorities report that thousands of people are living in the open with a few others sheltered only by unheated tents despite freezing conditions in the area.

Amateur radio operators in Turkey reported to DERA that several people trapped in the rubble of collapsed buildings were able to send short text messages from cell phones, and this aided in many successful rescues.

**Lessons:** (1) Poorly reinforced masonry continues to be a major challenge in many parts of the world. While Turkey has made tremendous progress in upgrading building codes, the older infrastructure may take decades to replace, while building in some rural areas still relies on mud-based construction. (2) While cell phone networks remained generally intact, a tremendous amount of auxiliary communications was needed. (3) Survival depended on local search and rescue capabilities, as outside help was hours away. Development of trained local SAR teams should be a priority for all disaster-prone areas.

**North America.** It is difficult to summarize the extent and severity of natural disasters in North America during 2011. On one day alone, over 100 separate wildfires were burning in the province of Alberta, where even the town of Slave Lake suffered major destruction. At the same time, the Missouri and Mississippi rivers were causing record flood damage to states all along their paths from Montana to Louisiana. This year was the deadliest tornado season in the U.S. since 1936, with 556 total deaths reported through October, including 324 fatalities in April in the Southeast and 159 deaths in Joplin, Missouri in May.

In Texas alone, over 4 million acres were burned by over 27,000 separate wildfires that destroyed over 2,800 homes and 2,700 other structures. The most catastrophic wildfire in Texas history engulfed the city of Balstrup in September, destroying 1,645 homes and killing two people. Texas was not alone, as major wildfires caused significant damage throughout several Western states. Nationally, over 63,000 wildfires have burned more than 8,000,000 acres so far in 2011.

In August, Hurricane Irene did extreme damage and killed seven people in the Caribbean before coming ashore in New Jersey, the first hurricane since 1903 to do so. Afterwards as a tropical storm, Irene left a path of destruction through New England and into Canada. New York and Vermont reported the worst flooding in centuries. The hurricane caused at least 56 deaths along its path. Preliminary damage estimates for the U.S. alone are \$15 billion.

# Key to Effective Emergency Management

## Perception Management

by Lee Champagne, CEM

A friend and retired Fire Chief recently told me a tale about when he was just starting out as a young fireman on his first big fire. Apparently he expressed awe of the size of the emergency to the on-scene battalion chief/incident commander. The chief turned and confidently told him, "Kid, there is no longer an emergency because we are now on the scene." Whether we have a handle on the situation or not, we always have to act like we do because that is what the public expects. Perception is important. So when the fire department arrives, the public can relax, the emergency is over. I thought about that and remembered when I was a young naval officer trying to qualify to be an officer of the deck (OOD) at sea. There was so much to learn it was daunting. The Captain told me that the key to being a good OOD was when you were on deck, to act like a movie star playing the role of a decisive and confident leader. He said if you play it well, everything else would fall in place. It did. Later after I became a Captain, my ship was at sea skirting the edge of a violent hurricane. It was scary. I remember being on the bridge watching waves go over the top of the ship as the ship was being severely tossed about. Apparently my concern must have shown on my face. A young seaman manning the helm looking at me said in a distressed voice, "Captain, are we going to make it?" I was suddenly aware I had let down my guard and was not expressing the confident and positive attitude that a John Wayne would have if he were Captain. So I quickly picked up the microphone for the shipboard (1MC) public address system that broadcasts to the entire ship and said, "This is the Captain speaking. Although we have a little storm out here, the ship is doing fine, there is no danger, and we will be out of the storm soon." With that announcement, I could then sense a collective ship-wide sigh of relief, as the emergency was now over because the captain said so. I continued to keep our bow pointed into the waves and several hours later we did clear the storm. At last the seas were calm and all was well.

