

Washington State Animal Response Team

"Helping Animals and their Owners in Disasters"



WASART NEWS

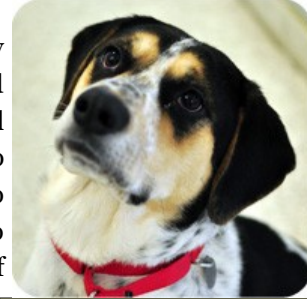
From the President

Last month I had the opportunity to attend the annual Summit conference of the National Alliance of State Animal and Agricultural Emergency Programs, or NASAAEP, in Leesburg, Virginia. As the name suggests, NASAAEP is a consortium of many groups committed to animal welfare, including Federal, State and Regional agencies, academia, and national, state and regional non-government organizations (NGOs). It was a great forum to discuss and learn about disaster preparedness and response, to meet other state and regional animal response organizations, and to share information about best practices for a wide variety of situations. Discussion topics ranged from technical rescue and working with Search and Rescue organizations to disaster planning and preparedness at the regional, state and national levels. The conference provided three days of non-stop discussion and learning. It was sometimes frustrating when there were multiple sessions of interest held at the same time. But the overall experience was great, and an excellent opportunity for WASART to get to know organizations from other states with similar goals, objectives and challenges, and for them to get to know us. Whether in Florida, Kansas, Massachusetts, Colorado, Louisiana or Washington, we all face similar situations, and we can all benefit from sharing what we know.

Bill Daugaard
President

September-October
2012

Adopt a Shelter Dog Month



Mission Statement

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

Save the Dates in 2013!

WASART's Training Committee has finalized the dates for the 2013 training year. We lead off with the **Annual Orientation** on **January 12th**, followed on **March 2-3rd** with the revised two-day **Core** training.



Transport is next on **April 20th** followed by the ever popular **Field Response** training on **June 8-9th**. The **Emergency Animal Sheltering** course is the final training opportunity for 2013 and is scheduled for **July 13-14th**. In both Field Response and Sheltering, we train with live animals and these courses are excellent opportunities to get some real hands-on experience with llamas, dogs, cows, rabbits, horses, chickens and goats, lots of goats.

All of these trainings are open to the general public, adults only please, and the locations for each training session will be posted on WASART's website and in subsequent newsletters as those details are finalized.

For more information, review the current Training Curriculum on WASART's website or contact training@washingtonsart.org.



For the second time this year, WASART was called on to participate in the rescue of a dog and its owner stranded on the slopes of Mt. Si in North Bend, WA. On September 2nd and the early hours of September 3rd we teamed with Seattle Mountain Rescue (SMR), King County Explorer Search and Rescue (ESAR), King County 4X4 Search and Rescue (SAR), the King County SAR Incident Support Team, and the King County Sheriff's Office to bring Quinn, a 1½ year old Australian Shepherd, and his owner safely down from a precarious spot on a ledge part way up the mountain. Quinn and his owner had been hiking up a neglected trail when the dog got stuck on a ledge near the 900-foot level. His owner tried to help him get down, but soon found herself in a very problematic situation as well, unable to reach Quinn, and also unable to get off the ledge.

WASART received notice of the situation at about 7:30 p.m. on September 2nd. Members **Greta Cook, Ritz Duchesne, Rory Kelleher, Jon Mercer, Julia Olszewski, Molly Reagan Axt, Denise Steinkerchner** and **Bill Daugaard** responded, and **Jason King** was on standby if needed. They met with the other responding organizations at the base of Mt. Si at about 9:00 p.m. The SMR and ESAR teams had already started up the mountain. Rory, Denise and Bill joined two ESAR members to form another team and headed up the "trail." It was a very difficult scramble up steep shale scree through heavy underbrush. When the team arrived at the scene, the earlier SMR/ESAR teams had already secured Quinn's owner, and had started back up the ledge for Quinn. After some coaxing and bribery with food treats, they managed to secure him, too, and brought him down on ropes. After an enthusiastic reunion with his owner, the WASART team gave him water and more treats, leashed him and started back down the mountain. The teams all returned to the command post at the base by about 2:30 in the morning of September 3rd.

