

## **Mosquito Control: Organizations from around globe share efforts to control mosquito menace worldwide**

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By **JEFFREY STIVERS**, Special to the Daily News

Mention mosquito control to residents of the Collier Mosquito Control District and many people will talk about low-flying helicopters at dawn, the 2 a.m. drone of Shorts Skyvan aircraft or inspectors standing in woods and yards around the district to count biting mosquitoes.

Others, most often long-term residents, will throw out "remember the year that" and tell tall tales of mosquitoes so thick the sun was dimmed and they could not leave the house for weeks, or how their dog was never seen again after it got carried away by two hungry mosquitoes.

These observations and jokes are comments on Collier County's continuing battle with the insects. Mosquito control, however, is a world-wide issue. In Florida alone there are more than 50 organized mosquito control operations. To facilitate the interchange of information among these organizations, the Florida Mosquito Control Association (FMCA) was founded in 1922.

The FMCA ([www.floridamosquito.org](http://www.floridamosquito.org)) has two meetings each year, during which people from different districts, research labs and academia can meet to share ideas and experiences through formal presentations and informal discussions.

The FMCA also hosts a week long training program each year covering topics ranging from basic mosquito control for new inspectors to forums for commissioners. It also hosts an annual "Fly In" at Lee County Mosquito Control where pilots, operations personnel, aircraft mechanics and others responsible for aerial mosquito control operations can learn about the latest techniques and technology.

Collier County Mosquito Control District personnel routinely make formal presentations at the FMCA meetings and are active members of the Association. In fact, two Collier employees, Executive Director Dr. Frank Van Essen and Director of Research Dr. Jeff Stivers — yes, that's me — were recently elected to the board of directors of the FMCA. Another Collier staff member, Biologist Marin Brouillard, was just selected to serve as the editor-in-chief of Wing Beats, a glossy magazine published by the FMCA and distributed to mosquito control personnel worldwide.

Other states also have extensive mosquito control programs and associations. New Jersey, the cradle of modern mosquito control, and California are the other major

mosquito control states. However, with the rapid spread of West Nile virus across the US, there has been an explosion in the number of state and local mosquito control operations.

The American Mosquito Control Association (AMCA, [www.mosquito.org](http://www.mosquito.org)) serves to unite the various mosquito control operations, not only in the US, but worldwide. The AMCA has an annual meeting during which mosquito control personnel from the US and other countries meet to share ideas and experiences. At the 2003 AMCA meeting held in Minneapolis, there were more than 800 participants representing countries from around the globe. One session focused on mosquitoes and mosquito-borne diseases in Latin America and had simultaneous translations in Spanish and English.

The AMCA serves as a conduit for mosquito control information for personnel around the world. AMCA also publishes a quarterly, refereed professional journal and a bimonthly newsletter and supports the distribution of "Wing Beats." Collier Mosquito Control District personnel are also active in the AMCA, serving on several committees and routinely making presentations at the annual meeting.

The next time residents are bothered by mosquitoes, they should remember that not only the Collier district, but organizations that support mosquito control around the globe, are working to make mosquitoes less of a bother and health hazard. Without the support of these organizations mosquito control would not be as effective as it is.



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