

# Napa Valley *Register*

## Lisa Adams Walter: Furry, Feathered Friends: A team efforts saves kittens after the Glass Fire

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LISA ADAMS WALTER

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Queenie and Winifred are two brave, feline survivors of the recent Glass Fire. Fortunately for them, in Napa County, a team of first-responders for animals was in place to help when disasters strike.

The Mund family of Deer Park were unable to catch their two cats when they had fled for their own lives as the fire rapidly approached their home.

When the family returned to assess the devastating damage, they found Winifred, who unable to walk or meow due to burns. Soon after, Cal Fire firefighters rescued Queenie, who was pinned beneath a tree and also suffering from life-threatening wounds and burns.

The cats, both with badly burned paws, were transported to an emergency veterinary care hospital, which was then outside of the active fire and evacuation zones.

Dr. Jeff Smith of Middletown Animal Hospital in Lake County cared for the burn victims, with Jameson Humane supporting the effort by covering the cost of their care.

When Monica and David Stevens founded the non-profit, no-kill, animal sanctuary Jameson Humane in 2014, widely devastating wildfires were not regular occurrences in Northern California wine country.

According to Cal Fire, wildfires are a natural part of California's landscape, yet now the fire season in our state and across the West is beginning earlier and lasting much longer. Climate change is considered to be a factor that continues to propel the trend.

Recent wildfires, sparked by both natural and manmade events, have been devastating for humans and animals alike. Both human and animal lives have been lost, along with homes, barns, pastures, and business structures, as well as thousands of acres of wildlife habitat that have been damaged, altered or destroyed.

Jameson Humane has evolved along with the recent, frightening fire trend. With the initial goal of improving animal welfare through collaboration, Jameson Humane has listened closely to local communities to address the needs of both animals and their human guardians.

There are many animal welfare organizations that assist with the process during a natural disaster, addressing needs such as evacuation, short-term boarding, reunions with owners, and critical medical care.

After the wine country fires in 2017, Monica Stevens said that many animal agencies and organizations came together to figure out what each group was great at executing.

Stevens explained the action-driven organizational chart: “Napa Community Animal Response Team (Napa CART) is at the top, they get activated by the Napa County Office of Emergency Services. Napa CART acts in many ways. They activate the Napa County Animal Shelter to be prepared to take in companion animals such as dogs, cats, birds, and rabbits.”

“Napa County loves their animals,” Stevens continued, explaining that Napa CART is set up to accept large and farm animals such as emus, horses, llamas, alpacas, goats, sheep, cows, pigs, and chickens.

Most of these larger animals are temporarily housed at the Napa Horsemen’s Association. “It is set up beautifully there for large animals,” said Stevens, who also reports that Napa CART does all of the organizational and operational tasks to take care of humans and animals in need. “They have a 24/7 hotline, where they run point and tell people where to go.”

At this point, Jameson Humane is poised to help. “We jump in and can help with supplies, medical needs, and other things. Collaboration with other organizations makes us a really great team. We are all doing it for the animals with Napa CART at the high level, and Jameson Humane offering financial support as well as boots on the ground.”

The Glass Fire also created an urgent, mandatory evacuation for St. Helena’s We Care Animal Rescue, another no-kill refuge that has been focused upon saving cats and dogs since 1982.

“We Care’s executive director made a great choice, and contacted us, stating that they needed help. We called Napa CART and sent up three trailers, along with Jameson Humane’s van and SUV.”

Stevens credits the We Care staff as managing the hard part, getting all of the cats, 90 in total, into crates and temporarily relocating them to Napa Valley College.

“Jameson Humane brought in big crates, blankets, and sheets, while We Care cared for the cats for ten days.” When evacuation orders were lifted, We Care called back and the same team of Napa CART and Jameson Humane got all of the cats delivered from Napa Valley College back to the refuge in St. Helena.

Queenie and Winifred are now thriving after their surgery, and well into a long recovery, as frequent bandage changes are required for burn patients. They received the gift of survival, while the Mund family, received the gift of a glimmer of hope. As well as one less thing to worry about, while beginning the process of rebuilding and healing.


“The kitties are doing great,” reports Stevens, “We look for a solution, it was a collaborative effort. My heart bleeds for all of these animals.”

Stevens added that Sonoma Community Animal Response Team is also part of the local disaster response effort, as wine country is really one region with nearby counties leaning on and supporting each other.

“Three years ago no one was ready for these fires, no one was paying attention.,” Stevens recalls. “Now we meet every quarter, there is a lot to it. The main thing is that just like the wine industry, the animal community is very relationship-focused. We have a very high-functioning leadership team. I am proud that Jameson Humane is part of it, we all work together and know what we do best. We stay out of each other’s way. It really is a triangle of love. We are all talking to each other. At the end of the day, it is wine country, and we put our best foot forward not only for the public but for the animals.”

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Watch now: What happens to animals during wildfires?

 [What happens to animals during wildfires?](#)

Submit questions, topics and ideas for future pet columns to Lisa Adams Walter at [lisa@adamswalter.com](mailto:lisa@adamswalter.com).