



March 10, 2020

"Legacy. What is a Legacy? It's planting seeds in a garden you never get to see."



Russell Strickland
Executive Director
Maryland Emergency Management Agency

There is a quote from Hamilton that sums up Russ, **"I am inimitable, I am an original."**

Through his vast experience in the field of emergency management and the kindness he upholds, he wears his originality well.

If you had to develop the top five hits of NEMA, what would those be? That's a good question.....

First and foremost – it is the association/representation/forums, the ability to network with the other 50 plus individuals who have the same basic responsibilities that you do – good for best practices, lessons learned, sharing ideas, documents, etc., and finally therapy – like therapy dogs for search and rescue dogs...gotta keep it weird, otherwise we'll have no relief!!!!

Second – the national legislative monitoring, we so desperately need that, and we need to be united on issues, NEMA does a good job of keeping us informed, and although we complain about the amount of correspondence, it is really necessary.

Third – the committees, which really gives us the opportunity to solidify our strategies, and develop unity. Provides us the opportunity to focus on those areas that we can make a difference.

Four – I'll probably be attacked, but the bi-annual survey - - that gives us a good picture to use for self-assessment...and the other surveys do help us stay knowledgeable as to what others are doing...I'll steal an idea, thought, document in a heartbeat!!!! And it is a good service to provide to us.

Five – the resource expertise of the staff...I've learned a great deal and thank each and every one of you!!

As co-chair of the new NEMA Resilience Committee, what are your thoughts on what it means to be resilient? I just love that question...we don't have enough time or paper...It's a semester class, if not a full course of study...but, simply, resilience is "a state of being" to which you place a degree of measurement, and a defined acceptable description. I believe to be "resilient" you must consider at a minimum, good master planning that is "very" holistic; good mitigation efforts (it is the center of the universe); good preparedness efforts; and an agreed upon acceptable level of risk / consequence. Back to your question...to be resilient means that you have done everything you can, understand what you haven't done, and accept a level of risk for what the disaster might present.

County dispatcher; Police officer; Fire Inspector; Assistant Director at the Maryland Fire and Rescue Institute; Executive Director – You're like an emergency management mixologist! What did you learn from your experience that has created the leader you are today? Everything we do has basically three components – people, process, and "stuff" (equipment, technology, etc.) The number 1 is people – you need to work with, develop, be inclusive of your people, diversity is the key – brings more ideas, thoughts and beliefs. Need to listen to them and be very upfront - most of the time I'll be very democratic, but when the house is on fire, and I'm the officer in charge, we won't have a committee meeting first. I subscribe to the principles of the Meta leadership, really believe that is an answer. As well as we really did learn everything we need to know in kindergarten or the sandbox, now practice it!!! And too, it needs to be fun, enjoyable, and as one of our local emergency managers recently noted, "Keep it weird" – I like that!

And speaking of mixology, how long have you been studying the subject? What is your best recipe thus far? I'm a novice...I enjoy single malt scotch, and bourbons, and particularly creating recipes for Manhattans. Best recipe: 1 part Jack Daniels, 1 part American Honey, 1 part Dolin Sweet Vermouth, with at least two Amarena cherries (that my wife, Maggie, has canned in either bourbon or brandy, she really has that covered!!) It's fun the different tastes you can create. It's just fun balancing three different liquids and creating a taste you really like, enjoy.

With your love for theatre, what scene always gives you goose bumps every time you watch it? Why? I cry at the "drop of a hat" - so any scene that involves relationships of people, I'm gone...The mixology of Hamilton, from rap, to diversity, humor/sarcasm, politics, relationships.....

On your most recent trip to NYC, what was your favorite museum and fine dining restaurant? Why are they considered your favorites? Museum this past trip – Metropolitan Museum of Art – you'll never spend enough time there to really see and absorb it all. Fine dining, Lincoln Ristorante – food is very good, consistent, good drinks, and convenient to the Lincoln Center. And, Katz's Delicatessen - it's where Harry met Sally!!!!!! Fun and excellent food.

What has been your favorite traveling excursion and why? Alaska number one – we flew to Fairbanks, did the northern visits, Denali, trained to Anchorage, boarded a ship to Vancouver, and all the really neat excursions. Love Scotland, Trans-Siberian railroad is a must, and the Canadian Rocky Mountaineer train.

About this NFL Playoff wager with Director Patrick Sheehan (TN), what happened? What did you have to gift to Patrick? Have you followed through?

Well...just for the record, Patrick is a great human being, and two he started it!! And all I could think was, if I do this the Ravens are sure to lose...and of course...so Patrick was very clever!!! He offered a bottle of Jack Daniel's (which is my favorite "go to") and I offered a bottle of Sagamore Rye, which is distilled and bottle in Baltimore. In fact, Maryland is the historical home to American rye whiskey and the rest is history. I have the bottle, and a box of their rye chocolates. I'm going to present to him at the Mid-Year, we should probably put it on the agenda (save on the shipping!!).

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