

ALLIANCE FOR RESPONSE PITTSBURGH
Spring program: "The Anatomy of a Response"

Library Service Center, University Library System, University of Pittsburgh
Tuesday, March 23, 2010
1:30 to 4 pm

Present:

- Amy Baker, University of Pittsburgh
- Tracie Ballock, Duquesne University
- John Barnett, PALCI
- Martha Berg, Rodef Shalom Congregation
- Tom Clareson, LYRASIS
- Jeanann Croft Haas, University of Pittsburgh
- William Daw, University of Pittsburgh
- Keri Garland, Carnegie Mellon University
- Rachel Grove Rohrbaugh, Chatham University
- Mary Catharine Johnson, Carnegie Mellon University
- Janice Jones, BELFOR USA
- Jackie Mignogna, Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh
- Elaine Misko, Carlow University
- Miranda Nixon, University of Pittsburgh
- Thomas White, Duquesne University
- Grace Young, Carlow University

The Alliance for Response Pittsburgh chapter convened its spring meeting. The program focused on four main topics—

- The Anatomy of a Response (Tom Clareson, LYRASIS)
- Goal-setting and future plans for the Pittsburgh chapter (Tom Clareson, LYRASIS)
- MayDay activities (John Barnett, PALCI)
- Report on disaster preparedness training (John Barnett, PALCI)

The Anatomy of a Response

Tom Clareson reported on a disaster that befell a Philadelphia-area cultural heritage institution, a fire that struck the 23rd Street Armory in January 2010, home to the oldest cavalry unit in the United States. Tom discussed the efforts that were made by cultural heritage agencies in the area to mediate the damage and observations made after the event by members of the Alliance for Response Philly group, some of whom thought the response by AFR Philly was successful, while others did not.

Tom then posed to the Pittsburgh group how we might deal with a similar situation. The group discussed matters such as nominating a single point of contact to "rally the troops" when such cultural heritage

emergencies happen, developing a shared disaster supply cache for the region, and using local media outlets (as well as social networking sources) to advise other cultural heritage agencies of the need for disaster response.

Goal-setting and future planning

The “Anatomy of a Response” discussion led into a brainstorming session on setting goals and developing plans for the Alliance for Response Pittsburgh chapter. Tom posed several questions to the group. The attendees broke into smaller groups and discussed the questions, then proposed courses of action that might be taken in response.

Jeanann Croft Haas, University of Pittsburgh University Library System, and Tracie Ballock, Gumberg Library, Duquesne University, kept track of the discussion:

1. What is the best way to inform Pittsburgh Cultural Heritage Institutions that a disaster has happened to a cultural organization, and the institution needs help?
2. What is the best method for continuing communication in this type of situation?
 - Emergency Notification System
 - Contact an institutional contact person
 - Central, local contact person, who then contacts others
 - Contact list with home and work numbers
 - Twitter, Facebook, or other social-networking alerts
 - TV Media- ticker line at bottom – announcement to Alliance for Response
 - Phone tree, with daytime and evening contact lists
 - Three Rivers Contingency Planning Association (TRCPA) email list
 - AFR Pittsburgh discussion list (subscribe: <https://list.pitt.edu/mailman/listinfo/afr-pittsburgh>; post: afr-pittsburgh@list.pitt.edu)
 - Google Docs / PALCI document for updating contact list
3. How would Pittsburgh institutions work together collaboratively to assist a disaster-stricken organization?
 - Mutual Aid Agreement detailing participation
 - Review union vs. non-union issues
 - Discuss liability issues
 - Pitt-SIS and Duquesne University student volunteers
 - Office of Emergency Response/Pittsburgh—investigate their mutual aid agreement
4. Do AFR-Pittsburgh institutions have enough disaster supplies on hand to “answer the call” if disaster strikes a local institution?
 - What supplies are necessary and how much?
 - Cooperative agreement among member institutions/participants?

