



# 2023 WASHINGTON STATE ANIMAL RESPONSE TEAM ANNUAL REPORT





# A Letter From the President

Dear Friends and Supporters,

2023 was a monumental year for the Washington State Animal Response Team. With our dedicated team members, Board of Directors, and gracious donors we made many advances keeping with our mission statement of “Helping Animals and Their Owners in Times of Emergency.”

Of notable significance, was the acquisition of the new Technical Water Rescue Team van, thanks to a generous donation, thereby expanding our fleet of rescue vehicles and enhancing our ability to deploy to the aid of animals requiring water rescue. The build-out of the van will continue into 2024, ensuring it has the needed equipment and capabilities to support the Technical Water Rescue Team. With the ever-changing risk from climate change, the potential for flooding increases here in Washington. WASART strives to be prepared to meet this challenge through response preparedness.

In addition, we held a very successful online fundraiser in March of 2023 with the funds dedicated for rescue gear at our new I-90 gear location in North Bend, at the base of the Cascade mountains. The new gear includes a rescue litter, wheel, radios, ropes, dog first aid kit, and technical rigging equipment which allows us to quickly deploy to help injured dogs on the busy trail systems along the I-90 corridor.

We are incredibly grateful for the public support and donations that made both of these significant acquisitions possible.

Supporting our communities through outreach and education is important to us and we continue to look for ways to interact in person. WASART Outreach volunteers were on hand at many events in 2023 including the Tacoma Equine Horse Health Expo, City of Fife Harvest Festival Emergency Preparedness Fair, and dog first aid class to answer questions and share helpful tips on how to best be prepared as animal owners.

As a premier animal rescue organization, our team members have a strong reputation in the rescue community for their intensive training and knowledge base. In addition to our own in-house training, we bring in highly qualified outside instructors to keep our team members current in techniques. In 2023, qualified Operators within the Technical Rescue Team participated in a Rigging for Rescue Course held at several locations in Washington. The Technical Water Rescue Team sharpened skills while attending the Swiftwater Safety Institute’s NFPA Class. We invest in our member’s education as they invest in us with their time and skills.

Our mission statement of “Helping Animals and Their Owners in Times of Emergency.” is not just words on a piece of paper, but our guiding star. Every decision as an organization is made with this purpose in mind.

I am incredibly proud of this organization and its team of volunteers. We are ready to respond to the call for help from animal owners 24/7 and there is never a charge for our rescues.

Thank you for your continued support of our organization and mission.

In gratitude,

Lynn Snow  
President



### **WASART's vision:**

To be the premier animal disaster response organization throughout the Northwest.

- Recognized as a model for other animal response organizations
- Member of the Governor's Readiness Council
- State accreditation/recognition/appointment







**RESPECT**

**CREDIBILITY**

**HONESTY**

**ACCESSIBILITY**

**ETHICS**

## Values

### Mission statement

Helping Animals and Their Owners in Emergencies

### Integrity

We do what we say we can do. Above reproach as well as morally and legally responsible for our actions and decisions.

### Education

Developing and sharing knowledge and technical expertise. Utilizing skills and available resources to inform and train members and the broader community.

### Professionalism

Excellence in reputation and delivery.

### Teamwork

Collaborative skills, experience and training, and willingness to work with each other and other organizations. This allows us to expand our capabilities. Respectful collaboration to efficiently achieve our goals.

### Volunteerism

Personal commitment to participate; to participate to the level we can. We are committed and we believe in our Higher Purpose.



