

Welcome to this issue of the Washington State Animal Response Team's monthly newsletter! Find out what the President has to say, what deployments we've been on, where the next meetings will be, and where we'll be with upcoming events. [View this email in your browser](#)



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Helping Animals & Their Owners in Disasters

From the President

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Donate

General Meetings

June 11

Shoreline Fire Department,
#61
17525 Aurora Avenue North
Shoreline, WA 98133

The next General Membership Meeting will be held in Shoreline, WA from **7 p.m. - 9 p.m.** The first hour is spent on WASART business and the final hour is a mini-training session on a subject of interest to members. And, of course, some social time, too. All General Membership Meetings are open to the public and everyone is invited to attend.

Training

Generosity Saves Lives



Left to right: Carol Swindaman (WASART member and Serious About Fitness race organizer), President Bill, Carla D. (WASART member), and Sam Newcomb (SAF part owner and trainer) meet at Hi-Fi Brewing to exchange a check, a thank you plaque, and some stories.

Following up on my report from January, I'm very happy to report that WASART received an extremely generous donation this month of \$2,600 from Serious About Fitness in Redmond, as a result of their 5K fun run/walk charity event. Carol, long-time WASART member and animal rescuer, organized the event, for which we are very, very grateful.

WASART depends on donations of this sort to continue to expand our capabilities. A perfect example of how these additional funds are used is the new rescue litter just procured as a result of

Opportunities

(Open to the public)

[April 26-27 -- Field Response](#)

Wilkeson, WA

[June 7 -- Transport](#)

Enumclaw, WA

[June 21 -- Technical Large Animal Rescue \(TLAR\) \(Awareness\)](#)

Enumclaw, WA

[July 12-13 -- Animal Sheltering](#)

Enumclaw, WA

Visit our booth at these upcoming events

[May 17 - Petpalooza](#)

Auburn Parks - Game Farm Park

[May 17 -- Evergreen Health & Wellness Fair](#)

Evergreen Hospital - Kirkland, WA

[July 19 -- Tacoma/Pierce County Dog-A-Thon](#)

Ft. Steilacoom Park - Lakewood, WA

[August 2 -- Woofstock](#)

Tacoma, WA - Univ. of Puget Sound

Did you know we're often available to talk to your group about WASART or disaster prep?

Mission Statement

donations in response to last Fall's Moses rescue, the Newfoundland dog rescued from over a cliff at the Mud Mountain Dam Recreation area in Enumclaw, WA. The new litter will be a great asset for our Technical Rescue Team, who practiced with it on a very rainy day in March, as described further below.

We depend entirely on the generosity of donors who value the work we do on behalf of animals in distress. Their donations enable us to add to our rescue capabilities. Though we've come a long way in equipping our two utility trailers with rescue gear, we still have a way to go to complete their complements. The new litter will go into our Trailer No. 1, but another is needed for Trailer 2, which also needs a generator. And both trailers need A-frame lifting structures to provide tall overhead height for lifting large animals and assisting lifts of animals of all sizes in high-angle rescues. These items are expensive, in our budget's frame of reference, and can only be gotten with the generous assistance of our supporters. So we can't overstate our appreciation for donations such as the one from Serious About Fitness, and the others that have enabled us to get this far.

Bill Daugaard
President

Reaching Out at the Horse Expo



The Outreach Committee is one of the most active

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



committees. Making friends on WASART's behalf, it's a great way to be involved if you like talking to people. Contact outreach@washingtonsart.org if you are interested in helping out.

For the fourth consecutive year, WASART maintained a booth and a stall at the 2014 Western Washington Horse Expo this year. The event was held at the Event Center at the Clark County Fairgrounds on February 14th - 16th. The extra space was necessary to accommodate Stan, WASART's life-sized static demonstration and training horse, plus all of the materials necessary to fully explain and demonstrate what we do. It took many hours of dedication on the part of our volunteers to navigate and staff this outreach project. Though the overall attendance for the Expo was down this year, WASART had a great member turnout. Our volunteers shared information about our mission and our objectives, and helped to raise awareness regarding emergency preparation for livestock, small animals and for humans, too.

