

MEMO

From: Savannah Heritage Emergency Response Group (SHER)
Beth Reiter, Chairman

To: Cultural/Historical Site and Institution Community

Date: May 25, 2010

Re: Staffing the Chatham County Emergency Management Agency Emergency Operation Center ESF-11 Workstation in the Event of a Disaster Affecting Cultural Sites.

Background: You are receiving this request as a constituent of the cultural/historical sites, institutions, and collections community within Chatham County. In 2007 local representatives of these institutions began organizing informally to address the needs of these institutions in the event of a major disaster or emergency. 48 institutions comprising 71 sites have been identified and received notification to attend such events as the Alliance for Response Forum in December 2009 and the SHER workshop on Risk Assessment of Cultural Heritage Sites in May of 2010.

In April of 2010 the coalition of Institutions was formally organized as the Savannah Heritage Emergency Response Group (SHER) to assist the Chatham County Emergency Management Agency (CEMA) to better coordinate first responders and cultural collections in the event of a disaster. Hurricane season will open June 1. SHER has been assigned a work station at the Emergency Operation Center (EOC) that we will need to staff if called upon in an emergency activation that affects cultural resources.

I will be a primary contact for SHER, and we need to identify two additional primary contacts who would be willing to man the desk and/or to contact the list of volunteers for shifts. In addition we should have at least 6-9 other names to form a pool of persons willing to staff the desk if called upon. The commitment requires the volunteer to be available when called upon for a shift, day or night. Responsibilities essentially include being a coordinating conduit between the cultural institutions and CEMA. Volunteers should be familiar with the cultural community however a desk manual will be provided. CEMA will train all interested volunteers on operations within the EOC structure. I will be happy to answer any questions at reitlatt@comcast.net.

Please discuss with your staff and provide me at the above e-mail address, the name, e-mail, direct office number and cell number of volunteers willing to be a primary contact or on the volunteer list to staff the desk by Monday May 30. I am particularly looking for volunteers from each of the four constituent groups: historic structures and sites; documentary collections (libraries etc); object based collections; and living specimen collections (aquariums, Oatland Island etc.)