


**Introductions**  
Moderator: Dr. Tamra Walthall




- Small animal practice owner in Waco, TX for >30 years
- Shelter Vet for Humane Society of Central Texas
- Advisor & Spay-Neuter Vet for Waco Humane Soc.
- Co-Founder and long time Chair of TVMA Shelter Medicine Committee
- Waco Animal Control Board Member
- Coordinator for TVMA Operation Reunite (2017)
  - Provided foster homes for animals owned by people displaced by Hurricane Harvey, with intent to reunite

**Introductions**  
Panelist: Dr. Aaron Rainer



- Masters of Public Health 2006
- Small animal veterinarian, practice owner, emergency clinic partner
- TVMA President (2018)
- Awards
  - 12 Under 12 Young Alumni Spotlight (TAMU Assoc Former Students)
  - Rising Star Award (TAMU-CVM)
  - Recent Graduate Practitioner of the Year (TVMA)
  - Buck Weirus Spirit Award for Outstanding Contributions to Student Life Programs (TAMU)

**Introductions**  
Panelist: Dr. Dawn Blackmar



- Dir of Emergency Mgt - HSPCA
- Certificate of Homeland Security Texas A&M (2008)
- Director of Veterinary Public Health for 26 years at Harris County Shelter (Hurricanes Katrina, Rita & Ike)
- Chair – Harris County Disaster Animal Management Committee
- TVMA Disaster Preparedness Committee
- First Responder for Hurricane Harvey
- Coordinator for TVMA Operation Reunite (2017)
  - Provided foster homes for animals owned by people displaced by Hurricane Harvey, with intent to reunite

**Introductions**  
Panelist: Dr. Susan Culp



- 12 years private veterinary practice
- Texas Animal Health Commission (TAHC) – Staff Veterinarian
- TVMA Disaster Preparedness Committee
- City of Austin Community Emergency Response Team (CERT)
- TVMA Recent Graduate Practitioner of the year (2005), SWVS Visionary Award (2014)
- Emergency Management Association of Texas Community Service Award for DPS Region 6

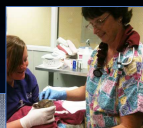
**Introductions**  
Panelist: Dr. Wesley Bissett



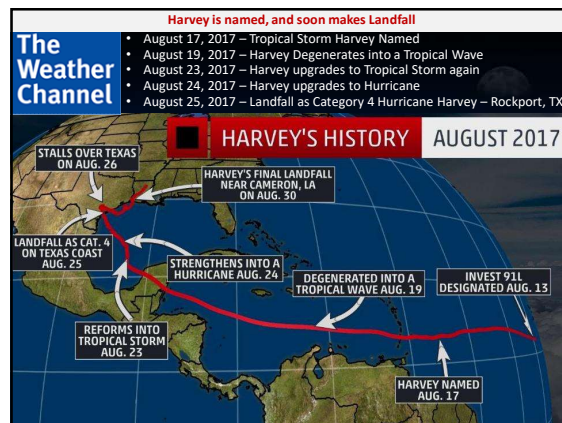
- Associate Professor of Emergency Management – Texas A&M University College of Veterinary Medicine
- Director – VET Emergency Team (TAMU-CVM)
  - Deploys veterinary aid teams to disaster sites
- Education outreach to local governments to develop emergency response standard operating guidelines
- Research projects focused on disaster preparedness and response

## Introductions

Panelist: Dr. Shawn Ashley



- Companion animal veterinarian for 15 years prior to receiving Masters in Microbiology (2009) and then pursuing Shelter Medicine
- Shelter Vet for SPCA of Texas & Humane Society of North Texas
- Animal Cruelty Investigator & Rescue Center Vet
- TVMA Shelter Medicine Committee Founder and current Co-Chair
- Community Animal Response Team (CART) Mega Shelter Shelter for Hurricane Harvey



## Harvey Hits Rockport, TX

Category 4 Hurricane  
130 mph winds



- Port Aransas, Rockport, Copano Village and Lamar All have winds >100 mph
- Widespread destruction of buildings
- Storm surge and rain produced flooding of 6-10 feet
- Port Lavaca, Port Aransas, Seadrift and Manchester had record high water

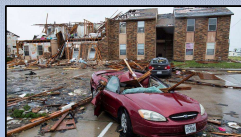
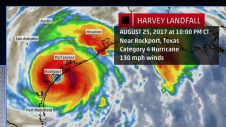
## Harvey Hits Rockport, TX

Category 4 Hurricane  
130 mph winds



## Harvey Hits Rockport, TX

Category 4 Hurricane  
130 mph winds



## Question #1

Dr. Aaron Rainer



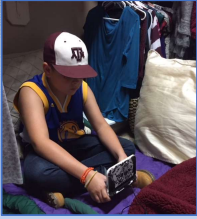
What are best practices for engaging local practitioners in the disaster relief system?

