

# Washington State Animal Response Team

*"Helping Animals and their Owners in Disasters"*



## WASART NEWS

### From the President

As I sit down to write my first "From the President" column for the newsletter, I can't help but reflect on what large footsteps I have to follow, and be a little intimidated. 2012 will be WASART's first year without Gretchen McCallum at the helm. She's done an outstanding job of building and leading WASART, from our embryonic beginnings when she and Greta Cook decided to start an animal response organization in the aftermath of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, and the Western Washington flood disasters of 2006 and 2007. Between them, Gretchen and Greta have created a widely respected organization with a very strong emphasis on training, professionalism and competence, and with membership throughout Western Washington, from Canada to Oregon, and from the Cascades to the Olympics. I'm delighted that both Gretchen and Greta will remain on our Board of Directors, and will rely heavily on their guidance and advice in the years to come. I'm truly grateful for their leadership.

Two new faces will be joining our Board of Directors. Cathy Reaney will replace me as our new Training Director, and Marie Schimke will take over as our Secretary, replacing Ritz Duchesne, who has finished her term. Ritz has done a great job, not only in keeping an accurate record of our many meetings and activities, but also in community outreach activities. I'm grateful for her support, and though she'll no longer be keeping our minutes, I'll be counting on her to continue with her outreach and other committee efforts. Cathy has been an active member of our Training Committee for a long time, and brings knowledge and experience to the position. Marie has been very active in a number of WASART events and committees, and a frequent responder to our various deployments. I'm looking forward to working with Cathy and Marie, as well as with our other continuing Board members, Michaela Eaves, Barbara Archer, Dr. Heather Stewart and Denise Steinkerchner.

For the coming year, we'll be working on a number of new and continuing initiatives. We've restructured our training curriculum somewhat, to streamline the process for our members to become qualified for deployment. We've created a little more structure in our Training Committee to facilitate arranging for the wide variety of animals we utilize in our Sheltering and Field Response training classes, and also to emphasize our Technical Rescue Team's training activities. Recognizing the importance of effective communications in any emergency response, we're going to strengthen our communications capabilities, including incorporating our newly acquired VHF radios.

**January 2012  
National 'Get  
Organized' Month**



### Mission Statement

To help animals and their owners through disaster preparedness, education, and emergency response.

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Recognizing the difficult economic times we're all facing, we'll be looking for ways to help members hold down their costs of training and equipment, while ensuring that we retain our skills through a comprehensive continuing education program.

2011 marked a first for WASART – the first time we have deployed members as a WASART team in support of a national animal response organization. Many of our members have deployed previously, but as members of other organizations rather than as a WASART team. In fact, we had two such deployments in 2011, both with the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA). In June we deployed a team of four members to Joplin, Missouri in the aftermath of the terrible tornado that devastated that city. Then in November and December, we deployed two teams, a total of nine WASART members, to Hot Springs, Arkansas to assist ASPCA in sheltering approximately 200 dogs seized there from a puppy mill operation. As a result of these two missions, we now have eight more members who have gained the experience of their first deployment to actual emergency situations, experience that can't be duplicated in a training class.

So we start the new year with a full agenda, some new faces on the Board of Directors, a more experienced cadre of members, and determination to make WASART even stronger and more capable than before.

Bill Dugaard  
President

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### Roxy's Story—January 7-11, 2012

On Saturday, January 7, 2012, a private citizen called WASART to ask if a Technical Rescue Team could provide assistance to a young filly who was in poor condition and had been unable to get to her feet for several days. 11 members responded with their availability and four other members, from as far north as Bellingham and as far south as Tacoma, were placed on standby for later deployment if needed.

Upon arrival at the scene, the Strike Team Leader, **Bill Dugaard**, sized up the situation and realized WASART's tripod would be needed. A Safety Officer was designated and the team set to work to rig Roxy for rescue and to start assembling the tripod. It was dark when the work began so the generator and work lights were removed from WASART's #1 Supplies & Equipment trailer and set up on the ground.



The team spent at least six hours trying to get the filly to stand on her own feet while supported by the tripod but she was unable to do so unassisted. Eventually, the owners and their veterinarian decided that the stress too much for the little horse and she was lowered to the ground. She was covered with blankets and a shelter, provided with hay and water, and kept warm until a decision could be made about her future. The team left the premises at approximately 10:00 p.m.



When the filly was still down and showing no sign of getting up by Wednesday afternoon, her vet decided that Roxy's best chance was to transport her to her own facility and try to get her on her feet there. For this endeavor, five WASART Field Response Team members assisted.

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Using WASART's Rescue Glide, she was moved from her farm into a stall in the vet's barn. At that point the team rigged Roxy into its Becker Sling and attempted to raise her using a 3:1 mechanical advantage system, but with the people available, the 3:1 system wasn't adequate. The team then compounded the system into a 9:1, and that was enough. They were able to raise her up and onto her feet.



After being down for 5+ days, she of course had no feeling in her legs, and initially it looked hopeless. But the team massaged her legs, and in a little while she began to put some weight on them and partially support herself. She was still very wobbly, but began to shift her feet to brace herself a little, and perked up enough to hold her head up and eat and drink.

