



Vol. 32 August 1999 No.7

RESCUE

**IDAHO MOUNTAIN SEARCH
AND RESCUE UNIT, INC
BOISE, IDAHO**

MEMBER:
**MOUNTAIN RESCUE
ASSOCIATION**
SINCE 1960



CLEAR CREEK SEARCH—AUGUST 11, 1999

--BY GEORGE GUNN

Search in Boise County...18-year-old babysitter and two children did not return from a day hike. At 0530 ten IMSARU searchers (and three SAR dogs) were loading the trucks waiting to be briefed by Coordinator Rod Knopp. This weekday turnout was gratifying to those who have been working at improving our response.



0530 at the compound. The neighbors must wonder about our sanity at chaotic times like this.

We met the parents at Clear Creek Lodge and proceeded to their cabin on the edge of Forest Service land. Winston Cheney obtained a scent article, our man-trackers began sketching prints that had been identified as belonging to the missing and our navigators tried to figure which map we were actually on (the search area being at the junction of four maps). Jenny sniffed the article and started off on the tracks, confirming that these were indeed the right prints and establishing a direction of travel. The trail was

over twenty hours old and Jenny had trouble staying with it in the near-drought conditions.

By now we knew that we were looking for three females.— An 18-year-old baby sitter, two girls ages 10 and 8, as well as two family dogs. It was not unusual for them to take long walks in the area. They had taken a daypack but no one knew what supplies it contained. The family did not get worried until the

RESCUE is published monthly by the IDAHO MOUNTAIN SEARCH AND RESCUE UNIT, INC., P.O.Box741, Boise ID 83701. Editor: Charlotte Gunn, Phone (208)466-8345 or e-mail cgunn@execu.net
Deadline of the 20th of the month is required for material to be included in the next month's issue.

Printed courtesy of the Hewlett-Packard Company on an HP Color LaserJet 8500DN

children did not show up for supper. They had taken pains to not search the area where the tracks were, so that we would have something to go on in the morning. After notifying the Sheriff's office, they concentrated their efforts on road patrol and contacting friends and neighbors to be sure the kids were not at someone else's house.

Our man-trackers took over. At first the teams (Steve Argyle, Robert Gilly, Rick Cudd and Jeff Waldeck) made good time. One team stayed on the known sign while the other ranged out ahead to cut for tracks. When that team could verify the track, the first team would leapfrog and repeat the process. Eventually they came to some structures that had served as a playground for the trio. Sign was everywhere. The teams tried to find tracks leaving the area but were frustrated to keep finding them looping back into the area.

The rest of the group made plans to form a containment sweep to the north and west. George Gunn remained with 903 to function as OL. Tim Henning, Tom Wheless, Jerry Newland, and Leslie Robertson with Mingo, loaded into 901 and began the long drive "to the other side of the hill." In hindsight, it would have been faster to walk across country. Radio contact to this containment group was intermittent. We regretted not bringing the stored-voice repeater.

Steve found and began working one line of sign leaving the area. It was verry slow going. Rick and Jeff tried to cut sign farther out. All teams were in type one mode--calling the subjects' names, blowing whistles and generally trying to attract the subjects' attention. It had been a mild night and we felt the subjects would still be moving. We learned that Jeff's pocket air horn sound carries very well.



It never rains on missions in Idaho. Nice rain pants, Jeff .

After nearly 60 days with no measurable rainfall, the clouds moved in. Sprinkles became steady drips and then things turned serious. Lightning prompted the OL to call all teams back off the ridges. We began to worry about the subjects' ability to find shelter. Law enforcement had gathered from the family the information needed for their missing person's process and we all hunkered down in our vehicles as the thunderstorm set in. By the time the skies cleared, over half an inch of rain was recorded for the area. The Patrol Lieutenant came to the scene with the intent that

he and the deputies on scene would begin to drive the "roads" in the area. The noise of the rain and the now slick mud cancelled that plan, so he left and went back toward the paved road.

As the rain slacked off, Steve and Robert went back to work their track. They reported that the moisture had "brought out the track" and they were able to make much faster process. The OL was on the radio with Rod who was still in Boise. Discussions were in progress about bringing in

additional resources, when Lt. Bower came on the air and announced that the subjects had flagged him down and he was bringing them back home.