# 2023 at a Glance



17

Deployments



144

Members



28,842

Miles Traveled



6,374

Volunteer Hours

\$239,837

Value of Volunteer's Hours\*



\*Value of non-professional volunteers' hours (at WA rate of \$37.63/hr. 2022 rates, most recent available. Source: independentsector.org)





# Board of Directors



Josette Holden

**President**

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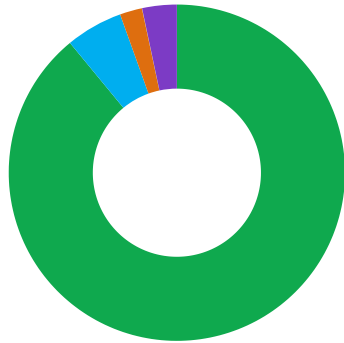




## Balance

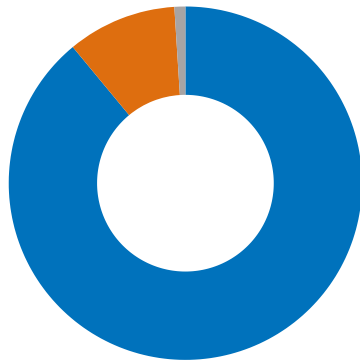
| Assets & Liabilities | 2022             | 2023             |
|----------------------|------------------|------------------|
| Total Assets         | \$309,576        | \$309,566        |
| Total Liabilities    | \$419            | \$1,420          |
| <b>Net Assets</b>    | <b>\$309,157</b> | <b>\$308,146</b> |

## Income



| Fundraising and Income           | Amount          | Percent     |
|----------------------------------|-----------------|-------------|
| Contributions, gifts, and grants | \$80,571        | 89.0%       |
| Program services revenue         | \$4,968         | 5.49%       |
| Investment income                | \$9,938         | 2.14%       |
| Sale of an asset                 | \$3,000         | 3.32%       |
| Promotions & merchandise         | \$19            | 0.02%       |
| <b>Total</b>                     | <b>\$90,496</b> | <b>100%</b> |

## Expenses



| Summary of Expenses           | Amount          | Percent     |
|-------------------------------|-----------------|-------------|
| PProgram related expenses     | \$83,338        | 89.36%      |
| Management & general expenses | \$8,591         | 9.21%       |
| Fundraising expenses          | \$412           | 1.43%       |
| <b>Total</b>                  | <b>\$82,293</b> | <b>100%</b> |







## Serving Our Communities

Emergency preparedness and education are a core part of WASART's mission. We continued our commitment to serving our communities in 2023. With more in-person events post-Covid, we welcomed these opportunities for WASART to share knowledge and skills and increase our involvement within the community. WASART volunteers staffed an outreach booth at the Tacoma Equine Horse Health Expo in Tacoma. We were at the City of Fife Harvest Festival and participated in the emergency preparedness section.

Outreach volunteers and the Technical Water Rescue Team (TWRT) were on hand at the Kenmore Waterfront Park Ribbon Cutting Ceremony, with the TWRT giving a well-received water rescue demonstration to the public. Outreach volunteers partnered with the Technical Rescue Team at a dog first aid training held at Marymoor Park, answering questions and demonstrating the rescue litter. In addition, we held two WASART Open Houses at the King County Office of Emergency Management. We look forward to more opportunities to serve our communities in 2024.





## Keeping Animals and Owners Safe

Emergency response is the main type of situation WASART is called for. Some of the rescues we see are dogs over cliffs and horses over embankments or stuck in mud. It's not just animals we are saving. By providing a way to retrieve an animal that is in a location that could harm a well-meaning owner, we save owners as well. We also set up and run emergency animal shelters in disasters, like wildfires, and provide cooling shelters in extreme heat events so owners can take care of themselves. In fact, nearly all the photos in this report come from emergency responses we have completed this year.









## Education

### Knowledge, Training, Preparedness

We have a deep commitment to training our volunteer members to respond to emergency animal situations, both individual animal emergencies and wide-scale disasters. We only deploy volunteer members who are trained for the situation to which they are being deployed. We emphasize hands-on training with live animals when possible for real world experience as well as bring instructors who are experienced in a wide range of emergency situations

In 2023, we had two Base and Operations Support Trainings, the class needed to deploy with WASART. We also held Emergency Animal Shelter training in combination with our Annual Exercise. During this event, volunteers learned about animal handling and behavior, as well as how to set up and run an emergency animal shelter. At our Transport Training class, attendees learned how to drive all of the WASART vehicles and trailers as well as how to support teams on the ground during deployments. The Technical Rescue Team held a dog paw wrapping and first aid training at Marymoor Park, open to all WASART volunteers.





