# pet connection M A G A Z I N E



## King County Sheriff's Office

# From the **Publisher**

Finally! is the time of rebirth and renewal. I know that my life has changed in a big way over the last few months. In fact, there are

some heroes that made this issue possible; some folks that stepped up when my plate was overflowing! I want to give big thanks to Tracy, Holly, and Marika for their talented contributions to both spring editions! It truly takes a village to support each other and make a huge project like PCM possible!

In this issue, we share stories about animal heroes and heroes for the animals! Please join us in celebrating just a few of the hardworking organizations, people, and pets that are helping to make life in the PNW even better. We see you out there, going the extra mile to make a difference, and we appreciate you!



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The Roque Detection Teams are based out of scenic Rice, Washington, but their heroic work has a worldwide impact!



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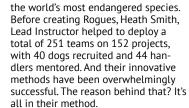


he snow crunched beneath our boots as we ascended the winding trail, flanked by Douglas Fir and lodgepole pine. The air was sharp, but the sun glinted through the trees, warming our faces. Holly Cook, her husband, Tony, and I hiked up the mountainside sandwiched between several of the Roque Detection Teams, including Justin Broderick with Winnie, Jennifer Hartman with Scooby, Suzie Marlow with Skye and Zilly, Heath Smith with Chester and Duke, and Collette Yee with Jack and Dio. As we walked, each dog checked in with their human partner, or "bounder," pausing, or making eye contact, or putting their nose to their human partner's leg

As we rounded a turn, we came to an opening in the trees. From here, we could see everything: sky, trees, vast alluvial plain, and the mighty Columbia River stretched out below us, with the Kettle Mountains fanning out far in the distance. We all paused to take in the sight.

The pups and people of the Roque Detection Teams have circumnavigated the globe, ascending countless hillsides and mountains, most of them far steeper than this one. From Southern California to Southern Africa, from Nepal to Malaysia, and from British Columbia to France, the people who created Rogues have reached some of the world's most remote ranges, and all in the name of conservation. With more than 65 years of collective experience, the Roques have searched by land, sea, and air for indications of





"Part of the passion is the detection dog method," explained Bounder Jennifer Hartman. "There's still a lot of hesitation from researchers. It still seems like the outlying method. We're asked: Why don't we just use 'traditional' methods?" The answer: because detection dog method works.

The Pet Connection team had the opportunity to see just how well detection dogs worked when several of the teams showed us how quickly their dogs could find some scat that had been hidden off-trail. Dog after dog bounded over the hillside, their noses searching eagerly, until they found where the scat had been hidden. Each time, it was within one or two minutes., Impressive, considering this was scat that the dogs had been trained on more than a year earlier but hadn't smelled again since. Each time the dogs found scat, they leapt with joy, and then were rewarded with a ball. They raced around the hillside, snow spraying up from beneath their paws as we all laughed. Even working dogs get

While the faces behind the Rogue Detection Teams have been in the field for years, their name is new. The Roques were officially founded

"We decided to break out on our own because we were going to lose the soul that made us who we were," Jennifer explained. "We have 25 years of making mistakes, and we know what works and what doesn't. We decided to name ourselves the Roque Detection Teams because we're the misfits of the biology world." Jennifer explained. The Roque dogs were all rescued from shelters; some of these dogs, like Pip, had been returned to the shelter up to six times before their particular set of skills made them the perfect partners for the human roques.

"The Rogue dogs tend to be a lot of the working breeds, because of their obsessive, high-energy

Australian Cattle Dog/Mix

Golden Retriever/Lab Mix

Rat Terrier/Chihuahua Mix

Australian Cattle Dog/Mix

Australian Cattle Dog/Mix

Australian Cattle Dog

Australian Kelpie/Mix

Australian Cattle Dog

Australian Cattle Dog/

Australian Cattle Dog

Cattle Dog / Mix

Cattle Dog/Mix

Black Lab/Mix

Black Lab/Mix

Black Lab/Mix

Black Lab/Mix

Breed

Cattle Dog/Mix

Ewok/No Idea

Athena

Beckett

Chester

Dio

Duke

Filson

Hiccup

Hooper

Nelson

Ranger

Scooby

Jack

Max

Pips

THE DOGS OF THE ROGUE DETECTION TEAMS

Age

15

16

14

5

10

13

8

6

9 32lb

Weight

32lb

40lb

20lb

60lb

35lb

20lb

45lb

47lb

60lb

50lb

45lb

38lb

35lb

72lb

65lb

46lb

36lb



behavior, but they're also dogs that don't like they'd be working dogs." Take Becket example: he's a small, black, fluffy dog, w looks like he's equal parts Ewok, Teddy E Papillon. The Roque Teams also tend to e with a lot of traditional working dog bree black Labs and blue heelers, but many br can be detection dogs.

"We're looking at personality traits. Our selection process isn't breed-based," Jennifer said. "We know that these dogs work; they wouldn't be as happy in a home. We adopt the misfits. These are 'bad' dogs for a good cause. 'Bad' because they didn't thrive in a home environment, but they do thrive in the great outdoors, doing what they love with their people."

While many of the bounders work primarily with certain dogs, the teams are trained to be interchangeable.

"Even amongst all of these dogs with high prey drive, they still have differences in their communication," explained Bounder Suzie Marlow. "Being able to work with 15 different dogs, it's almost like learning different dialects. You see how you communicate with one dog versus how you communicate with another."

While the dogs might differ in their communication, bounders and canines alike have a shared reputation as misfits. They truly are roques.

"We're always outsiders, even within the biology world" said lennifer "The traditional method for tracking animals is using a radio collar or trap, but we use scent detection work to find them."

The nontraditional approach has yielded extraordinary results; the dogs can detect more than 40 species and counting.

a feedback."

with the world.

Recent Projects

dling population.

nifer said.

"We're all family," Jennifer said.

"Part of what makes our meth-

od work is our connection with

overtime, all over the place. We

The Rogues branched out be-

"Educational outreach is a big

component of what we do, and

dogs are the perfect vehicle," Jen-

There are between 100 to 300

Humboldt martens left in the

world, and last fall, the Rogues

were on the job on the Oregon

coast to help locate them and

find ways to conserve their dwin-

science and wildlife conservation

cause they wanted to share

each other. We're always working

instruct each other; it's a loop, it's

t look tt, for vho Bear, and end up eeds like reeds	"The Humboldt marten is a really rare animal that needs to be conserved," Jennifer explained "Other methods have had some success, but in terms of collecting genetic material specifically detection dogs are more successful. We discovered that the martens live in both old growth forests and sand dunes, which we hadn't anticipated."

Other recent projects have included detecting cougar, bats, tigers, Taylor's Checkerspot and Silverspot caterpillar frass (they are an endangered butterfly of the PNW), Sierra Nevada red fox in Yosemite National Park, storm petrels in British Columbia, grasshoppers in France, and fishers and marten in Michigan.

The Roques don't fit within a certain framework because they're using a live animal to find other

"They aren't a machine: we're constantly learning," Jennifer said. "How do we get them to go to the right spot where a bat has landed? We can't do your nice, neat, statistical analysis."

Many of the team members have been in the field for years. Suzie Marlow and her dog, Skye, have traveled as far as Nepal and Vietnam, where they located pangolins. Justin Broderick, who works with Winnie, has been detecting endangered species for 8 or 9 years.

"We're looking to grow in 2020," Jennifer said. Part of that growth includes increased educational outreach.

"We're going to be hosting two classes where people can learn more about behavior work and how to specialize in detection," explained Suzie. "It's a dynamic environment, and we're going to teach them how to deal with that. This is citizen scientist work. Science isn't just a lab coat; it can be more physical and more engaging. From a feminist point of view, it's an opportunity to see how women can have diverse roles in science."

The two-week classes will be held at the Roque's home base in Rice, Washington, and will include basic theory and an apprenticeship

The dates for the classes are:

# March 15-March 28 March 31-April 14

"We have to act now. Conservation doesn't have that time. We need to band together and work toward communal goals," Jennifer said.

To learn more about how you can support the Rogue Detection Teams, visit roguedogs.org. Follow their adventures on Facebook, Instagram and **Twitter at Rogue Detection Team.** 

2 Pet Connection Magazine South Edition March/April 2020





Presented by Feline Friends

**APRIL 4, 2020** 

# 10am to 3pm

11am First Dog Hunt / 12pm Kids Hunt 1pm Fashion Show / 2pm Second Dog Hunt

**ALL PROCEEDS BENEFIT:** 





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# KING COUNTY Sheriff's Office



Photos and story by Holly Cook Photography

of fall in the early afternoon air when I met Sqt. Randy Potter from King County Sheriff's Department K9 Unit at Bandera Airstrip, in the foothills of the Cascade Mountain Range. I had been invited to participate in hoist training and was a bit anxious, as were a few of the K9s who had never been in a helicopter before. I was in good company.

In addition to Sqt. Potter, who is a Master Trainer with the Washington State Police Canine Association and an evaluator with Washington State Criminal Justice Commission, several civilian K9 trainers were in attendance. Sqt. Potter is a firm believer in getting the most for his K9 units and utilizes as many resources as he can find to make sure his K9s and their handlers are at the top of their game. Sgt. Potter is a former handler himself and he is still full of passion and energy and talks with enthusiasm

The K9 unit for King County Sheriff's Department was formed in 1977 by 4 deputies who took the time to travel to Baltimore to become trained handlers In the early 80s. 2 more handlers were added to the department and in 1986. the department added 3 more. The early training for these handlers and their dogs was done by the deputies, in-house. At that point in time the teams were considered full time, special ops, but that title was disbanded in the early 90s.

The K9 units are now considered patrol K9s with ancillary K9 duties. All K9s and their handlers must meet Washington State standards for patrol which are defined by The Washington Police Canine Association and Washington State Criminal Justice Training Commission These standards include 400 hours of initial training to become certified, then 16 additional training hours per month. The teams are run through a variety of scenarios, from tracking quarry through neighborhoods and forests to retrieving evidence The teams also participate in yearly certification tests with a variety of other agencies. All of this training pays off for the King County Sheriff's Department K9 Unit. With warriors' hearts, the deputies train with their dogs who have the instinct and internal drive to get the job done. The deputies have training log books in their vehicles and one glimpse shows how committed they are to their duties.

Along with their weekly training, the teams participate in special scenario training as well, which is why I was standing on a helicopter pad. I was among eight K9 teams from Seattle four teams from Vancouver, BC, a retired Master trainer, 2 civilian trainers, a member of Search & Rescue and 2 photographers gathered at Bandera

Airstrip on a cool October afternoon to participate in hoist training. The hoist training was logged into the deputy's training logs as training hours.

The training is valuable to everyone involved and the atmosphere during the safety briefing is serious and somber. Of the eight King County Sheriff's Department's K9 teams, 4 of them had already experienced hoist training and the other 4 had not. None of the teams from Vancouver had any hoist training experience. I also discovered that this training was not just for the K9 teams, but also for the crew of the helicopter, who rarely interact with the K9s.

There was a little bit of tension in the air, and, for me personally, some anxiety, because I was told I too would be hoisted. I have as much experience in a helicopter as the new K9s (read: none). Sqt. Potter took the lead and explained the scenarios for the day and then we all geared up. Safety is a top priority for both the handlers and the dogs. Once in our harnesses, we were checked and then double checked to make sure the harnesses fit properly and were in working

After the safety check, the first scenario began. The handlers were to introduce their K9s to the helicopter at rest. Both doors were open and the rotors were still. While on leash, each handler took their K9 up to the helicopter, encouraged them to hop in, and then exit out the other side. The pace was quick and the K9s ran their paces in excellent time. Next, the rotors were turned on and the handlers were instructed to run the doas through the helicopter again, but this time, there was a reward at the end. Two quarries in bite suits were awaiting the K9s once they made it through the whirring helicopter. The K9s were aware of the quarries before entering the helicopter, which encouraged them to get their job done so they could apprehend their quarry, about 100 yards away. Each K9 team made their way



through the helicopter and dashed to the quarry, they pursued the quarry with much enthusiasm, leaving the deputies to run as fast as they could to catch up to their K9s.

The next scenario began after another safety check, because hoisting was about to begin. The helicopter hovered about 100 feet above the ground. In the rotor wash, the dogs were attached to their handlers with large carabiner and a short bungee cord. Literally attached at the hip, the teams were then hooked to the hoist line. We were instructed to sort of lean back as soon as we felt the tension in the line. The handlers and K9s were hoisted up, and then urgently rushed into the helicopter Two teams would be hoisted into the helicopter at once and then sent back down the hoist line.

The worst part is that split second where you brain tries to tell you that leaving a perfectly good, airborne helicopter is not a good idea. I can't image what the K9s were thinking, but they had complete faith and trust in their handlers, and each dog had a turn in the helicopter. There were many wide K9 eyes and very proud handlers once this scenario was completed.

Before we took a break for lunch, our next scenario was much like the last, except that instead of just hovering, the helicopter actually flew a small loop around the airfield once two K9 teams had been hoisted onto the aircraft. Upon returning, the teams were hoisted back down and the K9s were rewarded, again, with quarry in

We broke for lunch and the mood turned iovial. The teams started to relax and revel in their accomplishments. I took the time to meet all of the handlers and their K9s Most of the K9s had been returned to their vehicles to rest, but some of them didn't rest. They were up and watching, some even barking, knowing that the day wasn't

Our last scenario of the day was an actual tracking scenario. The quarry was whisked away by helicopter into the forest, near a low running stream. The K9 teams did not know where they quarry was located. of course, but the handlers knew the approximate location just by listening to where the helicopter was hovering. After several long minutes, the helicopter returned and I was ushered aboard with my camera. I huddled in a corner to try to stay out of the way. The teams were hoisted onto the aircraft and then flowr around the airstrip and into the forest, where they were lowered onto a creek bed. There were then met by Sat. Potter who gave them their instruction; to track and apprehend the quarry. Once they had completed the scenario, they were once again hoisted onto the helicopter and returned to the airstrip. This was all completed with such efficiency and determination, that the last scenario took only an hour for all 12 teams to complete.

Once all of the scenarios had been completed, we removed our harnesses, accounted for all of the gear (emphasis on safety) and held our final debrief. With complete faith and trust the K9s followed their handler's requests, even if they were scary or didn't make sense to the K9 mind. Watching the bond between the handler and the  $\bar{K}9$  grow even stronger after such a stressful day was especially rewarding. These K9s and their handlers are the epitome of a true team and partnership.