The Becker Sling was great — the wide straps and thick pads allowed her to be suspended from it for much longer than in an ordinary lifting harness from webbing or fire hose. When, after midnight, she was lowered down again, the team planned to return the next day to raise her again and begin a long, hard period of rehabilitation.

The sad epilogue to this story is that, in spite of her encouraging efforts of the night before, poor Roxy died the next morning. It was an unhappy ending for our volunteers who had worked so hard to pull her through. The one positive outcome was that we'd gained valuable technical knowledge to use in our next deployment in similar circumstances, but we all grieved for this poor little filly that we'd worked so hard to save — she just didn't have the strength to keep going.

Submitted by Bill Daugaard

The initial 11 person team were **Bill Daugaard, Jason King, Lanette Knapp, Zoe Clelland, Patty Vanassa, Sarah Knapp, Heidi Kuester, Marie Schimke, Ken Cottle, Julia Olszewski, and Joodie Klinke.** Placed on standby were **Fred Knight, Lauri McBeath-Davies, Joyce Moody, and Dennis Brislawn.** The second WASART team was comprised of **Greta Cook, Kristin Malone, Gretchen McCallum, Bill Daugaard and Joodie Klinke.** Also on-site in her private capacity as a vet was WASART member **Heather Stewart, V.M.D.**

### Core Training—February 4-5, 2012

This two-day class is open to all WASART members and the general public (adults only, please). It will be held at the Redmond Fire Department Training Facility, 18104 NE 76th, Redmond, WA 98052. Cost is \$85.00 to WASART members and \$110.00 to the public. For a description of the class contents, please visit the website at [www.washingtonsart.org](http://www.washingtonsart.org) and view the new training curriculum under the 'Training' tab. To pre-register, contact the registrar, Amy Adams, at [amy@lostpetresources.com](mailto:amy@lostpetresources.com) or download a registration form from the WASART website's Calendar.

WASART's General Membership Meetings are currently held on the **2nd Wednesday of each quarter at 7:00 p.m.** In 2012, the **March 14th** and **September 12th** meetings will be held in Pierce, Snohomish or Thurston Counties with the exact location still to be determined. The **June 13th** and **December 12th** meetings will be held at the **Key Bank, 1212 Cole Street, Enumclaw, WA 98022 from 7:00 p.m.—9:00 p.m.** All these meetings are open to the public and everyone is invited to attend.



## Teri's Thailand Adventure

For two weeks in mid November I was deployed by World Vets to Thailand to help with the rescue and medical treatment of dogs and cats stranded by the months of flooding ravaging northern Thailand since September.

Dogs had been trapped on bridges for weeks to months, being fed by locals bringing them food by canoe and motor boat. Several local animal welfare organizations had been organizing the catching, caging and transport of the dogs to a privately owned wildlife sanctuary several hours south of Bangkok.

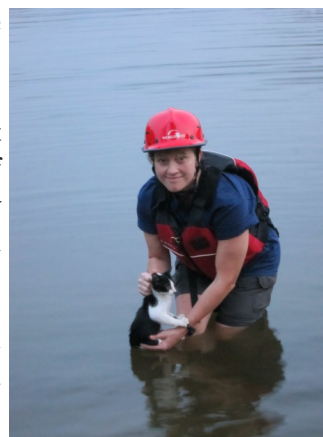


It was interesting to be a part of so many different aspects of this massive effort... from the catching of half wild dogs in a rabies positive country (armed only with little nylon leashes), to the loading of cages onto small boats (or dealing with 60 volunteers who had spent a 12 hour day getting to the flooded areas by large military trucks and boats.... and then not having the cages arrive!) ... to the caging, care and surgery of over 1000 dogs in a facility meant to care for elephants, tigers and gibbons.

It led to many discussions of how to deal with infectious disease outbreaks as these dogs were kept not just for a few days, but for several months before they could be returned to their communities, and the sensibility of spaying and neutering in this type of disaster scenario. It was fascinating to watch the human politics in the situation as well... Who called the shots? The government? The private individuals dedicating massive funding to help rescue these animals? The many foreign volunteer organizations that showed up to serve? One major subject that caused quite a bit of tension was the question of euthanasia. There were many 'unrescuable' cases by some definitions, but Thailand is a Buddhist country that does not support euthanasia at any time.

I was also reminded that we have to be prepared for anything in times of need, as we were called on to help not only with the flood animals, but with the wild animals at the sanctuary as well. It was all an amazing, fulfilling, and yes, tough experience, requiring flexibility and tolerance for the many points of view that had to be considered. And like many, I brought a small piece of the adventure home with me, in the form of a small kitten named, yes, 'Thai!'

Submitted by Teri Weronko, DVM  
WASART Member



## Low Cost Gelding Clinics

Ripley's Horse Aid Foundation is offering low-cost gelding clinics in various counties in 2012. The stallion must be at least four months old, halter-broke and able to load and unload. Cost is based on financial ability but no more than \$100.00 each horse. For more information, email CEO Wilma Tronstad at [w.tronstad@frontier.com](mailto:w.tronstad@frontier.com) or call her at 360-424-8250.