The Technical Water Rescue Team participated in the Swiftwater Safety Institute's NFPA Class. This was a multi-day class where team members learned technical water and rope rescue skills. The Technical Rescue Team's qualified Operators added to their knowledge base during an intensive Rigging for Rescue course, held over 5 days.

We also held an Introduction to Rigging Basics class, open to other SAR organization members and the public, where attendees learned rope and rigging terminology and fundamentals.

Additionally, our Technical Rescue Team and Technical Water Rescue Team hold monthly trainings to hone their skills and learn new techniques.









## Strengthening Partnerships

We are fortunate to work alongside some of the best organizations in search and rescue and animal response. In 2023, we were assisted by King County Explorer Search and Rescue, King County 4x4 Search and Rescue, and Seattle Mountain Rescue. Notable rescues involving KCSARA and WASART cooperation involved Dakota, a horse who fell through a bridge, and several dog packout rescues including Kahu and Muffin. These rescues would not have been possible without their selfless and dedicated assistance. In addition to cooperating SAR organizations, we work alongside animal control, police, fire departments, and local veterinarians around Washington.

In 2023, several WASART members assisted the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA) on 7-day rotations at the ASPCA's Cruelty Recovery Center in Ohio. These volunteer rotations not only help the ASPCA care for the animals, but also give our members the opportunity to learn valuable skills and gain experience in animal sheltering that can be utilized here in Washington.

We greatly value the relationships we have built with these fine organizations and look forward to growing these partnerships in the future.







**WASART**  
Washington State  
Animal Response Team





## Dakota

On the evening of August 12th, we received a call about a horse named Dakota that had fallen through a wooden bridge on the Middle Fork trail. WASART deployed in partnership with King County Explorer Search and Rescue. The KCSAR Rapid Alpine Deployment Team was first on scene followed by responders from King County Explorer Search and Rescue (KCESAR) and WASART. The initial responders hiked the half mile up trail to Dakota and her owners to assess the situation. Our command checkpoint was the Middle Fork trailhead parking lot. After coming up with a preliminary plan, heavy gear was packed and hauled up the trail including rope bags, rigging equipment, glide, head protector, and Becker bar and slings.

Initial assessment of Dakota showed that her right hind limb was completely through a hole near the side of the bridge up to the level of her right pelvic bone. Her left hind limb was on the bridge deck, splayed laterally. She was laying

across the bridge with her front hooves hooked over the other edge of the bridge. Her head and neck were resting on one of the bridge rails. There was a piece of wood missing along the edge of the bridge decking, creating a notch that Dakota would intermittently get her left hind leg caught in. She was alert, but clearly distressed, and would struggle to raise her front end up every 10 minutes or so. She was drinking water from her owner's hand.

One of our first concerns was the additional rot in the wood surrounding the primary hole. To provide extra security in case the other boards started to fail, we passed webbing beneath those boards on the bridge and secured them to the top of a bridge post on each side.

A highline, anchored approximately 40 feet up trees, was set up over the bridge to provide the best high-directional for lifting Dakota out of the hole. The highline was redirected to a tensioning haul system.







A tagline was attached to a Kootenay pulley from the “down trail” end of the bridge, the direction we needed to move Dakota. Another haul system was set up in line with Dakota’s hind end and anchored to a tree beyond the opposite end of the bridge, allowing us to pull her hind limb out of the hole as soon as she was lifted up by the highline.

There was no way to get the Becker slings beneath her (she was too deep into the hole), but we were able to pass a 4-inch wide webbing strap under her front end and down to her abdominal region. This was secured into a long loop around her abdomen, and eventually attached to both the highline and the hind end haul system.









When the owner's veterinarian arrived on scene the systems were ready to go. Dakota was assessed and then sedated for the move and raise. Everyone took to their stations and we began.

