



Field Notes

LOVE IN ACTION: PREPAREDNESS, SERVICE, AND COMMUNITY CARE

AT A GLANCE

- CERC members across California honored Dr. King's legacy through **acts of service**
- Meet Hannibal, Nova, Dexter, and Zoey—our featured **CERC pets** showing how love and readiness go hand in paw
- **Reflections** from the Palisades and Altadena wildfire commemorations

Editor's Note



This month's note from the heart

This February, we're leading with love in every plan, pawprint, and act of service. When we serve, we share a kind of love that gives back twice: it lifts others, and it fills us with joy. As Kahlil Gibran wrote, *"I slept and I dreamed that life is all joy. I woke and I saw that life is all service. I served and I saw that service is joy."* Here's to finding both love and joy in the everyday moments that keep our homes and hearts prepared.

- Briana

Strength in Service



Honoring Dr. King's call to serve through local acts of care

Across California, CERC members celebrated Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s legacy through acts of service that united communities.

In San Diego, members joined California Climate Action Corps volunteers for a park cleanup, spreading mulch and beautifying the area. "It felt gratifying to help," Miguel said. Hamse added, "I enjoyed getting to know my fellow corps members—it made the work more fun."

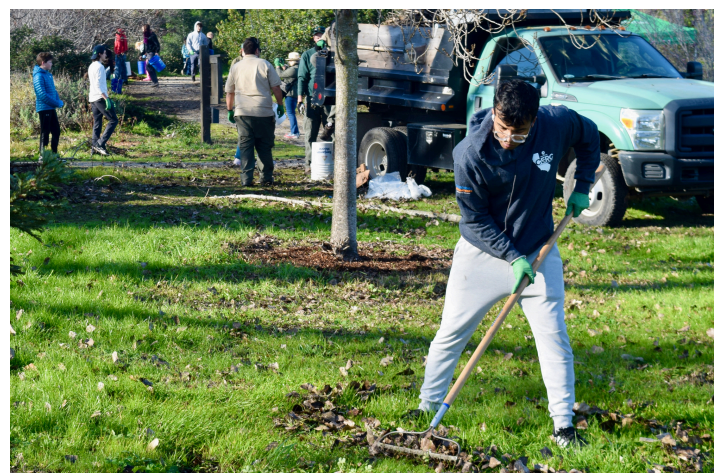
In Los Angeles, the team partnered with Leadership Long Beach for a garden cleanup at a YMCA Early Childhood Center. Together, they trimmed hedges, cleared weeds, and refreshed the soil. “The team really bonded,” Maria shared. “I hope we can have more events like this where we can all come together.”



Further north in Fresno, Zander and his team teamed up with Beautify Fresno to clean up the downtown area. “This was our first regional day of service,” he said. “It was amazing to see us come together as one team, doing something small that made a big difference.”



In the Bay Area, members worked alongside local volunteers to restore Martin Luther King Jr. Regional Shoreline, helping promote urban biodiversity while connecting with new faces. The team filled two 20-yard dumpsters with more than 8,000 pounds of debris.



Though spread across miles, every CERC region shared the same spirit: serving with purpose, building connections, and living out Dr. King's message of unity through action. Together we did more than volunteer, we strengthened the bonds that make CERC one community, one team, one collective impact.

Paws for Preparedness

Practical tips + adorable examples from our community's most prepared pet parents

Pets are our true Valentines, and they're counting on us when emergencies happen. This month, we're sharing simple ways CERC members show their love by keeping their animals safe and ready, plus photos of some very photogenic household companions. Use these tips to make sure your furry, feathered, and scaled sweethearts are part of your preparedness plan.

How CERC Pets Are Getting Ready



Hannibal the cat

Hannibal proves that even the most dignified felines appreciate a solid escape plan. His human keeps his suitcase-style rolling carrier packed with a full go-bag: compact food and water dishes, seven days' worth of wet and dry food, a small bag of catnip to ease anxiety, pee pads for the carrier, and his favorite toy so he feels at home on the move. They also keep his vaccination and medical records (including his most recent FIV test), adoption papers with microchip number, and a labeled collar plus separate harness and leash all together, so if they ever have to leave quickly, everything Hannibal needs is in one place and ready to roll.



Nova the guinea pig

Nova may be tiny, but her snack-loving personality is larger than life: she squeaks the second the fridge door opens because she's sure treats are on the way. Her emergency kit includes a secure carrier and a pet go-bag with extra hay and water so she can stay safe and comfortable if her family ever needs to leave home quickly.



Dexter and Zoey the dogs

Dexter and Zoey were adopted from the Humane Society and quickly claimed their forever family's hearts (and couch space). Both pups are microchipped, and their humans keep a grab-and-go travel bag with collapsible bowls, extra food, and treats so these adventurers are always ready for an unexpected evacuation.

Three Things You Can Do This Month

1. Make a pet go-bag. Include several days of food and water, a bowl, any medications, a copy of vaccination/medical records, and a leash or secure carrier.

2. Add pets to your evacuation plan. Decide who is responsible for which animal, where the carriers live, and which pet-friendly locations (friends, shelters, or hotels) you could go to if you had to leave home.

3. Prep ID and documentation. Check collars and tags, confirm your microchip info is current if applicable, and save a photo of you with each pet on your phone and in your go-bag to help with reunification.

No pets at home? Consider asking an elderly neighbor or busy family what support they might need to include their animals in their emergency plan.

Disasters affect entire households, and that includes animals. Whether you share your space with a cat, dog, guinea pig, gecko, or no pets at all, thinking about pets in preparedness plans helps us build more proactive communities.

Lighting the Way Forward



Commemorating loss and celebrating the strength that grew in its wake



On January 7, neighbors, families, and community partners came together in Pacific Palisades and Altadena to honor those affected by the Eaton and Palisades Wildfires. The gatherings created space for people to remember, grieve, and find strength together as a community.

Jack shared that it felt especially meaningful to have an open space where everyone was invited to take part in rituals of remembrance together, rather than alone. He noticed people from “all walks” of experience with the fires: those directly impacted, those who supported from afar, and those still processing what happened standing side by side. His hope was that participants left with a sense of peace, knowing “their community has their back.”

Over the course of the day, the tone gently shifted from remembrance into celebration. Seeing the communities “come alive” again gave Maria hope that, no matter what lies ahead, people will come together to rebuild what was lost and make it stronger. She shared that these moments also help residents become more aware of who is caring for the community and what resources exist when emergencies occur.

Pamela reflected on how honored GEM felt to help organize and participate in the Palisades commemoration. The ceremony began by honoring families and their loved ones, including the presentation of American flags as a gesture of remembrance and respect. A powerful procession followed, as families walked toward the wildfire-affected area carrying photos of those they lost, creating a moving moment of shared support. Pamela described this scene as a profound expression of community solidarity and care.

Across both Palisades and Altadena, the commemorations were a reminder that

remembrance and resilience go hand in hand. By coming together in reflection and in celebration, our communities are ensuring that the lives affected by these wildfires are never forgotten and that we continue building a safer, more connected future side by side.

Gratitude Corner



- Our devoted pet parents who include their furry family members in their emergency plans
- All our members refreshing go-bags, updating supply kits, and checking in on friends this storm season
- The extra daylight returning slowly but surely

IN CASE YOU MISSED IT

- For **questions, feedback, article ideas or story contributions**, click the green button above or email me and we'll be in touch