

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](#)



[www.washingtonsart.org](http://www.washingtonsart.org)

Helping Animals & Their Owners in Disasters

## From the President

### Generosity Amid Disaster Allows For More Help

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Did you know rescuing a dog from a cliff can cost almost \$5000?

It's only possible because of you.

[Donate](#)

### General Meetings

**September 10, 2014**  
Key Bank Meeting Room  
1212 Cole Street  
Enumclaw, WA 98022

The next General



*President Bill Daugard meets with Elders of the Snoqualmie Tribe to accept their generous donation to help fire response. The Tribal Elders said they consider animals parts of the family.*

July was a month not to be forgotten, not only for WASART, but also for the residents of Chelan and Okanogan Counties, as they dealt with the pain and loss brought on by the wildfires that ravaged their communities and are not yet fully contained. We were honored to be asked to respond there by the American Red Cross and county authorities. We established and operated two emergency animal shelters for those displaced by the fires, one in Chelan and another in Okanogan. The two-week deployments challenged our resources, but we were

Membership Meeting will be held in Enumclaw, WA from **7 pm - 9 pm**. 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.

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### Upcoming training

**September 27 & 28 - [Core Training](#)**

Woodinville Fire Department, Woodinville, WA

**October 18 & 19 - [Annual Exercise](#)**

Enumclaw Expo Center, Enumclaw, WA

**November 8 - [Technical Animal Rescue Training](#)**

Cumberland Fire Station, Enumclaw, WA

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Visit our booth at these upcoming events

No upcoming events.

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

proud to have been able to meet the challenges through the dedication and commitment of nearly 30 different WASART members, some of whom deployed multiple times.

I also want to acknowledge the caring response of the communities affected by the fires, from the remarkable support of Dr. Mark Shelton and his staff of the Chelan Valley Animal Hospital, who not only donated veterinary care for injured animals, but also brought cold drinks and ice to our volunteers, to the many other community members that erected exercise pens, donated food and supplies to our shelters, and offered support in many other ways.

Our efforts in aiding the wildfire response were rewarded far beyond our expectations when we were awarded a remarkable donation of \$50,000 by the Snoqualmie Tribe, as a part of their overall gift of \$250,000 to organizations that responded to the wildfires. We cannot begin to express our gratitude to the Tribe for its generosity, and we will do everything possible to justify its confidence in us by putting the funds to the best possible use for aiding animals in distress and helping to keep them with the families to whom they mean so much.

And following on the gift from the Snoqualmie Tribe, we were also privileged to receive a grant of \$15,000 from the Noah's Wish Foundation, also based on our efforts in emergency relief. As with the Snoqualmie Tribe's gift, we will ensure that the funds are used to increase our capability to respond to future emergencies.

In addition to the generosity of the Snoqualmie Tribe and Noah's Wish, we also received substantial donations from the Seattle Foundation and Merrill Lynch as well as numerous smaller donations from individuals and non profit organizations far and wide in response to our efforts in responding to the fires. We are equally grateful to all those that made those donations from the heart. We will try hard to justify your trust.

### Mission Statement

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



Finally, I'd be remiss not to acknowledge the recent effort and dedication of four WASART and five Summit to Sound Search and Rescue volunteers in undertaking a very arduous, all-night rescue of Azara, a female Siberian Husky lost for a week in the Mount Baker wilderness of Whatcom County. See the story below for more details, but it's the commitment of members like these and those that deployed for the wildfires, as well as the assistance once again of our friends in the Search and Rescue community, that make serving as President of this organization so satisfying.

Bill Daugaard

President

[president@washingtonsart.org](mailto:president@washingtonsart.org)

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## Fires in Eastern Washington Displace Residents and Pets



*Vice President Zoe Clelland makes sure dogs at the temporary shelter in Chelan get plenty of love, enrichment, and exercise.*

By the middle of July, much of the Eastern part of our state was engulfed in flames. There were numerous wildfires throughout our region but the Carlton Complex Fire in Okanogan County, the largest wildfire in recorded state history, burned more than

250,514 acres. Imagine a fire consuming approximately 400 square miles of terrain. It is estimated that the fire incinerated 300 homes and claimed the lives of too many pets, livestock, and untold numbers of wild animals and plant life.

