



FEMA

Briefly

Region V Newsletter

Combined Federal Campaign Tops 2003 Goal

The Combined Federal Campaign of 2003 closed Dec. 12, with total contributions from Region V employees of \$15,802.

Staff participation was up sharply as the Region exceeded its goal of \$13,360 for 2003. The increased participation in pledges and money raised from a pancake breakfast represented a 4000% increase from 2002, including a 7% increase in the number of donors.

The CFC committee was chaired by Alyce Williams. Others serving on this year's committee included Bob Courtney, Carl Bebrich, Andy Vlack and Bruce Pfaff.

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Flood Disaster Declared

Major damage in central Ohio counties

A major disaster declaration was issued by President Bush following a review of FEMA's analysis of the state's request for federal relief. The declaration covers damage to private and public property from severe storms, flooding, mud slides and landslides beginning January 3.

Immediately after the declaration, Department of Homeland Security Under Secretary Michael D. Brown designated the counties of Franklin, Jefferson, Licking, Morgan, Ross, Tuscarawas and Washington eligible for aid to affected residents and business owners.

Funds will be provided for the state and affected local governments to pay 75 percent of the eligible cost for repairing or replacing damaged public facilities in the counties of Athens, Belmont, Guernsey, Harrison, Jefferson, Monroe, Morgan, Noble, Perry, Ross, Tuscarawas and Washington.

"Federal funding also will be available to the state on a cost-shared basis for approved projects that reduce future disaster risks," Brown said. He indicated that damage surveys are continuing and additional counties may be designated later, based on the results of the assessments.

Ron Sherman of Region V was designated as Federal Coordinating Officer to coordinate federal recovery operations.

Firefighting Career Influenced By Deadly Blaze

I want to be a policeman. I want to be a doctor. I want to be a fireman.

It is not uncommon for young children to give these answers to the age-old question; what do you want to be when you grow up? It is unusual, however, for five children from the same elementary school to serve distinguished careers in the fire service. Their bond and their destinies were sealed on a cold December day 45 years ago. That day, 92 students and three nuns perished in a blaze that tore through Our Lady of Angels Catholic School on Chicago's west side. The fire was one of the deadliest in city history. Those who remember that fateful day can still recall images of classmates screaming for help and leaping from second floor windows to escape the flames.

The Our Lady of Angels fire made national headlines and sparked important changes in the city's fire ordinances. Among the changes were regulations requiring sprinklers in schools, alarm systems with direct links to the fire department, and buildings constructed with fire resistant materials and layouts. Many of the victims were trapped in second floor classrooms with escape routes blocked by smoke and flames.

For five boys in particular, the images of firefighters valiantly risking their lives to save the children would consciously or otherwise lead them into the firefighting profession. One of those boys was Region V Fire Specialist Steve Dumovich. In 1958, Steve was a seventh grader at Our Lady of Angels. He and his younger brother Joe escaped death and injury in the fire. Authorities later determined the fire had burned undetected for nearly a half hour before smoke and flames raced through the building.

Today Steve Dumovich administers the Region's Fire Grant Program. Steve has been with FEMA since 2002. As part of his assigned duties, he travels throughout the six state region providing training, guidance, and conducting information workshops about the grant program to hundreds of fire departments. His conscientious dedication to the fire service is widely known by those he has come in contact with, although few people are aware of his link to the Our Lady of Angels tragedy.

Dumovich joined FEMA following a distinguished firefighting career during which he served in various capacities, working his way to the rank of Deputy Chief in Mount Prospect. Before joining FEMA, he served as Chief of the Wilmette Fire Department. Steve became a firefighter in the early 1970's after serving in the Marine Corps in Vietnam. "Something like the fire is naturally going to influence you from then on," Steve said. "It was certainly an important part of my decision to become a firefighter." The chance to help others the way he saw Chicago firefighters help his Our Lady of Angels classmates also drew Steve to the job.

