

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- Gulf Coast Oil Spill Response
- "I Care for Animals" Car Tag Program
- Large Animal Registry
- MART's Role in Animal Seizures



Training Makes a Strong Team

The Mississippi Animal Response Team's logo includes the words: Serving, Protecting, Educating. These are strong words; therefore, we must be a strong team.

MART has a tremendous responsibility. We are Mississippi's official coordination and response team for disasters involving animals and agriculture. We are the "go to" guys during these emergency situations.

MART is considered an "all-hazard" team. We respond to any type of disaster, natural (hurricanes, tornados) or man-made (terrorist attacks). Disaster animal response courses can be found nationwide and online; however, we are always excited to have quality training available in our own state.

In October, a Technical Large Animal Emergency Rescue Awareness Course will be held in Raymond. Registration for this top-rated course is only \$25, which is an unbelievably low price. A course description is listed at the bottom of this page.

Other training coming soon, includes Pet First Aid. Dr. Brigid Elchos and I are enhancing the American Red Cross' Pet First Aid course with more hands-on training. These classes should be rolled out before the end of the year.

I hope many of you are able to take advantage of these training opportunities.

Serving, Protecting, Educating. Strong words, for a strong team.

Beth Adcock
MART Coordinator

October 30th-31st—

Technical Large Animal Emergency Rescue (TLAER) Awareness Course - Raymond, MS

TLAER as a 'Specialty Form of Rescue' is a new idea. And this does NOT refer to 'rescue' of neglected, starving or abused animals – although many of the techniques may be utilized on those types of scenes. The goal of TLAER is to improve the standard of care for large animal victims while improving the safety margin for well meaning emergency responders.

The course is sponsored by the Mississippi State University College of Veterinary Medicine and Extension Service, Mississippi Office of Homeland Security, and the Mississippi Animal Response Team. The registration fee is \$25, and seating is limited. A registration form will soon be online at www.cvm.msstate.edu. Until that time, email beth@mdac.state.ms.us and a form will be sent your way.

Many Agencies Assist with Oil Spill

The Mississippi Board of Animal Health has been actively contributing, collecting and disseminating information regarding the Gulf Coast oil spill and the wildlife aspects of the response. **While the response has been challenging, the wildlife rehabilitation efforts in Mississippi have been very successful.**

To date, 16 wildlife paraprofessionals have assisted at the Wildlife Rehabilitation Center (WRC) in Gulfport. Six of the 16 have been MART members, and most were contracted for multiple deployments. The WRC has tentatively scheduled demobilization for the end of September.

As a result of the participation of Mississippians in this response, BP donated \$5,000 to the Mississippi Animal Disaster Relief Fund to cover continuing costs.

For more information about the ongoing response efforts, visit www.RestoreTheGulf.gov. Federal response activities can be found at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/deepwater-bp-oil-spill>.

Brigid Elchos, DVM
Deputy State Veterinarian
State Public Health Veterinarian

The Mississippi State University Extension Service (MSU-ES) and the Mississippi Agricultural Forestry Experiment Stations (MAFES) assisted with the oil spill response on the Mississippi Gulf Coast. MSU-ES and MAFES provided personnel to assist wildlife transport from Mississippi beaches to the Wildlife Rehabilitation Center in Gulfport.



MISSISSIPPI STATE
UNIVERSITY
EXTENSION SERVICE

A total of 44 employees from the two agencies completed Hazmat Awareness Technician training and BP Hazmat training. The employees also received training on proper animal handling and chain of custody procedures.

Once training was complete, five strike teams were formed. These teams were divided by the area of the state in which they work and live (Southeast Region, Northeast Region, Campus, Southwest Region, and Northwest Region). Each region was assigned a team leader who was responsible for putting together two-person teams.

Once on the coast, the teams were paired with the MS Department of Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks (MDWFP) personnel. The MDWFP personnel were responsible for the capture of wildlife, and the MSU-ES and MAFES personnel were responsible for transportation of the wildlife to the Wildlife Rehabilitation in Gulfport. Teams worked from 6 a.m. - 6 p.m. seven days a week. MSU-ES and MAFES have had a total of 25 personnel who worked on the coast June 30th thru August 18th, resulting in 600 man hours of work with the oil spill clean-up.

Elmo Collum
Extension Associate for Disaster Response
MSU Extension Service

MART Member Works at Rehab Center



As a new graduate of the College of Veterinary Medicine, any experience I partake in during my first year as a veterinarian is a learning opportunity and a chance to improve my veterinary skills. But **deploying to the Mississippi Wildlife Rehabilitation Center in Gulfport for the British Petroleum Oil Spill Response was an experience I will never forget.** Although our veterinary education briefly covers poultry, rarely do we interact with wild bird species. It was a remarkable experience assessing, monitoring, and providing intensive care to the many species of birds at the Rehab Center.

