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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

Helping Animals & Their Owners in Disasters

From the President

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In a large animal rescue, much of the more expensive equipment needs to be replaced for safety reasons.

It's only possible because of you.

[Donate](#)

General Meetings

December 9, 2015

King County Office of
Emergency Management
3511 NE 2nd
Renton, WA 98056

The next General
Membership Meeting will be
held from **7 p.m. - 9 p.m.**
The first hour is spent on

Grateful for Choices Volunteers Make



Members Tatianna and Chris at a recent technical rescue training do last minute checks of all the moving parts before sending Aaron over the edge of a cliff.

This time of year, many of us pause to look at our lives and acknowledge things that we're grateful for. For me, being a part of WASART is definitely something for which I'm grateful. This kind of work nourishes my soul and gives me a chance to connect with things that really matter. Each and every volunteer in WASART brings an amazing amount of talent, skill, dedication and compassion; whether it's a deployment, an educational opportunity or anything else that we do. It is known in the rescue community that we are worthy of respect and trust – because we've earned it, and we will continue to earn it. The work that we do really does have a positive impact 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.

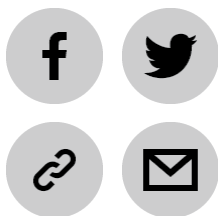
Upcoming training

Upcoming events

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

Mission Statement

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



our communities, and I'm grateful to each of you for helping make our world better. That may sound cliché, but it's heartfelt and genuine. Each of us could be doing any number of things with our time and our money, yet we have chosen to help make lives better. I respect that, and I respect you. May this season of giving thanks bring you closer to the 'real' part of your lives and to the things that truly matter.

Shawndra Michell
President

Feed After Fire Update

Roadtrip to Omak



The Omak/Okanogan Long Term Recovery Organization, feed suppliers, and a number of ranchers took time out of their day to discuss their experiences.

We've been working hard on the Feed After Fire project. We set up an online application and got word out. While we waited for people to fill out applications, we did research on what was needed and how best to address it.

We found the [Omak/Okanogan Long Term Recovery Organization \(OOLTRO\)](#), a group in the Okanogan area already helping their neighbors. We contacted them and after a bit of discussion decided the recipients of the aid would be best served if we worked together and shared resources, including

who applied to which organization to make sure everyone got their fair share of feed. Everyone also benefits from local people on the ground who know the area and individuals involved well.

It can be difficult to be a group from another part of the state jumping in to help, so we are grateful to the OOLTRO for their willingness to share knowledge and resources so we can make the most of the grant in the most sensible way possible and provide help that is actually helpful.

This past weekend we traveled to Omak in Okanogan County to meet with the representatives from the OOLTRO. We also got to meet some of the ranchers – hard working people who devote generations to raising grass-fed cattle. These guys don't run factory farms; they are small operation ranchers. They, along with everyone else, took time out of their very busy schedules to meet with us.

According to Monte Andrews of Ag Tech, a local feed store which has been a distribution center for donations, there are about 6400 cattle in the area. He said it will cost \$3.6 million to get them through the winter. They originally got donations but it was only enough to last 20 days and is, of course, long gone at this point. Local supplier [North 40 Outfitters](#) has been incredibly generous with their connections. With the \$40k (\$10k will be going to Ferry County), we purchased a semi-load of protein tubs, about 14 tons worth, and two semi-loads of hay and blocks to help feed wildlife. The blocks are food for deer and other grazing animals on the outside and have wild bird seed on the inside. North 40 sold this to us at cost. They, and Ag Tech, have been amazing in their consideration for their neighbors that have had losses.

Here are some other facts regarding the situation:

- OOLTRO, Ag Tech, and North 40 have helped about 200 people so far, including supplying food for dogs, cats, cattle, and horses, seed for pasture, fencing, and more.
- 2014's Carlton Complex Fire affected 9 ranchers. 2015's fires have affected 52 that the group knows of.

Many ranchers are still looking for cattle, which are raised on the open range.

- It will take many of the ranchers 5-10 years to recover from what they've lost.
- Cattle raised during last year's fires were 75-100 lbs lighter than average, showing the stress they suffered in 2014.
- One rancher said she needs 2 tons of hay per day for her 240 cattle. She also said where she used to feed about 20 deer a night, now 100 show up.
- Amount of FEMA aid received: none. Members of the group stated they have been told by FEMA no individuals will receive aid. Eastern Washington was also denied aid following 2014's Carlton Complex Fires. ([An article on the denial of aid can be found here.](#))

We're grateful we had a chance to meet with everyone. WASART may have most of our members living on the western side of the state, but they are our neighbors, too. They are kind people who care about their family, neighbors, and animals. There is a strong sense of self-reliance that is key to success as a rancher. Shauna Beeman, who is in charge of the agricultural branch of the recovery group's efforts said, "You think you're standing alone but when you look left and right you realize you're not."

