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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](#)


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Helping Animals & Their Owners in Disasters

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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.

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General Meetings

December 13, 2017

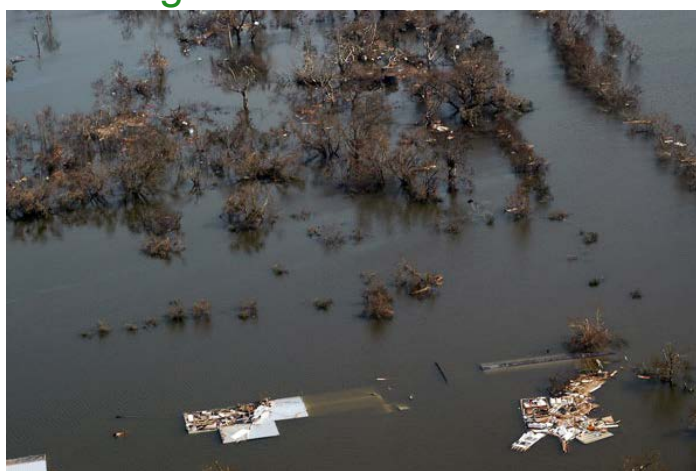
[King County Office of Emergency Management](#)

3511 NE 2nd Street
Renton, WA 98056

The General Meetings are held from **7 p.m. - 9 p.m.** The first hour is spent on WASART business and the final hour is

From The President

Reflecting on Katrina



Flooding in Venice, Louisiana after Katrina

August 30, 2005

(Photo credit: USGS)

With all that Mother Nature has given us in recent weeks, I can't help but think back to my time during Hurricane Katrina. I had volunteered with animals in a different capacity prior to this event, but this was my first deployment to a disaster, and it forever altered my path. Even 12 years later, there are still times when I struggle with what I witnessed and went through. I believe though, that that is one of my driving forces -- to make sure that WASART responders are as prepared as possible for what they may encounter. If it's at all possible, I don't want anyone holding onto stressful events any longer than they need to. Every deployment presents the chance for our souls to be harmed or scarred, but when we go in prepared, we have a

a mini-training or discussion session on a subject of interest to members. And, of course, some social time, too. All General Meetings are open to the public and everyone is invited to attend.

Upcoming training

Register at
<http://bit.ly/WASART2017>

Animal Handling & Assessment (repeat)

October 1, 2017

8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
Foothills Veterinary
28512 112th St E
Buckley, WA 98321

Practical Communications Workshop (repeat)

October 7, 2017

10:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.
Fort Steilacoom Park
Lakewood, WA

Annual Exercise

October 14, 2017

9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
Enumclaw Expo Center
45224 284th Ave SE
Enumclaw, WA 98022

Outreach Events

No registration required.
Stop by and say hello!

September 30, 2017

[Maple Valley Community
Emergency Preparedness Fair](#)

9:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.
Rock Creek Elementary School
25700 Maple Valley-Black
Diamond Road SE
Maple Valley, WA 98038

September 30, 2017

[Peninsula Emergency
Preparedness Fair](#)

10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

much better chance of healing from it rather than having it hold on and not let go. It also puts us in a better position to assist the humans in dealing with these events. WASART currently has teams on stand-by and ready to deploy to Texas and Florida, and we're also on stand-by for wild fire sheltering here in Washington State.

We send our thoughts out to everyone affected by these disasters, and remain dedicated and prepared to helping animals and their humans when called upon.

Shawndra Michell

President

Helicopter assists human/dog rescue



Atreyu safely back at the trailhead

On Labor Day, we received a call from Snohomish County for a dog with injured paws up Gothic Basin Trail. The owner and a friend had hiked up the trail where the dog was injured. They'd camped

Gig Harbor High School
5101 Rosedale Street NW
Gig Harbor, WA 98332

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.



overnight while waiting for rescue. The dog is a lab/boxer mix, weighing about 65 lbs. We met up with volunteers from [Snohomish Search and Rescue](#) (SAR) (also a nonprofit) at Verlot Ranger Station then proceeded on to the trailhead.

There was some concern for dehydration and health of the owner, so SAR had gone ahead of us to check. The hiker, who was with the party but was not the dog's owner, had come back down the trail earlier and provided information on the dog, hikers, and situation. After a final briefing with the SAR deputy and his team we headed out, taking one of their radios. The deputy had unlocked the gate allowing us to drive the first mile.

The trail is strenuous with a few light scrambles. The SAR team arrived first and discovered the owner was also injured. They made the determination that hiking her out in the dark, while WASART managed the litter, would be dangerous.

We arrived shortly thereafter. Our subject, Atreyu, was able to stand a bit, though it was clearly painful for him to do so. His paws were abraded and sore.

The Snohomish deputy requested, and was approved for, helicopter assistance based on the safety concerns and condition of the dog's owner. As there was no place for the helicopter to land, the subjects would be hoisted into the helicopter. The team split up to make the helicopter extraction less complicated and thereby safer. The owner, the dog, the SAR team lead, and a WASART team member to assist with animal handling remained at the extraction site.

The rest of the SAR and WASART teams continued up the trail about half an hour to the Foggy Lake area, tasked with looking for a suitable landing zone for the helicopter. The team prepped the area for the helicopter, cleaning it up and making sure nothing was free to fly around and create a hazard.