It turns out that the kids had set off for a peak and when they got there they could no longer see their home area and were unsure of the way. The babysitter realized that they would not make it back by dark. They stopped while they still had about three hours of daylight left and began to gather a large supply of firewood to last them through the night. Soon after they started their fire, they saw a helicopter and put green branches on the fire to make smoke. The craft did not come back but they continued to make their fire smoke until it got dark.

They chose their bivouac because they had followed an elk trail and located a spring; they were on the edge of a meadow where a helicopter could land and there was a good supply of wood in the area. In the morning they used a plastic bag as a cup and drank their fill from the spring. They had breakfast at a patch of wild raspberries and then set out for what they thought would be the direction home. The drainage they were following brought them to a road. That in turn took them to a road they recognized and soon to the road where they waved down the deputy. They were still several hard wet miles from home but they were safe.

Other lessons learned: Safety education, in this case by the father, pays off. Our efforts at containment were good tactics. The subjects had gone in the direction our tracking teams were working. The subjects had gone a lot farther than anyone thought. The weather was about to change what had been a great adventure for the girls into a real emergency.

DROWNING SEARCH AT CASCADE RESERVOIR, JULY 19-20, 1999

--BY CHARLOTTE GUNN



Checking the surface-to-diver communication system before going under.

On the night of July 18, four adults reported that the fifth member of their party had fallen overboard from a pontoon boat. He was thought to be a non-swimmer and was presumed drowned. Information on the incident was inconsistent, but the probable Point Last Seen was in a section of the Gold Fork Arm of the reservoir, where water is mostly 10-12 feet deep but with areas up to 20 feet. Underwater features include barbed-wire fence, old highway and borrow pits, etc. Water temperature was in the 60's; breeze was light until the weather changed on the afternoon of the 20th; daytime temperatures rose to 90 or so degrees. Divers were unable to locate the body on the night of July 18, so the Valley County Sheriff's Office requested search dogs. Responding were Pam Green with Inca, George and Charlotte Gunn with Hobo and Leslie Robertson with Mingo. Gene Ralston took his boat and set up a base station on shore for accurate differential GPS readings.

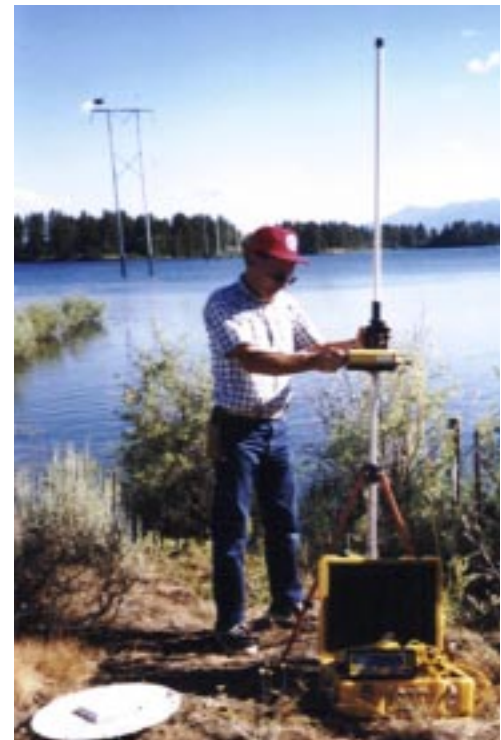
(Overhead transmission lines seemed to be interfering with communications.)

The dogs indicated two areas of interest, although none of them had strong alerts. Divers from Valley County Search and Rescue Divers and McCall Fire Department Dive Team covered those areas thoroughly without finding a body. Pam and Leslie returned home with their dogs, while we and Gene camped overnight. Valley County continued diving into the night.

Leslie drove back up with Mingo on Tuesday morning, and we worked throughout the day with no new results. Divers checked out images on the sonar, but they turned out to be logs and stumps. Thunderstorms predicted for shortly after noon apparently blew around us, but the wind became quite stiff and we were off the lake by shortly after five. George and I arrived home to find our deck fully occupied by a very large branch discarded from our maple tree.

