

# UC Davis vets rescue family's cow from mine shaft after fall

By ELLEN GARRISON  
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Molly the cow was rescued from almost certain death at the bottom of a Tuttle town mine shaft by UC Davis veterinarians on Jan. 22.

Her owner, Antoinette Nichols, went looking for the family pet Jan. 19 after Molly didn't return to her corral that day. Nichols spotted her in a 30-foot hole. Molly was fed and given water, but Nichols and the Yolo County Sheriff's Office had no way to get her out.

After three nights, the Sheriff's Office called UC Davis' Veterinary Emergency Response Team to rescue Molly.

Nichols was on hand to comfort the 1,200-pound cow as the team began her extraction.

"Molly, we've had since birth," Nichols said. "She's always been special. One day old, she came up to humans, and every now and then you have to dodge her because she gives you a big lick."

Molly is a 9-year-old Brahman cow, a breed known for "snorty and aggressive behavior," according to Dr. John Madigan, a professor at UC Davis' School of Veterinary Medicine and head of VERT.

The response team sedated Molly before bringing her up for their own safety.

The team attached her to a lift specially designed by UC Davis veter-

inarians for picking up large animals and brought her out of the hole.

Madigan said this was the hardest rescue he has attempted since he and veterinarians at the clinic began developing the techniques and equipment required almost 20 years ago.

"The cow was not going to get out of there without expertise that we have," he said.

Madigan and other veterinarians at the clinic are leaders in the field of large animal rescue, according to Madigan, and they often train teams from fire departments in large-animal rescue.

Their lift equipment is used all over the world, he said.

He has assisted with these rescues two or three times a year since he started to focus on training.

"We used to go all the time, but then we focused on training so others can do most of these things. That's our goal," he said.

The UC Davis-designed lift works with the skeletal system of the animal, rather than wrapping around the belly which can constrict an animal Molly's size.

Molly was uninjured and returned to her corral following her rescue.

Call The Bee's Ellen Garrison, (916) 321-1006.



Joe Proudman UC Davis

Molly the cow is lifted out of a 30-foot mine shaft by UC Davis veterinarians and a tow truck in Tuttle town.

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ANTOINETTE NICHOLS



Molly was rescued with a lift designed by UC Davis vets for picking up large animals.

## 2015 Molly the cow rescued from fall down mine shaft

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