

Welcome to this issue of the Washington State Animal Response Team's bi-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](#)



Helping Animals & Their Owners in Emergencies

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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

The 2020 meeting schedule will be announced in the next newsletter.

From The President

A Word From Josette Holden, WASART's New President



President Josette Holden has some words for the team.

It's 9AM on the second Saturday of the month, and I'm standing in a parking lot in the pouring rain with a group of tired, yellow clad people shouldering equipment bags and holding coffee cups. I find myself wondering, "Who are these crazy people?"

Who are these people who woke up, threw a power bar into their pocket and willingly set out to spend the next eight hours practicing knots in the rain? These people that show up for the annual exercise when the

The 2020 training schedule will be announced in the next newsletter.

Upcoming Events

The 2020 event schedule will be announced in the next newsletter.

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.



water rescue team while a storm rages outside?

This dedication is the heartbeat that gives life to your organization, rain or shine, whenever an animal is in need. Your effort on days like these does not go unnoticed by those who matter most; the animals and their owners that we respond to.

Your decision to put on that green shirt and yellow jacket doesn't just give you the opportunity to perfect your skills and knowledge, it allows you to curate a perspective that is invaluable to the decision makers behind the scenes that are working to make this organization better at what we do. From finding and remodeling the perfect van to add to our fleet, to crafting exciting updates to the training curriculum, these decisions rely on the skills, knowledge and unique perspectives that grow with each opportunity to engage with WASART. I am proud to be a part of a culture where every member can contribute to furthering our mission, and I encourage each and everyone one of you to reflect on your experiences, large or small, and share your thoughts, perspectives and ideas so we can continue to make decisions that matter.

It's 5PM on the second Saturday of the month, and I'm standing in the dark in the pouring rain with a group of tired, yellow clad people shouldering equipment bags and donning headlamps. I reflect on all we have achieved in the last 8 hours and find myself thinking "I am proud to be one of these people."

Josette Holden
President

**Snohomish County Fire Department
Trains for National Deployments**



WASART teamed up with Steven's Animal Sanctuary to hold a training for members from the Snohomish County, WA, fire departments and swiftwater teams.

It's not every day that a team of professional firefighters decide they want to be more active in deploying nationally as a FEMA team to rescue animals during wide-area floods. But that exactly what personnel from [Snohomish County Fire District #7](#) decided to do. Fourteen of them, many already on the Fire Department's Water Rescue team, trained with WASART instructors in Animal Rescue & Handling, at the Awareness Level.

On November 16th the firefighters met at Enumclaw Fire Station #2 in Cumberland.

The training started with several hours of classroom instruction covering rescue site assessment, animal behavior/handling, and decontamination practices.

This was followed by hands-on training at nearby [Steven's Animal Sanctuary](#). Lead instructor Heather Stewart—DVM, Molly Reagan—LVT, and other instructors taught the attendees how to fashion emergency halters on large & small horses and cows. The trainees learned how to recognize and stay out of kick zones, and how to safely and effectively move

situations that may be dangerous to them or where they pose a danger to humans.

Small animal handling was also covered: Trainees learned best practices for using various equipment to catch dogs. Muzzling is always a good idea in rescue situations; normally calm animals will often react differently when frightened and stressed, so that was covered as well. Crating dogs for transport was also covered.

The next step for these animal loving responders is to acquire the supplies and equipment they will need when they deploy. Donations would be gratefully accepted; enquiries can be directed to SnoCo Fire Department #7's [Heather Chadwick](#).



WASART members outfit the new van as a technical rescue vehicle.

Over the past few years, with the help of generous donors, WASART has added to its technical rescue equipment. The new equipment gives us the ability to help more animals, in more situations, even more safely.

The down side is that WASART's box van is approaching its maximum load carrying capability, and there's not much room in the box for more gear.

We went shopping. One of our members located a used 2016 Isuzu NPR-HD 16' box van. that gives us a four foot longer box and another 4,500# load carrying capacity. The Board of Directors approved the purchase at the October meeting.

Fortunately WASART members come with many skills. We will be using our own volunteers to install

lighting, a backup camera, and radio equipment.

