

NEIGHBORHOOD ANIMAL RESCUE NETWORK CENTRAL BROOKLYN CHAPTER (NARN-CB)

What is NARN?

NARN is a unique kind of rescue group. We are not a traditional, public-facing organization. Rather, we are a NETWORK made up of animal rescuers living in a specific geographic area. The Central Brooklyn Chapter encompasses Bed Stuy/Ocean Hill and Crown Heights, with a few members in Bushwick and elsewhere. Some members are independent rescuers; others are affiliated with rescue groups.

What is the purpose of NARN?

The idea behind NARN is that rescue is, or should be, a community endeavor. When we pool our resources and work together, we can get more done, more efficiently, than when we work in separate silos. Some of us have traps, or cars, or recovery space, or time, or social media skills, but very few of us have *all* of those pieces. Additionally, neighborhood specificity enables us to address our own particular problems, utilize the strengths of our particular communities, and develop relationships with our neighbors that promote animal welfare. We also find that working together (and sometimes having a beverage together!) helps us cope with the tremendous stress that often comes with animal rescue.

Here are some of NARN's primary goals:

- Provide an organized, expedient means for sharing advice and information related to TNR (Trap, Neuter, Return), rescue, community cat care, veterinary issues, etc.
- Facilitate the sharing of resources such as traps and cars, spay/neuter appointments, as well as holding, recovery, and foster space.
- Provide a platform for group TNR projects.
- Collaborate around fostering and adoption through shared forms, advertising, and helping each other make good matches.
- Hold space for rescuers to find support around the many emotional challenges that are inherent in rescue work.
- Give people who are new to rescue or not sure how to get involved a place to plug in, share whatever time and/or resources they have, and gain experience through collaboration with more seasoned rescuers.

How do you organize yourselves and get work done?

We use SLACK, a cloud-based organizing tool, for the bulk of our work and communication. Slack keeps our work organized and efficient by allowing us to have different “channels” for individual projects and topics. We have channels for trap sharing, transportation, clinic spots, fostering, fundraising, and advice, among other topics. And we can directly message and call each other through Slack, individually or in groups.

We also use Google Drive for storage and sharing of documents, such as spreadsheets related to mass spay/neuter projects, and flyers for community posting.

We realize that Slack is not for everyone, either because the technology is challenging for them or because it sends frequent notifications that can be intrusive. Some people may not be able to be part of NARN-CB because of these barriers. But we find that the benefits of Slack outweigh the negatives. Slack is fairly intuitive and user friendly, free to use, and works on both mobile devices as well as computers. And we are 100% available to help you get set up and work through any issues with it.

Who is in the group, and how do you make sure the participants are actually rescuers?

We prefer that members be TNR certified, but membership is open to people who have not yet obtained certification, e.g. if they are planning to get it, if they are partnered with someone else who is certified, or if they actively help the organization in other ways, for example by driving.

For the Central Brooklyn Chapter (currently the first and only chapter), members must live or work in Bed Stuy, Ocean Hill, or Crown Heights, or be doing animal rescue work here. For the safety of the animals we work with, even if you are certified, new members must be known to an existing member of the group. People new to the area and/or unknown to this rescue community are eligible to join if they provide an appropriate reference, e.g. from a rescue group, shelter, or veterinarian.

If you live in another geographic area and are interested in starting a local chapter, you are welcome to get in touch with us.

Are you a nonprofit? Can people donate to NARN?

NARN operates on a different model than traditional nonprofits. Nonprofit rescue groups pay their bills from a central pool of funds. They usually solicit donations from the public to cover those bills. Membership organizations also pay their bills from a central fund but typically obtain their funds from membership dues.

We are more like a mutual aid group or collective. Our rescuer members pay their own bills. We can and do support each other with the financial burdens of rescue, sometimes by making small donations ourselves and often by boosting each other's fundraisers. So we are not able to accept financial donations, but we do happily accept donations of supplies from the public, which we distribute as fairly as possible. Our focus, however, is mutual support and networking, and we do that exceptionally well!

Something else to know about us:

The animal welfare field at both the professional and volunteer levels is disproportionately white, and NARN's make up reflects that. Both institutional and interpersonal bias help perpetuate that disparity. Additionally, many of the problems that we as rescuers attempt to address have their roots in larger, systemic issues including a critical lack of affordable veterinary care, pet-friendly housing & shelters, and mental health care.

While we are a network and not an organization per se, NARN does have some common standards for discourse and practice. We attempt to be inclusive, equitable, and intersectional in our rescue work. We do not tolerate racism, homophobia, transphobia, sexism, ableism, fatphobia, ageism, or other forms of oppression and entitled behavior in public conversation, engagement with community, or within our own ranks. We ask our members to practice respectful dialogue at all times, say something if they see something, and be open to "calling in" regarding language and practices. We support and encourage work that shifts the balance toward equity and justice.

If you are interested in joining NARN-CB, [please fill out our membership form!](#)