What role should the private practitioner expect to play in first response, and in response to the disaster aftermath?


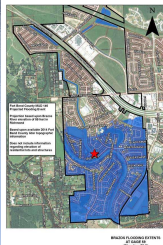


**Question #1**  
Dr. Aaron Rainer

>50 Tornado Warnings



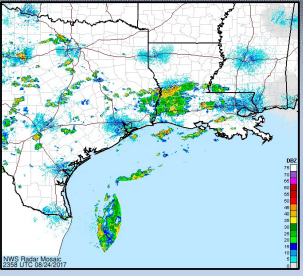

**Question #1**  
Dr. Aaron Rainer


Rainer Home  
1000 year  
Flood Plain

**Harvey Hits Louisiana**  
Tropical Storm  
and then the SE United States

**Harvey**  
8 day Animation




**Question #1**  
Dr. Dawn Blackmar


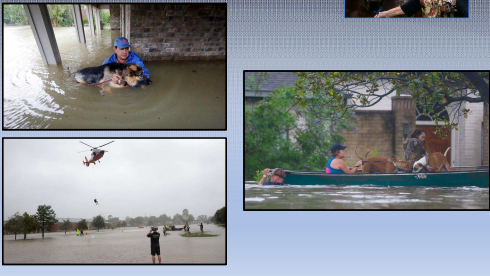


What resources are available to facilitate rescue of animals \*with their owners\* from areas affected by natural disasters?



How are those with animals in need of emergency sheltering notified of where to go to find needed shelter that is "animal friendly"?



**Question #1**  
Dr. Dawn Blackmar

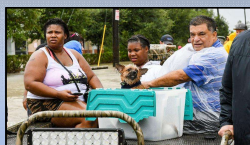



**Question #1**  
Dr. Dawn Blackmar

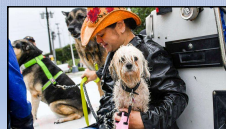
### Question #1

Dr. Dawn Blackmar



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### Question #1

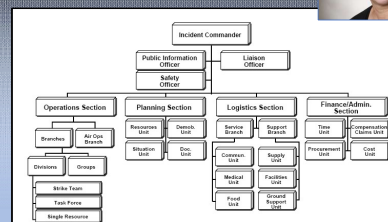
Dr. Susan Culp



Dr. Culp, please set the stage for the emergency needs for landfall of a major hurricane

- What are greatest needs that the deployed responder teams will need to meet, and how are those needs identified?
- What are the greatest anticipated challenges to meeting those needs?

### ICS = Incident Command System



If the State Emergency Council cannot fill a request for help, they may turn to FEMA (Federal Emergency Management Agency) or nearby states for help.

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### Question #1

Dr. Susan Culp



August 23 – TAHC activates to Level III  
at SOC and DDC levels (Harvey re-upgraded to Tropical Storm)

- *Level III* = day-to-day "blue skies" activities performed by disaster preparedness responders
  - Monitoring local and regional events
  - Collaboration with partners to develop plans and conduct training
- *SOC* – State Operations Center
- *DDC* – Disaster District Committee

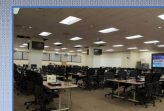
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### Question #1

Dr. Susan Culp



August 23 – TAHC activates to Level III



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**Question #1**

Dr. Susan Culp

**August 28 – TAHC activates AROCC**

- AROCC = Animal Response Operations Coordination Center
- Dr. Culp led Small Animal Branch and Zoo Branch
- Field staff regularly check with local sale barns, Expo Centers, etc., who are willing to provide emergency sheltering
- TAHC, AgriLife and NGO Partners helped coordinate
- NGO = Non-Governmental Organizations
- AROCC de-activated September 11

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**Question #1**

Dr. Susan Culp

**September 2 – Previous members of TXSART began daily Situational Awareness Calls at 7am**

- TAHC = Texas Animal Health Commission
- USDA (US Dept of Agriculture) Animal Care and Veterinary Services
- TAMU VET = Texas A&M University Vet Emergency Team
- TX VMRC = Texas Veterinary Medical Response Coalition
- TBVME = Texas Board of Veterinary Medical Examiners
- TVMA = Texas Veterinary Medical Association
- NARSC Members = National Animal Rescue and Sheltering Coalition (ASPCA, Cods 3 Associates)
- Greater Good, Rescue Bank – animal food pantry
- Houston SPCA, Austin Humane Society, City of Irving
- Katie Eick, DVM – South by South Vets

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**Question #2**

Dr. Susan Culp



How do affected communities and disaster victims go about requesting help? Explain the STAR process (State of Texas Assistance Request)

What do they need to do to maximize the benefit of that help?