On July 18<sup>th</sup>, we partnered with the American Red Cross, at their request, to set up WASART's first co-location shelter intended to service both displaced humans and their pets. WASART volunteers responded and by the next day our shelter, located within the walls of Chelan High School, was fully operational. WASART was prepared to expect an unknown number of people and companion pets.

WASART's Vice President, Zoe Clelland, described her first intake experience at the Chelan site, "The very first dogs that arrived at our Chelan animal shelter had run off from their family during the evacuations and were located running along the fire line over a day later. We were 5 minutes from officially opening intake and a man came around the corner carrying a young black lab mix like a baby, the older Spaniel limping behind, both covered in ash. The young dog was vomiting and lethargic at intake, most likely due to heat exhaustion and smoke inhalation. After a cool bath, some rest and quiet time, both dogs started to improve and by the end of the day were outside enjoying the green grass and cool breeze with the WASART volunteers."

Senior WASART member and responder, Denise Steinkerchner, commented, "This was the first time WASART was truly able to test what we have drilled/table topped and planned for 6 years." We were indeed tested, twice. Within the next few days, WASART was requested to set up an additional companion and large animal shelter on the Okanogan County Fair Grounds, a location much closer to the fire line. Our team was then split up in order to continue staffing both the Chelan shelter and to open and staff the new shelter in Okanogan. Zoe left Chelan to join the Okanogan team and made this comparison, "The conditions at the second shelter in

Okanogan County were definitely tougher, especially on the responders. Over 100 F degree heat, high winds and smoke gave us a sense of how dire the situation was in that area. But as always, never a day went by without a local resident stopping by to offer kind words, donating supplies or volunteer their time to help with the effort. It was amazing.”

Community response at the Chelan shelter was equally “amazing.” One of the benefits of volunteering during a disaster response is the privilege of participating in situations where people work together with common purpose. Disasters can make the world seem small. Everyone, in the communities of Chelan County and Okanogan County, was either directly affected by the wildfires or had a neighbor who was affected. Local residents drove by both of our shelter intake locations on a daily basis eager to donate time or equipment, sometimes money, offering to do anything to help.

WASART continues to debrief and analyze the details of our response. What did we learn? How can we do it better? We do know, with renewed certainty, that during a disaster response we can and should rely upon the generosity and the kindness of those folks who live in or near the disaster area as they are the folks most invested in the well-being of their neighbors and their community. WASART is grateful to have had this experience and we now have many new friends in Eastern Washington.

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**Alta, Burned Cat Face of Wildfire**





*A burned cat, named "Alta" after the area where she was found, was brought to WASART by her rescuer, then transferred to the [Lake Chelan Veterinary Hospital](#), where she continues to be treated. Photo courtesy of Lake Chelan Veterinary Hospital.*

The survival story of Alta the burned kitty has already been widely reported and emerges as a glimmer of hope and good news amid the devastation of the Eastern Washington wildfires. Alta's bears repeating.

No one knew her real name or anything about this kitty when she was found but on Sunday, July 20, when she appeared at our shelter she had earned the name "Alta." The coloration of Alta's fur was barely recognizable when Heidi Brown and her boyfriend, Brad, brought her to the WASART/Red Cross co- location shelter at Chelan High School.

Alta had somehow managed to survive the Alta Lake/Carlton Complex fire in Okanogan County when Heidi found the kitty wandering through the cinders of the burned out Alta Golf Course. Alta's fur was singed so badly she appeared to be a calico but it was

impossible to tell at the time. Her face was also badly burned, as were her paw pads. Alta's eyes were so swollen that it was unclear whether or not she would be able to see. Dr. Mark Shelton and his wife, Tori, of Lake Chelan Veterinary Hospital, came to the Chelan shelter within minutes of the kitty's arrival and took Alta into their loving care. Tori remarked that a human in Alta's condition would have been transferred to the Burn Unit at Harborview Hospital.

Alta experienced a setback in her recovery ten days after her rescue. Dr. Shelton took a day off and drove Alta for 5 hours to the Washington State University Veterinary Clinic in Pullman, Washington. Dr. Fransonn and her staff at WSU confirmed the superb quality of Dr. Shelton's care. Alta stabilized, and was then able to make the trip home to Lake Chelan a few days later.