# **Back to Basics** by Sarah Weideman **Horsemanship Heroes**

Hero. It's a word that means many different things to many different people. In the horse world, people often think of elite riders or their trainers as heroes. We have all seen the memes on Facebook, "when my trainer rides my horse" and the horse is suddenly the hidden unicorn of the barn. There is a reason that your horse becomes a "unicorn" when your trainer rides. but that is a whole different article...

Over the past 6 years Back to Basics Horsemanship has had nearly 100 students come through our doors. Many have stayed with us over 4 years or more! It has been an amazing time in my life. As we close the doors on Back to Basics in Washington, I have spent a lot of time thinking about the good, the bad, and the ugly moments.

Shortly after opening the doors my daughter had her first Grand Mal seizure at school. From the ambulance I sent a text to my boarders, students,

and a few others, giving updates, feeding instructions, and a thank you, and tossed the barn at them as our world fell down around us. All I got back was "we love you" and "we got this!" For 5 days my husband and I sat in the ICU with our daughter, with only one or 2 questions from these amazing people. When we returned, the barn was swept, hay restocked, stalls cleaned and horses fat and happy. These people are my heroes.

When my daughter's epilepsy developed into a life-threatening problem, my barn family once again stepped up and covered me when we ran to the ER for seizures or other issues. Through the seemingly endless 3.5 year battle with epilepsy, my barn family was there, helping catch Allie when a seizure hit, keeping an eye on her while I taught lessons. They forgave me and rescheduled when doctors called and had test results that we needed to go in for. These

Everyone has their heroes- mine just happen to be my ENTIRE barn family. Who is

yours? We'd love to hear from you—write us at info@petconnectionmagazine.com -

you may get your story published on our website during the month of April!

When Allie had brain surgery and 3 days later my husband had shoulder surgery, my barn family helped supervise both Allie and my husband. They helped keep my husband from moving his arm in an attempt to help, and assisted me in convincing Allie that she needed to put a saddle on the horse if she was going to ride a mere week after having a part of her brain removed. These people are my heroes.

When my students trot or canter for the first time and smile-you are my heroes. That first time trotting or cantering over a pole or jump. and you smile breath and say "I did it!"- you are my heroes. When we stand around in the arena and chat through our entire lesson and you leave telling me that you feel much better and give your horse a cookieyou are my hero because you took care of you.

**BE THE HERO** TO YOUR PET! Vaccinate. Microchip. Prevent Parasites Finally, quality pet care that is affordable, provided by friendly vets you can trust. Fast, Friendly, 🎏 Affordable & Convenient GOOD NEIGHBOR VET 3.234.1350 www.GoodNeighborVet.com



estled in the foothills of the Cascade Mountains, Chimpanzee Sanctuary Northwest is home to ten chimpanzees and four beautiful bovines. But the heartbeats that you might not often hear about belong to those who care for these beings, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. They belong to the volunteers of CSNW, who provide daily care, including meals, cleaning, and enrichment.

These volunteers are heroes for the animals. As CSNW caregiver Anthony Denice wrote in a blog about the best volunteers, "To say we lean on our volunteers (and interns) when times get tough is an understatement...

"Volunteering is a big commitment. Just to even be on site, applicants must go through rigorous training..

"It truly is a diverse, talented, and diligent group of people. I can't say that any one of them is the best volunteer, but I like to brag that we really do have the best volunteers."

**April is National Volunteer** Month. Please join us in thanking the volunteers of **CSNW!** To find out how you website at **Chimpsnw.org** 







can support CSNW, visit their

## PORTLAUD $U \in M i$





ou are a superhero! No really, no matter who you are, what you do for a living, how much money you have, in the eyes of your dog, you are a superhero! It's one of the most wonderful things about dogs: they see the very best in us. Our dogs already see us as their superheroes – it's up to us to try as hard as we can to live up to how our dogs see us, here are a few tips to show up for your dog more intentionally that put their feelings and desires first in your life together.

## **Intentional Time**

More than expensive toys or gourmet treats what our dogs really want is to spend time with us, and not time near us while we are on our laptops or staring at our phones. Dogs want us to play with them, our dogs want to spend time with us where our focus is on them. One of the biggest ways that we can be superheroes for our dogs is to create more time in our busy days to engage with them. Everything from setting your alarm a few minutes early in the morning to give time for a longer, "sniffing walk" where she can have the chance to interact more with the environment, instead of being rushed along. Put your phone down when you can and throw a ball. You can also consider skipping meeting up with people at a bar or restaurant where your dog may not be welcome, and instead signing up for a dog sport, activity, or training class so you can be social and spend quality time with your dog at

# Dog's Choice

There is an old dog trainer saying: train the dog in front of you, not the dog in your imagination. I think that one of the most important ways that we can really intentionally show up for our dogs is to choose things our dogs would honestly choose to do, which isn't always the same as what we would choose. Try to give your dog choices about what you do and avoid events and situations that will overwhelm your dog. If you get somewhere you thought your dog would enjoy, but find that your dog is struggling, be it the park or

a dog-friendly event, don't be afraid to change plans and leave. As adult humans we (generally) have the ability to make decisions about where and when we go places, and have the ability to opt out. Dogs don't often have that same opportunity, and instead are frequently dragged along regardless of how they might feel. Whenever possible, it's important to shift that aspect of our relationship and give our dogs those same opportunities to opt out of stressful situations. Bring your dog to the events and sports that he likes best, instead of pushing them to do things that we might want. Obviously, there are exceptions: vet visits need to happen, grooming needs to happen, but whenever possible give your dog choices and options.

One of the most meaningful ways to be a superhero for your dog is to be your dog's biggest advocate. All dogs deserve to have boundaries, and to have their boundaries respected by other dogs and people. Be proactive to speak out for what your dog needs. If your dog is uncomfortable around other dogs, don't hesitate to request that people keep their dogs away. If your dog doesn't like other dogs to take her ball, create situations where that won't happen. If your dog isn't excited about greeting people or is actively doing something else it's completely appropriate to advocate for your dog

and tell people "No" when they ask to pet your dog. Our dogs aren't stuffed animals and don't owe engagement to strangers. Veterinary care is one really good example of a place where our dog's will see us as superheroes when we advocate for them. At many clinics



# SASSAFRAS LOWREY

it's becoming increasingly common for vaccines to be given

at quick "tech appointments," where you and your dog won't

meet with the vet directly. For those quick appointments that

don't include a full exam, you don't have to allow your dog

to be taken to the back for a blood draw or a vaccine to be

procedures to happen with you present. Being a superhero

Being a superhero to your dog might mean being seen as

rude or pushy by other people and that's OK! Try to be firm

but polite as you advocate for your dog, because it's likely to

get a better response from people. If you have the time and

energy feel free to educate people about dog behavior and

why you are asking them to behave differently around your

if doing so requires your dog to remain in a situation that

important thing is what your dog thinks!

dog. Remember, you have no obligation to educate, especially

makes her uncomfortable. At the end of the day people might

not like you advocating for your dog and that's OK, the most

preferences.

**Be Pushu** 

advocate is important for all dogs, not just dogs who might

have behavioral special needs. Every dog has boundaries and

administered. Instead, you can request that all vet care and

is an award-winning author and Certified Trick Dog Instructor. Sassafras' books have been honored by organizations ranging from the American Library Association to the Lambda Literary Foundation. New books from Sassafras in 2019 include a hybrid memoir: Healing/Heeling, Bedtime Stories for Rescue Dogs: William To The Rescue, and TRICKS IN THE CITY: For Daring Dogs and the Humans That Love Them. Sassafras lives and writes in Portland, Oregon. Learn

www.SassafrasLowrey.com

# **Disaster Relief Heroes**

enise Bash crawled across the ground, using one elbow crutch herself up, a cat carrier in her other hand. The ir swirled around her, growing into a tremendous roar as she inched closer to the basement.

As the Director of Disaster Response for GreaterGood.org, Denise Bash has seen her fair share of hazardous situations. She leads

Denise has been part of GreaterGood.org's Disaster Response program since January 2015; prior to her work with the

the coordination of the disaster response efforts of GreaterGood.

org across its People. Pet, and Planet programs as needed for

each disaster. But this was the first time that she'd been part

of a tornado response team where a secondary tornado came

organization, she ran Animal Lifeline in Pennsylvania as well as the disaster response efforts for the Petfinder Foundation and has served as a field responder for the International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW). With a BS in recreational therapy, Denise has always focused on those who need her help the most. "I'm a social worker and I always have been. It's always been for underserved communities and animals," she said.

GreaterGood.org has been supporting disaster response efforts since 2011, providing cash and in-kind support across more than a dozen hurricanes/typhoons/tropical cyclones, 18 fires, four earthquakes, several floods, and dozens of animal cruelty and neglect cases. In 2019 alone, GreaterGood.org provided over \$7

million in cash, in-kind, and program support towards disaster relief and recovery across the globe.

The recent fires that have ravaged much of the Australian continent have left the land charred and tens of thousands of animals, wild and domestic alike, have been killed, left homeless, or without access to necessary forage.

"We're running actions through our partners to help out in Australia," Denise explained. "We're funding animal search and rescue teams, veterinary costs, ambulances, and investigating recovery programs to reestablish trees and rebuild devastated wildlife centers that face a new and urgent crisis due to the destruction."

"There's so much biodiversity in Australia...this was a massive catastrophe and we don't know what we've lost yet. And recovery takes much longer than the actual event. We need to be thinking about replanting...what you'll see from us next... programs to buy the plants and plant them. That all takes time, and then we have to determine where the animals will get re-released."

## Mitigating disasters

"We work with local, state, and federal governments," Denise explained. "We're one of the only not for profit organizations that will look at it from the people, pet, and planet perspective. We bring awareness to all of these aspects; they're all interrelated."

## **Preparedness, response, and recovery**

Responding to a natural disaster takes a long time. "There's food security, and paying attention to the animal sheltering systems. We get to know a lot of other organizations in this line of work. We talk to people at the darkest hours of their life, and absorb some of their concern and helplessness. It provides them a chance to grieve, and to encourage them personally."

GreaterGood.org has a team that's going to the Bahamas to assist the Grand Bahamian Humane Society, which was heavily damaged in the storm. Going in to rebuild makes the community safer, increases animal life-saving capacity and instills hope in people who have lost so, so much.

GreaterGood.org's primary goal for their Disaster Relief Efforts in 2020 is to be There When It Matters™. GreaterGood.org raises funds in two phases – the first for immediate disaster

response (for example, "ASAR" – animal search and rescue – and urgent needs by our partners on the ground), and the second for longerterm, specific community and habitat recovery projects (i.e. re-planting bee and wildlife forage in fire-ravaged habitats). GreaterGood.org will also continue their robust in-kind response in 2020 – veterinary pharmaceutical supplies and pet food on the animal side; clothing, toys, and books as humanitarian aid

How can you help their efforts? "Check in with GreaterGood. org; they're a good source of information," Denise said. "And donate when you can. Get your company involved. Find out: what product would help? Don't send un-needed items, as this can create a secondary crisis. People will send stuff in too soon. We often have to re-route supplies if too many of one thing are sent to one area. And lastly, don't self-deploy into a disaster area"

Natural disasters are happening more often and tend to be more dangerous then in the past.

During the recent hurricane in the Bahamas, the staff at Grand Bahama Humane Society in Freeport stayed behind with the sheltered dogs and cats. They have had some flooding in past hurricanes but nothing like the monster that was Dorian. This storm had them trapped, they had nowhere to go. "They were stuck inside the building, which was considered a safe haven, and they kept lifting dogs in crates as water rose." Denise said. "Eventually, when their lives were in grave danger if they stayed on the main floor, they popped a hatch and went into the attic...They heard the cries of the dogs and were helpless to do a thing assuming that they were next... Finally, after riding out the storm for hours, it was silent." We all know a storm was coming; no one could have predicted a category 5 would hover on them for 36 hours.

GreaterGood.org's Rescue Rebuild team traveled to the Bahamas in February 2020 with a staff of six and enlist volunteers from around the country to clean out and rebuild the facility.

## **Beyond Katrina**

Natural disasters

often and tend to

then in the past.

"Hurricane Katrina opened our eyes," she said. "And then the fires in Paradise, California showed us that it's a fire and people are saying get out, you need to get out." But there was no notice for most of those who died...the fires swept in faster than most people – and their animals – could evacuate. "They were just overtaken without any hope for escape," Denise said quietly. "I've never seen anything like it."

And that second tornado that Denise had to brave? "It was following the Moore Tornado," she recalled. "This lady with the WildCare Foundation in Norman, Oklahoma had taken in 600 animals from the Moore tornado and then a secondary tornado hit. When the second one hit. I had to crawl on the ground, with that cat in the carrier, and hide in a basement until after midnight. It was a humbling experience. The people at the wildlife center saved my life, I would have left and driven right into it without them. That center became the first wildlife recovery build for Rescue

In 2019, GreaterGood.org was proud to have provided \$6.2 are happening more million in pharmaceuticals, pet food, animal care supplies, and more during the massive spayneuter "Spayathon" campaign in Puerto Rico following the be more dangerous devastation of Hurricane Maria in 2017. To date, the campaign has spayed or neutered and cared for over 43,000 cats and dogs on the beleaguered island.

> After initially providing 4 tankers of corn syrup to feed starving bees, and 38,000 pounds of bee pollen to save queen bees in the aftermath of Hurricane Michael in 2018, we again provided sugar syrup in 2019 to keep managed bee populations alive.

GreaterGood.org is also proud to have provided \$2.8 million in needed supplies for people and pets to the Bahamas after the utter devastation of Hurricane Dorian. We've also made close to \$200,000 in cash grants to support critical needs and have also provided rescue flights for evacuating unowned shelter animals.

One of the biggest fears for those who survive a disaster like this is that the help is just going to leave right away. "After doing this long enough, I already know where their mind is when I call," Denise said. "It's like going through a death. The grief and the exhaustion...and then they get sick."

## At the End of the World

Denise works closely with deployment teams; everyone in animal and human response knows one another. "We call this 'At the End of the World' – that's what it feels like," Denise said. "These disasters are becoming more common, and they'll continue to become more common. These situations are tragic, but it also brings out peoples' best side. People want to help. And if you can't help with a donation, then send goodwill. When you have nothing left, just a note that says, 'I'm thinking about you,' goes a long way."

# Looking for that perfect gift? Consider a custom painting by Animal Friends Portraits







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# **SANDY PAWS:** Four Dog-Friendly Beach Hikes



pring is the best time to hit the beaches of the Pacific Northwest with your pet. While the snows are still resting on summits, and the rivers and forests are still saturated with the heavy rains of the past few months, the beaches provide a perfect way to get out and about. While there are dozens of petfriendly beaches around, we have highlighted four lesser known beaches around the region, each with their own hidden gems. As always, before heading out to a place not listed here, make sure it is dog-friendly. Also, always pick up after your pooch and follow all leash rules.