How can affected communities best help themselves?

**Question #1 Large Animal Sheltering**

Dr. Wesley Bissett



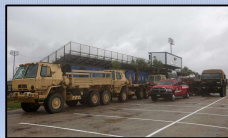
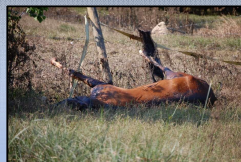
What are best practices for identifying large animals (horses, cattle, etc.) in need of emergency sheltering?

What are the resources for collecting, transporting and providing emergency shelter for those animals?

What are best practices for ensuring return of those animals to their owners?

**Question #1 Large Animal Sheltering**

Dr. Wesley Bissett

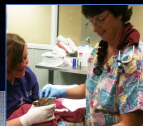
**Question #1 Rescue vs Recovery**

Dr. Wesley Bissett



### Question #1 Remote Shelter Prep

Dr. Shawn Ashley



As an inland disaster shelter who will be dealing with evacuees at the time of landfall and in the coming weeks, how are you notified that you will be asked to manage an evacuee shelter?

What resources do you begin to mobilize immediately, or even before the request?

What training programs are in place at SPCA of Texas?

### Harvey Floods South Texas

Weakening Hurricane  
Tropical Storm



- Harvey stalled in South TX on August 26
- 40-61 inches of rain in SE Texas & Louisiana, from August 26-30
  - All-time US tropical cyclone rainfall records were broken
- Catastrophic and record breaking flooding in Houston, Beaumont and Bastrop County
- Harvey meandered back out into the Gulf

### Harvey Floods South Texas

Houston



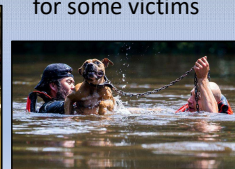
- Harvey was one of the worst weather disasters in US history
- Storm damage was in the billions
- 70% of Harris County was flooded by at least 1.5 feet of water
- By August 31, an estimated 136,000 houses and other buildings were flooded

### Harvey Floods South Texas

Beaumont



- Even the Port Arthur shelter was flooded causing a 2nd evacuation for some victims



### Question #1 Volunteer Options for Vets

Dr. Aaron Rainer



**What can Individual Veterinarians Do to Help?**

- Deploy under a VMAT or CART command
- Foster/House displaced animals
- Provide Emergency Care
- Reunite Pets with Owners
- Volunteer at an Emergency Animal Shelter
- Just Lend an Ear or a Helping Hand

### Question #2 Intake Processing

Dr. Dawn Blackmar

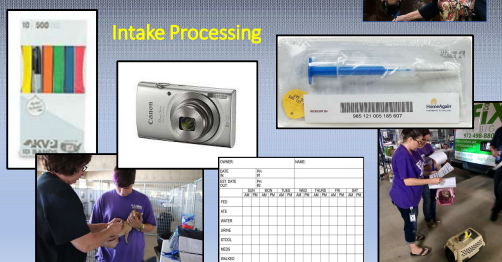


As a local responder in a hurricane prone area, what are best practices for intake processing for animals entering an emergency shelter?



## Question #2 Intake Processing

**Dr. Dawn Blackmar**



## Question #2 Infectious Disease Control

Dr. Wesley Bissett

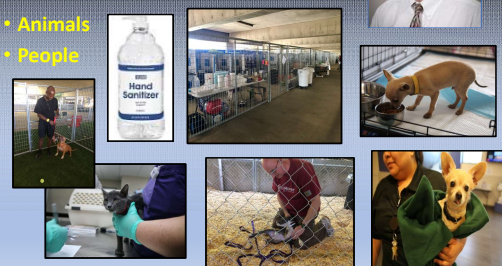


What are best practices for infectious disease control within the shelter?

- Decontamination of animals
- Methods to train and remind people about hand hygiene
- Should animal owners be allowed to care for their own animals?
- Management of animal waste

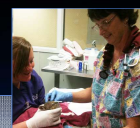
## Question #2 Infectious Disease Control

Dr. Wesley Bissett



## Question #2 Emergency Shelter Sites

**Dr. Shawn Ashley**



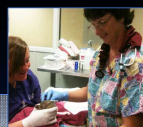
## What are best practices for setting up actual emergency shelter facilities for people and animals?