Alta is well on the road to recovery thanks to Dr. Mark Shelton, Tori, and the entire staff at Lake Chelan Veterinary Hospital. Alta's eyes are wide open, her face is healing and the bandages have been removed from her paws. It's now easy to see that Alta is not a calico but a black and white kitty. Alta's original owners were located but their home was lost in the wildfire and they are unable to provide a home for her. Heidi Brown fell in love with Alta when she scooped her from the cinders and will happily provide Alta with a new forever home and family.

WASART is especially grateful for the kindness and generosity of everyone at Lake Chelan Veterinary hospital. Dr. Mark Shelton made his services readily available to each of the critters sheltered by WASART at the Chelan High School. Dr. Mark and his wife, Tori, extended their hospitality to our volunteers as well, even bringing us a cooler full of ice and cold drinks. It gave us an enormous amount of comfort to know that Dr. Shelton and his staff were onboard for us and for the critters in our care. It was truly a pleasure working with all of them.

## Lost Husky Found Under Waterfall Goes Home



*Azara, lost for a week and found trapped in the water at the base of a waterfall was helped out of the wilderness.*

Azara, a nine year old, Red Siberian Husky, had been missing almost a week in the rugged old growth area of Welcome Pass Trail in Whatcom County. Tony, Azara's owner, and Matt, Tony's father, put up flyers in the area where she was lost. As described in trail brochures, "The 2.5 mile long Welcome Pass Trail begins with a gentle grade of a former logging road. After 0.5 miles it becomes a steep, difficult trail through old growth forest up switchbacks and very steep terrain. In the last 2 miles you gain 3,000 feet elevation."

Six days later, on Sunday, August 3<sup>rd</sup>, Tony and Matt



returned to look once more. Tony waited below while Matt, and his dog, Marley the Pit Bull, hiked to the top of the steep rugged terrain. Matt made it to the top of the climb calling for Azara even though he suspected he might be calling in vain given the length of time the dog had been missing. Matt started on his way back down and again called Azara; this time she answered.

Matt bushwhacked his way through the trees to find Azara at the bottom of a ravine and trapped under a log in a pool of cold glacial water. Azara was weak and hypothermic. Matt freed her, wrapped her in an emergency blanket and dragged her as far as he could. Because of the steep gradient of the terrain, carrying the husky was not an option; Matt needed to use both hands to keep himself from falling. He knew he needed help if Azara was going to survive and through a miracle of technology Matt found he had cellular service! Matt called Tony down below. Tony called 911 and was referred to the Humane Society who hooked Tony up with WASART President, Bill Daugaard.

Lucky for Azara, and lucky for WASART, two of our members, Lauri and Fred, live in Whatcom County. They know the trail systems and have good friends in Summit to Sound Search and Rescue. It was late Sunday afternoon but still daylight when Laurie, Fred, Rory, and Joe from WASART assembled on the trail along with 5 members of Summit to Sound Search and Rescue. Ryan, from Summit to Sound, left his twin brother's bachelor party to be there.

The rescue team made the climb and established contact with the barking help of Marley the Pit Bull. They dropped a haul line down to Matt and Azara. But how to move a 70 pound unresponsive dog? Ed, from [Summit to Sound Search and Rescue](#), emptied his large pack and descended into the ravine. They were able to fit a good portion of Azara's near lifeless body into the backpack and the team hauled them up. Azara was showing unmistakable signs of severe hypothermia. She was shivering, exhausted and

unable to drink. At this point the team was working by the light of their headlamps. They wrapped Azara up in a soft Stokes litter. Jessie suggested using webbing to adapt the litter into an army style stretcher so that two people, Ed and Matt, could carry her and one person could act as a brake. This method allowed them to successfully negotiate the switchbacks across and down the steep 3,000 ft descent.

Tony, the owner, was at the base to greet the rescue team. Azara was then transported to the Emergency Vet in Bellingham. Tony recently informed us that Azara has recovered from her hypothermic condition, has some minor scrapes and is still exhausted but she is eating, drinking, and walking on her own. Tony included that, "Azara, is on strict orders from the vet to avoid wilderness areas."

Thank you to our dedicated WASART responders and to Summit to Sound Search and Rescue for spending the entire night on the Welcome Pass Trail to help Azara and her humans. We also thank Ryan's brother for sharing Ryan on the night of his bachelor party.