How does this relate to emergency management? During my past 10 years working disaster emergency response and recovery, I have observed that, much like my shipboard experiences, perception management is crucial to success. Of course there is no substitute to being well prepared, having

trained and experienced personnel, and supplies and equipment on scene quickly. Despite this, unfortunately if the public perceives you are not doing well, you have failed. The federal response to Hurricane Katrina in Louisiana is a case in point. It was perceived a major failure. Although after-action reports and testimony to Congress identified many shortfalls or actions not taken or that could have been performed better, these are common after every major disaster, and that alone would not have made it a failure. I was part of the initial Hurricane Katrina response efforts. I witnessed all the supplies, equipment, and experienced personnel that were rapidly brought into the state, which would have enabled an effective emergency response. There were many responders in state doing the right thing. Unfortunately, I also observed many of the initial meetings at the Louisiana State Emergency Operation Center (EOC) between the FEMA Director and the Louisiana Governor. There seemed to be little agreement, confidence, or decisiveness, and unfortunately this influenced media coverage. If the immediate and early media coverage had been positive, public perception could have been vastly different. From my perspective, the label of failure occurred during that first crucial week after hurricane landfall, when the opportunity was missed to manage perception and demonstrate decisiveness to the public. No one picked up the microphone to reassure the public that all was well until Admiral Allen and General Honoree arrived a week later to lead the disaster response. They acted like they knew what they were doing; displayed confident, positive, decisive leadership; and then public perception began to improve. There is a lesson here for all emergency managers.

*Lee, a Certified Emergency Manager (CEM®), is on the DERA Board of Directors and resides in Edmonds, Washington.*

**Newsletter articles, field reports  
and member news are always  
welcome at any time.**

***Please share your experiences,  
insights and personal news.***

**Send to: [editor@disasters.org](mailto:editor@disasters.org)**

## CEU Credits (Cont'd from P. 1)

The pilot will run through September 30, 2012. The level of participation and response from the emergency management community during the initial year will determine whether this program will be continued in the future.

New students may register at any time throughout the year, and will receive credit for EMForum.org programs attended following the date of registration. Each one hour program attended earns one contact hour; ten contact hours equals one CEU. Certificates may also be requested at any time, and partial CEUs may be awarded. The credit may be applied toward meeting CEM® or AEMSM requirements.

The Emergency Information Infrastructure Project (EIIP), a non-profit educational organization, manages the EMForum.org and hosts Webinars twice a month on a wide variety of emergency management related topics, featuring subject matter experts from across the spectrum of related professional disciplines.

A November EMForum Webinar on "Changes in Information Sharing since 9/11" featured subject area expert Steve Hewitt, co-director of the Tennessee Fusion Center and Supervisory Intelligence Officer with the Tennessee Department of Safety and Homeland Security. Other weekly EMForum Webinars throughout the year cover virtually every aspect of disaster preparedness and emergency management.

EIIP, the sponsor and host for EMForum Webinars, has been a program partner with DERA since 1995. Further information regarding the CEU pilot may be found at

<http://www.emforum.org>

*Amy Sebring has been a DERA member since 1998. She is the Vice President for the Emergency Information Infrastructure Project (EIIP). Amy's EIIP office is in Corpus Christi, Texas.*

## Congratulations, QPS

**Congratulations, to Kim, Bus and  
the crew at QPS of Loveland,  
Colorado for your 50 years of  
service to the community.**

QPS has printed every issue of *DisasterCom* since 1995 and has provided DERA with extraordinary support and quality service. Contact QPS: [sales@quickprintshop.com](mailto:sales@quickprintshop.com)

## Job Announcement

Wanted: Engineering Manager for multi-disciplinary engineering team. This is a hands-on management position responsible for direction and oversight of five engineers. The Engineering Manager will provide functional guidance and leadership for product development, and support manufacturing group in areas of product improvement, test procedures, and failure analysis. Requires electrical engineering background; RF or microwave engineering experience is a strong plus. Should have some familiarity with embedded processors and programming. The position is with Radiometrics Corporation ([www.radiometrics.com](http://www.radiometrics.com)), a small dynamic company that builds microwave radiometers for climate research and meteorological applications.

Salary: Commensurate with experience.

Qualifications: Bachelors of Science degree in Electrical Engineering (Masters Degree preferred) or equivalent with 5+ years management experience.

For more information, contact David Patton at

[d.patton@radiometrics.com](mailto:d.patton@radiometrics.com)

## New EPA Mapping Tool

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has released a new mapping feature in EPA's Enforcement and Compliance History Online (ECHO) database. As part of EPA's ongoing effort to improve transparency, the EPA and State Enforcement Actions Map will allow the public to access federal and state enforcement information in an interactive format and to compare enforcement action information by state. The map will be refreshed monthly to include up to date information about the enforcement actions taken to address violations of air, water, and waste laws.

