



AFR CENTRAL VIRGINIA KICK-OFF FORUM

Historic Hanover Tavern

July 28, 2015

Welcome

Kathy Garrett-Cox, Manager of Historical Collections, Maymont Foundation; Chair, Central Virginia Museum Emergency Support Team (MEST) Training

- Thanked MEST and Virginia Museum Association for partnering to present this forum
- Thanked both museum professionals and first responders and emergency managers for making the time to participate
- Built into the agenda are numerous opportunities for cultural stewards to connect with first responders and emergency managers

Protecting and Preserving Our Cultural Heritage: The Power of Partnerships

Lori Foley, Director of Emergency Programs, Foundation of the American Institute for Conservation of Historic and Artistic Works (FAIC)

- Cultural heritage institutions are often overlooked as a valuable segment of the whole community
 - Yet institutions such as museums are often economic drivers in your community
- Images of damage and loss of both domestic and international cultural resources illustrate the need for communities to prepare for and be ready to respond to disasters
- Alliance for Response is one program developed by Heritage Preservation (and now continued by FAIC) to facilitate a more effective and coordinated response to all kinds of emergencies
- AFR has been building bridges at the local level between the cultural heritage and emergency management communities since 2003
- Partnership goals:
 - To build relationships
 - To educate each other – vocabularies, concerns, operations
 - To develop strong networks to enable successful response
- AFR website, www.heritageemergency.org/afr, contains a wealth of information for developing and sustaining an emergency network
 - Example: Great ShakeOut participation

Keynote: FEMA and Cultural Resources in Disasters

Amanda Ciampolillo, Regional Environmental Officer, FEMA Region III

- FEMA's mission is about supporting America's citizens and first responders
- Explanation of what FEMA does – which is more than just respond to disasters
- The disaster cycle – prevent, prepare, respond, recover, mitigate – constitutes FEMA's mission areas
- Examples of current regional planning initiatives include cultural and historical resource concerns in hazard mitigation planning
- Encouraged participants to engage in emergency preparedness activities:
 - Make a plan

- Take advantage of training opportunities, such as those offered by the Emergency Management Institute (EMI)
- Make connections

Tabletop Exercises

Allen Evans, Training and Compliance Coordinator, Virginia Museum of Fine Arts

- Shared how to run a tabletop exercise (TTX)
- A TTX helps an organization test the validity of an existing plan, but it's especially useful in evaluating the group's ability to cooperate and work together
- Stressed the importance of involving policy-level personnel
- Ground rules for TTX include:
 - Fight the problems, not the scenario; suspend your disbelief so you can focus on solutions
 - Responses should be based on current, not projected, capabilities
- Common exercise mistakes include:
 - Not including critical agencies/departments
 - After-action items are not implemented
- All organizations should conduct a TTX at least twice a year:
 - To test the emergency action plan
 - To test the COOP (continuity of operations) plan
- Facilitator should make sure participants are already trained regarding plans, process, roles and responsibilities
- Reach out to your local EMD (emergency management director) to help plan a TTX
 - Can provide training, planning, design

Working with Emergency Responders

David Creasy, Fire Marshal, City of Richmond Fire Department

- Never take the cavalier attitude that "fire won't happen to me"
 - But don't place blind faith in the local fire department to save you and your property
- Planning, training, and automatic fire protection systems are key ingredients of protection
- Life safety must always be the first priority
- Make sure employees are well versed in how to turn on an alarm
- Maintenance is the most important factor in preventing loss due to fire
- Understand that fire departments seldom respond to cultural institutions
 - Make sure they have pre-planned for your facility
 - Make sure you share your emergency plan with them
 - Make sure they know your high-priority items
 - Make sure you notify them of exhibit changes
- Much can be done with little or no expenditure of monies to minimize the chance of a fire starting or spreading
- Take steps to reduce the likelihood of fire, including:
 - Restricting and keeping electrical appliances away from combustibles
 - Prohibit storage in mechanical equipment rooms, electrical closets, and within 3 feet of the front of electrical panels
- Take passive fire protection measures, such as:
 - Planning for the possibility that all active fire systems might fail
 - Ensuring fire doors are never propped open, and close without assistance