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## Update

## Gemma Helps Others in New Home



*Ella Mae, Nancy Grette, and Gemma pose for a picture. Ella Mae, who suffers from spina bifida, was the inspiration for Alatheia Riding Center. Photo courtesy of Alatheia Riding Center.*

In May 2013, WASART responded to help rescue a Norwegian Fjord who had fallen seventy feet. WASART worked with a number of other agencies to retrieve Gemma. The rescue is to date WASART's most technically difficult, involving the rigging of a horse on a narrow ledge, the lifting of her to a steep incline, and then helping her up the embankment she'd fallen down. You can read about the team's cooperative rescue in the [June 2013 newsletter](#).

Gemma's life since her rescue has led her to help others.

This year, Gemma's owner decided to lend Gemma to the [Alatheia Riding Center](#). The riding center serves disabled people of all ages via equine therapy. The riding center favors Norwegian Fjords, citing their easy-going natures in helping their clients, who so far have ranged in age from three to seventy-four. Gemma's owner Nikki Elin and one of ARC's owners Nancy Grette found each other through the Facebook

[Pacific Northwest Fjord Promotional Group](#).

Read more about Gemma's story at Alatheia Riding Center in this article published in [August's Northwest Horse Source](#).



*Gemma rests during her May 2013 rescue.*

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Sept 27-28: Core Training

**UPCOMING TRAINING**

When: September 27-28, 9am – 5pm

Where: Woodinville Fire Department, Station 31,  
17718 Woodinville-Snohomish Road,  
Woodinville, WA 98072 ([map](#))

Description Cost: \$85, (\$42.50 recertifying members)  
\$110 for non-members

This training is the foundational level of all of our trainings.

Core is designed to give students the basic skills and knowledge to deploy with us in a non-animal-handling support capacity, and is a mandatory requirement for WASART members to be able to deploy in an Emergency Sheltering or Field Response animal-handling capacity. During the two-day class, students will be instructed in WASART's operational policies and structure, as well as Disaster Preparedness, Disaster Stress Management, Basic Fire Safety, Biosecurity Awareness, and Base Camp Support. Students will have hands-on training with a fire extinguisher and be given the opportunity to practice putting out a live fire.

Core is open to both members and non-members who must be at least 17 years old. Pre-registration is required. To register online, follow this link: <http://bit.ly/WASARTcore2> The deadline to register is Sept. 17.

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## Annual Exercise



**UPCOMING TRAINING**

When: Oct 18-19, 8:30am – 5pm

Where: Enumclaw Expo Center, 284th Avenue  
Southeast, Enumclaw, WA,

The Annual Exercise is structured with the intention of giving all participants the benefit of experiencing a dress rehearsal in terms of sheltering response for a



major disaster. Given our geographic circumstances, reality must intrude to consider all possibilities including seismic and volcanic activity, landslide and wildfire. WASART has a response plan but we need as many volunteers as possible to continue to develop and troubleshoot that plan into a realistic workable strategy. If/when catastrophe strikes and a large scale sheltering response is necessary WASART will respond. This training will give you the ability to make yourself invaluable to our communities of humans and animals.

The WASART Annual Exercise is a free, two-day full-scale animal shelter set up and operation exercise with live animals. Participants will be exposed to all aspects of a large and small animal shelter operation. Participants are encouraged to spend the night onsite to gain the full benefit of an overnight deployment experience in addition to getting to know other responders in the organization and having more fun.

Complete the registration form and send to the Registrar at [registrar@washingtonsart.org](mailto:registrar@washingtonsart.org) or mail to WASART, P.O. Box 21, Enumclaw, WA 98022. For general information, go to [jobyemail@yahoo.com](mailto:jobyemail@yahoo.com).

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### Easy Money

## Unexpected Ways to Give to WASART That Cost You Nothing



If you shop at Fred Meyer, you can donate to WASART at no additional cost to you. Fred Meyer



allows you to choose a non-profit or school to link to your Fred Meyer rewards card. Once a quarter, Fred Meyer sends out donations, which is a percent of what purchasers have spent at the store. Currently we have five families signed up, and that earns us about \$5/family per quarter. It may not sound like much, but the extra \$125 a year can help us purchase new five helmets, a new tire for the trailer, or enough gas for one rescue. You can sign up at the [Fred Meyer Community Rewards](#) site. Thanks for helping us save lives!

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