The body floated on July 23, approximately 60 feet beyond the boundary of our search area. (The reporting parties had been vague about details but definite about the overhead transmission line.) The lesson for us is obvious: When the dogs don't hit hard in the search area, go beyond it.

Thoughts from this and the following mission: It is tiring and frustrating for everyone who searches unsuccessfully. (1) Law enforcement resources are stretched thin as they try to cover these time-consuming operations in addition to all their usual responsibilities; it is amazing how patient the officers are in working with personnel drawn from various sources and in briefing us, maintaining communications and putting together information—while also dealing with the media and the public. (2) Dogs don't understand why we are so dense, and we handlers don't understand a whole lot of things. Were the areas of scent in the warm, shallow waters of Cascade Reservoir the lingering scents of divers who worked those areas the previous night? (3) We are frustrated when the media play up the dogs as heroes. We know they are warm, fuzzy images for the TV screen, but they are only one tool in the repertoire. Those who want real heroes need to look at the law officers with their multiple responsibilities and at the divers who literally risk their lives when they go under the water.



Gene adjusts his portable DGPS transmitter. Note power line in background.

BODY SEARCH AT LUCKY PEAK, JULY 15, 1999 **--BY CHARLOTTE GUNN**

A fisherman reported that he had snagged something while trolling deep, right behind the dam, and that he had pulled a body to the surface. He stated that he had immediately released it and it had sunk again. The Ada County Sheriff's Office requested search dogs; responding were Pam Green with Inca, George and Charlotte Gunn with Hobo, Leslie Robertson with Mingo.

We worked from Gene Ralston's technology-equipped boat, and all three dogs alerted—at water depths of 83 to 135 feet in the area behind the dam. (The bottom slopes very steeply to a depth of approximately 200 feet.) Two pairs of divers went down, but found no body in the limited time they could work at that depth; they did find a rock resting on top of two others, which could have caused the promising sonar image.

The same dogs and handlers returned to the scene on July 24. Our plan to work early, before the wind and the weekend crowd arrived, was again a good idea that didn't work. We worked from Gene's boat and from Rod Knopp's Boston whaler, but the wind was too stiff and we stopped after half a dozen sweeps. After a wait of an hour or so, the wind dropped considerably (but became erratic in direction) and the dogs went back to work. This time, all three dogs had the same area of interest, with Mingo and Inca in particular saying the scent is there. **Thoughts:** We don't know the limits of search dogs in deep, cold water. Mingo and Inca had probably the hardest hits of their careers on July 15. (Pam and Leslie had been working on training the scratch alert for water work; Pam may carry the scars of success for a while.) We are guessing that if the body had been brought to the surface the previous day, there was a lot of scent coming to the top on July 15.



IMSARU is fortunate to have access to the professional quality equipment on Gene Ralston's boat.

WOMEN IN THE OUTDOORS, JULY 10, 1999

--BY CHARLOTTE GUNN

Idaho State Parks and Recreation, Idaho Fish and Game Department, and several private organizations worked together to organize a special day for introducing women to activities that sometimes have a male image. Approximately seventy women participated, each attending two sessions that she had requested in advance. Choices included archery, backpacking and camping, basic fishing, canoeing, Dutch oven cooking, fly fishing, mountain biking, stream ecology, turkey hunting, and survival map and compass. In addition, two female falconers brought their birds and talked about their sport during the lunch break.

Idaho Mountain Search and Rescue Unit provided stand-by first aid, with Jerry Newland and myself on duty through the morning and Chuck Bricker replacing Jerry for the afternoon. We sat under an awning and were delighted to be unneeded—not so much as a Bandaid.

CAVE RESCUE IS TRAINING FOR SEPTEMBER

Dig out your headlamp and clothes that can get dirty. We will be going underground for the regular training in September. Cave environments are rare in our response area but they do exist. That environment challenges the search, technical rescue and medical skills for which we train. As cavers say, "If you can do it underground, you can do it anywhere." See you the 14th and 18th.

Emergency Preparedness

POINTERS

HEAT WAVE

Heat kills by pushing the human body beyond its limits. Under normal conditions, the body's internal thermostat produces perspiration that evaporates and cools the body. However, in extreme heat, evaporation is slowed and the body must work extra hard to maintain a normal temperature. Most heat disorders occur because the victim has been overexposed to heat or has overexercised for his or her age and physical condition. Other conditions that can induce heat-related illnesses include stagnant atmospheric conditions and poor air quality. Do you know how to protect yourself from the effects of a heat wave? The following information will help you to prepare yourself and your family.