## n Park Off-Leash Area

Located in Seattle, Magnuson Park is a favorite for dog-owners who are looking for a huge area to explore with the furry friends. Fenced, but also including a waterfront area to let your dog go for a dip, Magnuson Park's Off-Leash Area is hands down one of the best dog parks in Washington State. Not only is the scenery fantastic, but the park is lined with trash cans and doggy bag stations to help everyone keep the park clean and to have a great time. The park even has a separate place for small and shy dogs to get away from the more popular and bia-doa-filled areas.

Across the sound from Seattle, Fay Bainbridge is a good place to go for a controlled adventure with your dog. While you'll need to keep your pooch on a leash of 8 foot or shorter, the smells will have your dog eager to explore. The views for you are also incredible, showing off both Mount Rainier and Mount Baker, as well as the seals and occasional whale sightings, common from the shoreline. While big dogs may need more room, this is an ideal place for smaller dogs to feel like an alpha as they smell all sorts of washed up wonders.

### hmond Beach Saltwater Park

Found in Shoreline. Richmond Beach Saltwater Park is vet another classic, but often overlooked dog area in the greater Seattle area. The rocky beach here is full of smells for a dog, while giving breathtaking views across the Puget Sound toward the Olympic Mountains on a sunny day. Richmond Beach also offers a wonderful off-leash dog area, which is open seasonally between November 1 and March 15. **Kalaloch Beach** 

For those hoping for a long day of adventures with their dog, head out to the Washington Coast this spring. Kalaloch Beach is one of the few places in Olympic National Park where dogs are allowed, giving numerous beach access points and endless driftwood to explore with your puppers. From South Beach to Ruby Beach, and everywhere in between, leashed dogs can roam with you along the stunning shores of one of America's most popular National Parks. Come here in March and April for the great gray whale migration, where 20,000 whales swim within a half a mile from the waves breaking on the shore.

To learn more about GreaterGood.org's Disaster Relief efforts, including how you can help, visit greatergood.org

AVAIANCHE D ailey and Olive bounded joyfully up the hillside, snow scattering out across their black fur, freckling their black faces with white. Olive splayed out onto her stomach and slid down the slope

What looks like play between these two black Labrador retrievers is actually practice for a very important job - avalanche rescue. And the dogs approach everything that they do with joy and enthusiasm.

at Stevens Pass, her tongue hanging

happily out of the side of her mouth.

Bailey, 7, and Olive, 3, are two of the four Avalanche Rescue Dogs (affectionately referred to as "Avy Dogs") who work on Stevens Pass. Their canine team members include black Lab Scout, 5, and chocolate Lab Josie, who

Today, Bailey and Olive took turns showing us how they would find an object that was hidden in the snow. In this instance, it was a wool sweater,

When each of the dogs found the sweater, they

held it in their mouths and raced around with

finding a missing person, the dogs are trained to

triumphant zoomies, but when it comes to

"We refer to this as 'victim loyalty," Angela

The Avy Dogs and their human partners have

since the inception of this program, training

The training is so thorough that Bailey and

more than 20 dogs since 1993.

been searching the slopes of Stevens Pass and

beyond since for almost three decades. And the

Stevens Pass Rescue Dogs have been trailblazers

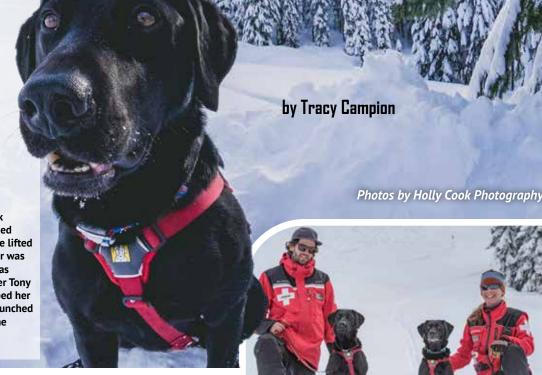
stav with them.

but the two dogs always approach their work with the same intensity, whether they're practicing their search or looking for a real missing person.

Ski Patrol Director Angela Seidling took the wool sweater and buried it in a snowbank. When it was Bailey's turn to demonstrate how they work, she began to dig intensely.

"That intense digging is their signal that they've found something," Angela explained.

Once Bailey found the sweater, she pulled it from the snowbank triumphantly; had her tail wagged any faster, she surely would have lifted off of the mountain. The sweater was hidden again, and this time it was Olive's turn. Snow Patrol member Tony Fortune, handling Olive, unclipped her lead and watched as she, too, launched into the snowbank, retrieving the sweater in a matter of seconds.



Olive aren't afraid of the sound of explosives, fireworks, bombs, gunshots, or even thunder. Olive and Bailey demonstrated how they could

both sit on a chairlift, much to the delight of onlookers. Afterward, they jumped down, each greeting their human partners as if it say, 'What's next?"

"You can see how much they enjoy all of this," Tony said as Olive came back over to him.

As we talked. Olive looked up at Tony, her tongue lolling out of her mouth. While Olive and Bailey are both black Labs, the elder stateswoman was more serious. "Bailey doesn't go into the full Lab 'derp' mode," Tony said, laughing as Bailey stared at him intensely, "whereas Olive can be pretty goofy." But what they share in common is a laser focus for their work – and a joy for everything

That joy begins with their training, where every scenario is steeped in fun, excitement, and positive reinforcement. The Stevens Pass

Avy Dogs use the 'Swiss Method" of Training to be an Avy Dog starts at an early age; training. It takes three Bailey has been part of the program since she vears of training came to live with Angela at eight weeks old. to become a fully Olive, who joined the program three years after certified Avalanche Bailey, has been training alongside her elder Rescue Dog. In-house statesdog since she was eight weeks old, as well. certification is the first step. This is the "During their first year, we work on basic minimum requirement training," Angela explained. "Later, we train them for an Avy Dog; once on chairlifts, snowmobiles, and helicopters." a dog is Back Country

Avalanche Rescue Canine (BARK) certified, they can respond to incidents throughout Washington.

Once she's wearing her

vest, the dogs know that they're on duty. Bailey tips the scales just under 50 pounds, while Olive, who is slightly taller, is approximately 70. Both dogs need to be light enough to be picked up, if needed, as Angela and Tony demonstrated during their photo shoot.

Both canine and human members of the team are dedicated to what they do Tony has been working at ski patrol for three years, and Angela has been at the slopes for thirteen. Both Olive and Bailey began to work with their partners at only eight weeks of age, getting exposed to everything on the slopes – and learning how much fun their work is. Olive demonstrated this time and again by sliding down the mountainside on her stomach, otter-style, her tail wagging behind her as she swept on by.

> The four Avy Dog teams each have a primary human partner; most teams have secondary partners, as well. "We all know each others' dogs so well, and regardless of who they're working with we try to make this the most exciting game ever for them. Angela explained.

Bailey is partnered with Angela, Josie, age 10, is with Liz, Scout, 6, is with Dan, Olive, 3, is with Tony. All of the dogs know basic obedience, in addition to their further rescue-related training. And every aspect of their training is approached

"The dogs are the most enthusiastic employees every morning," Angela said, laughing.

The Avy Dogs are dedicated to the slopes from eight weeks until they retire at 13 or 14 years of age, at which point they still do PR work - an agreement that dogs and Stevens Pass visitors alike delight in.

The Avalanche Rescue Dogs are primarily supported by t-shirt sales, donations, and their annual fundraiser. They are proudly supported by Nutrisource, Mud Bay, and Ruffwear, which provides their gear.

Learn more about them at www.stevenspass.com/the-mountain/ more-options/avalanche-safety.aspx and follow their adventures on Facebook at @StevensPassAvalancheRescueDogs.

**ASK THE ER VET!** Blair Burggren, DVM, Olympia Pet Emergency

I read somewhere that a woman's dog choked to death right in front of her, and she didn't even realize there was a problem until it was too late! Now, I'm terrified it will happen to my dog. What are the signs of choking? Is there something I could do to help my pet? Are there things I can do to prevent this? Help!

-Paranoid in Parkland

## Dear Paranoid.

I prefer the term "hyper-vigilant" to "paranoid." It not only sounds better, but it is more accurate. Choking (airway obstruction) incidents do happen, but they are not very common at all. Further, it is more rare that these incidents become any more than a very brief altercation, which resolves on its own.

The first thing to remember is that choking incidents most commonly occur when the dog becomes distracted while chewing on something or eating. Working dogs are at highest risk due to their high drive and focus for reward. It is best to avoid intensely engaging your dog while he or she is intently chewing or playing with an object. The size and shape of a chew toy is also important. You may consider taking chew toys away once they are small enough to present a significant choking risk, when they can fit the entire thing in their mouth.

Choking causes a partial or complete (more severe and emergent) airway obstruction. The signs of choking in dogs are similar to that in people. The dog rapidly becomes disinterested and disengages

with the environment. They usually immediately quietly focus on their breathing. They can begin to paw at their face and neck, gasp, and attempt to hack and cough. Their attempts to breathe may become exaggerated.

The things you can do as a pet owner when choke happens are very important and usually very effective. These things include Heimlich maneuver (abdominal thrusts), performing a finger sweep (in an unconscious patient) and rescue breathing. I encourage you to watch some instructional videos on YouTube on the subject, as they are difficult to explain in print. Alternatively, if you are a member of a dog enthusiast club, considering asking if your local family veterinarian would be willing to give a demonstration to your group.

I hope I have provided some good information, and that you never find it necessary to utilize these techniques, but it is always good to be prepared.

Olympia Pet Emergency





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ith over 20 years of active involvement in the anim orld, Carmen offers you personal experience an iderstanding of the unique traits of your busines oupled with over 17 years of legal experience servir our business and personal planning needs.

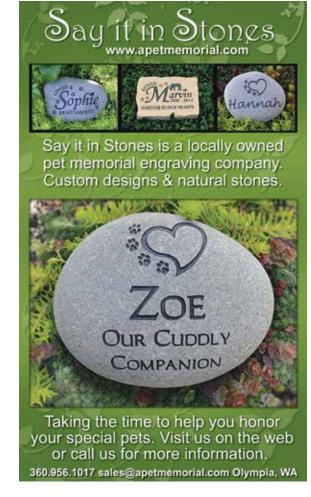
- Contracts (boarding, daycare, grooming, training, adoption/foster, breeder)
- **Business-to-business contracts**
- Formation of animal-related businesses
- Purchase and sale of animal-related businesses
- Zoning, agriculture & other real estate issues
- HR and employee policies and contracts
- Succession & Estate planning and probate

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# PETCONNECTION MAGAZINE. COM

# MOST COMPREHENSIVE

# PET EVENTS CALENDAR!





**READING WITH ROVER** 1:30-2:30p. Mercer Island Library

**WASHINGTON STATE ANIMAL RESPONSE TEAM SMALL ANIMAL TECHNICAL RESCUE TRAINING** 9a-5p. https://wasart.org/training-events

**HELPING PAWS: HOW YOUR DOG CAN BE A THERAPY DOG** 1-2p. Oregon Humane, Ehmann Classroom. Learn about animal-assisted therapy & how your dog can become a pet partners team. Bring qs, leave pets at home. www.oregonhumane.org/training/pettraining-classes/workshops/#clicker

**CRAFTING FOR KITTIES AT SEATTLE AREA FELINE** 

**RESCUE** 4-6p. Make crafts for kitties, including catnip hearts & cozy blankets. RSVP w/# attending to: kelsi@seattleareafelinerescue.org

**READING WITH ROVER** 6-7p. Mark Twain Elementary School, Kirkland

SEATTLE ANIMAL SHELTER PET LOSS SUPPORT **GROUP** 6-7:30p. Seattle Animal Shelter conference room, 2061 15th Ave. W. Seattle. 206-386-7387 (PETS). www.seattle.gov/animal-shelter/events-and-resources/petloss-support-group

READING WITH ROVER 11a-12p. Federal Way 320th Library

**WASHINGTON STATE ANIMAL RESCUE RESPONSE TEAM TRAINING: BASE & OPERATIONS SUPPORT** 9a-5p. Remlinger Farms, 32610 NE 32nd St., Carnation. registrar@washingtonsart.org

SAFE FIRST STEPS: PREPARE YOUR DOG FOR BABY'S ARRIVAL 1-2:30p. Oregon Humane, Ehmann Classroom. Help your dog adjust to life with an infant. Bring gs, leave pets at home. www.oregonhumane.org/training/ pet-training-classes/workshops/#clicker

**READING WITH ROVER** 11a-12p. Snohomish Library

**READING WITH ROVER** 1:30-2:30p. Bothell Library

**READING WITH ROVER** 6:30-7:30p. Marymoor Aegis Living, Redmond

**READING WITH ROVER** 6-7p. Renton Library

**READING WITH ROVER** 12:30-1:30p. UW Law School,

CRAFTING FOR KITTIES AT SEATTLE AREA FELINE

**RESCUE** 4-6p. Make crafts for kitties, including catnip hearts & cozy blankets. RSVP w/# attending to: kelsi@ seattleareafelinerescue.org

**READING WITH ROVER** 3-4p. Woodinville Library

SEATTLE ANIMAL SHELTER PET LOSS SUPPORT **GROUP** 6-7:30p. Seattle Animal Shelter conference room, 2061 15th Ave. W. Seattle. 206-386-7387 (PETS). www.seattle.gov/animal-shelter/events-and-resources/petloss-support-group

COMMUNITY PINT NIGHT TO SUPPORT FERAL CAT SPAY/NEUTER 4-9p. Cairn Brewing, 7204 NE 175th St., Bldg. A., Kenmore. A portion of each pour supports spay/neuter for all cats

**ADOPTION EVENT WITH CHEW DOG RESCUE 11a-**3p. Gig Harbor Mud Bay, 4816 Point Fosdick Dr., Ste 102

ISSAQUAH ALPS DOG HIKE 9a. Meet at 175 Rainier Blvd. S., Issaquah. Dogs & hikers welcome. Bring leash, water, baggies. Easy, 4-6 miles.

https://www.issaquahalps.org/hikesevents/schedule

NORTHWEST SCHOOL OF ANIMAL MASSAGE MAP FOR K9 ARTHRITIS www.nwsam.com/schedule.html

WHISKERS WINE & DINE 5-9p. McGavick Conference Center, Clover Park Technical College. Dinner & Auction Benefit for Northwest Spay & Neuter Center. \$60/person; 21+; catered dinner, wine available. https://nwspayneuter.ejoinme.org/Registration

**MEET & GREET WITH NORTHWEST BOXER RESCUE** 12-3p. University Place Mud Bay, 3804 Bridgeport Way W.

**VACCINE & MICROCHIP CLINIC** 11-11:30a. The Noah Center, 31300 Brandstrom Rd., Stanwood. www.thenoahcenter.org/news-events/event\_calendar.html/

calendar/2020/3 **ADOPTION EVENT WITH CHEW DOG RESCUE 11a-**

3p. Gig Harbor Mud Bay, 4816 Point Fosdick Dr. Ste 102

**READING WITH ROVER** 11a-12p. Edmonds Library **READING WITH ROVER** 11a-12p. Lake Stevens Library

**READING WITH ROVER** 11a-12p. Oak Harbor Library

NORTHWEST SCHOOL OF ANIMAL MASSAGE MAP FOR EQUINE BACK PAIN www.nwsam.com/schedule.html

**PAINT YOUR PET** 1-4p. Painting With a Twist, 920 15th St SW, Auburn. Qs: 253.735.0308. www.paintingwithatwist. com/studio/seattle-auburn/event/2342159

**READING WITH ROVER** 1-2p. Covington Library

**READING WITH ROVER** 4:30-5:30p. Langley Library

**READING WITH ROVER** 5:30-6:30p. Mill Creek Library

**READING WITH ROVER** 6-7p. Algona/Pacific Library

**CRAFTING FOR KITTIES AT SEATTLE AREA FELINE RESCUE** 4-6p. Make crafts for kitties, including catnip hearts & cozy blankets. RSVP w/# attending to: kelsi@seattleareafelinerescue.org

SEATTLE ANIMAL SHELTER PET LOSS SUPPORT GROUP 6-7:30p. SAS conference room, 2061 15th Ave. W, Seattle

MEET & GREET WITH OLD DOG HAVEN 11a-2p. University Place Mud Bay, 3804 Bridgeport Way W.