- Create a list of priority items (audience tip: use your database to create the list, and include a large photo, if possible)
- Historical structures can present unique fire detection and suppression issues
- Placement of smoke detectors is key for the early detection of fire
- The three types of fire suppression systems are:
 - Portable fire extinguishers (which require human reaction and entail risks)
 - Fire sprinkler systems
 - Gaseous systems
- Evaluate your facility needs!
- Remember that fire departments can help in developing your plan

When Worlds Collide

Ken Myers, Director of Operations and Capital Projects, The Valentine

- His job: helping first responders, facilities staff, and collections staff understand each other
- Each comes to a situation with different preconceptions, different and competing priorities
 - Important to anticipate what others are bringing to the situation
 - Collections/curatorial staff come from an academic background, but “don’t know the difference between a circuit breaker and a fuse”
 - First responders – and possibly collections/curatorial staff – won’t know information about the building
 - Facilities managers are concerned with “how soon can I be open tomorrow?”
 - Collections staff see artifacts; firefighters see combustibles
- Contractors can be on the scene
 - Often, their first priority is schedule (and the safety of contractors and subs) and they’re not even aware of collections
- Establish a list of top 10, top 100 priority items
 - Firefighters can’t stay all day; once they’re packed up, they’re ready to go
 - Have that conversation with firefighters beforehand
- Is there a central person at the fire department to ensure continued connections?

Managing Crisis & Working with the Media

Jason Elmore, Community Programs Coordinator and Public Information Officer, Chesterfield Fire & EMS

Dawn Eischen, Director of External Affairs, Virginia Department of Emergency Management

Lindsey LeGrand, Spokesperson, Virginia Department of Transportation

Jonathan McNamara, Communications Officer and National Spokesperson, American Red Cross

- Who is the best person to deal with the media?
 - The person at the highest level or the person who has *access* to the highest-level person
 - It’s the person who people recognize
 - It might be someone who is a subject matter expert
 - Identify that person and give them public speaking training
 - See Public Relations Society of America, PRSA, www.prsa.org
 - It could be a Board member groomed to be the spokesperson
- Get ahead of social media and speculation
 - Indicate that you are engaged in the emergency by saying:
 - “We’re looking into it.”
 - “It’s under investigation.”
- Share what the impact is on the organization

- Study talking points
 - 1 – 2 sentences to help you remember what to say
- First, determine your main message, even if it's just a tweet:
 - We know about it. We're working on it. We've sent someone to look into it.
- Before an event occurs, create a crisis communication plan
 - This is in addition to a disaster plan
- Make sure everyone knows who the point of contact (POC) is
- Be STARCC: Simple, Timely, Accurate, Relevant, Credible, Consistent
 - Never say, "No comment."
 - You come across as stand-offish or have something to hide
- Make sure you're the first one to put out a message
 - As soon as you have information, verify it, then get it out
 - Have the shortest list of people reviewing it before the message goes out
- A relationship with the media is important
 - Pitch a joint topic for them to cover
 - The more logos behind a pitch, the higher the media awareness
 - American Red Cross has more success partnering with other agencies
- Give credit to partners, especially those who have a larger follower base
 - "And we're really proud to partner with [organization X, Y, Z]."
- Near end of interview, you may be asked, "Is there anything else you'd like to add?"
 - "I don't think I stated that as well as I could. Let me restate it more clearly."
 - Journalists will want good sound bites
 - Plug website
- PRSA has sample communication plans
- Basic public information crisis communication class available through www.vaemergency.gov

Closing Remarks

Tracy Bryan, Director of Facilities, Virginia Historical Society; Co-chair, Central Virginia Museum Emergency Support Team

Libby Howlett, Curator of Collections, Agecroft Hall; Co-chair, Central Virginia Museum Emergency Support Team

- Reviewed MEST mission: To provide an active network for local museums, libraries, and archives to improve their collective emergency preparedness, better protect their collections, staff, and visitors, and coordinate mutual assistance in recovery from disasters affecting cultural resources in greater Richmond.
- Committees:
 - Communications and Supplies
 - Training and Technical Assistance
 - Membership and Administrative Duties
- Thanked sponsors:
 - Tracy Bryan
 - Hollinger Metal Edge
 - Historic Hanover Tavern
- Conducted robust Q&A session
- Thanked participants for an engaging forum
- Encouraged continuing dialogue between cultural stewards and emergency managers