AUGUST 1999

Terms to Know

Heat Cramps - muscular pains and spasms due to heavy exertion. They usually involve the abdominal muscles or legs. Loss of water from heavy sweating typically causes heat cramps.

Heat Exhaustion - occurs when people exercise heavily or work in a warm humid place where body fluids are lost through heavy sweating. Blood flow to the skin increases, causing blood flow to decrease to the vital organs. This results in a form of mild shock. If not treated, the victim's condition will worsen. Body temperature will keep rising and the victim may suffer heat stroke.

Heat Stroke - is life-threatening. The victim's temperature control system, which produces sweat to cool the body, stops working. The body temperature can rise so high that brain damage and/or death may result if the body is not cooled quickly.

During a Heat Wave

- ✓ **Slow down.** Avoid strenuous activity. If you must do strenuous activity, do it during the coolest part of the day.
- ✓ **Stay indoors** as much as possible. If air conditioning is not available, stay on the lowest floor, out of the sunshine.

- ✓ **Wear lightweight, light-colored clothing.** Light colors will reflect away some of the sun's energy.
- ✓ **Drink water regularly,** even if you're not thirsty. Your body needs water to keep cool.
- ✓ **Avoid drinks with alcohol or caffeine** in them. They can make you feel good briefly, but make the heat's effects on your body worse. This is especially true about beer, which actually dehydrates the body.
- ✓ **Eat small meals** and eat more often. Avoid foods that are high in protein, which increase metabolic heat.
- ✓ **Avoid using salt tablets** unless directed to do so by a physician.

Treatment of Heat Emergencies

Heat Cramps - Get the person to a cooler place and have him or her rest in a comfortable position. Lightly stretch the affected muscle and replenish fluids. Give a half glass of cool water every 15 minutes. Do not give liquids with alcohol or caffeine in them.

Heat Exhaustion - Get the person out of the heat and into a cooler place. Remove or loosen tight clothing and apply cool, wet clothes, such as towels or sheets. If the person is conscious, give cool water to drink. Make sure the person drinks slowly. Give a half glass of cool water every 15 minutes. Do not give liquids that contain alcohol or caffeine. Let the victim rest and watch for changes in his or her condition.

Heat Stroke - This is a life-threatening situation. Help is needed fast. Call 911 immediately. Move the person to a cooler place. Quickly cool the body. Immerse victim in a cool bath, or wrap wet sheets around the body and fan it. Watch for signals of breathing problems. Keep the person lying down and continue to cool the body any way you can. If the victim is vomiting or there are changes in level of consciousness, do not give anything to eat or drink.

Symptoms of Heat Emergencies

Heat Exhaustion - Cool, moist, pale or flushed skin; heavy sweating; headache; nausea or vomiting; dizziness; and exhaustion. Body temperature will be near normal.

Heat Stroke - Hot, red, skin; changes in consciousness; rapid, weak pulse; and rapid, shallow breathing. Body temperature can be very high - sometimes as high as 105°. If the person was sweating from heavy work or exercise, skin may be wet; otherwise, it will feel dry.



HELICOPTER TRAINING SCHEDULED

—BY GEORGE GUNN

IMSARU has gained permission to receive orientation training on the Blackhawk helicopters now in service with the Guardian Medevac unit at Gowen Field. The session is tentatively scheduled for 11 September and will be held at Gowen Field. There will be a phone tree with details when we get closer to that date. This is in addition to the regular training in September and will make up for the training that we missed during the Corn Booth.



FOURTH OF JULY PARADE

— BY GEORGE GUNN



Jeff, the girls are the other way.

Everyone thought it was a great idea. Leslie got us an entry number. Charlotte made the phone calls. Tim Henning washed 903 for the occasion. Jeff Munn mugged his nephew for a boombox. But when it came to standing around in the hot sun waiting for the parade to start, only Jane Foreman, Eric Mundell, Dave McDermitt, Rick Cudd, Jeff Munn and George Gunn showed up.