**DINOSAUR PHOTO BOOTH** Maple Valley Mud Bay, 24107 Kent-Kangley Rd.

**NORTHWEST SCHOOL OF ANIMAL MASSAGE EQUINE MANUAL LIGAMENT THERAPY** Vashon, WA. www.nwsam.com/schedule.html

**READING WITH ROVER** 11a-12p. Lynnwood Library

**WASHINGTON STATE ANIMAL RESPONSE TEAM GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING 3-5p.King County** Emergency Services Dept., 3511 NE 2nd St., Renton. https://wasart.org/training-events

**WASHINGTON STATE ANIMAL RESPONSE TEAM WATER RESCUE TRAINING** https://wasart.org/training-events

VACCINATION & LICENSE CLINIC 9:30a. Seattle Animal Shelter, 2061 15th Ave. W. Seattle, Purchase or renew pet license & receive free rabies vaccination. Details: GoodNeighborVet.com. www.seattle.gov/animal-shelter/events-and-resources

**CADETTE GIRL SCOUTS ANIMAL HELPERS BADGE** 10-11:30a. PAWS, 15305 44th Ave. W., Lynnwood. Earn your animal helper's badge at PAWS! \$10/Scout. Not a drop off event, adults must stay & attend. Os: education@paws.org. www.paws.org/events/cadette-girl-scouts-animal-helpers-badge

**PAW-LATES PILATES MAT CLASS TO SUPPORT** FURRY FRIENDS 10a. Motley Zoo Animal Rescue, Redmond. www.facebook.com/events/249515169391913

**READING WITH ROVER** 7-8p. Bellevue Library

**CRAFTING FOR KITTIES AT SEATTLE AREA FELINE RESCUE** 4-6p. Make crafts for kitties, including catnip hearts & cozy blankets. RSVP w/# attending to: kelsi@seattleareafelinerescue.org

SEATTLE ANIMAL SHELTER PET LOSS SUPPORT GROUP 6-7:30p. SAS conference room, 2061 15th Ave. W.

ADOPTION EVENT WITH NEWBERG ANIMAL SHELTER 1-3p. Mud Bay, 16784 SW Edy Rd., Sherwood, OR

PAINT YOUR PET HUMANE SOCIETY FUNDRAISER 6-9p. Painting With a Twist, 920 15th St SW, Auburn. www.paintingwithatwist.com/studio/seattle-auburn/ event/2318070

READING WITH ROVER 11a-12p. Monroe Library

READING WITH ROVER 11a-12p. Third Place Books,

### **30TH-APRIL 3RD**

NORTHWEST SCHOOL OF ANIMAL MASSAGE LARGE ANIMAL REHABILITATION MASSAGE www.nwsam.com/schedule.html

SEATTLE ANIMAL SHELTER PET LOSS SUPPORT GROUP 6-7:30p. Seattle Animal Shelter conference room, 2061 15th Ave. W. Seattle. 206-386-7387 (PETS). www.seattle.gov/ animal-shelter/events-and-resources/pet-loss-support-group

**SPAYGHETTI & NO BALLS** 4-7p. Lake Forest Park Civic Club, 17301 Beach Dr. NE, Lake Forest Park. Supports Feral Cat Spay Neuter's mission of reducing pet overpopulation & euthanasia. Register: https://fcsnp.ejoinme.org/ spayghetti2020

## RAISE THE HOOF FOR WASHINGTON STATE

ANIMAL RESPONSE TEAM (WASART) 4-7:30p. Renton Technical College, 3000 NE 4th St., Renton. \$45 in advance, \$50 at the door. https://wasart.org/raisethehoof

NORTHWEST PET EXPO 10a-6p. Spokane Fairgrounds, Spokane. www.northwestpetexpo.com

ADOPTION EVENT WITH CAT ALLIANCE TEAM SANCTUARY 12-3p. Mud Bay, 16784 SW Edy Rd., Sherwood, OR

HELP YOUR LEASH-REACTIVE DOG 1-2:30p. Oregon Humane, Ehmann Classroom. Bring qs, leave pets at home. www.oregonhumane.org/training/pet-training-classes/ workshops/#clicker

## THIRTEENTH ANNUAL DOGGONE EASTER EGG **HUNT BROUGHT TO YOU BY FELINE FRIENDS!** 10a-3p. Regional Athletic Complex, 8345 Steilacoom Rd. SE, Lacey. Family & pet-friendly day of fun! "Doggiest" Easter egg hunt in Washington! Egg hunts, Doggie Fashion Show, games, prizes, bake sale, & much more!

**DAISY GIRL SCOUTS BIRDBATH AWARD 10-11:30a.** PAWS, 15305 44th Ave. W., Lynnwood. Earn your birdbath award at PAWS! \$10/Scout. Not a drop off event, adults must stay & attend. Qs: education@paws.org. www.paws.org/events/daisy-girl-scouts-birdbath-award-april

**READING WITH ROVER** 11a-12p. Federal Way 320th Library

**READING WITH ROVER** 11a-12p. Snohomish Library

**READING WITH ROVER** 1:30-2:30p. Mercer Island Library

**PAINT YOUR PET** 1-4p. Painting With a Twist, 920 15th St SW, Auburn. Os: 253.735.0308. www.paintingwithatwist. com/studio/seattle-auburn/event/2375804

NORTHWEST SCHOOL OF ANIMAL MASSAGE FUNdamentals OF ANIMAL MASSAGE www.nwsam.com/schedule.html

workshops/#clicker

Living, Redmond

**READING WITH ROVER** 3-4p. Woodinville Library

CANINE MANUAL LIGAMENT THERAPY Vashon Island,

NORTHWEST SCHOOL OF ANIMAL MASSAGE

DOG PARK ETIQUETTE 12:30-2p. Oregon Humane,

www.oregonhumane.org/training/pet-training-classes/

WASART TRANSPORT TRAINING 9a-5p. Enumclaw

**READING WITH ROVER** 11a-12p. Edmonds Library

**READING WITH ROVER** 11a-12p. Lake Stevens Library

**READING WITH ROVER** 11a-12p. Oak Harbor Library

**READING WITH ROVER** 1:30-2:30p. Bothell Library

**READING WITH ROVER** 6:30-7:30p. Marymoor Aegis

**READING WITH ROVER** 5:30-6:30p. Mill Creek Library

**READING WITH ROVER** 6-7p. Algona/Pacific Library

6-7:30p. SAS conference room, 2061 15th Ave. W, Seattle

**ANIMAL AROMATICS FOUNDATION PRACTICAL** 

PAWS WILD NIGHT 5:30-10p, Fremont Studios, 155

N. 35 St, Seattle. Glitz, glamour, & love for animals at a

prestigious Seattle location! Info: events@paws.org.

VACCINATION & LICENSE CLINIC 9:30a. Seattle

Animal Shelter, 2061 15th Ave. W. Seattle. Purchase or

www.seattle.gov/animal-shelter/events-and-resources

**READING WITH ROVER** 11a-12p. Lynnwood Library

**HUMANE SOCIETY OF MASON COUNTY'S 11TH** 

**LAUGH YOUR TAIL** OFF 6:30-10p. Tulalip Resort

show & auction to support the NOAH Center. https://

Save a Forgotten Equine: http://heart.safehorses.org

thenoahcenterorg.presencehost.net/news-events/laugh-

**HEART OF THE HORSE** 5p. The Golf Club at Newcastle,

15500 6 Penny Ln., Newcastle. Dinner & auction benefiting

& Casino, 10200 Quil Ceda Blvd., Tulalip. Comedy

**ANNUAL SAILS 'N TAILS DINNER AUCTION 5:30p.** 

Alderbrook Resort & Spa, Union, WA. Info: 360.275.3419 or

renew pet license & receive free rabies vaccination. Details:

**NORTHWEST SCHOOL OF ANIMAL MASSAGE** 

Vashon, WA www.nwsam.com/schedule.html

www.paws.org/events/paws-wild-night-gala

www.humanesocietyofmasoncounty.com

GoodNeighborVet.com.

your-tail-off.html

SEATTLE ANIMAL SHELTER PET LOSS SUPPORT GROUP

**READING WITH ROVER** 6-7p. Renton Library

Ehmann Classroom. Bring gs, leave pets at home.

Expo Center, 45224 284th Ave SE, Enumclaw.

https://wasart.org/training-events

WA. www.nwsam.com/schedule.html

SEATTLE ANIMAL SHELTER PET LOSS SUPPORT GROUP NORTHWEST SCHOOL OF ANIMAL MASSAGE LARGE 6-7:30p. SAS conference room, 2061 15th Ave. W, Seattle

**ANIMAL ACUPPRESSURE FOUNDATION** www.nwsam.com/schedule.html

# **NORTHWEST SCHOOL OF ANIMAL MASSAGE SMALL**

**READING WITH ROVER** 4:30-5:30p. Langley Library

ANIMAL ACUPPRESSURE FOUNDATION www.nwsam.com/schedule.html

SEATTLE ANIMAL SHELTER PET LOSS SUPPORT GROUP 6-7:30p. SAS conference room, 2061 15th Ave. W., Seattle

## 24TH—26TH

**WASHINGTON STATE ANIMAL RESPONSE TEAM WATER RESCUE TRAINING** https://wasart.org/training-events

**READING WITH ROVER** 11a-12p. Monroe Library TULIP RIDE Pacific NW's charity motorcycle ride to tulip

# country! Supports Seattle Humane. www.tulipride.org/press

YOUR NEW CAT: START OFF RIGHT 1-2:30p. Oregon Humane, Ehmann Classroom. Bring qs, leave pets at home. www.oregonhumane.org/training/pet-training-classes/ workshops/#clicker

4TH ANNUAL WALK N WAG DOG WALK 11a-3p. Lake Sammamish State Park. Raise funds for park improvements. 5k or 3k walk. Agility course, vendors, beer garden, raffle, & more! https://www.lakesammamishfriends.org/wnw2020

**READING WITH ROVER** 11a-12p. Third Place Books, Ravenna

## **27TH—MAY 1ST**

NORTHWEST SCHOOL OF ANIMAL MASSAGE SMALL ANIMAL FOUNDATION MASSAGE

## www.nwsam.com/schedule.html

SEATTLE ANIMAL SHELTER PET LOSS SUPPORT GROUP 6-7:30p. SAS conference room, 2061 15th Ave. W., Seattle

**READING WITH ROVER** 6-7p. Redmond Elementary School

# SAVE THE DATE!

# **SEATTLE HUMANE'S TUXES & TAILS** www.seattlehumane.org/tuxes-tails-2020

# **AUBURN PETPALOOZA** 10a-5p. Game Farm Park.

www.auburnwa.gov/events

# June

**CHIMPANZEE SANCTUARY NORTHWEST'S HOOT!** https://chimpsnw.org/events/hoot-2019

# **KEEP UP TO DATE ON NEW EVENTS!**

Full listings, visit www.petconnectionmagazine.com/events

**READING WITH ROVER** 1-2p. Covington Library

www.petconnectionmagazine.com 11

# **Training Guide for the Blind** With Seattle Puppy Raisers

by Douglas Scott

ost can agree that dogs are people's best friends, but our four-legged friends also bring communities together for the greater good. In Seattle, 40-50 of our neighbors gather with a gaggle of puppies with the goal of raising both the standard of life for those in need and the puppies to be guide dogs. Known as the Seattle Puppy Raisers (SPR), this group is part of the larger Guide Dogs for the Blind, whose headquarters are in San Rafael, California.

Run by volunteers located all around the Seattle area, this group is inspiring and full of heroes. Each volunteer with SPR raises one puppy at a time, attends training meetings and puppy socialization outings to ensure that the puppies become the best guide dogs that they can. Currently, there are seven dogs from SPR that are either out for breeder evaluation or formal harness training and will soon be out helping the blind.

Heidi Hespelt is one of leaders of SPR, helping to organize and wrangle both volunteers and puppies in her spare time. Her journey began around 20 years ago, when she was hoping to find a way to give back to the region. In her search, she recalled a paper she wrote in 4th grade, talking about how she wanted to train seeing-eye dogs when she got older. Now, over the past two decades, she has seen many successes with SPR, both with the dogs and with her fellow community

"The best part about raising quide dog pups, besides the cute puppies, is the wonderful community of people that you meet and work with," Heidi shared. "Many of my very best friends I met through Guide Dogs. We help and support each other, dry tears when dogs leave for "college," sit by each other's bedsides when there are major health problems, and know that we have a safety net when we

About 9 years ago, Heidi asked co-leader Robin Roselle to help out. Robin stepped up, which prompted Heidi to now call her a true hero. Robin shouldered at least half of the work of running the club, ensuring that it could grow into the life-changing organization that it is today.

