A Message from the Chair

Dear GAFM Members,

I hope this finds you all enjoying a very pleasant summer and I hope that it is an uneventful one—at least from a flooding perspective, anyway!!

There has been a flurry of activity both at a State and National level since our last Newsletter and I will try and share some of that with you………………

Training opportunities within Georgia are at an all-time high - we have had two week-long E-273 classes, one in Gainesville, April 13-17, and one in Waycross, on June 22-26 (this last one was in response to the disastrous flooding that was experienced earlier this year in South Georgia). There have been 6 Luncheon Lectures - 4 in Savannah and 2 in Augusta and last, but certainly not least, Veé Burnham hosted an EC Class attended by 62 (yes, I said 62 !) in Ellijay, on June 25th. WOW !! Our GAFM members have certainly been busy with training endeavors and I applaud each and every one of them for their awesome training efforts !

Speaking of training, the ASFPM Conference in Orlando was incredible !! I can only sum it up by saying that there was “so much to learn in so little time” !! Once again, GAFM’s entire Executive Board was in attendance (thanks for sending me again this year !!) and Board members, Collis Brown, Michael Blakely and George Eastman. Speaking of Collis, our beloved Legislative Officer and Past Chair has some new “bling” in his State NFIP Office. The highlight of the week was the Awards Ceremony on Thursday, where our very own, Collis Brown came home with ASFPM’s John Ivey Award !! That’s twice this year that I have seen Collis speechless—not to worry, we have pictures to share with you of this prestigious moment!!

Before I leave the training subject, don’t forget that there are numerous training opportunities over the next quarter (July, Aug, Sept), to include GAFM’s Fall Education & Technical Training Conference, “Tools for Success”, in Norcross, GA, September 16-17, at The Marriott on Technology Parkway. Your host is newly elected Metro Atlanta Regional Representative, Johnny Barron, and the agenda is packed with exceptional training opportunities.

There are Showcase sessions again (these were such a hit in Columbus, that we brought them back !) and Ed Thomas will be joining us again for two days of “Ed-magic”. Ed will be doing a workshop on “Patchwork Quilt”, will be sharing his “NAI Total Water-Resources Management Workshop” with us (this was debuted at the ASFPM Conference in Orlando in June!!), will be once again doing the “NAI Legal” workshop and has promised the GAFM membership a new workshop never before seen by human eyes and specifically designed for the challenges we face here in Georgia—the only hint I will give you is that it is an “in the trenches” kind of workshop for floodplain managers. Johnny Barron, Terry Lunn and others will be teaming up to do a “Mitigation Alternatives and Grant Writing 101” workshop, the folks from the State NFIP Office and FEMA Region IV will be doing a session on “Faux Pauxs in Relation to the Elevation Certificates” (or maybe it should be more aptly titled “EC War Stories”), Sam Crampton and Todd Cochran will be back doing a mini version of the HEC-RAS/HEC-HMS training (our full day class in Augusta on July 30th is full and we are working on another full day class in Atlanta for sometime in October!), Chris Budd will be there doing the full-day CFM Refresher Course (test to follow—don’t forget to register with ASFPM if you are planning on taking the test !!) and finally, Susan Wilson (FEMA Region IV) will be there doing Insurance Agents Training for Working with Flood Policies (3 hours of continuing education are now required by all insurance agents in Georgia selling flood insurance!). And just in case you think you might get bored, Dewberry has scheduled a field trip to Drew Valley. Conference Registration will be open soon (remember, that we now have online registration AND you can use your credit card for added convenience!!) and you may want to go ahead and book your hotel room so that you can take advantage of the special GAFM rate. You absolutely don’t want to miss this Conference — in true GAFM fashion, we just keep on outdoing ourselves, every time we put on one of these events !!

Along the line of training events, several GAFM members met with the folks from the NC Board and discussed a joint conference between NC, SC and GA (to possibly even include AL) sometime around 2011. The location of this joint conference looks like it would be Charleston or Greenville (possibly even Asheville, NC) and because of the number of people that could possibly attend this kind of event, the networking opportunities would be awesome! Before we embark on such a lofty undertaking, the GAFM Board certainly would appreciate your feedback on whether or not you would be interested in an event of this magnitude. Let us hear from you—this is YOUR organization and your opinions count !!