In addition to Steve, several of his classmates also became career firefighters. His brother Joe recently retired after 27 years with the Des Plaines Fire Department, where he was Deputy Chief. Jim Saletta worked 22 years as an Elgin Firefighter before becoming Fire Chief of Huntley. Classmate Michael Mason is a Lieutenant in the Downers Grove Fire Department. Kenneth Leonard, another Our Lady of Angels survivor is retired Deputy Chief of the Oak Lawn Fire Department.

Within three months of the Our Lady of Angels fire, the building was demolished and reconstructed. A new school opened in 1960 and remained at the site until 1999, when it closed due to declining enrollment.

For Steve Dumovich and his four classmates, the fire shaped their life's work which would be dedicated to prevention, protection and fighting fires. "For the people who were there it was a pivotal event," Steve said. "You could call it a defining moment in our young lives."



FEMA Region V Fire Specialist Steve Dumovich (right) inspects equipment with firefighter Joe North of Footville, Wisconsin. Dumovich's career in the fire service spans over 30 years.

Planning Reduces Cost, Heartache Of Flooding For Indiana Town

When torrential rains pour from the sky and rivers rush over their banks, people often feel at the mercy of nature. But planning, determination and months of hard work can often reduce or prevent the high cost and heartache of flood damages. Just ask city planners and residents of Kokomo, Indiana. Two flood events within a year convinced the City of Kokomo and some flooded residents to take action. With the help of the Indiana State Emergency Management Agency Mitigation Officer, city leaders responded by applying for federal funds for an acquisition project.

The first step taken by the acquisition project manager, Debra Cook, who is the planner for the City of Kokomo Department of Development, was to study the requirements for the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program and develop a manual of Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) for the city's Flood Hazard Mitigation Demolition and Acquisition Program. Creating the SOP ensured that Cook and other City decision-makers understood the grant program at the outset. The SOP outlined all the steps required to ensure there would be no surprises about deadlines, administration and funding requirements as the project progressed. The time line Cook developed was crucial to managing the expectations of residents concerning the process and length of time a buy out program may take.



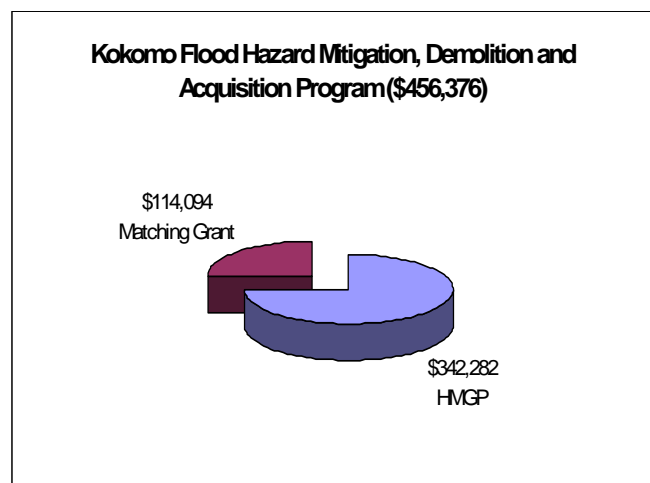
Five structures were removed from this Kokomo, Indiana area as a result of the buy out.

Various components need to come together to build a successful acquisition program: funding sources, political and administrative leadership, and, especially, willing residents. With the 2000 flood event fresh in everyone's mind, the city conducted a survey of residents regarding interest in a buy out.

The results, combined with the City's evaluations of past damage and information on repetitive damage from the National Flood Insurance Program, helped to identify structures eligible for the buy out. Interested residents living in the flood-prone areas attended a public meeting and were thoroughly briefed on the buy out process. The advance planning opened lines of communication with all participants and assured the success of the program.

Another round of rains and flooding hit the city in 2003, but this time Kokomo was prepared. The success of the acquisition program has been demonstrated in the satisfaction of the buy out participants and in the cost savings of flood recovery and repair.