The technical expertise of the SMR and ESAR teams was invaluable in carrying out this difficult rescue. We were pleased and grateful for the opportunity to work with them again.

2012 Annual Mock Shelter Exercise—October 27-28, 2012

The annual exercise will again be held at the Enumclaw Expo Center (formerly King County Fairgrounds) on **Saturday and Sunday, October 27-28, 2012**. The exercise is primarily an opportunity for WASART members to put into practice the skills they have learned from deployments and their various trainings from WASART and other organizations. Members of the community and partner agencies are encouraged to attend as observers and to potentially play a role as a "spontaneous" untrained volunteer showing up and wishing to help at an emergency animal shelter. There is a position for everyone and 'just



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in time' training will be utilized to complement the training level and experience of the responding participants.

The purpose of the exercise is to practice the WASART Emergency Animal Sheltering Plan: to clarify roles and responsibilities; improve interagency coordination; locate resource gaps; develop individual responder performance; and identify opportunities for improvement.

The exercise is a realistic deployment scenario utilizing large and small animals of many species. There will be two eight-hour shifts from 0800 hours to 1600 hours on Saturday and Sunday. Participants can attend one or both shifts. Dinner on Saturday and breakfast on Sunday will be provided for participants. There is no cost to participate.

For information about participation, contact the Volunteer Coordinator, Zoe Clelland, at zclelland@yahoo.com. For general information contact the Event Coordinator, Greta Cook, at gretacook@hotmail.com. To register, go to the WASART Calendar and click on the Mock Shelter Drill link <http://washingtonsart.org/calendar.html>

Volunteers Help Seized Graham Horses

Charges of animal neglect are never welcomed but when such charges are made and horses removed from an animal owner's property, someone must step up to provide the care and attention the animals need until the legal issues are resolved.



Credit: Drew Mikkelsen/KING

On September 27, 2012, 39 horses were seized by Pierce County Animal Control and horse-experienced volunteers were needed to look after them. When the Pierce County Auditor, Julie Anderson, contacted WASART and asked if WASART would undertake the role of recruiting, screening, and scheduling the many volunteers needed for such a large scale operation, WASART immediately accepted the opportunity to be of assistance. Delving into the depths of WASART's bank of contacts, emails and calls were broadcast immediately to various horse-related organizations asking for help. Six WASART volunteers handled both shifts on September 28th and, on September 29th another eight WASART volunteers were joined by three volunteers from NW Horseback Search & Rescue. Within the next five days, over 30 volunteers responded with the enthusiasm and skill-sets necessary for this project with more volunteers joining daily. They came from WASART, four chapters of Backcountry Horsemen, NW Horseback Search & Rescue, Pierce County Animal Response Team, Peninsula Mounted Search & Rescue, Progressive Animal Welfare Society, the ASPCA, the Pierce County Sheriff's Posse, the WA Horse Racing Commission, and many, many unaligned volunteers. They drove several times a week from as far north as Snohomish County, from as far south as Olympia, and all points in-between. They left five month old babies at home with spouses, and worked 12 hours a day because it was too far for them to drive home after the morning shift and then return for the afternoon shift. They came before work and after work. Mothers and daughters, fathers and daughters, husbands and wives, mothers and sons, family groups, friends and friends of friends, all came forward to assist when needed.

To date, over 100 volunteers have stepped forward and signed on to help. I am not privy to the hours and mileage of all the volunteers. However, from September 28th through October 14th, 23 WASART volunteers contributed over 450 hours and 5,000 miles to this endeavor.

To quote Thich Nhat Hanh, 'compassion is a verb', and these volunteers have demonstrated that they have compassion and action in spades. They have been magnificent in meeting the

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needs of these horses. They have touched my heart, and the hearts of everyone who is aware of and who has observed their hard work and many, many kindnesses to these horses.