"I couldn't and wouldn't do it without her," said Heidi. "She keeps us both on track and makes it fun. We make a good team and I am so lucky to know her."

With leaders like Heidi and Robin, Guide Dogs for the Blind continues to be a fantastic organization that empowers lives by creating exceptional partnerships between people, dogs and communities. To learn more about both Guide Dogs for the Blind and our local Seattle Puppy Raisers, head to www.quidepupseattle.org.

They are always looking for new puppy raisers and dedicated puppy sitters! You can also head over to Disney+ and watch the series "Pick of the Litter," which focuses on the pups and their journey toward becoming full service dogs.



# Seattle Police K9 Team

# Competes on A&E's new Series, America's Top Dog

have had the pleasure to do ridealongs and observe training sessions for K9 Pele and her human partner, Officer TJ San Miguel. When I heard that they were competing on A&E's new show, America's Top Dog, I was



## When I met Pele in

2016, she was a sleek, black, three-yearold German Shepherd who was just finishing her training. Now, at six years of age, Pele is a fully fledged Police K9 who's starring on the national stage.

Officer TJ, who is from Hawaii, named her partner after Hawaiian Pele, the goddess of fire, lightning, wind, and volcanoes. With her exuberant expression and eagerness to go, Pele's powerful name is fitting, and her partnership with TJ is just as strong. Together, Pele and TJ have taken a significant bite out of crime. As of this writing, Pele has tracked down 41 people and assisted with more than 100 arrests. TJ and Pele were recognized as the Canine Team of the Year in 2017 and won the Application of the Year in 2018 from the Seattle Police Department. The latter was awarded when Pele located five suspects in North Seattle using only the scent that they'd left behind in their stolen car.

TJ applied to America's Top Dog after her aunt encouraged her to enter. Their segment aired on February 19 – and their performance didn't disappoint! Watching TJ and Pele work together, I got all choked up. Their teamwork was superlative, and by the end of the first half of the show, they were in second place. During the second round, a timed event entitled "The Boneyard," the contestants had to find five scent items hidden in movie set-style rooms. Pele found four of the five items in under four minutes, placing her again in second place. During the final round, Pele and TJ worked together to open doors, navigate through a "spider web" and several tubes, down a set of stairs, and apprehend a suspect. When the dust settled, TJ and Pele came in second place, losing the spot of "Top Dog" by less than eight seconds, but earning the admiration of viewers world-

wide. Congratulations, TJ and Pele - we're so proud of you!

## About America's Top Dog

In each one-hour episode, one civilian team and four police K9 teams, including fan-favorites from the hit series "Live PD," will face off for the title of "Top Dog" in three rounds of high velocity, furry competition. The skilled teams will be tested on their speed, agility, and teamwork by completing a series of expert tasks on a massive obstacle course, including navigating a complex maze for scented items and apprehending and taking down a suspect in a bite suit, among a variety of other challenges. Each week's winning team will receive \$10,000 and an additional \$5,000 to donate to the animal charity of their choice. In the final week of competition, top competitors will return to the finale course to battle for the title of "America's Top Dog" and an additional \$25,000 cash prize.

Series host Curt Menefee is an award-winning veteran studio and game broadcaster who currently co-hosts "Fox NFL Sunday" in addition to wrap-up show "The OT." Alongside Menefee, expert trainer Nick White is a former US Marine and former member of the Secret Service with years of experience working with K9s as well as the owner of a dog training company with locations across the country. Menefee and White watch the action unfolds on the course each week and provide in-depth explanation on the competition rounds. Jamie Little is a seasoned motor sports reporter covering the pit road for FOX NASCAR, as well as an animal rescue ambassador who served as a reporter at the 2019 Westminster Kennel Club Show. Little acts as sideline reporter on the course speaking with the teams as they make their way through the competition.

"America's Top Dog" airs on A&E on Wednesdays at 9:00 p.m. Pacific.

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# CONNECTIONS .... by Tracy Campion

# **WDFW Officer**

# Dustin Prater and K9 Officer Spencer

fficer Dustin Prater watched s his partner, Spencer the elian Bear Dog, ran along the horizon, his tail held high, his nose to the ground. Almost as if he sensed his partner talking about him, Spencer glanced back over at us. At eight years of age, he wasn't slowing down...yet.

I watched Spencer, who was exploring the landscape with working dog photographer Holly Cook, They wove in and out of sight as Spencer followed his nose, alert and curious.

Spencer became a part of Officer Prater's life when he was only fourteen weeks old Officer Prater and his wife Julie drove out to the Wind River Bear Institute in Montana in February of 2012. Little Spencer was in the kennel with his siblings, who were sleeping. But Spencer's eves were fixed on the couple and their truck. His focus on his new partner hasn't faltered since that day. Spencer fit in well in the Prater household which included their three girls and. up until two years ago, their beloved black Lab, Gracie.

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) Karelian Bear Dog program began with biologist Rocky Spencer, who in 2003 partnered with a black and white dog named Mishka. Their goal? To reduce human-bear conflicts in Washington State Since that time, the Karelian Bear Dogs and their partners have provided a deterrent to bears, responded to bear and mountain wildlife complaints, assisted in a homicide investigation, helped investigate poaching cases, assisted in non-lethal "hard releases" of bears to restore their natural fear of humans, and provided educational outreach at schools and public events statewide

"It all began with Rocky Spencer and Mishka," Officer Prater said.

to share the WDFW's mission.

After Spencer's untimely death in 2007. Officer Prater honored his friend by naming his canine partner after him. Mishka retired in 2015. In addition to Officer Prater and Spencer, there are three more teams, including Nick Jorg and his canine partners. Colter and Freya, Keith Kirsch and Jax, and Rich Beausoleil and Indy, who is Spencer's brother

Officer Prater and Spencer are an incomparable team, working to protect wildlife throughout Washington State. When he was ten years old, Officer Prater had a profound experience with a game warden that forever changed his perspective – and his career path, as

"I grew up in the South Park neighborhood of Seattle," he said, "and my family hunted and fished. I'd hear negative stories about game wardens, and I was fearful of them. One day when we were fishing in Fastern Washington, a game warden approached my father and me. He checked our fishing licenses, and checked what we'd caught, and then he spent 45 minutes just talking with us. It was such a positive experience. I appreciated what he was doing, and why, and from that point onward. I wanted to be a game warden. My misconception of what they were like was completely

opposite of what was true."

Spencer, who was showing us how he searched for an animal, was wearing his standard uniform: a radio collar that's affixed with a GPS. If Spencer was out of earshot, Officer Prater had a handset that he could use to cause a vibration or - in safety situations, such as not wanting Spencer to cross a busy road in pursuit of a bear – a shock.

"I've rarely had to use the shock, and it was only in safety situations like that." Officer Prater said.

As he spoke, Spencer continued to explore with Holly. Even from a distance, I could see that he was smiling As they approached us, we saw that Holly was carrying something; it turned out to be a rather large Muscovy goose that Spencer had found

"I brought dinner!" Holly said. laughing. "Spencer kept on nudging the goose with his nose, and I felt like I needed to bring it back." Spencer looked from the goose to Holly and then fixed his eyes on Officer Prater.

"Find it," Officer Prater said to Spencer, who trotted off, eyes soft, smiling, and tail aloft. There wasn't a bear to find (that we knew of, at least!) but Spencer trotted off in search of whatever he could find

"He'll air scent and ground scent," Officer Prater explained, "Right now, he's trying to cut the wind. You can watch his tail, and when he's hot



on something, it will start to 'tick,' wagging ever so slightly, but he doesn't bark until he actually has his eves on the bear. And that's pretty typical of Karelian Bear Dogs. I can be 100 yards away, and if I hear barking. I

know that he has eyes on the bear. He has likely either treed it or bayed it which is when he's circling the bear."

There didn't seem to be a bear about, but Spencer was busy inspecting everything in the field. "We work on the fly; I used to have a frozen bear paw that I used, but I gave it to another handler," Officer Prater explained. Spencer approached a pile of deer bones, including a pelvis and lea bones with sinew still attached. He took a hone in his mouth but dropped it immediately as his partner told him to "leave it."

Bear dogs like Spencer are used to help protect bears instead of using lethal force when bears and humans share the same space. With continued encroachment into lands where bears historically roamed, these incidents are becoming increasingly common

that it couldn't go over the fence. We were able to shoot the hear with an immobilization dart and then safely relocate it."

"We teach landowners how to avoid

garbage," he explained. "The phrase

goes, 'A fed bear is a dead bear,' and

it's against the law to feed them We

Washington, cares for orphaned bear

cubs. When these bears are ready to

be released the WDFW Karelian Bear

they're deterred from returning to

dog teams are present to ensure that

"We do what's called a hard release,"

Officer Prater explained. "The bear

barking. It's adverse conditioning.

shoot them with a bean bag, then

release a cracker shell, which is an

M-80 noisemaker. We're teaching

the bears boundaries. They usually

don't come back, but if they do, that's

a different problem." Fortunately for

Washington's bears, the strategy has

Spencer and Officer Prater starred in

Animal Planet's Rugged Justice, where

they helped locate poached animals,

we'll go two weeks without a wildlife-

two calls in one day," he said. Spencer

located the body and a student officer

human who illegally killed the animal

including a trophy elk. "Sometimes,

related incident, and then we'll get

used a metal detector to find the

bullet that killed the animal. The

Another call involved a bear that

had traveled from Joint Base Lewis

when I got the call, but Spencer and

I were there within thirty minutes,"

was going over fences, and we were

crawling underneath them. This was

a hot day, and it was about 2:00 p.m.,

and we were running constantly for

a homeowner might shoot the bear

or that he might get hit by a car. We

got picked up by Lakewood Animal

Control because our vehicle was far

away by that point, and then we got

a call that the bear was six houses

away. When we stopped the truck,

Spencer got to the bear so quickly

45 minutes. We were worried that

Officer Prater recalled. "The bear

McChord to Lakewood. "I was off duty

remains at large.

been largely successful.

When we release the bears, we

is in a culvert trap, and the dogs are

don't want bears to be habituated;

we want them to remain wild and

PAWS, located in Lynnwood,

areas where humans live.

healthy."

attracting wildlife, including how

to handle their chicken feed and

"Rugged Justice gave the public a good sense of the work that we do," he said. It also provided a window into their partnership.

"I wouldn't trade him for anything," Officer Prater said. Spencer's smile and wagging tail said the same thing.

"You know when you see athletes on television, and they're announcing their retirement?" Officer Prater asked me. He was contemplative, his light eyes going back and forth from Spencer, off in the distance, to me, standing before him, notebook in hand.

"You see them thanking everyone, and then they just break down emotionally at the end...They know they aren't going to play again. They're done with that part of their lives. Well. Spencer completes me as a 'player.' I'm a better officer with him by my side, whether we're looking for a bear or not. We have complete trust and understanding. He'll tell me when he's ready to retire, and then I

Officer Prater's soft eyes were damp. Mine were, too. I hadn't expected to be choked up. But hearing that Officer Prater – who was entering his twentieth year as a game warden for the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) – wanted to retire when Spencer did. too. spoke not only to the depth of their partnership, but also of their connection and commitment to one

The Karelian Bear Dog Program is budget-neutral, with no funds paid from the WDFW agency budget. The program is 100% supported by private donations. By donating today, you can help support the mission of these hardworking dogs.

To make a donation, send a check or money order to: WDFW - KBD Fund 16018 Mill Creek Boulevard Mill Creek, WA 98012

# Heroes in the Treetops

# by Susan Wyatt

cat rescuers Shaun Sears and Tom Otto have been finessing firs and scaling cedars for more than a decade. Over the years, Canopy Cat Rescue has liberated more than 3 000 cats who found themselves stuck high in a tree, sometimes for days.

Though you may think if a cat can climb UP, she should be able to get down, that's not the case. Cats have claws that are designed to take them forward – or up. Getting down is another story - a frightened cat may keep climbing and just get stuck.

Shaun says about 95 percent of the cats he and Tom rescue are chased by something; a very small number get the zoomies and bolt up a tree.

One of those spunky cats was a young calico in Brier named

Dad Andrew Flannery says Beatrice is a sweet, playful, affectionate cat who loves to play and enjoys a good belly rub, but she also loves to sneak outside.

One morning, Beatrice got out and decided that the 90-foot fir tree in the front yard looked like a fantastic adventure, and up she went.

"And there she stayed, looking down at us," said Andrew.

Andrew said he'd heard of Canopy Cat Rescue, so he gave them a call. Luckily, Shaun happened to be nearby, so he came right over.

"It turns out that the tree Beatrice had chosen to climb was an excellent climbing structure for a cat: it was less than an excellent climbing structure for a human," said Andrew.

And Beatrice decided to make things more interesting by venturing onto the tiniest limb she could spot.

under the tree didn't work, and she is a foodie." "It was getting dark and she was so very scared but we had no choice but to leave her out there," said Debbie.

Cricket had never been in a tree or been outside at night.

a long extension ladder and

We tried everything, the food

"So, with heavy hearts we went in, also thinking she would quit meowing. I was afraid an owl would hear her," said Debbie.

After a long sleepless night, Debbie went back to the tree.

"(Cricket) was terrified, hungry, and losing her voice," said Debbie

Debbie decided to consult Whidbey Island Pet Network, where was referred to Canopy Cat Rescue.

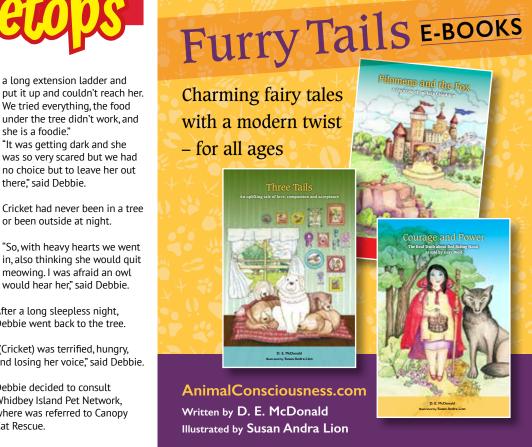
10 minutes," she said. "He said help was on the way. He pulled up and went to the tree. I asked what it would cost, he said free, they were a nonprofit who took donations and ran fundraisers."

'I got a call from Shaun within

Debbie was so upset she couldn't watch anymore and walked away. She was relieved when she heard minutes."

"He handed me the moving bag

"I took my poor baby into the house and got an immediate purr. When I went out to talk to my new hero, I



By scaling an adjacent tree, Shaun was able to reach Beatrice and she was soon safe and sound inside her

But Beatrice still longed to be outside.

