

**Damascus Emergency Preparedness Team
Meeting of 21 March 05**

During the last meeting there was discussion regarding the establishment of a more formal structure for DEPT, and a report prepared by George Moy was read that addressed this issue. Because of a busy agenda, action was tabled until the next meeting.

Chair reported on a meeting with Chief Long of the Damascus Volunteer Fire Department (DVFD) at which plans were made for a presentation to be given to the DVFD Board on April 4 by Doug Noble on the Damascus Emergency Community Communications Network (DECN). This will be the first step of a process that should result in DECEN equipment being installed... and possibly includes a 400MHz repeater that has been offered (at no cost) by a local amateur radio operator (HAM). The DECEN web site can be seen at:

<http://hometown.aol.com/duganbuddy/myhomepage/index.html>

Paul Laing reported on attendance at the last Montgomery County CERT meeting as well as on the 5th District Police Advisory Board... on which he sits. He suggested DEPT involvement in the Damascus Safety Day to be held at the Damascus Community Recreation Center on April 30... and John Miller was tasked to act as liaison. The next CERT meeting/exercise will be at station 31 in Darnestown on the 14 April and will cover Urban Search and Rescue.

Tom Smith, President of Montgomery County CERT, was introduced by Paul Laing and spoke at length regarding plans and goals for the upcoming year... plans for a mock call out in April... a possible CERT exercise in May... and incident management training. There was general discussion on how both organizations could cooperate and mutually support each other.

There was discussion on using the opportunity of Damascus Days to involve the general community in a disaster simulation using Damascus United Methodist Church (DUMC) as a shelter as well as the Open House at the Damascus Fire Station to demonstrate emergency support capabilities to the local population. Approval by DUMC and DVFD are pending. Chief Long also sits on the planning committee for the Damascus Days event and will help coordinate with them DEPT plans to incorporate some sort of community training and awareness exercise into this community event. Bob Gladhill will sit on this planning committee representing DEPT and Ken Phillips will coordinate through the Lions Club.

Julie Sain reported on the National Humane Society course she took on the emergency sheltering of animals in disaster. Taught by professionals with extensive experience, much of the practical class training utilized case studies and stories from the recent Florida hurricane experience. One of her missions was to be able to report to local churches the advisability or not of including pets in the church's shelter operations... and her opinion was basically favorable to this. Julie was in Florida during the hurricanes and had a chance to witness disaster recovery and relief operations first hand. She has prepared a report that will be read at the next meeting.

Tom Smith reported that under Kathy Henning's tenure as Montgomery County Emergency Management Director that an "annex" was prepared to the County EOP (Emergency Operations Plan) that spelled out the benefits of people activated by Maryland VOAD (Voluntary Organizations Active in Disasters). Such volunteers would be administratively covered by the Montgomery County Volunteer Center and thus qualify for Workman's Compensation should they be injured while responding to an emergency or disaster. The status of this annex is unclear following the County reorganization with a new County Department of Homeland Security... and he will seek to have this clarified and on the record.

Chair reported on the Good Heart Program and how the various churches are progressing. The April 8 meeting between Damascus clergy and County officials organized by Rev. Walt Edmonds continues to grow as Cathy Matthews puts together an agenda.

During the meeting Paul Laing circulated a personal disaster kit that was amazingly complete that he found at Costco for \$19.95. In fact... the kit was so impressive in both cost and completeness that it was suggested that it might be used as a fundraiser for DEPT. Frank Jacob volunteered to call Costco to investigate donation/cost possibilities.

Doug Noble had on hand a two person 72-hour kit (complete with tent) that was also impressive in its completeness... and provided the web site from which he purchased it:

[*Earthquake Survival Kit, Executive
<i>w/ Solar Radio Upgrade Nitro-Pak.com The World Leader in Innovative & Affordable Pr..](#)

http://www.nitro-pak.com/product_info.php/cPath/188/products_id/929

Doug had also prepared a video presentation of HAM radio volunteers operating in a disaster... but as time ran out this was deferred until next week.