Special thanks and appreciation to long-time member Ritz D. for everything she does for WASART. She was responsible for hauling Stan and all of the other necessary furnishings to the event that are required for a successful road show. Thanks also to Dr. Richard Vetter of [Performance Equine Dental & Veterinary](#) in Buckley, WA, for the loan of his display equipment. The display was fabulous and worth every square inch of the double booth. WASART volunteers donated a total of 197.25 hours and drove 2730 miles.

As a direct result of our participation at the Expo, WASART recruited two new members who then took our recent Core Training March 1 and 2. Nice work, everyone.

Core 2014: Soggy but Successful



One of the most popular segments at Core Training is the fire extinguisher training. This year WASART made a [short video](#) from the training to help people remember the key points of safely using a fire extinguisher.

WASART conducted its 2014 Core training for new members and for the re-certifying of already Core-trained members on March 1-2, 2014. This training, along with additional independent study and certification requirements, is required for members to become certified for deployment by WASART for Sheltering, Field Response and/or Transport. We had 25 students in attendance, two of whom travelled from Oregon for the training, making for an excellent turnout. The weather was seasonably miserable, rainy and cold, making it a perfect weekend to hang out in a warm dry class room and talk about disaster training and preparedness.

WASART Core Training 2014 was graciously hosted by Woodinville Fire Station 31 in Woodinville, WA. We were treated to a hands-on Basic Fire Safety & Suppression class taught by David Weed, Public Information Officer (PIO) of Woodinville Fire & Rescue. David Weed did a beautiful job as a presenter and was also on hand this past summer to work alongside WASART volunteers for the rescue of Coco, the 2000 lb. Percheron whose rescue was detailed in the [June 2013 WASART Newsletter](#). As a speaker, David Weed is as knowledgeable as he is entertaining which is always appreciated during classroom trainings.

Mary Schoenfeldt is another of WASART's favorite guest speakers. Mary is a field certified Traumatologist for [Green Cross International](#) and she taught the Disaster Mental Health segment of our training. Mary's message, and WASART's message to all members, is the importance of caring not just for our own mental and emotional health but caring for the well being of our team mates during and after a disaster response.

We thank the rest of our capable Core instructors who were comprised of WASART members.

This year we had 5 WASART members who took the training to recertify for deployment, 2 non-member participants, and 20 first time trainees. WASART is thrilled at the prospect of having so many new and enthusiastic volunteers in training. We encourage them to complete their training so that we can work together in the future.

New Litter Tested During TRT Training



Either the Technical Rescue Team members test out the soundness of the new litter or someone lost a bet.

WASART Technical Rescue Team (TRT) members assembled at the Lower Twin Falls trail head in North Bend, WA on March 16, 2014 for their monthly training session. Though it was a particularly sloppy day for an outdoor gathering here in the great Northwest, member Chris B. happily pointed out, "Yes, it was sloppy, but that's how we deploy, so that's how we train!"

Similar to last month's training, the focus for this month involved a scenario of a critter over a cliff, but this time the team had the opportunity to practice with our newly acquired equipment, the Cascade Rescue Advance Series Model 200 Max Rescue Litter. As described by President Bill Daugaard, "It's a two piece, so each half can be attached to a backpack and packed in, but can also be carried out in one piece by the team carrying the subject. It comes with a complete tie-down system for securing the patient into the litter (see pic of Chris B. turned upside down), but it's designed for human rescue." Bill continues, "We'll have to improvise an effective system for securing a dog or other critter. Dr. Steve Johnson, vet and TRT member, would like to see the rescued animal secured in the sternal position (upright, so it doesn't compress the lungs and other organs, or potentially put on side loads on spinal injuries). Team member Rory K. has a plan for a net system that would go under and over the animal, let it breath, but keep it from sliding out the front or back. It will take some development but there's lots of room to improvise and retrofit."

Kevin W. of ESAR (Explorer Search and Rescue) was there and demonstrated several types of litter harnesses known as "spiders." The team practiced subject packaging by securing a teammate into the litter and inverting it before proceeding 1.5 miles up the trail to the training site near the Falls viewpoint.

Once at the site, a dual-mainline system was built to lower a litter and subject package with three attendants down a moderately steep slope. Upon reaching the bottom, the "subject" traded places with one of the attendants while the rigging was converted from a lowering to a raising system. The subject, litter, and attendants were then assisted back up the slope using the system. Once at the top, personnel were rotated and the exercise was repeated. The system was then disassembled and the gear was repacked and loaded onto the litter. The team carried out the litter as if it contained a subject.