"Her adventure in the tree had done absolutely nothing to dampen her enthusiasm for the great outdoors. In fact, it probably heightened it," he

Andrew decided to build a catio for Beatrice and her brother, Mr. Ginsburg. "She's now the very happy denizen of a newly-built catio... and she's still climbing," said Andrew.

## Cricket

Debbie Norman's CCR adventure began when she returned to her Whidbey Island home one day and discovered little Cricket missing.

"We went outside to see if we could find her and heard a pitiful meow," said Debbie. "We followed the meows and found her way up in a very large cedar tree. I went and got

"He had to go up over 100 feet, then down to 75 feet where Cricket was. I heard him talking to her but she went out to the end of the branch." said Debbie.

Shaun say, "We will be down in a few

that went still from exhaustion," said

asked him why this profession, and in a stoic voice he said, 'We like cats."

"I thank God for Sean and CCR for giving Cricket back to her twin sister Vixon, and our family. There are good people out there!" said Debbie.

# **Canopy Cat Rescue**

Phone: (877) 721-6369 Email: canopycatrescue@gmail.com Website: canopycatrescue.com Facebook: facebook.com/canopycatrescue





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# LIMELAGHT PET PROJECT

t started with one small idea: A partnership to provide fame for the forgotten, a platform for the less fortunate, and perspective from the people and places that help harder to adopt

That one small idea sparked so much joy, and over coffee and conversation, Pet Connection Magazine's Sarah Bous-Leslie and Tracy Campion, and Dirtie Dog Photography's Marika Moffitt created a multimedia campaign that would highlight rescue animals throughout the greater Puget Sound region. The campaign, which would air on Q13's weekend morning news on JoeTV, would help cats and dogs, horses and rabbits, goats and guinea pigs who needed just a little bit of extra attention to find their forever families.

But we had an even bigger vision than this. Our creative collaboration also aimed to illuminate the stories behind the people and places that helped these harder to adopt animals. We wanted to know their names, their stories, and what our community could learn from them.

We wanted to shine a light on harder to adopt pets and the people who helped them. People like Terry Phelps, Kacy Bradley, and Barbara Jamison. Terry, Kacy, and Barbara put their heart and soul into their work, day in and day out, and all they hope for is that the animals that they work with will find the loving homes that they deserve.

## Terry Phelps

Operations Director, Save a Forgotten Equine (SAFE) www.safehorses.org

Terry's love of each of the SAFE horses shines through with every interaction, and her understanding of their communication, needs, and unique personalities provides them with the best possible opportunity to find their forever families.

## **Kacy Bradley**

Adoption Counselor, Homeward Pet www.homewardpet.org

Kacy has a wealth of knowledge and an innate understanding of the animals that she works with. Her warmth, enthusiasm, and dedication help the animals of Homeward Pet put their best paws forward and help those who are looking for a new animal family find their best possible match.

## **Barbara Jamison**

Founder and Executive Director of Puget Sound

www.pugetsoundgoatrescue.org Barbara's dedication to goats in Washington State is second to none. She's dedicated to ensuring that goats throughout the state find the perfect, loving home.



pril 22, 2020 marks the fiftieth anniversary of Earth Day, an annual event that's celebrated worldwide to demonstrate support for environmental protection. The overarching theme for Earth Day 2020 is climate change - a topic that has become heavily laden with partisan identity. But politics doesn't change what's happening to our planet.

According to NASA, the global temperature is up 1.9 degrees Fahrenheit since 1880, carbon dioxide is up 412 parts per million, and we're losing 413 gigatons of ice sheets per year. As a result, since 1880, the global sea level has risen 8 inches, and by 2100, it is expected to rise by another one to four

According to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, there is a greater than 95% probability that current climate trends are the result of human activity since the mid-twentieth century. According to the National Research Council, ancient paleoclimate evidence reveals that the current global warming trend is approximately ten times faster than the ice-age-recovery warming rates.

We can see this impact on the land, with the retreat of glaciers in the Alps, Andes, Himalayas, and Rockies. With rising temperatures, species are changing their spatial ecology; the mountain pine beetle, for example, has taken to the trees at higher altitudes. The insect is only 5 millimeters long, but it's making big waves with much larger species like the grizzly bear. Pine beetles burrow into conifer trees, where they lay their eggs; their larvae then eat the trees, which often proves to be fatal for the trees. This disrupts the entire ecosystem; the seeds from the whitebark pine are one of the grizzly's staple foods, but the whitebark is one of the beetle's new favorite places to lay their eggs. The loss of millions of trees means the loss of an important food source for grizzlies, who have to find another way to get their calories if they are to survive. And this is just one example of multiple land species - insect, plant, and mammal - being impacted by climate change.

The outlook is no better under the water. The oceans have become more acidic: here in the Pacific Northwest, the embryos of oysters and scallops cannot survive because they can't build their shells.

Species are struggling on both the land and in the sea. Earth is currently experiencing

### a biodiversity crisis: Animal **Earth Day Pledge** species are disappearing from **Event 2020** our planet at up to 10,000 times the "natural" extinction Oxbow Park, 6427 Carleton Ave S, rate. There have been five Seattle, WA 98108 mass extinction events during Earth's geologi-

cal history and, unless

we act quickly, scien-

tists believe that there

including development,

encroachment, and contri-

bution to climate change. Humans' actions

during the last 100 years alone; under natu-

ral extinction rates, only nine species would

have gone extinct during that same time.

In biodiverse areas, scientists estimate that

tens of thousands of species have yet to be

identified, and may well go extinct before

It's a dreary forecast for those of us who

switching to green power, and avoiding

plastic. You can learn more about the im-

pact of climate change and you can work

with your local community to help make

Northwest, protests and educational events

are also taking place for Earth Day. Some of

worldwide changes. Across the Pacific

these include:

live on earth. So what can you do? You can

begin with small steps, like saving energy,

we've ever known of their existence.

have led to the extinction of 500 species

RSVP link: www.facebook.com/ events/517850168937192/ Buy a ticket: www.gpsea.org

# **Protest for our Planet:** Signmaking

Whatcom Museum Lightcatcher Building Courtyard, Bellingham April 22, 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. Information: Contact Katherine Everitt, (360) 778-8961, kmeveritt@cob.org

# **Spokane Earth Day 50 Climate Strike**

Riverfront Park Pavilion, Spokane April 22, 2:00 p.m. to 3:30 p.m.

Information: Contact Brian G. Henning, (509) 270-7908, info@350Spokane.org RSVP link: actionnetwork.org/events/ spokane-earth-day-50-climate-strike

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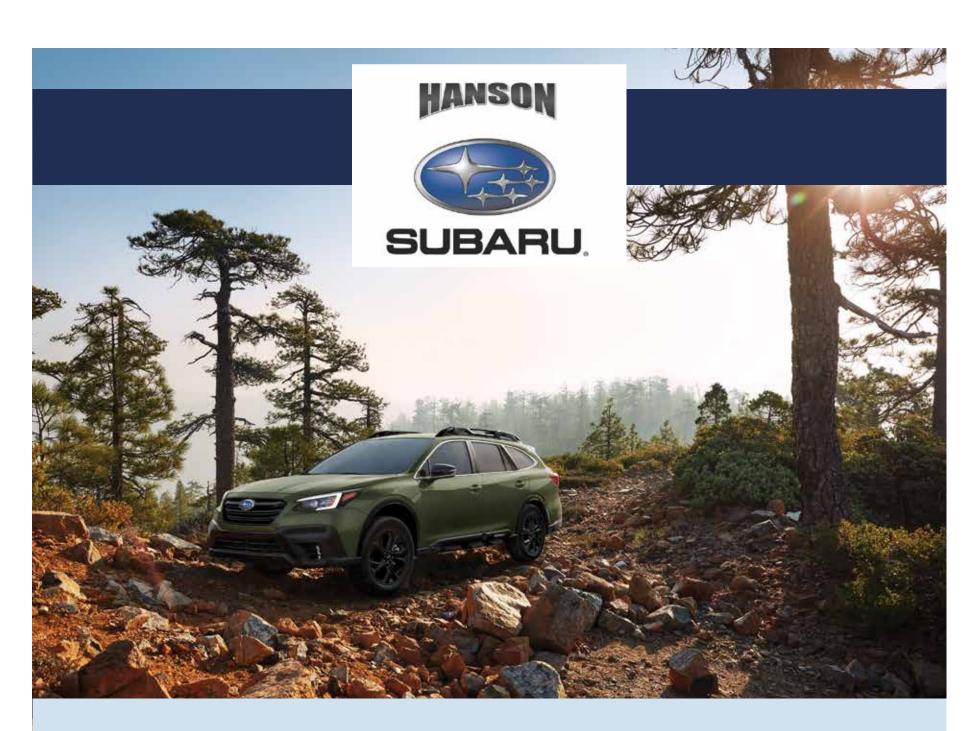




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# **OVS Celebrates the Heroes** of Covenant Creatures

by Lisa Parshley DVM, PhD, DACVIM (Oncology)

n this article I want relate a story. It's about a group of people who act like true heroes to countless animals in Thurston, Greys Harbor, and Lewis Counties. My tale begins on a rainy January day in downtown Olympia. It was the day for countywide homeless outreach and our yearly point-in-time count. For the last two years, I have volunteered, and because I'm a veterinarian, I am assigned to the pet site working with Covenant Creatures.

When I pulled up and parked near the Covenant Creatures trailer, it was raining,

puddles the size of Capital Lake in the parking lot for pet outreach. In the heavy rain and amidst all the puddles, the staff of Covenant Creatures were setting up their mobile compound. In a matter of minutes, this welloiled machine had turned a truck. trailer, and two tents into a miniveterinary clinic.

Because of the rain, we were sure that very few would brave the weather to bring their pets. No sooner was set up was complete than the first patients began to arrive. For a time, we were all very were busy giving vaccines, diagnosing skin diseases, giving worming medications, talking about arthritis, and educating people about the benefits of spaying and neutering puppies

around, watching the rest of the Covenant Creatures services. After each patient left the veterinary care trailer, people could peruse tables under the tents. On these were items of pet care, clothes, dog and cat coats, toys, treats, grooming tools, and shampoos. In other bins were leashes. harnesses, and collars. At these tables, every pet would have a chance of a treat, a warm coat, and sometimes a new brush or leash. Finally, before leaving our little mobile veterinary or pet care compound, each person was given a bag of dog or cat food. Watching people's faces transform from worry to smiles was payment enough





for me and made up for standing out in the

Every time I volunteer for this nonprofit organization, I am struck by what an important service Covenant Creatures provides. They would be a great organization if this was a once-a-year event. But Covenant Creatures deserves a label of "amazing" because for almost 14 years, they have been a year-round service to our communities.

Covenant Creature is a 501c3 non-profit and I mean raining hard. There were already organization whose mission is to serve

> that live with low-income families. Some of these people are unsheltered and others are struggling every week to pay bills. Animals who share these people's lives are special and treasured

Through services provided by Covenant Creatures, these animals receive yearly well checks, minor medical help, and preventative medicine

All the people who volunteer and work for Covenant Creatures share a common zeal: a love for animals. In every group like Covenant Creatures, there's an equally amazing leader. Founder Leanne Johnson has served in this role since the beginning. She is a pastor by calling, whose calling changed from preaching in a church to When the opening rush slacked off, I ambled providing care and service for animals in families that struggled daily to survive. Leanne has been honored with the very apt street name "Pet Pastor". These days, you can find her working to expand Covenant Creatures' reach and seeking out new communities it can serve.

> When I spoke to Leanne recently about Covenant Creatures' mission, she said, "By helping the vulnerable pets, all of creation is helped. We work for the betterment of all of society and to enable respect of every being - both human and animal. We become better human beings by showing love to

out into the universe reverberates from one soul to another, making the whole better than the individuals. For those who would like to learn more, volunteer, with them through their website (www. covenantcreatures.com/). Facebook site (www.facebook.com/Covenant-(360-357-6301).

Don't be bashful, you'll feel very fulfilled after one experience with **Covenant Creatures.** 

the pets in need. Covenant Creatures' 'motto' is: Life, LOVE, and responsibility. It is our hope that, in some small way, when we offer love and respect to our furry and feathered companions and their owners, this will in turn be taken out into the community and shared with others."

In the beginning, Covenant Creatures was run out of a garage in downtown Olympia with the help of a variety of veterinarians (such as Kim Martin), pet food stores (such as Mud Bay and Pet Works), and clinics (such as Hawks Prairie Veterinary Clinic). In the last year, through many generous donations, they were able to purchase a trailer and truck to house these services. Using the truck and trailer. Covenant Creatures has developed their signature street outreach operation called the "Mobile Companion Care Center (MCCC)". Moving from a fixed location to a mobile set up allows Covenant Creatures to further their mission by heading out into the community. For example, every other Sunday, you can find the MCCC in the Olympia Veterinary Specialist parking lot from noon to 4:00 p.m.

Whether providing care out of a garage or through the MCCC, it has taken the work and donations of many veterinarians, businesses, and people to succeed, including doctors like Justin Ripka and other volunteer veterinarians. Over the years, veterinary staff have provided the hands-on care. These positions have been filled by many volunteer veterinary technicians (animal nurses) and assistants, like technician Mishka Iglesias and assistant Marina Pruitt.

This article wouldn't be complete without naming a few others who work for Covenant Creatures. Justin Ripka, besides being the lead veterinarian, also serves as president of the board. Sue Nelson mans the phones and works to coordinate care for pets sent to veterinary clinics. Tom Johnson serves as treasurer, provides transportation, and is a regular volunteer for MCCC. In charge of general pick up and distribution of supplies, and a frequent MCCC volunteer, is Trey Gilbertson. MCCC registration coordination is provided by Lahani Allen. Chrissy Bailey serves as a board member, promotions director, event coordinator, and often works with MCCC. At every MCCC event, you'll find Cynthia Quinn helping with supplies and coordination. It's very probable that some people have been left out, for this project takes many hands pitching in for success. To those mentioned above and all those I have missed, I would like to say, "You are true heroes!"

Covenant Creatures knows that money doesn't define who can love or be loved. They know that love and care freely given or donate to Covenant Creatures, connect Creatures-239725806050342/) or by phone



# **Nominations From** the Community

We put out a call on social media asking our readers to nominate local unsung heroes. We were inspired by the umber of nominations we received! These are the unsung heroes who received the most nominations from our readers. All nominations have been listed anonymously

he Nisqually Kennel Club, for its generous support of the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife's Karelian Bear Dog Program.