We first raised Dakota about 6-12 inches using the Kootenay pulley on the highline. We then used the hind end haul system to move her out of the hole and covered the hole with a slip sheet before laying her back down on the deck. We raised her a second time and placed the Becker slings beneath her front and hind ends and secured them to the Becker bar attached to the Kootenay pulley on the highline. We then placed the glide beneath her. The highline tagline was attached to the front of the glide and was used to pull the glide to the end of the bridge, just before the 90-degree turn onto

the trail at the end of the bridge.

Once there we waited for the sedative to wear off which took approximately 20 minutes. Using the highline and Becker slings, we raised Dakota to her feet and removed the glide. We slowly eased the sling support as she showed the ability to support her own weight. Dakota eventually walked forward a couple steps and was able to place and support her limbs. We then released the Becker straps from her. Dakota's owners and veterinarian walked her back to the parking lot where she was loaded into their trailer.

The rigging systems were deconstructed and members were sent downhill once they had a full load of gear to carry.





KCSARA and WASART debriefed, packed up, and headed home.

We are incredibly thankful for the assistance of the King County Explorer Search and Rescue rigging team and field members for their professionalism, skill, and willingness to work into the early morning hours to help. They were an invaluable part of this

advanced large animal technical rescue. In total, 33 responders between WASART and KCSARA contributed to the successful outcome. A big thank you also to Dr. Dana Westerman and her team!

We wish Dakota a full recovery and many happy trails in her future.







### Kahu

On Sunday July 23rd, we received a call about an American Bulldog Cane Corso mix named Kahu who was on the new Mailbox trail and was unable to make it back to the trailhead.

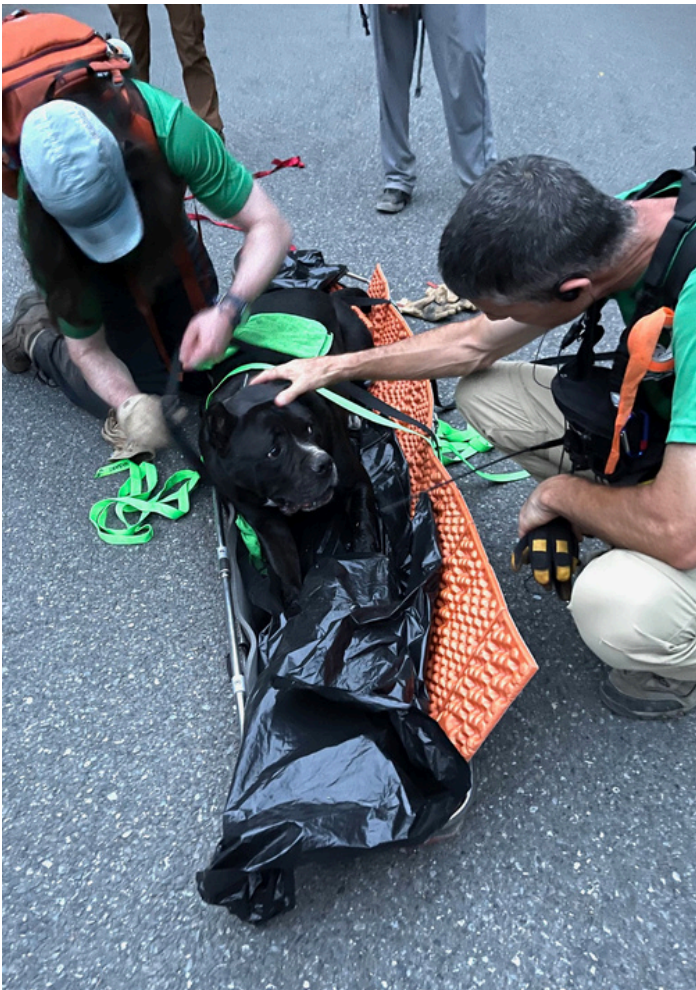
WASART responded in partnership with King County Search and Rescue Association. King County Search and Rescue's Rapid Alpine Deployment (Team 1) team was first on site and was able to send a hasty team up trail to the dog and owner. Soon after, Team 2 with members of WASART and ESAR were also on location with the dog. Kahu had paw damage including a torn paw pad. After bandaging the paw and further evaluation, it was evident that he was too fatigued to continue down the trail on his own. During that time, Team 3 arrived carrying the rescue litter which was assembled for his ride down.