No one was hurt and rain gear was properly tested.

Why Not Use A Chopper?



A Coast Guard helicopter rescues six people from Indiana flood waters in 2008 ([read more](#)). Photo Creative Commons via [Coast Guard News](#). (No changes made.)

Last summer, while Gemma, the smart little Fjord pony, was patiently awaiting her team of multi-agency technical rope experts to extract her from a pony width ledge over a cliff in Redmond, WA, one of Gemma's human neighbors posed the question, "Why not use a chopper?" Good question. Though the movie industry has accustomed us to seeing the image of a hovering helicopter successfully airlifting humans and dogs out of sticky situations humans and dogs don't weigh near as much as livestock. When it comes to large animal extraction the helicopter procedure is one of the riskiest techniques employed by animal rescuers.

In her book, [Technical Large Animal Rescue](#), Dr. Rebecca Gimenez, has written extensively on the dangers inherent when resorting to this last resort of extraction techniques. In terms of human safety, euthanasia is usually the better option.

In the Gemma scenario, the best reason NOT to use

a chopper: WASART is not currently capable of providing an airlift rescue nor are there any properly equipped airlift resources available in our state of Washington. Would that all large animal rescue organizations had the available resources of a standby helicopter and pilot, but even if that were the case, this technique is so highly specialized and fraught with wildcard dangers that few responders, or pilots, have the know how and/or the personal protective equipment and appropriate hardware to complete the task without risk of human and/or animal death. During such an attempt, a helicopter is required to hover and drop a cable to the animal and be secured by the "Lifting Team." The cable is then attached to a specialized UC Davis Anderson Sling snugly fitted around the horse; the only sling capable of supporting a load which significantly increases with the force of gravity and the climb, swings and turns that occur during the lift. WASART does not currently own an Anderson Sling.

According to CALSTAR, California Shock Trauma Air Rescue, it costs \$16,000 just to start the engines of a \$5 million helicopter used in medical human related transports. The cost increases exponentially for animal rescues because the helicopter used in a large animal rescue must also be specialized in order to handle a heavy live animal load that is capable of unpredictable behavior. Such an aircraft must have the engine power to maintain a constant altitude in spite of the physical conditions created by the downwash of air from the chopper's main rotor when it pushes against hard ground to produce lift. If there is no hard ground more power is necessary.

Helicopters need room to move safely and the animal in the sling needs to be lifted through an area clear of trees and other overhead hazards. In Gemma's case, the pony had dropped down about 70 feet onto a platform barely big enough for the pony to stand and little room for a rescue team. The area was also surrounded by thick vegetation and topped by a canopy of tall evergreen trees. Had an airlift been an available option, terrain such as that can be a deal

breaker for an airlift rescue.

Helicopters produce hurricane force winds. Blown debris creates a hazard for the animal, the load and lift teams, as well as the safe operation of the aircraft. A tree branch blown into the rotor blade can bring a helicopter to the ground.

Once the animal has been lifted, the pilot will deliver the load to a "Landing Team." Helicopters also need room to land. The most ideal landing zone during an airlift operation is a football field. The longer the animal is in the air the greater potential for trouble so the landing field should be close by.

Dr. Gimenez describes several successful helicopter rescue operations but she describes some gut wrenching failures as well. Helicopter airlift teams must operate at the highest level of awareness. Any mistake, be it in equipment, the rigging, communications, weather, improper risk assessment, and more, can produce exponentially dire results. Death by rotary blade is not uncommon for responders.

Though WASART is not currently training to conduct airlift rescues it is a long-term goal. However, we do have WASART members who are currently qualified and have assisted in human related helicopter responses. In the event of a large-scale disaster, helicopters could be deployed by other agencies. Under these circumstances responders who have acquired the appropriate safety and support training would be much in demand. WASART supports and encourages interested members to expand their training in those areas of specialized service.

For those folks looking for basic Technical Large Animal Rescue Training stay tuned for WASART's TLAR course coming up on June 21, and is posted on the [WASART website's calendar](#).

us at: WASART, P.O. Box 21, Enumclaw, WA 98022.

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