"EPA is committed to providing the public with easy to use tools that display facility compliance information and the actions EPA and the states are taking to address pollution problems in communities across the nation," said Cynthia Giles, assistant administrator for EPA's Office of Enforcement and Compliance Assurance. "EPA

is proud to announce our latest effort under the President's White House Regulatory Compliance Transparency Initiative and we will continue to take steps to make meaningful enforcement and compliance data available as part of an open, transparent government."

Map users can choose the year, the media (air, water, waste, multiple), and whether they would like to display enforcement information for actions taken at the federal level, state level, or both. Users can then click on a state to view facility locations and click on a facility to list its name, the environmental statute the facility has an enforcement action under, and a link to a detailed facility compliance report.

ECHO provides integrated searches of EPA and state data about inspections, violations and enforcement actions for more than 800,000 regulated facilities. Now in its ninth year, ECHO recently received its 10 millionth data query and has completed a record year of more than 2 million queries. President Obama recognized ECHO in his January 2011 Presidential Memorandum on regulatory compliance, as a model for transparency for other federal agencies to follow.

The direct link to Enforcement and Compliance History Online:

<http://www.epa-echo.gov>



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## Thanks, Bill & Janet Liebsch

DERA extends a heartfelt thank-you to Bill and Janet Liebsch, authors of the book *It's a Disaster!...and what are YOU gonna do about it?* for their very generous donation.

DERA was one of three nonprofits selected to receive donations from Bill and Janet's publishing company, FedHealth, this year. We are pleased to have had FedHealth's support for the past four years and look forward to a long and continuing friendship.

DERA is also pleased to announce that we have the 5th edition of the book available for sale as a fund-raiser. Please see the link on our homepage ([www.disasters.org](http://www.disasters.org)) or the ad on Page Eight of this newsletter.

Please consider purchasing copies of *It's a Disaster!...and what are YOU gonna do about it* as gifts for family and friends this year. The book will be an invaluable resource for them and your purchase will help DERA continue with our preparedness and response mission.

Many thanks,

*Howard F. Pierpont*  
*Chair, DERA Board of Directors*

## DERA Program Recap

Since 1962, DERA has worked to help communities assess their hazards and implement effective mitigation, preparedness, response and recovery strategies. While most of DERA's active members have come from the U.S. and Canada, our aim has been to provide the means for sharing knowledge, skills and resources around the world, wherever DERA was needed and welcome. That remains our vision. Making that vision a reality, however, depends on the dedication and involvement of all our members.

DERA has never had any paid staff. Everything we do is accomplished by unpaid volunteers. We depend entirely on your support for ideas, program management, field support and executive leadership.

We are a 100% member-led organization. Please contact one of your officers to see how you can become more involved. Email: [\*\*dera@disasters.org\*\*](mailto:dera@disasters.org)

## Region III Preparedness Fair

By Raphael LaRocca  
DERA Region III Program Coordinator

In the last DERA newsletter I shared the story of Heather Harris, who was murdered as the result of domestic violence, and I emphasized the need for emergency management to take a more active role in preparing and mitigating for such situations. I want to thank the entire DERA membership for your support and involvement in the domestic violence event your Region III team sponsored on October 23rd in Pennsylvania. We were able to raise awareness about domestic violence as an emergency management issue while touching the lives of the people who attended the event.



*Heather Harris memorial table*

In making this event happen I have to reflect on why it is so important: Over 600,000 lives are affected by domestic violence each year in the U.S alone. I came across a story in every place I went while working to arrange this event: most of the people helping had their own story to tell. Looking back, we cannot allow domestic violence to continue unchecked; we must be proactive and we must strengthen survivors and reach out to victims and their families.

### **What can emergency management and responders do about Domestic Violence?**

1. Provide local resources to the public including links on websites, phone numbers, and publications.
2. Provide such information at public events; treat domestic violence as you would any hazard.
3. Educate medical providers and police officers how to identify and treat victims.
4. Maintain current resources and statistics on domestic violence in the community.