Dr. Lisa Parshley and the staff at OVS for their compassionate, generous care with a retired Rogue Detection Team dog who has

Marika Moffitt of Dirtie Dog Photography, for supporting local rescue organizations, bringing people together, and being a bright light in the animal community.

Laurie Hardman of College Dogs, for bringing four-legged love, warmth, support, and comfort to those in our community who need

Deanna ("Dee") Goertz of the Squeaky Toy, for providing muchneeded pet supplies during difficult times to low-income families, disabled veterans, and the homeless. Dee and her dog, Leroy, are often out in the community delivering supplies with a smile on

Melanie Ryan, founder of Beck's Place, for helping low-income families and their pets by helping them stay together. Melanie recognizes how important it is to keep all family members together.

Carol Whitfield of Clooney Dog, for helping a dog named Millie after she was hit by a car. Carol comforted the dog's 13-year-old human and called Millie's owner, and then set up a Go Fund Me for Millie's collapsed lung and broken pelvis surgeries.

Komu ("Mu") the cat-finding dog of Three Retrievers Lost Pet Rescue. Mu goes out every week in search of missing cats, and has found hundreds of missing cats since he started this work in 2011.

Tony Arnold, who has been an active volunteer at Adopt-A-Pet for years and fosters pups for them as well. His vacation is spent at a large dog sanctuary every year. He's active in the Humane Legislation Day. He's one in a million and never asks for thanks or recognition, but I feel he needs both.

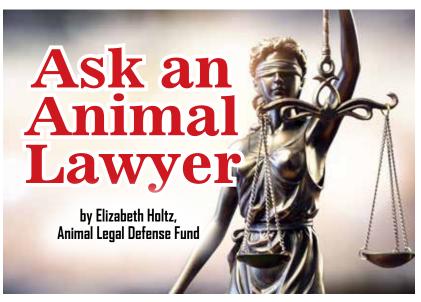
5XL Shelton is a nonprofit that gets pet food to seniors and lowincome and homeless families in Mason County. Good people doing

Thurston County Sheriff K9 Jaxx helps catch bad guys! He was born in December of 2014 and is an American Bred German Shephard which was donated by Excelon Kennels in Shelton Washington. He lives at home with Deputy Bagby, his wife and their two kids.

Astro! He's the facility dog at Monarch Children's Justice and Advocacy Center. As one of the Courthouse Dogs, he comforts children that have been victims of crime and helps them cope with the stress and trauma that often occurs during the investigation and prosecution of crimes.

All the dogs that volunteer with Reading with Rover. These patient pups really helped boost my daughter's confidence in reading.

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What are Courtroom Animal Advocate Program (CAAP) laws, and how can my state pass one?

■hank you so much for asking this question — Courtroom Animal Advocate Program (CAAP) laws help ensure that animal crime victims' interests are represented in the courtroom. CAAP laws allow advocates — supervised law students or volunteer lawyers — to advocate for animal victims in criminal cruelty cases. These volunteers assist the judge by conducting legal research, investigating, and gathering information from veterinarians, animal control officers, and law enforcement officials, drafting briefs, and, importantly,

making recommendations regarding the animal's interests.

The reality is that prosecutors and law enforcement officers often lack the resources or specific expertise needed to address crimes against animals. Additionally, animal crime cases can be unusually complex — involving complicated forensic issues, victims who are unable to communicate with representatives of the legal system, and living "evidence," who beyond food and water also need a stable and loving environment in order to thrive. Our criminal system is set up so that defense attorneys represent the interests of their client and prosecutors have a duty to the state. No one is charged with ensuring the animal victim's needs are addressed. CAAP laws change that — giving animal crime victims a special advocate dedicated to their well-being.

Currently, there is only one CAAP law — but that's likely to change soon! Connecticut enacted the first CAAP law, also known as "Desmond's Law," in 2016. The bill is named in honor of Desmond, a shelter dog who was severely abused and then strangled to death by the man who adopted him. In 2017, the first advocate testified in court in a dogfighting case under the state's CAAP law, a University of Connecticut law student working under the supervision of law professor Jessica Rubin, who was part of the team who made Desmond's Law a reality. On the advocate's suggestion, the judge imposed a possession ban on the defendant, preventing him from possessing, breeding, or harboring dogs for at least two years — that's CAAP in action. Encouragingly, both animal cruelty investigations and prosecutions have increased in the state since the law's passage.

If you'd like to work on a CAAP law in your state, first head to the Animal Legal Defense Fund website to find model CAAP Law language — you'll find it at aldf.org/CAAP. It's important to note that CAAP laws do not change the underlying animal cruelty laws. In other words, a CAAP law doesn't create new crimes or increase penalties for defendants. Once you familiarized yourself with CAAP, you'll need to work with a state legislator who is willing to sponsor a CAAP bill. Start by sharing the mod-

Passing legislation at the state level requires a bit of legwork, but it is possible. You may have trouble finding someone to sponsor the bill, unfortunately it's rarely as straightforward as sending an email and asking. But at least it starts the conversation! If things aren't progressing with any legislators, start networking with local and state groups who may be interested in teaming up. It's more difficult to ignore the voices of many people working together.

Considering the unique nature of CAAP laws, you'll also want to reach out to law schools in your state —look for a professor who teaches animal law. Legislators will want to know whether there are qualified people willing to step up as advocates, having buy-in from schools and professors will significantly strengthen your proposal. Make sure to research whether anyone in your state has tried to pass a CAAP law before. Understanding why the bill failed is critical to running an effective

The Animal Legal Defense Fund assists legislators actively working on CAAP laws to adapt our model language to fit the needs of their state. If you know of a legislator interested in sponsoring a CAAP bill, please reach out to us using the form at aldf.org/advocacy. With advocates like you and growing interest in animal protection across state legislatures, I'm confident several states will have their own CAAP laws by 2021. Your state could be next!



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# WOLF HAVEN'S // ON

by Kim Young, Director of Communications and Diane Gallegos, Executive Director

displaced and captive-born canids since 1982. This nationally-recognized wolf sanctuary has the mission to "conserve and protect wolves and their habitat" and 2019 was one of our best years yet.

Each one of us has a favorite

memory of wolves rolling, playing, eating, interacting, and howling, but when reflecting on 2019, we think about the remodels and physical improvements we made at both of our sanctuaries. Every modification was done with the goal of improving the quality of life for our resident wolves. At the McCleery Ranch in Montana, we had two portable aboveground corridors made that connect enclosures, giving the wolves more space. New above-ground shelters were also installed, so wolves have additional options for

getting out of severe Montana weather. At the Tenino, Washington sanctuary, a brand-new enclosure was constructed, wooden shelter boxes added, chain link fencing replaced, and wooden structures rebuilt

Kurtis Rattay, Wolf Haven facilities and animal care staff person in Tenino, built several new climbing structures to give the wolves mental stimulation and physical enrichment.

Wolf Haven had to overcome significant obstacles in 2019.

Looking for meaningful ways for humans and wild wolves to coexist remains an ongoing challenge. Wolf Haven has been involved with wolf conservation for decades (long before wolves reestablished themselves in Washington), and has been an active member of the state Wolf Advisory Group (WAG) since 2013. The WAG consists of diverse stakeholders: ranchers, conservation groups, hunters, animal rights organization, and many others. The group meets several times a year to discuss human-wolf conflict and advise Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife officials on wolf conservation and management. With so many different voices at the table—and in the general public—there are strong and diverse opinions, but the WAG con-



tinues its work toward fair and durable solutions with respect for all parties. It is slow progress at times, but the commitment to coexistence is evident in each person.

Wolf Haven is proud of what we accomplished in 2019, including successfully feeding and providing quality care for almost 90 wolves! There are 56 wolves who currently call our Tenino sanctuary home, while 33 wolves live at our McCleery Ranch in Montana. It's a huge responsibility to care for so many lives.

We also marked our one-year anniversary managing McCleery Ranch. The transfer of 33 wolves, outbuildings, equipment, and property took place one year ago, and with it, the permanent move of Wendy Spencer, longtime sanctuary director, to Montana.

Wolf Haven looks forward to 2020 and

We want to continue making progress in all three of our core areas: sanctuary, education and conservation. We will continue offering education outreach to Spanish-speaking and underserved communities, make quality of life improvements for wolves in our care, and keep working toward the recovery of endangered Mexican wolves and red wolves.

Wolf Haven also plans to offer a Wildlife Handling and Chemical Immobilization course at our sanctuary in Montana (this same three-day course has been held annually for the past 15 years in Tenino, WA).

We expect there will be legislation in 2020 addressing gaps in funding WA Department of Fish and Wildlife. There may also be efforts to provide support and oversight for preventing conflict with wolves and livestock.

Wolf Haven, its staff, and volunteers, continue to be heroes.

Wolf Haven receives a lot of positive reviews and online feedback from visitors, and this all makes us very proud of our volunteers. They are selfless, highly trained, passionate, and unpaid individuals and Wolf Haven couldn't have survived 38 years without them. Being held in high regard as a sanctuary also tells us that more and more people (like you, reader) believe in the value and sanctity of each individual

animal, regardless of economic value. There has been, and continues to be, a huge shift in how humankind regard other species; we like to think Wolf Haven has played a small part in showing the unique individuality and intrinsic worth of each animal.

There are several ways that you can support Wolf Haven in 2020 and

One of the best ways to support Wolf Haven is by becoming a member of our organization. Wolf Haven members receive quarterly issues of our magazine Wolf Tracks, which includes sanctuary updates, tributes to deceased wolves, welcomes new residents, reveals what life is like here behind the scenes, and highlights volunteers, lifetime members, and educational programs. You can also sign up on our website for our free monthly e-newsletters, World of Wolves, and stay current with our inhouse residents and wolves in the wild.



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Kitten Rescue has housed upwards of 170 kittens and young cats at one time during the last year, ensuring that they are all healthy, have received all their shots and have been spayed or neutered

Much of the money comes from our garage sales and personal donations, as well as grants.

We also help people in the community see that feral populations near their homes have food to eat. This is an to manage. If you are interested in helping, a commitment of a donation of one bag of dry cat food a month would go far in helping out.



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of Mason County www.kittenresq.net



To learn more about **Wolf Haven International, visit** wolfhaven.org

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WILD LOVE PRESERVE

Since 2010, Wild Love founder, Andrea Maki's, consistent and devoted attention to the plight of wild horses has been amazing to witness. A 30,000-foot view and her obvious political savvy have created an unlikely coalition of ranchers, environmentalists, wild horse advocates, and government agencies, working in delicate concert to save these majestic animals. She should be the envy of any activist looking to make a real impact.

- Stone Gossard, Pearl Jam + The Vitalogy Foundation



hen they were 14 years old, Seattle Natives Andrea Maki and Stone Gossard met at The Northwest School and became fast friends. In the following four decades, their lives took different paths: Gossard went on to play guitar in the Pacific Northwest-based bands Mother Love Bone and Temple of the Dog and was a founding member of Pearl Jam, while Maki became a contemporary visual artist and photographer who founded Wild Love Preserve, a nonprofit Idaho wildlife preserve to help protect and preserve America's vital wild places, including the wild horses of Idaho's Challis area. But their friendship and support of one another remained constant. Stone and the Vitalogy Foundation, a nonprofit founded by Pearl Jam in 2006, have proudly supported Wild Love's innovative work.

Since Wild Love was founded in 2010, Andrea has saved countless Idaho wild horses from being rounded up and shipped off; instead, they're living, wild and free, on the open plains. Currently, Wild Love is leasing 400 acres, but Maki and Gossard share a vision for an even more picturesque future: a 10,000-acre preserve that will provide a permanent home to Idaho's wild horses. Maki and Gossard are collaborating on a campaign to acquire this land.

"Wild Love Preserve is about finding new solutions and ways of bringing people together," Maki said. "If you approach with respect, kindness, patience, and sincere interest in listening to differing perspectives, you can find common ground. We can rise above drawn lines if we so choose."

t's that sense of collaboration that's vielding results. Because of Wild Love's pro-active efforts with the Challis-Idaho BLM and the implementation of their collaborative and humane management program on

the range, there has only been one helicopter roundup of the Challis wild horses since October 2012, versus every 2-3 years. Wild Love Preserve's programs have saved American taxpayers over \$7.5 million since 2013 and created new revenue streams for regional communities

America's iconic wild horses symbolize pure Americana but their management is controversial and polarizing. They have been protected by law since 1971, with the introduction of the Free-Roaming Wild Horse and Burro Act. The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is responsible for managing America's wild horses on 26.9 million acres of multi-use public lands covering 10 western states. From big energy to recreational use

to ranchers looking for grazing permits on public land, there's a lot of competition for a limited amount of space. As a result, public land for wild horses has decreased dramati-

In November 2019, the BLM conducted its first helicopter roundup of the Challis wild horses since 2012. As she did in 2012, Maki worked on behalf of the horses to reduce conflicts between the advocates, public and BLM, leading up to and during the roundup. This seven-year hiatus was due to Maki and Wild Love Preserve's collaborative efforts with the Challis Idaho BLM and their implementation of a successful fertility management program. The BLM's helicopter roundups and wild horse removals cost American taxpavers \$80 million annually - and rising - so Maki set to work creating a new inclusive conservation model a decade ago believing there was a better way for the horses environment stakeholders, and for the American public.

"Stone and the Pearl Jam Vitalogy Foundation have been instrumental to our efforts from the onset in 2010, along with generous support from Duff McKagan, Raymond James Endowment Fund. The Earth and Humanity Foundation, ASPCA, Humane Society of the US, the Gates Foundation, The Science and Conservation Center, Summerly Foundation, and other private donors," Andrea said.

> To support Wild Love Preserve, you can make a donation of any size via their website "Even the smallest amounts count and can be a big help in supplying food, water, and other essentials to the horses each and every day," Andrea said.

You can also become a sponsor of one of the wild horses living at Wild Love Preserve." Andrea said.

Please join us in thanking Andrea Maki and Wild Love Preserve for helping protect one of America's true gems - and for preserving our wild places.

For more information, visit the Wild Love Preserve site to learn more: www.wildlovepreserve.org

Hometown Heroes:

# **Washington State Animal Response Team**

was late at night when the call came out to Washington State Animal Response Team (WASART): a dog had fallen down a trail that ran along a steep drop off, which couldn't be seen in the dark.

"Nighttime rescues are always more dangerous and this particular area is infamous with the local rescue community for being dangerous for humans," explained WASART's Public Information Officer, Michaela Eaves. "Looking over the edge with your headlamp beam disappearing into nothing is definitely a sobering moment, reminding us that safety is priority number 1.