Kahu was carefully packaged and secured into the litter. WASART and ESAR members worked together to carry the litter the 2.7 miles back down to the trailhead. Moving a litter down a trail is hard physical work and arms get tired. Having lots of responders available to switch out and rotate with keeps the litter moving efficiently down trail.

Once back at the trailhead, we placed him in the owner's car and they headed to the emergency vet for further care. The team debriefed, packed up, and headed home.

A huge thank you to King County Explorer Search and Rescue and King County 4x4 for their assistance. We are fortunate to work alongside some of the best search and rescue organizations









## Summer

On June 13th we received a call for assistance with a 30-year-old female Mustang horse named Summer. She laid down in her stall during the night and was unable to get up on her own. Her owner stated she had arthritis in her hind end but was an otherwise healthy horse. A veterinarian was on site to evaluate and tend to Summer. While it is common for horses to lay down, being down for extended periods can be dangerous for them.

The technical rescue team arrived on scene with our equipment truck. We evaluated the barn environment and made a plan for the horse raise.

We assembled the tripod a short distance outside the barn and set up our haul lines

and redirects. Once the equipment was set and the team was ready, the veterinarian sedated Summer for the move and raise.

We cushioned and packaged Summer on the glide for her safety during the move and lift. We attached the Becker sling to her so we could go directly to the lift once outside. Using a redirect anchor and haul line, we moved her from the stall to the main hall of the barn. Once there, the glide was attached to a small tractor and Summer was slowly moved outside the barn and under the nearby tripod. We then attached the spreader bar to the Becker sling and removed the glide. When everything was ready and safety checked, we raised her to a standing position using a second haul line attached to the spreader bar of the tripod.



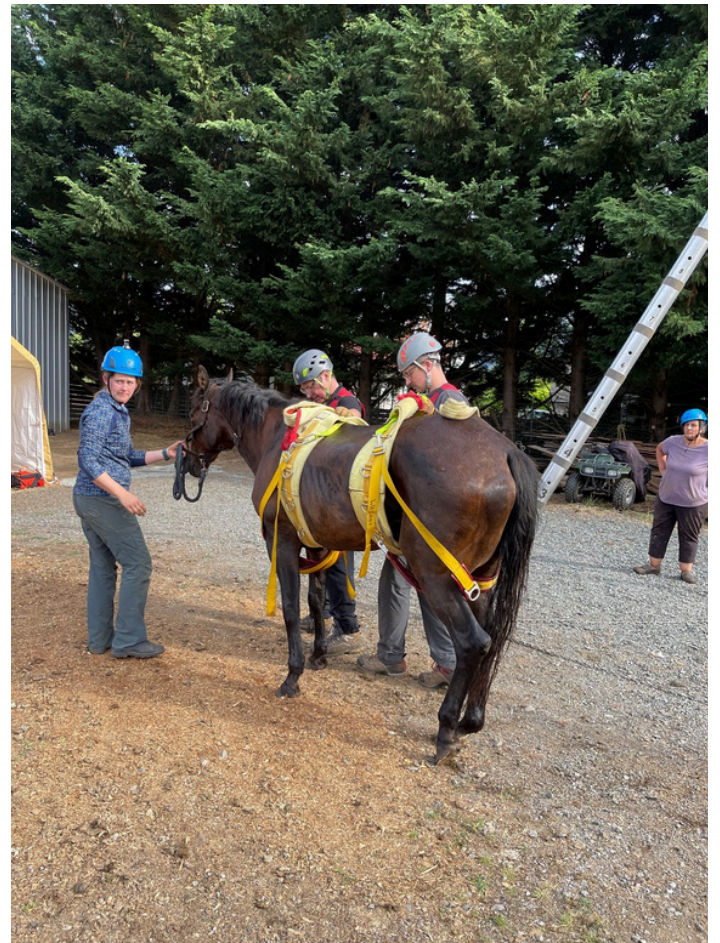
We waited for some of the sedation to wear off to see if she could support her own weight. After about 30 minutes, she was able to bear weight on all four legs. Once the veterinarian determined Summer was able to fully support herself and the sedation had worn off, we released her from the tripod. She was walked out to the field by the

veterinarian, her owner, and a few WASART members. In the field, Summer was walking around and eating grass.