(continued on page 2)
FEMA’s Elevation Certificate (FEMA Form 81-31) and the Floodproofing Certificate (FEMA Form 81-65) have been approved. The new expiration date for both forms is March 31, 2012. FEMA will permit a “phase-in” of the revised Elevation Certificate on a voluntary basis. During a 12-month transition period, beginning April 1, 2009, FEMA will accept either the new form or the old form. For more information and copies of the form go to [http://www.floods.org/PDF/Committees/Insurance/EC_and_Floodproofing_Bulletin_04-09.pdf](http://www.floods.org/PDF/Committees/Insurance/EC_and_Floodproofing_Bulletin_04-09.pdf).

FEMA also announced changes to the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) affecting insurance effective October 1, 2009. A quick summary of the major changes for October 1, 2009 are:

- The basic limit is being increased.
- Premiums are being increased.
  - V Zones up to the 10% maximum
  - A Zones up to the 10% maximum except for AH and AO zones
  - X Zones up 8%
- Minimum deductibles are increasing. There will no longer be a $500 deductible. Pre-FIRM standard deductibles will be $2,000. Post-FIRM deductible will be $1,000.
- A new Risk Rating Method for Leased Federal Properties has been developed.


It seems like forever since I have seen some of you and I look forward to “seeing you in September” (reminds me of a song…….), until then, my prayer if for your good health, safety and overall exceptional well-being and I hope with all of my heart that you will use your many talents and enormous energy to go forth and promote sound floodplain management across the State of Georgia!

T.

Post Script:

Please keep in your thoughts and prayers our fellow GAFM member and good friend, Brian Harvey (City of Port Wentworth), and his family, in the home-going of Brian’s Father and Best Friend the last week of May. Brian, please know that your friends grieve with you during this time of sadness and loss.
**Points of Interest**

**Job Corner**

Check out the job opportunities posted on GAFM’s website at:

www.gafloods.org

**Michael Baker Corporation’s Ed Thomas to Return to Georgia for GAFM Training !!**

Ed Thomas will be returning to Georgia to do “No Adverse Impact” (NAI) training at the Metro Atlanta Education & Technical Training Conference on September 16 and 17, 2009 at the The Marriott—Technology Parkway in Norcross, GA.

Ed has a few other tricks in his magical training bag to include “Patchwork Quilt” !!

**Mark your calendars NOW** for this cutting edge training event !!

Many thanks to the folks at Michael Baker Corporation for making Ed’s participation at this training event possible !

**Awards and “All that Stuff”**

**The family that cares............................**

Just by being a member of GAFM shows that you have a passion to promote sound floodplain management across our State.

We know that times are hard for many of our sponsors and for many more of our members. As a GAFM “family”, we will get through these tough times together.

In light of the current economic situation, the GAFM Executive Board has unanimously approved the Award of Scholarships for the Metro Atlanta Region Education & Technical Training Conference, Sept 16-17, in Norcross, GA, to those GAFM members who are currently out-of-work.

To qualify you must:

a) be a current GAFM member and
b) be out of work at the time of application and at the time of the Conference.

The Scholarships will include—free registration at the Conference (hotel accommodations and any food outside the Conference will be your responsibility).

To apply: contact Garrett Skinner at gaskinner@pbsj.com—the “Awards” will be held in strict confidence.

Within GAFM, when we say, “we are family”, we really do mean it !

**New CFM’s in Georgia**


Cheryl Alexander, CFM
Robert Head, CFM
Deidre Moore, CFM
Shayla Nealy, CFM
Daryl Kiser, CFM
Emory Thomas, CFM
Christopher Ford, CFM
Deming Chen, CFM
David King, CFM
Fred Berry, CFM
Scott Younker, CFM
Rachel Jones, CFM
Paul Woodward, CFM
Matthew John Bauer, CFM

A great big GAFM congratulation to these new GA CFM’s !!!

**Important information regarding “Week-long CFM Courses and CFM Refresher Courses (listed on the website and in this newsletter)**

These courses are meant as preparation courses for the CFM exam, but will not take the place of intensive study.

Prior to this training, GAFM recommends that you read the manual, Floodplain Management Requirements:
A Study Guide and Desk Reference for Local Officials (FEMA 480) available for download at www.floods.org/Certification/FEMA_480.asp.
This manual is lengthy, so please give yourself some time to prepare!

Please note that signing up for these courses does not automatically register you for the CFM exam, and signing up for the exam does not register you for the course. ASFPM requires that you register and submit payment at least two weeks in advance of any CFM exam.

ASFM Award Winner, Collis Brown, with DeKalb County’s, Terrence Simpkins, at the ASFM Awards Luncheon, Thursday, June 11, 2009, in Orlando, Florida.

Congratulations to Collis on winning ASFM’s “John Ivey Award” for Excellence in Certification.