During animal “intake” (whenever a captured bird was brought into the center), a physical examination of the bird was performed and essential medical records were documented. It was really awesome to learn the physical exam technique for birds to where I was confidently diagnosing issues. A physical exam technique for any animal is a learned skill that comes with practice. By the fourth day, I was able to diagnose a luxating elbow by both visual assessment of a dropped wing and manual palpation of the joint.

The majority of the time at the center was spent performing basic intensive care responsibilities including medication administration, changing bedding, and feedings; however, few situations called for more intensive monitoring such as daily blood work. Time was spent each day to fully assess the health status and needs of each bird.

The volunteers at the center were from all different locations including Delaware, California, and Mississippi; and, all were working for a common goal and with passion no matter what their background.

Although we never wish for disasters, I was fortunate to have had the opportunity to respond on the Gulf Coast to this one. This experience allowed me to further expand my disaster response skills, but also to learn new skills in the area of avian medicine.

Without my involvement with the Mississippi Animal Response Team (MART), I would not have been exposed to this opportunity.

Katie Leech Ebers, DVM
MSU -CVM, Graduate Research Associate

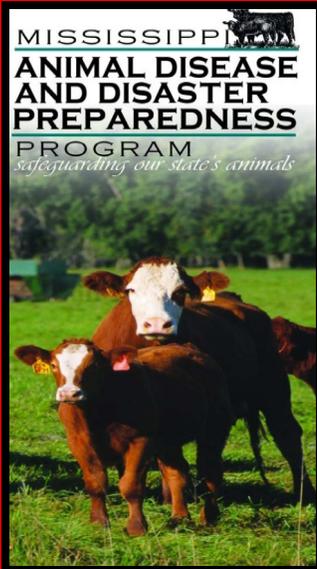


MART members, Michelle and Louis Lombas from Pike County, worked several weeks with Tri-State Bird Rescue at the Wildlife Rehabilitation Center in Gulfport.

They had the exciting experience of participating in a bird release. Tri-State transported birds from the Rehab Center to the Gulfport beaches, where the birds were released into the wild. This photo shows Michelle and Louis releasing a Laughing Gull.

“The training and skills we learned through this experience at the Rehab Center were just out of this world! We had an awesome experience that we will never forget.” -Michelle Lombas

MBAH Coordinates Preparedness Program



The Mississippi Animal Disease and Disaster Preparedness Program is vital to have in place during a natural disaster or animal disease outbreak. The program opens communication lines between large animal owners and the Mississippi Board of Animal Health (MBAH). This communication allows both parties to exchange needed information during emergency situations, ensuring the negative impacts of a disaster are alleviated.

The program consists of a confidential interactive registry of large animal owners. Registry information submitted by the owner includes: name, location, and species of animals on the farm. Owners of all livestock species and all size farms are participating in the program.

The registry enables the MBAH to contact large animal owners before a natural disaster, such as a hurricane, or immediately following a natural disaster, such as a tornado. The MBAH is also able to provide information to large animal owners during an animal disease outbreak.

The Mississippi Animal Disease and Disaster Preparedness Program has been promoted across the state of Mississippi at Cattlemen's meetings, trade shows, field days, and various horse shows. Also, through a joint effort of the MBAH and the MSU Extension Service, brochures and posters have been placed in all Extension offices and stockyards, as well as many feed stores and cooperatives. As more people become aware of the program, participation will increase and more communities will benefit from the protection it can offer.



The program's database is housed at the MBAH and is updated as new registrations are received. A combination of the database and GIS technology, helps the MBAH identify farms affected during a natural disaster or animal disease outbreak. Due to this efficient processing of information, the MBAH is able to allocate resources in the most effective manner. Anyone interested in more information about the program should email jesse@mdac.state.ms.us.

Jesse Carter
Animal Health Programs Coordinator

Humorous reasons not to train a dog...

- Like to see the paw prints on my visitors' clothes
- The house is too orderly
- Love the sound of barking morning, noon, afternoon, evening, and night
- Want the Vet to get a new BMW
- Garden and backyard need renovation, don't want to pay a gardener
- Furniture looks too nice
- Neighbors don't complain enough



“I Care” Program Covers the Entire State



In 2009, a national animal welfare organization provided research indicating **approximately 109,000 animals enter Mississippi animal shelters each year with 73,000 of those animals being euthanized.** This research is a prime example of the need for the “I Care for Animals” car tag program.

The “I Care for Animals” program allows Mississippians to purchase a specialty license plate for an additional fee. Money from each of the “I Care” specialty tags is deposited into a special fund under the management of the Mississippi Board of Animal Health (MBAH).