The team then packed up, debriefed, and headed home. We are glad to have been able to assist Summer and her owner on this day.













# Donors

Did we get it wrong?

We value your contribution and it's our goal to make sure everyone is correctly represented. If we missed your name or misspelled it, please let us know at [fundraising@wasart.org](mailto:fundraising@wasart.org) and we'll issue a revision.

## In Honor Of

**Gerry** — Anonymous  
**Julie Shipman** — Bourton, Lynn  
**Lenore Marentette** — Cayford, Vanessa  
**...of the Heroes who Serve and Save** — Heath, Veronica  
**Heartbreaks** — Leet, Lois  
**Deborah Cromheim** — NFG  
**Kelly Thomas** — Olarti, Kristie  
**Leo Notenboom** — Taylor, Linda  
**Michaela Eaves** — Tyler Technologies, Seattle, WA  
**Yoshi the Fjord** — Wyatt, Jennifer

## In Memory Of

**Peach Pooh Bear** — Beauchamp, Steven  
**Mateo** — Emery, Dylan  
**Curt Rhodes, Jane Brown, and Barry Rhodes** — Gregory, Janet  
**Bob Anderson** — McDermott, Keven  
**Jim Harman** — Okamoto, Niko Technologies, Seattle, WA  
**Kathy Kube** — WA State Assoc of Veterinary Technicians

## Thoroughbred (\$10,000+)

Jasper Family Giving

## Holstein (\$5,000 - \$9,999)

Bill Leander Animal Trust Fund  
 Defreece, Dawn and DJ  
 Enumclaw Expo Center

## Alpaca (\$1,000 - \$4,999)

Anderson, Leanna  
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 Moss, Sandra  
 Mulholland, Diane  
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 Paypal Giving Fund  
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## Labrador (\$500 - \$999)

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 Breazeale, Sona  
 Clark, Jenifer  
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 Foothills Veterinary Hospital  
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 Hewlett Packard Enterprise Foundation  
 Hewlett Packard Enterprise Foundation  
 Jasper, John & Jennifer Charitable Fund  
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 Maurer, Linda  
 Palmroth, Karen & Phil  
 Ruth's Dog Walking  
 Wannamaker, Joy and Ouderkirk, John  
 Wilson, Vicki

\*Some corporations or employers allow donations from users or employees. The smaller donations from multiple individuals are pooled and gifted under the names of the larger entity. The names of the individuals are removed from the donation what it is received, so unfortunately we can't thank the individuals themselves, but we are grateful none the less.



## **Merino (\$301 - \$499)**

Adams, Barbara  
Daigle, Ann  
Nelson, Shane  
Wigley, D.D.

## **Manx (\$0 - \$300)**

424th Trail Enthusiasts  
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Atchison, Shannon  
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Baker, Allyson  
Benson, Susan  
Berg, Corinne  
Blank, Catherine  
Boekenooen, Amanda  
Boni, Traci  
Bonin, Claire  
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Fulton, Julie  
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Gagnon, Carrie Lee  
Gallion, Harry & Martha  
Gerdes, Cynthia  
Gibson, Charrie  
Gillette, Greta  
Glasco, Kim  
Goltz, Jennifer  
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Gorans Gill, Gretchen  
Gossett, Robin  
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Huber, Brenda  
Hud, Colette  
Hung, Sherry  
Hunter, Mitzi  
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Jones, Jennifer  
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Myers-Newell, Willow  
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 Toth, David  
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 Dolores Unknown  
 Vandermay, Lisa  
 Ver, Daniel  
 Vogel, William (Bill)  
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 Weiner, Steve  
 Wharton, Stacy  
 Wilcox, Janey  
 Williams, Rachel  
 Zajackowski, Janine  
 Zen, Lynn & Frank