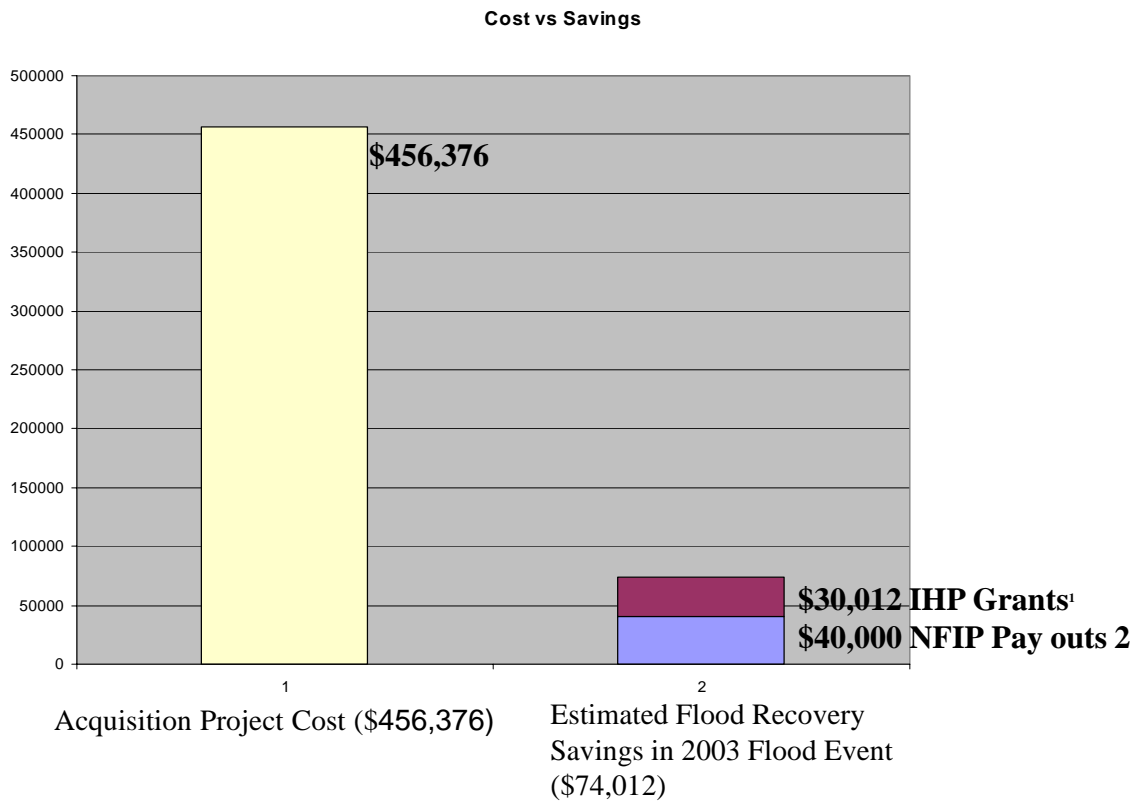
With the planning and experience gained in the initial phases, city leaders look forward to a smooth process in the next phase as they apply for HMGP funds to continue their flood hazard mitigation plan. The city's vision of a creek-side green space with a floodwater-holding retention pond, park and walking path to replace the deteriorating, unsafe flood-damaged houses is getting much closer to being a reality.



“It’s not just about facts and figures, it’s about the lives of these people.”

Cynthia Dunlap
Director Dept. of Development

Acquisition Cost vs. Estimated Recovery Savings from single flood event



¹Grants from FEMA’s Individuals and Households Program to Howard County flood victims in 2003 averaged \$3,092. That figure can be multiplied by 11, for the number of homes that were bought out, to give an estimated savings in recovery costs.

²The average payout per past flood event to the two NFIP policyholders who participated in the buy out was \$20,000.