The link to a very recent interview by Kiro Radio on the situation is included. <http://mynorthwest.com/11/1703110/Fate-uncertain-for-39-horses-kept-in-deplorable-conditions#.UIKwmQDWeto.gmail>

Submitted by Gretchen McCallum
WASART Past President

WASART Members' Individual Deployments

American Humane Association's (AHA) Red Star Animal Emergency Services Team was called to **Memphis, TN** in early **September, 2012** to assist with sheltering more than 160 animals removed from an animal hoarding/cruelty situation. The operation included a wide variety of animals: cats, dogs, birds, ferrets, rabbits, guinea pigs, hamsters, mice, and more.

Two AHA teams assisted with this operation. WASART member and Red Star Tea member, **Sara Scott**, deployed with the first team. They established a care regime, maintained and improved shelter operations and functions, and assisted the local veterinarian, Dr. Jennifer Dunlap, with medical care. The second team continued to care for the animals, hosted an adoption event, and assisted with preparing the animals for transport to rescue organizations pledged to find new homes for the animals.



The success of this rescue is the result of many hands, including Dr. Dunlap, local authorities and courts, the Cable Guy, and the animal-loving volunteers and staff members who do this great work.



At the request of his friends, WASART member **Byron Wilkes**, travelled to **Cle Elum, WA** for four days in late **September, 2012** to help with gathering/herding, loading, transporting and feeding several different species of livestock including horses, donkeys goats, sheep, pigs and chickens. The Taylor Bridge fire was primarily a grassland wildfire which posed unique problems in regards to the dispersants being dropped in the areas in which he was working and the nature of the burn itself, i.e., fast moving grass fire with high winds. At times, it was necessary to load the anxious horses by using wet towels over their heads and eyes. High quality breathing masks were in short supply which meant working without a mask in conditions where the air quality index was in the 450+ range with 500 being the worst possible.

The contributions made to our animal friends by Sara and Byron were invaluable. And the lessons learned that they shared with the WASART leadership will ensure that WASART will be better prepared if a similar event occurs in the future and WASART as an organization is called upon to assist.

WASART's General Membership Meetings are currently held on the **2nd Wednesday of each quarter** at **7:00 p.m.—9:00 p.m.** The **March 14th meeting** was held in Shoreline and the **September 12th** meeting will be held at the **American Red Cross Mount Rainier Chapter, 1235 South Tacoma Way, Tacoma, WA.** The **June 13th** and **December 12th** meetings will be held at the **Key Bank, 1212 Cole Street, Enumclaw, WA 98022.** All these meetings are open to the public and everyone is invited to attend.

Railway Safety

What, railroad safety you say? We learned about crossing railroad tracks in driver’s education class and we cross tracks on a regular basis. We probably don’t think much about it unless there is a train passing and we have to wait or we hear about a car/truck and train collision. At a recent *Rail Safety for Responders* course, put on by Operation Lifesaver and hosted by the City of Ruston in Pierce County, I was reminded just how dangerous trains can be and learned some information that is useful in everyday life as well as during an evacuation event or rescue such as rounding up loose livestock.

Safety tips and facts when operating around railroad tracks from Operation Lifesaver:

Trains have the right of way 100% of the time over emergency vehicles, police, vehicles and pedestrians. Slow down, look and listen before crossing.

All tracks are always active! Freight trains don’t travel at fixed times and passenger train schedules can change. Assume the track is active even if it looks rusty and has weeds growing in it. Even during a disaster, assume a track is in use.

A train traveling at 55 mph can require 2 miles to stop depending upon load and terrain.

Looks can be deceiving; an optical illusion makes trains appear to be farther away and slower moving than they actually are.

Railroad tracks, trestles, yards and equipment are private property. Companies such as Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) own the land under the tracks and approximately 50’ from centerline of the track on either side. Trespassers can be fined and arrested.