## What is the ideal disaster animal shelter site?

How long does it take to get needed equipment and supplies in, and then for a well trained staff to set up?

## Question #2 Emergency Shelter Sites

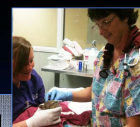
Dr. Shawn Ashley



## Dallas Mega Shelter

## Question #2 Emergency Shelter Sites

**Dr. Shawn Ashley**



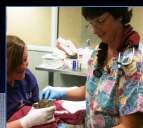
## Dallas Mega Shelter

### Question #2 Emergency Shelter Sites

Dr. Shawn Ashley



Dallas  
Mega  
Shelter



### Harvey Hits Louisiana Tropical Storm

...and then the SE United States

- Many tornadoes in SE Texas, Louisiana, Alabama, Mississippi, Tennessee and North Carolina
- One EF2 was reported near Evangeline, Louisiana during Harvey, which is the strongest known tornado during that hurricane
- On August 31, flash flooding was reported in Arkansas, Kentucky, Mississippi, & Tennessee



### Harvey Hits Louisiana Tropical Storm

...and then the SE United States

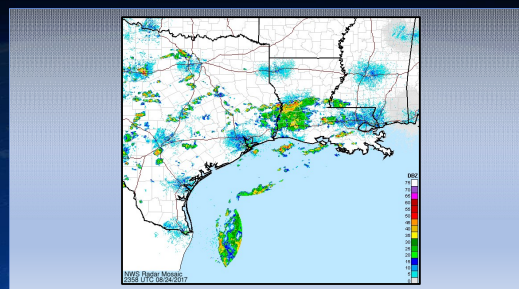
- Harvey remained a named storm for 117 hours, the longest on record
- The previous longest recorded named storm was about half that – 57 hours
- Some victims were evacuated 3x:
  1. To the Port Arthur Shelter which flooded
  2. To the Jasper Shelter which flooded
  3. To the Nacogdoches shelter



### Harvey Hits Louisiana Tropical Storm

...and then the SE United States

#### Harvey 8 day Animation



### Question #3 Shelter Evacuations

Dr. Dawn Blackmar

What methods are used to evacuate Agency owned animals from the disaster area?

- Animals that will be returned after the disaster – parks/zoos, food & working animals, breeders, etc.
- Adoptable shelter owned animals that can be transported out for adoption
  - i.e., to clear shelters to make room for stray animals endangered by the disaster
  - and animals separated from their owners, with intent to house them locally for reclaim



### Question #3 TVMRC

Dr. Susan Culp

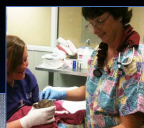


What is the best use of volunteer veterinarians during a disaster? Please Introduce us to the Texas Veterinary Medical Reserve Corps.

How do veterinarians who wish to volunteer actually engage, when trained responders are already deployed?



### Question #3 Red Rover Dr. Shawn Ashley



How are local volunteers and rescue groups selected, trained, deployed and supervised during the first responder effort? Tell us about Red Rover.

What methods are used to keep self-deployed rescue groups focused on local fostering until owner reclaim, rather than immediate transport animals separated from owners to other parts of the country for re-homing?

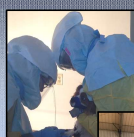
### Question #3 Training Programs Dr. Wesley Bissett



How can local veterinarians and humane workers be of help to the deployed VET Team?

What training programs and screening methods should be in place for local assets?

### Question #3 Veterinary Medical Involvement Dr. Wesley Bissett



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### Question #3 Social Media Dr. Aaron Rainer



How can social media and other online networking resources be used to proactively disseminate important information before, during and after a disaster?

What can be done to minimize false rumors pertaining to the disaster, as things unfold?

### Question #3 Social Media Dr. Aaron Rainer



**Dr. Susan Culp**

What can be done to improve communication before and during a disaster response?

How can social media be used to communicate with self-deploying assets in a disaster response?

What can be done to coordinate top-down messaging, in order to minimize false rumors pertaining to the disaster, as things unfold?

### Question #4 Donations Dr. Dawn Blackmar



What national, state and local grants and other "in kind" resources have been available for those that provide veterinary disaster relief?

- Shelters
- Private practitioners
- Other organizations

#### Question #4 Donations

Dr. Susan Culp



What is the best way to get "in kind" donations to the disaster site (drugs and medical supplies)?