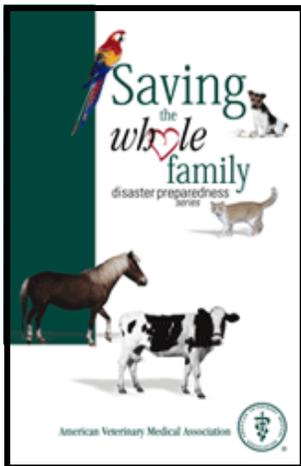
City and county animal shelters, private animal shelters, and humane organizations submit grant applications to the MBAH requesting “I Care” funds. Each application is reviewed by a panel consisting of animal welfare people from around the state. The panel recommends qualified applicants to the MBAH. If the Board accepts the recommendations, money from the “I Care” fund is allocated to the grantees for animal programs, with a special emphasis on spay and neuter initiatives.

The “I Care” fund has helped homeless, injured and abused animals in shelters and humane organizations across the state. **All of Mississippi’s 82 counties have been assisted through this program.** Since 2004, when the first “I Care” grant was awarded, over \$340,000 has been distributed to organizations for spay/neuter and other animal welfare related programs.

City and county animal shelters, private animal shelters, and humane organizations from the State of Mississippi are welcome to apply for “I Care” funds. For details on the program please contact Beth Adcock at beth@mdac.state.ms.us or look online at www.mbah.state.ms.us.



Tornadoes, hurricanes, floods, fires, blizzards, terrorism...



Devastating natural and man-made disasters can ravage our lives. No one is exempt from the possibility of being affected personally. You need to prepare for yourself and for your animals in case of disaster.

The American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) has developed a booklet “Saving the Whole Family” to help you avoid having to leave your animals stranded in the event of a disaster or an evacuation. This booklet is an excellent resource, and can be downloaded at http://www.avma.org/disaster/saving_family.asp.

Countless times people have been told to leave their homes for a "short time," only to find they cannot return for days or weeks. Even disasters like gas leaks and minor flooding can keep you from tending to your animals for extended periods of time. To prevent situations such as these **take your animals with you.**

MART's Role in Animal Seizures

MART members,

Several times this year I have sent informational emails to all of you concerning animal seizures around the state. Since January, animals have been removed from at least two puppy mills, a city shelter and two private sanctuaries.

Many of you responded to the animal seizures; and, I have heard wonderful comments about the assistance you offered to the local humane organizations, the local governments and the national humane organizations who were involved in these incidents.

These activities brought up questions from several of you concerning MART's role in animal seizures. **MART can deploy to assist companion animals and livestock during disasters when the MS Board of Animal Health is tasked to do so by the Governor or the Mississippi Emergency Management Agency.** MART is under the direction and control of the Executive Director/State Veterinarian of the MBAH, Dr. Jim Watson. **MART cannot deploy for non-declared disaster incidents involving companion animals because the MBAH does not have any statutory authority in this area.** However, MART can distribute information and coordinate resources as needed for most animal-related incidents.

The MBAH realizes you may be interested in assisting with animal seizures and the training you receive to respond to declared disasters can be used in non-declared disasters. As a trained MART member, you are extremely important to local communities because of your ability to safely and competently respond to all types of animal response events.

Regardless of whether you officially respond to a disaster as part of MART, or whether you participate in a local animal response, please let me know so I can add the experience to your MART file.

I appreciate all of you. Your willingness to help animals and communities around the state does not go unnoticed.

Beth Adcock
MART Coordinator

MART members are required to take ICS-100, ICS-200 and ICS-700. These independent study classes are free and are available online at <http://training.fema.gov/IS/crslist.asp>.

Other recommended ICS classes are 10 and 11.

Please send a copy of your class certificates to beth@mdac.state.ms.us.

HINT: Start now keeping a binder of your certificates. You may be asked for this binder when responding to disasters with other organizations.



Mississippi Board of Animal Health

P.O. Box 3889

Jackson, MS 39207

Phone—601-359-1170

Fax—601-359-1177

Dr. Jim Watson, State Veterinarian

jimw@mdac.state.ms.us

Dr. Brigid Elchos, Deputy State Veterinarian

brigid@mdac.state.ms.us

Preparedness Before the Disaster



A few tips from the American Veterinary Medical Association's "Saving the Whole Family" booklet:

◆Make copies of registration information, adoption papers, proof of purchase, and microchip information to store in an evacuation kit. List each one of your animals and their species, breed, age, sex, color, and distinguishing characteristics.

◆Keep current photographs of your animals in the evacuation kit for identification purposes. **Be sure to include yourself in some of the photos to help you reclaim your lost animal.**

◆If your pet has a microchip, call the microchip company to register the pet's information BEFORE a disaster happens. Remember to keep your contact information up to date with the microchip company.

www.mbah.state.ms.us



Mississippi Board of Animal Health

P.O. Box 3889

Jackson, MS 39207

**Want to help animals
during times of disaster?
Join MART!**