ASFPM Award Winner, Collis Brown, with DeKalb County’s, Terrence Simpkins, at the ASFM Awards Luncheon, Thursday, June 11, 2009, in Orlando, Florida.

Congratulations to Collis on winning ASFM’s “John Ivey Award” for Excellence in Certification.
FEMA Releases Revised NFIP Technical Bulletins

The NFIP Technical Bulletin series includes eleven separate bulletins that provide guidance on a wide variety of issues facing communities that administer floodplain management ordinances.

Four revised TBs were released in 2008.

The TBs are available from the FEMA warehouse at 1-800-480-2520, or can be downloaded at:

http://www.fema.gov/plan/prevent/floodplain/techbul.shtm

TB-1: Openings in Foundation Walls and Walls of Enclosures *REVISED*
TB-2: Flood Damage-Resistant Material Requirements *REVISED*
TB-3: Non-Residential Floodproofing Requirements and Certification
TB-4: Elevator Installation
TB-5: Free-of-Obstruction Requirements *REVISED*
TB-6: Below-Grade Parking Requirements
TB-7: Wet Floodproofing Requirements
TB-8: Corrosion Protection for Metal Connectors
TB-9: Design and Construction Guidance for Breakaway Walls *REVISED*
TB-10: Ensuring that Structures Built on Fill In or Near Special Flood Hazard Areas are Reasonably Safe from Flooding.
TB-11: Crawlspace Construction
Having a Datum Dilemma?
(mean sea level (msl), Mean Sea Level (MSL), NAVD 29 or NAVD 88?)
-Tom McDonald, City of Savannah

A citizen calls and states they are ready to build a new dwelling. The citizen asks, “what flood zone is the property in and what should the design finish floor elevation be?” You look at the community’s new DFIRM and tell the citizen the property is in an AE-59 zone. The citizen of course asks what does that mean. You inform the citizen that they are in a high risk flood area and are required to purchase flood insurance if they have a federally backed loan. According to the Flood Damage Protection Ordinance, which has a one foot freeboard, (please see your community FDPO for requirements in your jurisdiction) the finish floor needs to be at or above 60 feet. What do you say? 60’ msl? 60’ Mean Sea Level (MSL)? 60’ NGVD 1929? or 60’ NAVD 88?

I contacted Chris Mack, Coastal Services Department Manager, of Dewberry for his guidance: Commensurate with the new DFIRM datum reference, he suggests the following:

“60 feet, referenced to the North American Vertical Datum of 1988”; however, 60 feet, NAVD88 is an abbreviated version and is consistent with DFIRM datum. Based on my opinion, this use eliminates any ambiguity with respect to the units of measure (i.e., feet) and the vertical datum of which the elevation is referenced. I suggest another option, the abbreviated use “NAVD88”, is also suitable as long as somewhere on the form or guidance that the connection between the abbreviated version and its formal definition is listed to avoid ambiguity (i.e., “North American Vertical Datum of 1988 = NAVD88”

If the community floodplain ordinance accepts other datums of reference, the following are suitable abbreviated uses based on my experience:
- 60 feet, MSL
- 60 feet, NGVD29
- 60 feet, NAVD88

It would be helpful in situations where other datums are referenced, different than DFIRM NAVD88 datum, to provide the supporting calculations, tidal benchmark(s), and tidal epoch information used to convert one datum to another. The USACE CorpsCon software tool is helpful in converting between different datums. Likewise, the NOAA Vdatum tool is also helpful in dealing with tidal datum conversions or adjustments. Also, from my experience, “msl” and “MSL” refer to Mean Sea Level and are the same. I have seen MSL used more often than the lowercase version.”

According to NOAA’s standard explanation regarding differences between datums (as shown on many tidal benchmark sheets):

Mean Sea Level (MSL) is a tidal datum determined over a 19-year National Tidal Datum Epoch. NGVD 29 is sometimes referred to as Sea Level Datum of 1929 or as Mean Sea Level on some early issues of Geological Survey Topographic Quads. NGVD 29 was originally derived from a general adjustment of the first-order leveling networks of the U.S. and Canada after holding mean sea level observed at 26 long term tide stations as fixed. NAVD 88 is a fixed datum derived from a simultaneous, least squares, minimum constraint adjustment of Canadian/Mexican/United States leveling observations. Local mean sea level observed at Father Point/Rimouski, Canada was held fixed as the single initial constraint. NAVD 88 replaces NGVD 29 as the national standard geodetic reference for heights. Bench mark elevations relative to NAVD 88 are available from NGS through the World Wide Web at National Geodetic Survey.
GAFM Training Opportunities