Where should "in kind" donations be delivered?

How can need for supplies be matched up with donated supplies?

What is the best method of communicating to donors the actual supply and drug needs?

#### Question #4 Local Disaster Prep

Panelist: Dr. Wesley Bissett

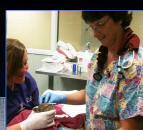


Explain the VET Team educational outreach program for local governments to prepare emergency response standard operating guidelines.

How do local government officials request education and access to resources?

#### Question #4 Extended Stays

Dr. Shawn Ashley



How long should evacuees and their Animals expect to stay in an emergency shelter?

How and when is this expectation communicated to the evacuees?

What happens to animals and people still at the emergency shelter when it closes?

#### Question #4 Operation Reunite

Dr. Aaron Rainer



What were the greatest successes and the greatest challenges of the Hurricane Harvey TVMA "Operation Reunite" program?



#### Question #5 Shelters & Foster Groups (MOU's)

Dr. Dawn Blackmar



What communications and MOUs could be agreed upon between shelters and rescue/foster groups between emergencies that could improve communication and work between these groups during disaster relief efforts?

#### Question #5 ICS & Volunteers (MOU's)

Dr. Susan Culp



What can be done to improve communication between Incident Command and those in need?

Between Incident Command and those deployed/volunteering?

Are there MOUs that could improve this communication? What should they contain?



### Question #5 VET & Local Government

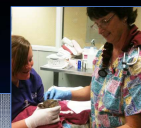
Panelist: Dr. Wesley Bissett



How can the TAMU VET Team better get the word out to municipalities the tools and educational outreach available to them for emergency response?

### Question #5 Chain of Command

Dr. Shawn Ashley



What are the challenges with Chain of Command on the emergency animal shelter, and what are the MOUs that might improve communication and agreement about these conflicts?

- Veterinarians lead humane workers on medical, animal care and sanitation issues
- How to dovetail the human and animal sides of the shelters?

### Question #5 TVMA (MOU's)

Dr. Aaron Rainer



How can TVMA facilitate more effective communication and increased cooperation between the many parties that respond to disasters?

- Federal Government – USDA
- Veterinarians (TVMA members and non-members)
- State Agencies - TAHC, DSHS, TBVME, Legislators, TAMU-CVM
- County and Municipal Governments asked to respond – TX Municipal League?
- Animal Shelters in Texas – private and public, open and limited admission, brick/mortar and foster networks
- Rescue/Foster Groups/Humane workers - grassroots
- Even large national humane lobbying groups? ASPCA, HSUS

### Questions from the Audience???



### Special Thanks

Dr. Nancy Carter  
Official Program Coordinator



- Arlington Animal Services Shelter Vet
- TVMA Board of Directors
- Chair - TVMA Shelter Medicine Committee
- Active in Legislative Issues for TVMA
- President of the Board – Ellis County SPCA
- Instructor – Texas Unites! For Animals

### Special Thanks

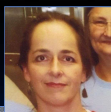
Dr. Kent Glenn  
TX Unites! Program Proposal



- Helped to establish first shelter in Graham, TX
- Evacuated 59 animals from a clinic in New Orleans that were displaced by Hurricane Katrina
  - Brought them to his clinic, treated and groomed them, fostered and reunited with owners
- Shelter Vet – Weatherford, TX
  - Instrumental in transforming his community shelter from 90+% euthanasia to 90+% live release
- Creator of TVMA Operation Reunite (2017)
- TVMA Distinguished Career Achievement Award
- Tarrant County VMA Community Service Award

***Special Thanks***

**Dr. Wendy Blount**  
Program PowerPoint



- Medical Director and Surgeon - low cost spay-neuter Clinics SpayNeuterNac and O'Malley PET
- Faculty Duquesne University – Humane Leadership Program (2007-2014)
- Founder - TVMA Shelter Medicine Committee
- Advisory Boards – Humane Society for Shelter Pets, City of Nacogdoches Health Board, Guanacaste Province (Costa Rica) Animal Welfare Foundation
- TVMA Companion Animal Practitioner of the Year (2012), TACA Bilderback Award (2011), TAVP Clinical Referral & Consultation (2004), TVMA Clinical Resident Award (1997)

A classic Looney Tunes ending screen featuring a series of concentric, glowing orange and red circles that create a tunnel effect. The text "That's all Folks!" is written in a white, cursive script across the center of the circles. The background is a dark blue sky with white clouds.

*That's all Folks!*