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/BackHome Initiative

Introduction

This initiative emerged from discussions with public library managers across the Gulf Coast states that have assisted hurricane evacuees. The initial question: How can public libraries assist those making the decision whether to return to their homes after a disaster? A potential solution: each public library create a web page identified ExistingLibraryURL/BackHome/. On that page supply all the information available about the current status of the community. The solution might also be of interest to public libraries who serve in any disaster prone area (tornadoes, wild fires, earthquakes, etc.) where there are evacuees. More generally, this initiative would be of interest to anyone, like second home owners or travelers, wishing to check up on a location "back home."

Objective

The objective is to get public libraries to add a page to their web site designated http://CurrentPublicLibraryURL**/BackHome**/. The web page would contain all available current information about the library's community that would be of use to someone trying to determine current local conditions **Back Home**. What is the status of their home, neighborhood or community? Is it safe to return home after a disaster? Suggestions for potential sources of information are below. People anywhere (in the U.S. say or Canada?) would come to expect that a service they might obtain from their public libraries is to be able to connect to their hometown public library and find out the latest current conditions about their town.

Potential Sources of /BackHome Information

Additional information might be included in such areas hotels, employment, better business bureaus, schools, real estate…

Sources of information include:

- Location [latitude & Longitude – Goggle location, state latitude]
- Media, local – TV, Radio (frequencies and Internet url access), Newspapers often have web outlets, Topix News for your area <http://www.topix.com/pick-local> Google News [location] http://news.google.com/
- Blogs [Google/Yahoo search: town blogs e.g. Syracuse NY blogs]
- Facebook [or search Google location facebook e.g., Syracuse NY facebook]
- YouTube [or search Google location YouTube e.g., Syracuse NY facebook]
- Local Government: Police, Sheriff, Highway Patrol, Fire Departments
- Maps/Satellite photos:
  Google Earth: http://earth.google.com/
  Google Maps http://maps.google.com/maps?f=s&utm_campaign=en&utm_source=en-ha-na-us-bk-gm&utm_medium=ha&utm_term=google%20maps
  Topographic maps: http://www.topozone.com/viewmaps.asp
- Phone: People or Business search: http://www.411.com/ or http://www.WhitePages.com/ etc. Yellow pages: AT&T. Real yellow pages.
  http://www.realpageslive.com/entrymap.asp?screen=1024&screenheight=768&os=wi
- Twitter [search Google location twitter e.g., syracuse NY twitter
- Weather:
  -- FL Division of Emergency Management. SERT. Watches & warnings. Weather images.

Your weather. http://www.floridadisaster.org/index.asp
-- NOAA. Hurricane basics.
http://www.climate.noaa.gov/education/hurricanes/hurricane_basics.pdf

-- Pinellas County Emergency Management. Hurricane 101.
http://www.pinellascounty.org/emergency/presentations.htm#one
-- NOAA. National Weather Service. National hurricane center. http://www.nhc.noaa.gov/
-- NOAA. Coastal services center. Storm information for coastal officials.
http://csc.noaa.gov/storm_info/
-- Storm advisory. Hurricane tracking. http://stormadvisory.org/map/atlantic/
-- Weather Channel. Storm watch.
http://www.weather.com/newscenter/stormwatch/?from=wxcenter_news
Weather Radio Local Frequencies: e.g., 162.550
- Webcams [Your city/town webcams on Google, Yahoo, etc.]
- YouTube [search Google: YouTube location e.g., YouYube syracuse NY