About the Feed After Fire Project

Thanks to a very generous gift, WASART will be able to provide both domestic and wild animals with feed for the winter in areas devastated by the wildfires in Washington State. The project is being called Feed After Fire and will be in force as long as the funds and needs are there. The money was gifted by a donor who wishes to remain anonymous.

Find out more on www.feedafterfire.com.



Member Gretchen McCallum and Shauna Beeman of the OOLTRO check out the wildlife feeding blocks intended to help to feed deer and wild birds.

When Things Don't Go as We'd Like



A member comforts a horse during a deployment. There is always someone managing the head of the horse to keep them calm and and stop them from getting up before we need them to make the attempt.

Sometimes we are unable to save an animal. It's very sad, and not the outcome we want, but it happens in the work we do.

We can most always extricate the animal from its situation: down a cliff or ravine, in a hole or well, stuck in the mud, or simply cast in a stall. But we can't fix them if they are injured or if there is an underlying medical issue. Sometimes the vet can't help either and a decision must be made by the owner based on the well-being of the animal and other factors.

WASART can do two things to help, even in these cases. The first is to extricate the animal from its predicament so that it can be evaluated by the owner and the vet, making the decision as to how to proceed clearer for them. The second is to get out of the way while the decision is made, while offering emotional support if appropriate.

Out of respect for the owners' grief, these rescues are often not reported on our website or in this newsletter.

We haven't failed, even when the animal can't be saved. We can help make the decision to euthanize a little clearer.

Volunteer of the Quarter II

Rory Kelleher



Volunteer of the Quarter Rory Kelleher oversees [the rescue of a cow](#).

Rory was nominated by a number of his fellow volunteers as Volunteer of the Quarter. The rescue that prompted most of these nominations was the [rescue of the dog on Vedder Mountain](#), whom he later ended up adopting. Rory's confident leadership style gets the job done efficiently and decisively. He's a great team member who focuses on safety. He serves as an Operations Lead (OL), and has been the lead on the last two sheltering deployments for the wildfires in Eastern Washington. Rory also volunteers for King County 4x4 Search and Rescue.

Thank you for your leadership and team-positive attitude, Rory!

Holiday Fundraiser



ORNAMENTS & GREETING CARDS
wasart.myshopify.com • A fundraiser for the Washington State Animal Response Team

Aw, look, it's our very first holiday fundraiser! We are selling cards and handmade ornaments.

Both the ornaments and cards were designed by WASART member Michaela Eaves and Laurie Cinotto of

the [Itty Bitty Kitty Committee](#).

Each ornament is handmade to order, so there'll be a slight delay in shipping, and they are limited to the number ordered this year.

The cards are blank on the inside and just have the animals-on-birch image on the front. They are generic enough to be used for any occasion.

Here's the link, enjoy! <https://wasart.myshopify.com/>

A Peek Behind the Scenes



After each operation, all equipment used must be cleaned, disinfected, and put away for the next use. It's maybe the least glamorous part of what we do, but one of the most necessary.

When you think of WASART, you probably think of mud splattered responders helping a horse get out of the muck, or someone hanging over a cliff from a rope system. We love doing that stuff; it's what we are all about.

That's just the tip of the iceberg, though. We have many more members involved in fundraising, procuring the equipment we use, training, technical rescue practice and skill building, outreach, and more.

One of those jobs is keeping track of, and taking care of, our equipment and supplies. This requires time and effort from WASART volunteers.

When we finish a deployment, it can be as simple as making sure everything gets put back in its proper place, ready for the next mission. More typically equipment has to be cleaned and inspected to make sure it is ready and safe to use. If rope systems are involved, the ropes must be cleaned and inspected. Often they must be replaced as dirt and mud is abrasive and can render the ropes unreliable. In the case of a large animal rescue, the ropes may have to be replaced due to the stress of a heavy load. Pulleys, carabiners, litters, glides, and other hardware must likewise be cleaned and inspected. Safety is always top priority.

In addition, we have two powered vehicles and three trailers (soon to be four) that need to be kept safe and ready, various gasoline powered chain saws and generators that require regular maintenance, battery powered lighting equipment is checked out to be sure it works and that the batteries and spares are good, radios likewise must be kept in working order.

Then there's restocking the vehicles, which is most important after sheltering missions, although there are consumables on every deployment. We take great care, but sometimes equipment is lost or damaged during a rescue and must be replaced. Regular inventories are conducted to identify missing items.



The disinfectant we use needs to sit on the equipment to be most effective. Because it's

corrosive to metals, it is sprayed off metallic parts after an appropriate amount of time. In the case of fabric, plastic, and other non-metallic surfaces, the disinfectant is left to dry.

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info@washingtonsart.org - www.washingtonsart.org • (425) 681-5498

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