- AFR participants may not have authority to commit funds, resources, etc – may have to seek permission from supervisor
 - Do institutions contribute money or supplies?
 - Who would monitor the supplies to replenish when they are used?
 - Mapping cultural institutions using Google Maps
 - Applying for a Preservation Assistance Grant
 - Identifying staging spaces
 - Red Cross trailer as storage space for supplies—or a Pod near a fire station or other emergency facility
5. Are there sources of assistance or funding locally for disaster-stricken institutions?
- Buhl Foundation
 - Pittsburgh Foundation
 - Library of Congress Grant
 - Allegheny Conference funds
 - IMLS
 - Heritage Preservation
6. What resources do you feel AFR Pittsburgh needs to develop in order to be better able to respond to disasters?
- Establish a communication system
 - Staff confidence – training and experience
 - Cast a wider net – Pittsburgh Cultural Trust, historic homes, historical societies
 - Meeting at other sites (i.e. Belfor USA, Rodef Shalom Temple) to encourage broader participation.
 - Promotion/involvement in American Institute of Conservators - Spring 2011 Meeting in Pittsburgh – May 17-20th
7. Do you feel your institutional administration would let you work with a disaster-stricken institution for 1-5 days of a regular work week?
- Establish a mutual aid agreement
 - Contact/discuss with Pittsburgh Council of Higher Education (PCHE) Facilities Committee? Is there still an Emergency Preparedness Committee?
8. Are there written or multi-media tolls the AFR could supply to build capacity for response in Pittsburgh?
- Field Guide to Disaster Response (book and DVD)
 - CCAHA, NEDCC, and NEH tools?
 - Better website with these tools?
 - If you know of more/other training materials, please share with us

9. How can we better reach out to the Emergency Management and Corporate Emergency Management sectors in our events and activities?
 - Survey emergency responders to see what types of topics that they might be interested in – what do they want cultural institutions to know?
 - Involve corporate records managers
 - Alternate topics at meetings to appeal to a broader range of persons and agencies, both cultural heritage organizations and emergency responders

10. What methods would work best to evaluate local response to disaster?
 - Needs further discussion, although the group felt that regular conference calls and meetings would be one way to achieve this.
 - The group hopes to offer 3 programs per year for the immediate future as one way to keep learning and evaluating needs and responses.

11. BONUS QUESTION: What types of presentations and training would help build the capacity of the AFR-Pittsburgh group?
 - Hands-on training (water-damaged items, mold)
 - Meet at a smaller institution and do a walk through to offer advice – Angel Project
 - Mold – Dr. Saunders at Duquesne and Dr. Collins at LaRoche – health and human safety issues
 - Integrated pest management
 - Winterizing collections
 - Emergency drill with staging area
 - Fire vulnerability
 - Sue Kellerman from PSU and her facilities colleague
 - Tour of BELFOR USA Pittsburgh facilities

Next John and Tom will work on a Preservation Assistance Grant to develop a shared disaster supply cache for the Pittsburgh area. The group also hopes to offer a summer program, as well as one later in the fall.

MayDay activities

John Barnett reported that once again, PALCI and the Alliance for Response initiative would be promoting the MayDay effort. Held on May 1 of each year, MayDay encourages libraries and other cultural heritage institutions to “do one thing” for disaster preparedness. MayDay activities are sponsored by Heritage Preservation, Belfor Property Restoration, and other members of the Heritage Emergency National Task Force.

As May 1 is often a busy time for academic libraries, PALCI has taken to encouraging its members to use the day to report on activities for disaster preparedness that they have held throughout the year.

Libraries can also use the initiative to take one day out of the year (in May or another, more convenient month) to carry disaster preparedness activities.

Heritage Preservation, in cooperation with Gaylord, is once again providing a number of prizes to those who submit reports on their MayDay activities. Reports are due to Heritage Preservation by May 21, 2010.

PALCI will also offer a prize or prizes to select participants among its membership or among those who participate in the AFR effort in Pittsburgh, Philadelphia, or Central Pennsylvania.

John reported that last year 6 PALCI libraries reported on MayDay activities. He is hoping to increase that number, especially among those who participated in the disaster preparedness training workshops offered by PALCI during 2009-2010.

For more information about MayDay, visit the Heritage Preservation MayDay website:

<http://www.heritagepreservation.org/programs/TFlessons/MayDay.html>

Disaster preparedness training

John Barnett gave a brief report on PALCI's disaster preparedness training activities during 2009-2010. PALCI has received a Library Services and Technology Act (LSTA) grant, administered through the Office of Commonwealth Libraries, to conduct six regional disaster preparedness training sessions across Pennsylvania during 2009-2010. Tom Claerson of LYRASIS was contracted to conduct the sessions.

The following sessions were held as part of the grant:

- September 29, Duquesne University, Pittsburgh
- October 13, Allegheny College, Meadville
- October 23, Lycoming College, Williamsport
- March 12, St. Joseph's University, Philadelphia
- March 15, Lafayette College, Easton
- March 16, Millersville University, Millersville

PALCI also supplied its members with disaster preparedness training materials, including the Field Guide to Emergency Response and the Emergency Response and Salvage Wheel. Additional training materials have been posted to the PALCI website.

During the final quarter of the grant, PALCI will encourage its members to participate in MayDay activities and host a planning meeting to plot future disaster preparedness educational opportunities.