"Another rescue off the edge of a trail, this one during the day, wasn't harrowing so much as exhausting, until we got to the top of the trail and had to figure out how to get the dog back down some steep trails with very few people. This was our third rescue up this particular trail, and had we been unable to bandage the dog's paws in a way that made it comfortable for him to walk out, we would have spent the night while we waited for additional responders to help get up and run rope systems for the first part of the way down the trail."

WASART's trained rescuers are no strangers to getting animals out of difficult spots. Members of the 501c3 have pulled horses out of thick mud, rounded up pigs, pulled cows out of ravines, and rescued many a dog from the side of a cliff. The organization responds to domestic animals in difficult situations and runs emergency animal shelters in disasters, such as wildfires.

"We had a very busy July with a number of dog rescues in Snohomish County," explained Michaela. "We were short-



busiest years, our two founders, Greta Cook and Gretchen McCallum, received Distinguished Achievement Awards from the Washington State Search and Rescue Volunteer Advisory Council (WA SARVAC) for the founding and growing of WASART," Michaela

'We'd love to continue growing the organization's volunteer base and educating the public on ways they can stay safe on the trails and prepare for disasters for their animals. We're working on some of our technical rescue people receiving additional advanced

> training to make our rescues even safer. We're also working on more interactive online training to make everything from becoming a member to deploying easier for people excited to get started with rescues."

WASART staff and volunteers are considered to be heroes in the Pacific NW and beyond - an honor that each team member takes to heart.

"We're fortunate to have the trust of animal owners, readers, staff, the general public, the sheriff's department, emergency management, and our volunteers," said Michael. "It's a privilege to be able to do these kinds of responses and we're very appreciative of the support we receive from people. We don't consider ourselves heroes. We're your neighbors who have a skill set to be able to help out and a community that supports us in doing so."



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handed on some of these, so we

the Sheriff's Office for volunteers

requested assistance through

Volunteer Search and Rescue.

We always love partnering with

other Search and Rescue teams,

and this team's professionalism

and enthusiasm are no exception.

Teamwork between our groups

meant successful outcomes for

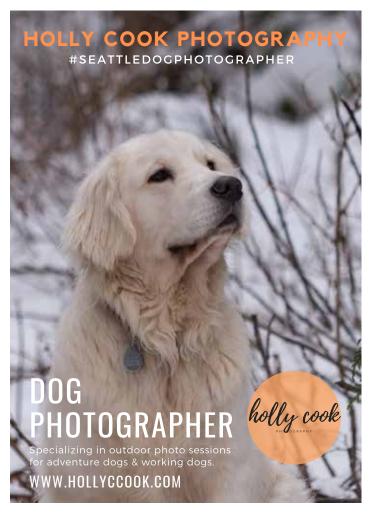
the subjects of four rescues who

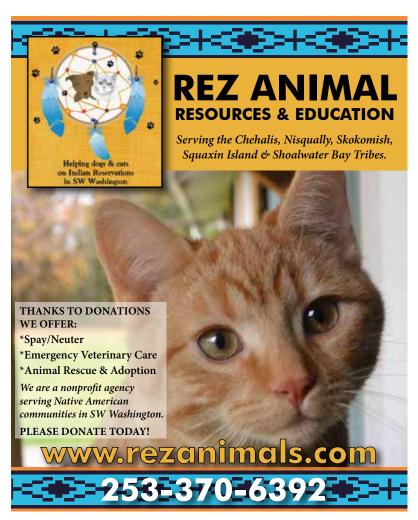
each got to go home at the end

of the night.

from Snohomish County

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SHOWING STREET

A woman's determined return to a life with horses.

- Part 24 -

Sarah Bous-Leslie

read recently that not all people have an inner monologue. Astounding. Some people just exist within their minds, at peace—without a nonstop onslaught of unbidden thoughts and worries? This foreign experience fascinated me and made me pay closer attention to what my inner voice was chattering on about. I even spent some time trying to control the diatribe, concentrating so hard on thinking positive things. Of course, as soon as my mind wandered, it was back to the races.

You may be wondering just what this has to do with horses, and Gypsy. Well, the answer is everything! For a person whose inner monologue never shuts up, horse time is very precious indeed. Horses are very sensitive to our moods and emotions, and force us to exist in the moment. To be safe and have a good ride, you cannot be distracted. Little wonder then, as my world was falling apart around me, that I was drawn to Gypsy like a life raft on a sinking ship.

Big changes were happening in my life, changes over which I had no control. My anxiety was through the roof, and the

worries hounded me all day and into my dreams at night. My divorce was final; my ex had moved out. My concern for my children was overwhelming and constant. I had just started a new position at work and was trying to learn a new job. Then, the unthinkable happened. (Insert dramatic pause here.) My very good friend and trainer, Sarah Weidman announced she was moving far away, and my sanctuary barn time was going with her.

I'm not a completely selfish jerk, of course I want her to be happy! But that didn't stop the panic that knifed through my heart. She can't leave me. I'm not ready! I can't do this on my own! My inner voice screamed. I had started my journey with her at my side over five years ago, and her calm knowledge and tutelage had brought both Gypsy and I so far. My thoughts raced on and I thought briefly about selling Gypsy and just returning to a horseless life. A

life where I didn't have to worry about the health and safety of a huge animal, where I didn't have full responsibility over her needs. But that thought was fleeting. I couldn't give up.

A stronger voice entered the conversation. The voice of stubbornness and fortitude. Wait a minute, it said, you are a grown-ass woman. Newly single, strong, and independent. Step up. Panic and worry are not luxuries you can afford right now. All the safety nets in your life have suddenly fallen away, but it's up to you to make your new life what you want it to be. Do you want a new life without Gypsy? Without the time with your horse friends? The answer was a resounding NO.

I decided to leave my pity party, and spring into action to find a new trainer, and a new barn. The weight of the decisions I needed to make was heavy, but once I had a plan, I started feeling better. I still felt the sting of abandonment, but I was able to look up from my own despair and be supportive of my friend. It helped immensely that my good friend and copublisher, Tracy, was going to be moving with me. I would have terribly missed our long talks, aimlessly riding our ponies around the arena while we share our fears and hopes.

I don't know how many of you out there follow this story, but those of you that do, take heart. The story continues! I commemorated this turning point in my life with a tattoo that reminds me of strength and independence. I hope one day soon the sadness will also lift from my heart, and I can be a strong partner for my blonde girl. Until then, when my inner voice becomes too much, I can take a peek at my totem and remind myself to live in the moment.







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# Tourney of SMART DIXIE INNES

Part VIII

## by Tracy Campion

here were no walls.
Where were the walls?

I tried not to feel anxious as I led Smarty out to the mounting block that was situated next to the large outdoor arena. The large, unfenced outdoor arena. Smarty stood unflinching as I swung my right leg over. His ears perked up as I motioned him forward.

"Breathe," Sarah W. called to me. I inhaled deeply. It smelled so good here – it was so light, so bright, so happy. Smarty was happy, too. He walked out in ever-longer strides, happily looking all around. And as he strode out, I relaxed, too. Where I'd once worried to ride outside of an arena, now I delighted in riding without confinement – and Smarty did, too.

And there were dozens of acres to explore: Smarty's new home was as beautiful as it was immense. There were multiple outdoor arenas, two round pens, rolling hillsides, and a large cross country course.

One of our favorite places to go was the "lower dressage arena;" to get there from the main barn, we rode through a lush forested pathway and then onto the soft, loamy grounds of the dressage arena. On some days, Sarah B. would join us, and we'd ride



around the large dirt track of the cross country course.

FOURTH

One day after a lesson where it felt like everything was "clicking," Sarah W. surprised us.

"You're ready to do a dressage show," she said. Flush with happiness and satisfaction from our successful lesson, I met her gaze. I'd never intended to show before; I rode for fun. But there was something about the way that she said this that made me change my mind.

"Okay," I said evenly, "when is it?"

"It's tomorrow morning," Sarah said, laughing.

S Ch My tr her co jump her t

speak, so I merely
nodded, waved...

"Just breat to myself his ear ba

I worried that it was too late, but she assured me that she could register me late.

I didn't get nervous until I was driving back out to the barn the following morning. My hands were shaking as I tacked Smarty up, but he stood motionless. He had this. He was ready.

As I rode Smarty toward the warm-up arena, I tried to ignore my shaking legs and shakily drawn breaths. Smarty strode out smooth, and confident, and happy. He looked at all of the new horses and people with interest. I just paid attention to Smarty. My stomach was churning so much that I was afraid I'd vomit if I tried to speak, so I merely nodded, waved, or gave a thumbs-up when anyone greeted me.

"Are you nervous?" people kept on asking me. My eyes flashed fire.

I nudged Smarty into a long-striding, swingy trot as we entered the warm-up arena. He bounded along happily, taking everything in calmly. He exuded calm and happiness, and it began to rub off on me. After twenty minutes of easy trotting, I stopped him at the far corner of the arena. I began to feel light-headed and nauseated, so I had him walk forward. After several stops and starts, I realized that every time I stopped Smarty, I also stopped breathing. I was holding my breath...waiting... waiting for what? For something bad to happen? I laughed at

My trainer was also doing her own dressage test and jumping, so I didn't have her there to remind me to breathe.

"Just breathe," I whispered to myself. Smarty flicked his ear back.

Sarah B. arrived atop Gypsy, and the two of them were flush with the excitement of the show. If she was nervous, I couldn't tell; the two of them were moving in perfect rhythm. Sarah joined us in the warm-up arena, and I did my best to chat with her while breathing and not feeling nauseated.

Sarah B. went first. I smiled as I saw that our trainer, Sarah W., was going to be calling the test. (This means that she would be telling us which actions to do, and where. A dressage arena is divided by letters, with "A" situated at the bottom of the arena, where one enters. A smallish arena, like the one we were using, had the letters AKEHCMBF, with "X" in the middle.)

Smarty and I watched as Sarah B. entered the dressage arena. "A enter working trot rising, between X and C, medium walk,"

Sarah W. called out. Sarah B. and Gypsy trotted to X, and then between X and C, continued at a medium walk. "At C, track right, working trot rising at M," Sarah W. continued. With each set of directions that were called out, Sarah B. and Gypsy gracefully followed through. Smarty watched each trot, turn, and transition. They finished beautifully.

And then it was our turn.

Sarah W.'s familiar voice called out our directives.

"A enter working trot rising, between X and C, medium walk."

Where Sarah B. and Gypsy had been straight and rhythmic, we drifted and were offbeat. As we rounded our first circle, Smarty stumbled; I held the reins tight and continued to listen to the sound of Sarah's voice. It wasn't pretty, but we did it. And as we finished, we heard the sound of our friends cheering. We'd done it. Smarty walked out of the arena, his knees rising high and his head held even higher. We followed up with a second test several minutes afterward.

When we read the comments on our test later that day, I smiled and nodded. The comments included "Wrong diagonal," "your circle is neither 20 meters nor a circle" (we all laughed about my 18-meter squircles) and my favorite, "much stumbling today." But what the test didn't show was that we breathed, we listened, and we worked together. Smarty stumbled because he was taking care of me; he knew that those big, long strides startled me sometimes, and he was trying to put me at ease. Next time, I knew we'd do

As I read the comments on my test, I saw Sarah W. standing near one of her horses. Our eyes met. She smiled. Next time, she knew, we'd do better, too. She'd said that we were ready for this, and she was right. She'd believed in him. In me. In us.

"Thank you," I mouthed to her.

Thank you for everything.

# COLLEGE DOGS

aurie Hardman has been a solid fixture in the Seattle therapy dog community for 3 decades. Her passion for therapy dogs led her to create several amazing programs that continue to serve Seattle to this day. Her dedication and passion are evident, and her reputation led Anton Zanotto, Resident Coordinator at old Lander Hall at UW to contact Laurie in 2010. Due to the high amount of stress his students were dealing with during mid-terms, Anton asked Laurie to bring in some dogs to visit with the students. Recognizing a need, Laurie then created College Dogs.



College Dogs' modest beginning of 5-6 teams has grown to 33 teams who serve University of Washington, Shoreline Community College, several Seattle high schools and, most recently, local businesses. Where ever there is human stress, College Dogs will visit. College Dogs even has a certified crisis response dog.

Additionally, College Dogs will sometimes utilize registered/certified therapy dog teams from different organizations and will coordinate visits to colleges and universities throughout Seattle. Laurie is a tester/observer for Alliance of Therapy Dogs, so she is able to test and certify the teams herself. In 2019, College Dogs scheduled 150 campus visits, which impacted 5000 students and faculty, as well as other people.

Amid the belly rubs and the laughter of these visits is a sense of relief, joy and fun. The dogs provide both a distraction to the students as well as pure love. Students visit the College Dog website just to find out where the dogs are going to be so they can go visit with them. The impact that these visits have on the students and staff is palpable. Each encounter is an endearing story to share, if only space allowed.

The visits range from 30-50 people visiting with a few teams in a one-hour visit, while other teams may be visiting with 200-300 people in the same time frame. That's a lot of people getting on the floor to love on a dog. Laurie and her dog, CB participate in 4-5 visits per week, so she has first-hand experience of what both the handler and the dog will encounter.

Once a visit is over, the dogs are tired. How the dogs decompress varies, as each dog is different. Most of them sleep while others need to eat, play, or indulge in a favorite activity

Is your curiosity peaked? If your dog makes *your* life better, you might consider sharing your dog with others. If your dog is friendly and is comfortable in public with lots of people petting him/her, your dog might be therapy dog material. Whether your dog is certified by another organization or not, you can start your College Dog career simply by emailing Laurie at AGUAK9@AOL.COM. The demand for College Dog visits continues to grow and, while Laurie and her teams work hard to meet the demand, more teams are needed. Maybe you and your dog can help.

# COLLEGEDOGS.ORG

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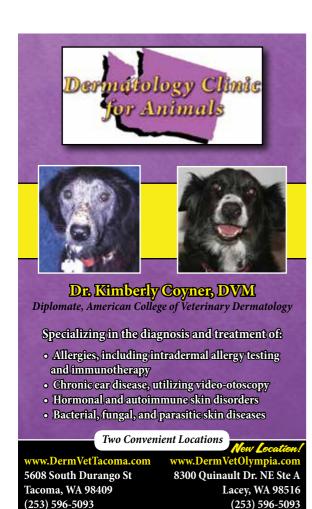




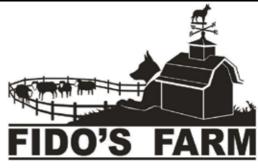


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