Once that work is complete, the gear will be transferred to the new van, which will replace the old one. It will be staged to the north, off of State Route 2, primarily for missions to the north of Interstate 90.

WASART Welcomes New President, New Secretary



Meet WASART's new Secretary Jeanette Whitmire (left) and President Josette Holden (right).

Election time is always bittersweet. We release some Board members and welcome others. We're always happy former officers continue on as regular volunteers, and we welcome our new officers and look forward to working with them.

Congratulations to our new officers:

President **Josette Holden**

Secretary **Jeanette Whitmire**

And thank you, former President **Shawndra Michell**, and former Secretary **Minde Sunde**, for your untiring efforts in leading WASART during your two terms in office. WASART is in a better place because of your leadership.

Emergency Animal Sheltering



Volunteers meet to find out what roles they'll play during the Annual Exercise.

Every fall, WASART holds an Annual Exercise (AE) to put into practice what we've learned over the year. It is also an opportunity to learn about new equipment acquired during that time.

The focus is on setting up and operating and Emergency Animal Shelter (EAS) that may be needed after a natural disaster or other event that displaces people and their animals. In addition we practice rescue techniques and some animal handling.

The year, as in past years, the AE was held at the [Enumclaw Expo Center](#).

The event set up began Friday afternoon at 1600 hours with 5 members helping transport vehicles and supplies to the Enumclaw Expo Center. The Exhibit Hall was set up as the classroom, Hospitality center and Admin station. Supplies and vehicles were then staged at the Horse Barn.

On Saturday, a mock deployment began at 0800 with a total of 21 members participating.

After introductions, Just In Time Training (JITT) covered the event purpose, basic shelter operations, safety, and intake forms and procedures.

and practiced with stuffed animal props. An introduction to the new technical rescue van was provided and then a tour of the facility and sheltering stations.

Responders were assigned to shelter stations. Team leads were chosen and given a briefing by the Shelter Manager. Stations were set up utilizing available supplies and resources onsite. The shelter was opened for intake and housing. Live (horses and dogs) and manikin animals were brought through the Intake Station to fill out paperwork. Then transferred into designated species-specific housing areas in the barn.

FRS and VHF radio communications were difficult to hear with the heavy rain on the metal roof and the dogs barking. This created the need to go directly to the appropriate station to communicate, which took time but simulated another real-life situation.

Participants were rotated into new positions to get experience at different stations in the shelter. The animals were reclaimed, paperwork was finalized, and the shelter was closed. Demob started and everyone shifted to clean up, repacking and returning supplies to their place of origin. A debrief was held where many lessons-learned were shared and suggestions made. All responders and supplies were off site by 1800 hours.

Giving Tuesday



Here's a call we dread: there is a horse trapped on one side of a river and we need to move her across. Don't get us wrong: we love helping out animals. But we are limited to the scope of our training. In the past with situations like this, we've worked with fellow rescues who have generously shared their trained volunteers, equipment, and other resources with us. These units are fantastic to work with, but their priority needs to be human rescue. Helping us is a courtesy. If they are needed elsewhere, the animal may not get rescued. We'd love to have the training and equipment to resolve this on our own.

The good news is, we're working on a water rescue team trained on rescuing animals from water situations. For that, we could use your help for this upcoming #GivingTuesday on December 3rd. You can help the horse stranded in water or the dog trapped on the far side of a river by giving us a boost toward our \$10,000 goal.

Want to see how Twix, who was trapped on the other side of a river in Snohomish County, WA, was rescued? Check it out here:

<https://wasart.org/wasart-stories/twix-horse/>

Donating takes less than five minutes. Here's how you can help:

<https://www.wasart.org/donate>

- Donate through Facebook

www.facebook.com/wasart

- Check with your place of work to see if matching is offered

- Sponsor a match or a challenge. Matching funds provide encouragement to everyone to donate by extending gifts.

Pro tip: check us out on [Guide Star!](#)

WASART NEWS is a publication of the Washington State Animal Response Team (WASART) published bi-monthly. 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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