### **How can emergency managers reduce domestic violence during disasters?**

- Maintain security at shelters
- Keep safehouse locations anonymous
- Educate staff in prompt, effective response
- Provide resources at shelters and hospitals
- Make domestic violence a priority in planning for events

*Raphael LaRocca has been a DERA member since 2008 and is coordinator for DERA's Region III programs. Raphael also is director of the DERA Online Emergency Operations Center (EOC) which supports not just DERA missions but those of our partnership organizations and other nonprofit response activities. Raphael may be reached at: [R.LaRocca@disasters.org](mailto:R.LaRocca@disasters.org)*

## Flag Reminds You to Check Your Go-Kit

By Howard Pierpont

DERA now has red and white "Water / Snacks / Meds" flags to attach to your disaster deployment Go-Kit as a reminder to check those three items and their expiration dates. Similar to the flags used on flight lines that say "Remove before Flight," DERA's flags serve not only as a reminder to rotate these three perishables, but can also serve to remind us to check the dates on sunscreen and hand sanitizer, and to include power cords for cell phones and laptops. After forgetting to pack sufficient meds on a recent deployment, I know I will be sure to attach my red and white flag.

You can order your flags for \$10 each postpaid at the DERA website or by sending your order by mail to:

DERA  
P.O. Box 797  
Longmont, CO 80502 USA

Save yourself the headache of arriving at your disaster destination sans adequate supplies while helping to raise funds for DERA's outreach efforts.

### **Appeal for help from a DERA program partner**

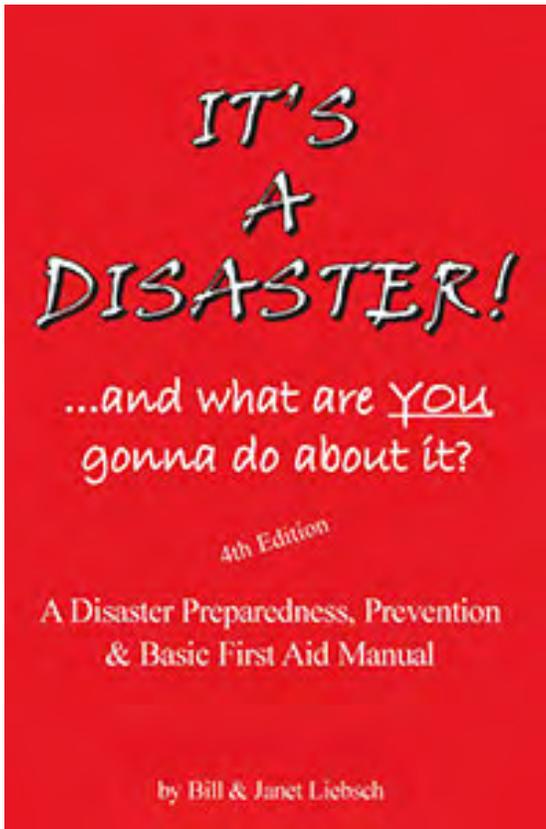
The flooding in Thailand has displaced thousands of families and thousands of people still need to be sheltered in flooded areas. We have received an urgent request for assistance from our partners in Thailand. They are in need of boats to carry emergency supplies and rescue people.

Nine boats are needed immediately and can be purchased in Thailand for less than eight thousand dollars. The flooding is very wide spread and the worst in decades. The boats will save lives! Please make a PayPal contribution on our web site, [www.cdresponse.org](http://www.cdresponse.org) or send a check today to Thai Flood Relief, c/o Christian Disaster Response, P.O. Box 3339, Winter Haven, FL 33885-3339 USA.

**Dr. Ron Patterson**  
Executive Director  
Christian Disaster Response  
[www.cdresponse.org](http://www.cdresponse.org)

A copy of this organization's official registration and financial information may be obtained from the Florida Division of Consumer services by calling toll free (within Florida) 1-800-436-7352. Registration does not imply endorsement, approval or recommendation by the State of Florida. The organization's state registration number is CH11032.

Dr. Patterson and Christian Disaster Response International have been DERA members since 1996. Christian Disaster Response International is highly respected for its work around the world and is currently spearheading relief efforts in Thailand, while continuing to support recovery efforts in Haiti and Japan among many other ongoing missions.



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