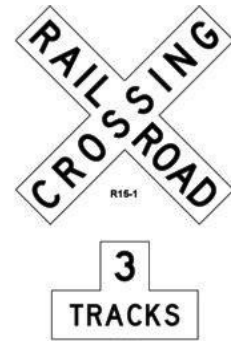
The only legal, safe place to cross tracks is at designated pedestrian or roadway crossings.

Today’s trains are quieter and don’t produce the telltale “clickety clack” that we may expect.

Trains extend three feet or more beyond the rails and can have cables, chains or other protrusions that extend the safety zone well beyond three feet from the rails.

Emergency Notification Signs are posted at railroad crossings. To report a stalled vehicle or other emergency, call the number listed and give the dispatcher the US DOT crossing number.

Black and white crossbuck railroad signs are regulatory and must be obeyed the same as any other roadway sign. They are a yield right of way sign. They will have the number of tracks designated if there are multiple track.



A stopped train can block your view of an oncoming train on another track. Just because one has stopped doesn’t mean the other will do the same.



Some horse trailers and other low clearance vehicles can get stuck on “humped” crossings where tracks are higher than the road grade. If you see this warning sign, don’t attempt to cross, find another route. Also be aware that you may have been able to cross without a loaded trailer but now that you are loaded with animals or equipment you may get stuck.

To stop a train due to an emergency on or near the tracks:

Burlington Northern Santa Fe (BNSF) emergency number is 800-832-5452. Also call 911 for assistance.

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Contact the railroad emergency number and give the dispatcher the USDOT number (six numbers and a letter) or railroad mile marker (not the same as highway mile markers) and type of emergency. If there are multiple tracks, ask that they contact the adjacent track owner if they do not own all tracks at that location.

Move stalled vehicles off the tracks. Leaving animals may be necessary to save human life.

Place at least one spotter at the scene to look for oncoming trains in both directions.

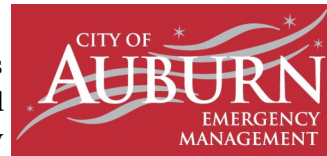
Operation Lifesaver has several article and PDF files of safety information for drivers, equestrians (useful for all livestock haulers), and emergency responders. They offer free presentations to the public. www.operationlifesaver.org WASART is working to schedule a Rail Safety presentation early next year.



Submitted by Greta Cook
WASART Operations Leader

Outreach Activities

September and October were very busy months for WASART's Outreach Committee. **Hollie Smith, Michaela Eaves** and **Christy George** staffed a booth at the Auburn Emergency Management Disaster Fair on 9/16/2012 followed by **Terry Garcia, Denise Steinkerchner** and **Teri Weronko, DVM**, teaching a class at the Shoreline CERT on 9/27/2012. On 10/10/2012, **Gretchen McCallum** and **Lanette Knapp** staffed a booth at the annual Franciscan Health Systems Regional Safety & Health Fair at St. Elizabeth's Hospital, Enumclaw.



The next day saw **Byron Wilkes, Carol Satre, Ginger Dickson** and **Gretchen McCallum** attending the King County Employees Giving Program Nonprofit Expo in Seattle where they were joined by Eric Swansen, Operations Manager of Regional Animal Services of King County, with his available-to-be-adopted shelter dog, Glory. Glory readily made friends wherever she wandered during the Nonprofit Expo. Good PR move for RASKC and Glory on Eric's part!

October 13th was particularly busy. The Thurston County Emergency Preparedness Expo saw **Ritz Duchesne** and **Joyce Moody** staffing a booth and **Hollie Smith** from WASART's Speakers' Bureau giving a presentation on Disaster Preparedness for Pets. **R. Marie Schimke** was called upon to give a presentation on Large Animal Disaster Preparedness at Puyallup's Emergency Preparedness Fair and for the fourth year in a row, WASART was present at the Maple Valley Emergency Preparedness Fair. There, **Connie Edwards** and **Christy George** staffed a booth while **Gretchen McCallum** gave a presentation on



Disaster Preparedness for Pets and Livestock. Also present were King County Sheriff's Deputies, Rich Barton and Pete Linde, with the Search & Rescue truck, now replete with WASART's truck decal.