Jeff, as usual, hung out from the back of 903. Rick figured he had made a good deal in volunteering to baby sit Joel Munn and drive the truck when it became apparent we were following the babes on the "Arrow 103" float. He stayed real close to the float ahead even if it meant leaving those of us wheeling the litter 50 yards behind. With a bandaged "Randy" in the litter along with the boombox blasting "Rescue me", we hurried to keep up. We were surprised and pleased with the applause we received from the crowd, especially when one considers how late we were in the parade.

There is talk that next year we need to have an Ice Ax Drill Team.

ST. LUKE'S KIDS FAIR, JULY 10, 1999
--BY ERIC MUNDELL

Rick Cudd, Amy Hastriter and Eric Mundell provided survival and safety presentations to about 250 kids and parents at the St. Luke's Kids Fair held at Centennial High School.

IMSARU members had previously helped film two Fox Kids' Club Channel 12 TV segments, five-minute clips on Winter Survival and Summer Outdoor Safety. Both combine ideas from Hug-a-Tree, what IMSARU is all about and award-winning shots of our members on camera. We played these clips; Amy showed the kids what their footprints on foil look like, then told them what and how the SAR dogs sniff in the woods when finding a lost person; Rick showed the kids how he is really prepared in the outdoors with the equipment in his 24-hour pack. (Rumor says that it took him hours to get everything repacked.)

There were eight thirty-minute presentations, and many of the parents told us they were happy with how the kids caught on to the concepts. This occasion was a great example of IMSARU teamwork in action.

A TRACKING WEEKEND, JULY 16-18
--BY AIMEE HASTRITER

It was a perfect weekend for my first tracking experience. Rick Cudd handled the registration and about thirty people attended from Idaho, Oregon, Washington and Utah. Representing IMSARU were Eric Mundell and his son Travis, Leslie Robertson, Paula McCollum and myself. Joel Hardin of Universal Tracking Services and his team of experienced trackers taught the class.

After only a few hours of "classroom" time on Friday afternoon, we were out in the field to track a man across nearby terrain. After dinner, we were sent out in teams of three, each with a team leader (someone who had more tracking experience than the rest of those on the team.) We analyzed a set of footprints, drew a picture of those footprints, and began to develop our tracking skills and new knowledge by picking out each footprint on the ground. The terrain ranged from pine needles to fallen logs to tall, dense grass. It was very exciting to actually see the outlines of the print, to notice the broken sticks and pine needles, to identify hinges in the grass and plants, and to see the damage that occurs to the trampled vegetation. Since we were out until well past sundown on the first night, and also studied the track over the weekend, we were able to observe how the sign changed in fading light and over time. There was no better reward than getting to the end of our track and looking back to see where we had come. The fact that we found any sign at all in some places still amazes me.

If you have never taken a tracking class and missed your chance this weekend, plan to attend the next time you have an opportunity. And I have to admit that I had as much fun getting to know the other individuals in the class as I did actually tracking.

WATER SEARCH DOG TRAINING, JULY 29-30, 1999 --BY CHARLOTTE GUNN

Jonni Joyce, a Sergeant with Zebulon Police Department in North Carolina, is also a nationally-known trainer of search dogs. Idaho Search and Rescue Dogs of Bingham County arranged for Jonni to teach a seminar on the basics of water search near Blackfoot. Attending from IMSARU were Debbie Ralph with novice dog Huey, Pam Green with Inca and George and Charlotte Gunn with Hobo.

The first challenge was to find our way to Rose Pond (a former gravel pit north of Blackfoot) through the “Road Closed” signs. We then spent two full days doing water search problems, getting advice from Jonni, and watching other teams from Idaho, Utah, Wyoming and Montana work. In addition to the standard “alert on the diver and he will come up and give you your toy,” we had a chance to proof on bubbles and to work some shore problems using cadaver scent through a scent pump.

We are proud of our dogs and believe they are competent. However, it is always valuable to watch other dog teams in action and to work with a professional on ideas to make our training even better. Jonni has a systematic method of instruction, the ability to individualize advice for different dogs and a willingness to field all sorts of questions. And we appreciate all the work by ISARD members to make this opportunity possible—shelters from the hot sun and brief rain, meals (including an excellent Dutch oven dinner), potty facilities, a camping place, divers, boats and operators, and a million more details.