Meanwhile, Atreyu's owner was put in a screamer suit, which is a way to get a patient harnessed quickly for extraction, and lifted into the helicopter. The dog was fitted with a muzzle and a harness, and was soon reunited with his owner in the chopper.

The SAR team lead and WASART team member headed up to Foggy Lake to rejoin the rest of the team. The helicopter ferried four responders at a time to the landing zone. There, we were met by another WASART member who ferried the responders back to the command post at the trailhead. We met up with the owner, debriefed and headed out.

We're very grateful to Snohomish County SAR and the Sheriff's office for their support and partnership on rescues like these. We also owe a big thanks go to Amateur Radio Operator David, N7NIP, who facilitated communication on this mission.

Swift water rescue delivers horse



Twix back on the safe side.

On Monday afternoon we received a call for a horse, Twix, who had spooked and ended up on the far bank of the Snohomish River in the Lord Hill area. He was safe but hemmed in by geography and too afraid of the water to swim back on his own.

We decided the horse was safe enough, and had grass and water available. Attempting a rescue in the dark can introduce unnecessary risks. Making plans and proceeding in the morning would be safer for the horse as well as the responders.

That evening we considered and rejected a number of plans, concluding that the best course was to swim the horse back across the river. Though the river is low, any water rescue can be dangerous. Swift water is not something we are trained in.

Fortunately we have friends at [Summit to Sound Search and Rescue](#) in Whatcom County who are. We've worked with them a number of times and successfully completed a swift water rescue with them not too long ago. (See [WASART News March 2016](#).) Additionally, a number of their swift water technicians are also horse people. Snohomish County's Sheriff was kind enough to put in an official request for Summit to Sound and four responders came down that afternoon with a boat and equipment in tow.

We met them at the river, about half a mile up stream from the horse. Joining us was Dr. [Dana Bridges Westerman](#) and some friends who also brought boats. We donned Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) and Personal Flotation Devices (PFD), then headed down the river.

Though most of the river was low enough to walk through, there was a channel right in front of the horse that was about ten feet wide and seven feet deep. This was the main feature we needed to get the horse across to get him to safety.

One of our best horse handlers, JC, rigged the horse. He used a Wideman Configuration to distribute weight and not injure the horse, while keeping Twix securely harnessed as he was pulled across.



*An example of the Wideman Configuration
(Photo courtesy of Dr. R. Gimenez)*

We attached a water rescue rope to the rigging. The water rescue rope is key here because it's designed to float and have less drag in the water, where our usual rescue ropes could have bogged down and become a hazard. Dr. Dana put an inner tube around the horse's neck to give a little extra floatation to the head. She also gave a bit of sedation to help calm the horse.

The rest of the responders took their places on the other end of the rope to pull the horse into the water and through the deeper part. He was able to walk the rest of the way over in the shallow water. Nearby, his owner, her friend, and Twix's pasture-mates were on hand to call him over and encourage him.

Rigging lead Joe called the pull and we steadily and firmly pulled Twix off his spot by the side of the river, into the water, and then across the river.

The solution worked well and his nose never went under, which could have caused medical issues. We're really grateful to Summit to Sound for lending

us their swift water experts. They are responsible for the rescue going safely and smoothly. We're also very appreciative of Dr. Dana and her friends from Rotten Chum Guide Service for the operation and use of their boats.

Disaster awareness on September 30



Hurricane Harvey rescue. Photo courtesy of [Texas National Guard](#) via Flickr under [CC 2.0 licensing](#).

With September being peak hurricane and wildfire season, it's no surprise September is disaster awareness month.

WASART has been on standby for evacuations from the Jolly Mountain and Sawmill Creek fires, and we have responders who are waiting on word back to assist with Hurricanes Irma and Harvey.

We'll also be at three local disaster preparedness fairs on September 30, presenting at two. Stop by and chat with us to make sure you, your family, your pets, and livestock are prepared for a disaster.

Don't want to leave home? You can catch up on what you need to know from [this great article by the ASPCA](#).

[Emergency Preparedness Fair](#)

by Peninsula Emergency Preparedness Coalition

(2 Presentations)

9:30 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Gig Harbor High School

5101 Rosedale St NW, Gig Harbor, Washington
98335

[Maple Valley Emergency Preparedness Fair](#)

9 a.m. - 2 p.m.

25700 Maple Valley Black Diamond Rd SE
Maple Valley, WA 98038

[Sammamish Annual Disaster Preparedness Fair](#)

by Sammamish Citizen Corps

9 a.m. - 3 p.m.

(Presentation at 11 a.m.)

Sammamish City Hall

801 228th Ave SE

Sammamish, WA 98075

2017 Training dates



Animal Handling & Assessment – October 1st
(repeat)

Communications Practice – Oct 7

Annual Exercise – October 14th

Technical Rescue – Monthly, contact the [Technical Rescue Chair](#) for info

Register for 2017

You can register for 2017's trainings

at <http://bit.ly/WASART2017>. Questions? Check

with [Training Director](#).

P.S. We have exemptions for veterinarians and search and rescue members. Check with the [Training Director](#) for details.

WASART NEWS is a publication of the Washington State Animal Response Team (WASART) published on or about the 15th of each month. WASART is an all-volunteer, 501 (c)(3) nonprofit organization. Mail us at: WASART, P.O. Box 21, Enumclaw, WA 98022.

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