Managers Hone Leadership Skills

On January 12 -13, Roger Herman and Joyce Gioia of the Herman Group conducted a day and a half training program for the region's managers. The course was entitled **Enlightened Leadership: Creating Excelling Performance**. Topics addressed included internal and external environment, today's workforce, the workforce of the future, what followers want in a leader and qualities of leadership.



Quarterly RISC Meeting Covers Multiple Topics

The Quarterly Regional Interagency Steering Committee (RISC) meeting was held at the Region offices January 21-22. The meeting focused on many topics of interest to the states and regional partners. During the opening session, Rob Hoffman of World Business Chicago provided a briefing on the Great Lakes Area Infrastructure protection status. Project SAFECOM (Interoperable Wireless Communications) was presented by David Boyd, Ph.D. Mr. Boyd is the Program Manager for Science and Technology Directorate of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). The day's final presentation was by Richard L. Jaehne, Director Illinois Fire Service Institute, who discussed Illinois' approach to Homeland Security in the state's 19 regions.

The second day of the RISC meeting featured briefings and presentations on the Emergency Management Accreditation Program (EMAP), the role of U.S. Department of Agriculture, U.S. NORTHCOM Joint Regional Medical Planning Program, National Disaster Medical System, and Metropolitan Medical Response System. The E Team Crisis Management provided a presentation on Collaborative Software for Crisis Management and Region staff provided Urban Search and Rescue, and Remedial Action Management Program (RAMP) updates.



Region V managers listen intently to instructor Roger Herman (above left). Training for all managers focused on developing leadership skills.

New FCO Named



Lee Champagne

Lee W. Champagne was recently selected to serve as a Federal Coordinating Officer (FCO) for the region, with overall responsibility for the coordination of Federal assets deployed to aid the victims and affected communities in the six state region and other locations as assigned.

Prior to his FEMA position, Champagne was a Senior Program Manager with the Defense Contracting firms of MAI and KPMG, LLP. He also was an officer with the U.S. Navy for more than 28 years, retiring in 1998 at the rank of Captain.

During his distinguished Navy career, his responsibilities ranged from command at-sea and ashore, to operational and intelligence assignments in crisis management positions, preparation and planning for and directing emergency response and recovery operations.

Champagne holds a Bachelor of Art's degree in Communications from Oregon State University. He is a graduate of the Naval Post Graduate School in Monterey, CA and holds a Masters Degree in Naval Intelligence /National Security Affairs. A native of New Orleans, LA, he currently resides in Chicago with his wife, Jonelle.

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News Around The Region

Woodie Curtis Retires

The Region bid farewell to one of its senior managers this month when Technical Services Branch Chief Woodie Curtis announced his retirement effective January 28. Woodie's federal career spans more than 27 years, and includes service in the U.S. Air Force, American Red Cross and FEMA. The Region V family expresses its gratitude to Woodie for his years of dedicated service and we wish him well in his retirement.

DHS Partners Meet

On Thursday, January 8 the region hosted a DHS partnership meeting with several Chicago area DHS partners. Jeanne Clark, TSA Director for Midway Airport provided the attendees with a briefing on her organization, responsibilities challenges. Region staff provided a COOP briefing. The meeting was a continuation of a series of meeting held last year to strengthen communication between DHS organizations within the region.

RAMP Training

On January 14-15, Region staff conducted training on a Remedial Action Management Program (RAMP) course for Region staff. The class included an actual RAMP facilitation that hotwashed Region V activities in support of the ERT-A deployment to Guam in November 2003.

Scouts Honor Region

On January 22, Jim Duncan attended a Boy Scouts of America (BSA) Appreciation Dinner in Downers Grove, IL. FEMA Region V was recognized by the scouts for our support of the Scout Preparedness Drill held at Hines Veterans Administration Hospital last October. Region staff provided a booth with Citizen Preparedness materials, gave briefings, and helped organize the drill along with local first responders and other federal and county agencies.