Debbie and Huey discover the joy of water search.

Final thoughts from the seminar: We appreciate the validation of having a national trainer tell us that our dogs are indeed working well. It was pure pleasure to watch young Huey progress from his first time in a boat through eager, pawing alert at the diver. And Rod, wait ‘til you see what Pam bought you for Christmas!

IN MEMORIAM: SARA MERIETTE MILLRUN HOLLYWOOD’S GIRL 1986-1999

Sara, one of our earliest search dogs and the first to make a confirmed water find, is sadly missed by her handler Jane Foreman and by the many of us who have worked with her over the years.

**8TH ANNUAL WATER WORKOUT WEEKEND
BONNEVILLE COUNTY, JUNE 25-27
--CHARLOTTE GUNN**



The Workout gives the opportunity...

What happens when you pull together some twenty search dogs and their handlers, a dozen divers, close to a dozen boats and operators, and a whole army of people to handle registration, food, shelters and organization? Answer—a splashing good time and lots of learning. Even the weather cooperated somewhat; it was cooler than in recent years and the gale winds of Friday night and Sunday morning dropped enough to allow us to work.

What did we do? Socialized over spaghetti on Friday evening. Had presentations on safety (Dave Ferguson), use of differential GPS (Gene Ralston) and introduction to cadaver scent (Leslie Robertson and Pam Green, who also gave away some awesome dog toys). Worked half a dozen different problems, from diver standing in water to diver thirty feet under, with handlers' option to customize the problem--using many different



to work from a wide variety...



of watercraft but...

types of boats, with coaches when the handler wished, and divers popping to surface to reward the finds. Watched others work and discussed ideas and problems with them. Occasionally panicked about wildlife. (The rattlesnake turned out not to be, but the ticks were real.) Ducked the reporters and cameras whenever possible. Ate an incredible Dutch-oven dinner as part of Bill and Mary's wedding reception. Went back out on Sunday morning and did it again.

It's always helpful to work with other dogs and handlers, to see what progress we are making and to set higher goals and plan strategies for reaching them. We had admiration for some things we saw and questions about others, and assume lots of people were impressed one way or the other by our "IMSARU tail-hold technique." (We do not want our dogs to jump into the water as alert, for several reasons, and use this method to remind them.) We also were fascinated at Greg Rix's command of the German language as he gave an obedience lesson to a dog on the site: "Phooey ist das!"



Rod's "little boat" was the most popular.

CALENDAR

Aug. 20-28	Corn Booth at the Western Idaho Fair, 10 a.m. to midnight, every day	
Aug. 29	Take down Corn Booth	9 a.m. at the Fairgrounds
Sept. 4	Dog Training—night/bivouac--Contact Eric Mundell at 362-1824	
Sept. 7	General Meeting	7:30 p.m. At the Compound
Sept. 11	Helicopter Safety Training (tentative)	T.B.A.
Sept. 14	SAR Training—Cave Rescue Jeff Waldeck	7:30 p.m. At the Compound
Sept. 18	SAR Field Training—Cave Rescue	Meet at 8 a.m. At the Compound
Sept. 21	Medical Training	7:30 p.m. At the Compound
Sept. 28	Business Meeting	7:30 p.m. At the Compound
Oct. 3	Dog Training—Wilderness	
Oct. 5	General Meeting	7:30 p.m. At the Compound
Oct. 12	SAR Training	7:30 p.m. At the Compound
Oct. 16	SAR Field Training	Meet at the Compound time T.B.A.
Oct. 19	Medical Training	7:30 p.m. At the Compound
Oct. 26	Business Meeting	7:30 p.m. At the Compound
Oct. 30	Dog Training—Wilderness--Contact Leslie Robertson at 362-7234	
Nov. 2	General Meeting	7:30 p.m. At the Compound

**BE SURE TO SIGN UP TO WORK AT THE CORN BOOTH.
YOU NEVER KNOW WHO MAY COME BY.**



Do your part. **The Corn Booth is our major source of operating funds for the year.** August 20 to 28. Call Tom Wheless 939-6005 or Debbie Shaffer 362-3795 **today** to sign up.

We Need YOU!

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