

RESCUINGAnimals
FROM
DISASTERS

SAVING ANIMALS FROM **FIRES**



by Stephen Person

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Mountains on Fire

It was 3:00 in the morning on October 27, 2003—but Nancy Baar did not dare go to sleep. She looked up at the mountains rising east of her home near San Diego, California. A huge **wildfire** lit up the night. Bright orange flames danced and leaped down the slopes, moving closer and closer to her home.

On October 27, 2003, people in San Diego looked up to see the mountains on fire.

Suddenly, a police car skidded to a stop in front of her house. An officer told her that she had ten minutes to pack everything up and go. Nancy had to leave quickly, but it wouldn't be easy. Her **property** was home to dogs, a horse, a pig, and 71 birds! How could she move all those animals to safety?



This picture shows the Cedar Fire nearing homes in San Diego, California.

The huge wildfire burning near Nancy's home became known as the Cedar Fire. It began on October 25 and burned until November 4. One of the deadliest wildfires in the history of California, it destroyed about 2,800 buildings.

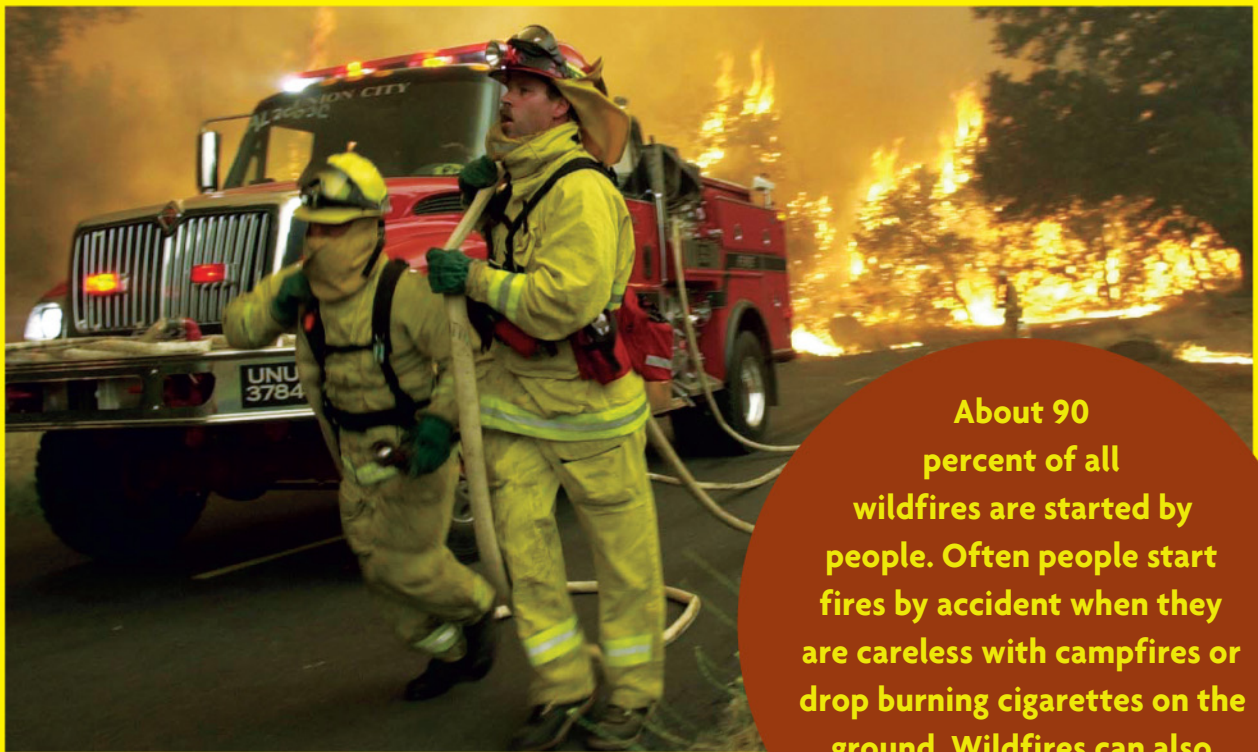
A Late-Night Rescue

Nancy rushed to save the animals around her home. Luckily, she had already loaded her dogs and horse into a van when she saw the flames getting close to her house. A police officer lifted her pig into the back of his patrol car. Yet Nancy still needed to save her birds. She had time to grab about 30 of them—but was forced to leave more than 40 others behind. The birds were not forgotten, though.



Horses near the Cedar Fire were loaded into horse trailers and carried to a safe location.

The police officer made a phone call to Darrell Hanson, who worked at a nearby **animal shelter**. Darrell leaped out of bed and raced over in his truck to Nancy's property. He ran from cage to cage, putting birds into empty dog and cat carrying crates. "They squawked and put up a fuss," he said, but there was little time to waste. With giant flames raging less than a quarter of a mile (.4 km) away, Darrell and the birds barely escaped the spreading fire. He brought the rescued birds to people who would keep them until they could be **reunited** with Nancy.



About 90 percent of all wildfires are started by people. Often people start fires by accident when they are careless with campfires or drop burning cigarettes on the ground. Wildfires can also be caused by lightning strikes.

Firefighters and animal rescuers raced to save farm animals and pets from the blaze.

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Stephen Person has written many children's books about history, science, and the environment. He lives with his family in Saratoga Springs, New York.

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SAVING ANIMALS FROM **FIRES**

When disaster strikes, people aren't the only ones in danger. In October 2003, a huge wildfire broke out near San Diego, California. Homeowners had no choice but to leave quickly. Often, that meant having to leave dogs, cats, horses, and birds behind. Would anyone come to the animals' rescue?

Look inside to meet the everyday heroes who have found ways to save animals from wildfires in California and many other parts of the world. These brave men and women have managed to rescue not only pets and farm animals, but also wild animals such as koalas, kangaroos, and orangutans—sometimes even risking their own lives as they rushed in to help.

**SAVING ANIMALS AFTER
EARTHQUAKES**

**SAVING ANIMALS FROM
FIRES**

**SAVING ANIMALS AFTER
FLOODS**

**SAVING ANIMALS FROM
HURRICANES**

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