**July**

July 8, 2009  
Luncheon Lecture  
Morgan Corporation  
“Modified Cement”  
Savannah, GA  
Offices of T&H  
11:30-1  
(CEC’s TBD)

July 15, 2009  
Luncheon Lecture  
Ray Pittman – Thomas & Hutton  
“Storm Drainage Challenges Along the GA Fall Line”  
Augusta, GA  
11-1  
(1 parallel CEC)

July 30, 2009  
Engineer/Reviewer Training  
Sam Crampton – Dewberry  
“NAI Using HEC-RAS / HEC-HMS”  
(6 core CEC’s per ASPFM)  
Augusta, GA  
9 – 5  
(6 core CEC’s)

You may register and pay for this session online at:  
http://guest.cvent.com/events/Info/Summary.aspx?e=09f9be44-e150-4e60-8851-361275ca5889

* Another HEC-RAS/HEC-HMS event is being worked on for October

**August**

August 5, 2009  
EC’s—Beyond the Basics  
(EC’s and Insurance)  
Savannah, GA  
(Savannah Civic Ctr - O’Conner Room)  
10-4  
(CEC’s TBD)

August 7, 2009  
Luncheon Lecture  
Angela Mettlen—WK Dickson  
“FEMA Grant Process”  
Atlanta, GA  
2120 Powers Ferry Rd Suite 100  
11-1  
(CEC’s TBD)

August 13, 2009  
EC Training  
Columbia Co, GA  
1-5  
(CEC’s TBD)

August 24-28, 2009  
E-273  
State NFIP / FEMA  
Columbia Co, GA  
Daily  
(12 core CEC’s)

Augusta 26, 2009  
“How to Read and Interpret Flood Maps”  
Savannah, GA  
(Location TBD)  
TBD  
(CEC’s TBD)

**September**

September 16-17, 2009  
Metro Atlanta Education & Technical Training Conference  
The Marriott Technology Pkwy  
Norcross, GA  
Daily  
(CEC’s TBD)

September 23, 2009  
“Stormwater Master Planning for Long Term Sustainability”  
Savannah, GA  
(Location TBD)  
TBD  
(CEC’s TBD)

*For more training opportunities see www.gafloods.org*

There are two more opportunities for Elevation Certificate training later this year—one between August 10 and September 3 (within a two hour drive of Atlanta) and one during either the week of November 2-6 or November 9-13. **Contact your Regional Representative and let them know of your interest in this training** - so that this valuable EC training can be brought to you in your local area!!

Registration for the Fall Conference, “Tools for Success”, Sept 16 & 17, in Norcross, GA, should be online soon—keep checking the GAFM website: www.gafloods.org for registration information (remember, if you register online, you can expedite your registration process by use of your credit card- another convenience brought to you by the folks at GAFM !!!!! ) (Thank you, Garrett !!!)
FEMA Moving to Digital Flood Hazard Information - General Distribution of Paper Products to End on October 1, 2009

FEMA Now Distributes Paper and Digital Flood Maps; That’s Changing on October 1, 2009

Since the 1970’s, the Federal Emergency Management Agency’s (FEMA) National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) has provided flood hazard maps and reports to help more than 20,000 participating communities manage and reduce risks. FEMA currently distributes both paper and digital flood hazard maps and reports.

Beginning on October 1, 2009, customers may order only digital flood hazard maps and reports. FEMA’s Map Service Center (MSC) will not produce or distribute paper Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs), Flood Hazard Boundary Maps (FHBMs), or Flood Insurance Study (FIS) reports on or after this date, other than a single paper copy provided to communities when their maps are updated.

Users of paper maps should start planning to make a transition to digital flood hazard maps and reports now.

On the Move………………

Tom McDonald (City of Savannah) has moved the location of his office—Tom’s new office is located at 5515 Abercorn Street in midtown Savannah. (Zip 31405)

GAFM Committee Chairs

Conference Planning Committee
Charles Absher, CFM (Fall Conference)
Jordan, Jones & Goulding; Atlanta

Garrett Skinner, CFM (Annual Conference—2010)
PBS&J; Atlanta

Outreach and Membership Services
David Smith
Jekyll Island Fire Dept

Awards Committee
Charles Absher, CFM
Jordan, Jones & Goulding; Atlanta

Programs Committee
Tom Tkacs, CFM
Atlanta

GIS Mapping & Technology Committee
Sam Crampton, CFM - Dewberry; Atlanta

Mitigation / NAI Committee
Michael Taylor, CFM - Watershed Concepts; Atlanta

Webmaster
Chris Budd, CFM - PBS&J; Atlanta

Your GAFM Board for 2009

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