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# RESCUE

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

FOUNDING MEMBER:  
**MOUNTAIN RESCUE  
ASSOCIATION**



## **SIDE-SCAN SONAR FIND FROM 2,000 MILES AWAY --AS TOLD TO CHARLOTTE GUNN**

[Editor's Note: Gene and Sandy Ralston travel all over the country, using their side scan sonar to search for people (and planes, shuttle pieces, and other things) underwater, but the article below describes the first time they have made a find from such a distance.]

A 42-year-old woman was reported missing by her husband on January 19, 2005. She was last seen in the parking lot of the Thunderbolt Marina on the Wilmington River (which is a tidal river in this area) at around 11 p.m. the previous night. She and her husband lived on their yacht, which is docked at the marina. Her husband reported they had been in an argument that night and she had gone outside to "get some air."

Thunderbolt police, Georgia Bureau of Investigation agents, and divers searched the Wilmington River for several days, looking for her. A State Department of Natural Resources helicopter flew a photographer over the river to document the search area from the air.

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While reviewing hundreds of side-scan images from the search, Gene noted a suspicious shadow cast by the anomaly in the center section of the partial image shown above. The black area to the left is a blind "null" below the towfish where no detail can be seen. Had the towfish been a few yards to the right, the subject could have been hidden.

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## FIELD CERTIFICATION CLASS—JANUARY 29, 2005 --CHARLOTTE GUNN

The Field Certification Class, offered whenever there is enough demand, is a basic requirement for IMSARU members. It offers an overview of expectations and opportunities for new members, and is an effort to teach them enough to avoid embarrassing themselves or the unit when they participate in our events. In addition to six IMSARU applicants and four new VSAR members, this class also had Roger Munger's graduate students in Communications, who will be working on publications and presentations for our unit.



Ron, Dan and Charlotte along with others, shared the teaching duties.

New IMSARU members who took this class include Ann Finley, Robin Hurst, Doug Knapp, Jon Metz, Vern Rae and Cori Tremayne. We welcome them to IMSARU and look forward to training and working with them. (Those who took the class must also pass a pack check before being placed on the call-out list for three-season non-technical missions.)

\* \* \* \* \*

**(SIDE SCAN cont. from p 1.)** On January 24, a local hydrographic survey company volunteered its side scan sonar equipment to search the marina and river bottom. Finding nothing, they returned for a second day of searching on January 26; they were again unsuccessful.

A local boat dealer, who had assisted with the search for a missing airplane and its occupants, knew Gene and Sandy Ralston from when they had volunteered their side scan sonar equipment to search for that plane. He contacted the Thunderbolt Police Chief and arranged a conference call with Gene on January 27. They discussed the possibility of Gene assisting with the search in the Wilmington River. During the conversation, they discussed the previous side scan sonar search efforts. Gene suggested that he would like to review the images and evaluate whether or not he would be able to offer any further assistance. Although they wanted Gene to fly to Savannah as soon as possible, they agreed to wait for his review of the images.

The boat dealer contacted the local sonar operator, who was more than willing to provide his images

for review; he indicated he had no experience searching for bodies and welcomed any assistance with interpreting his images. He agreed to send the images by FedEx and have them held at the Boise airport station for Saturday pickup.

The package arrived Saturday morning, but because of a misunderstanding, delivery was not scheduled until late Monday afternoon. Gene went to the FedEx station and discussed the situation with the front desk agent, explaining the urgency of the situation. Late Saturday afternoon, Gene received a call from the FedEx agent saying the manager had found the package. Gene quickly drove to the airport and returned home to review the 245 images. The sixteenth image revealed what appeared to be a human body in 20 feet of water! Gene immediately called the sonar operator, got contact information for the detective in charge of the operation and interrupted the detective's dinner to give him the details and the location of the body. Since it was well after dark in Thunderbolt by then, Gene suggested they not search until Sunday morning.

Unfortunately, a key person was not available for the dive operation to commence on Sunday, so it was scheduled for early Monday morning. The local sonar operator was on the water at daybreak only to find the body was no longer in the same place. He continued searching and, with helpful pointers and example images given to him by Gene, did locate an object of interest about 200 feet away. He was able to connect to the internet from his boat via WiFi and transmit three images to Gene for review. Gene called him to confirm that the "object" indeed appeared to be a body.

Divers were summoned while a marker was placed near the "object". By the time the divers were fully operational and began diving, the tidal current had moved the body once again! The area was scanned again, the marker placed again, the divers descended again, the body moved again. By then it was getting dark, but the low slack tide was soon approaching. The divers agreed to make one more dive, hoping the body would not move during the slack tide.

At 8 p.m. Eastern Time, the sonar operator called to say the recovery was successful. They recovered the missing woman. At midnight that night, the police chief called Gene to thank him for his efforts. The investigation is continuing into the circumstances surrounding her entering the water.

## **SHELTER IS ONLY CLOTHING AT A DISTANCE**

**--GUS BUSH**

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a publication of the Tacoma Mountain Rescue Unit**

The Oxford American dictionary defines a shelter as "something that serves as a shield or barrier against danger, heat, wind, etc." Shelter is only clothing at a distance. It may or may not include artificial heat producers, such as stoves. A shelter may be constructed of any material (lumber, bark, paper, cardboard, plastic, snow or dirt) and utilize insulation materials (snow, dirt, paper, fabric, bark, wood, cardboard, air) to help reduce body heat loss by convection, evaporation, radiation or conduction.

In emergency situations, such as wind and rain storms, where shelter is mandatory, man would be wise to do what the local animals do—burrow in or crawl under foliage. In forested areas it is faster to burrow or hollow out a small shelter under a downed tree than to find suitable material to erect a shelter. Time spent constructing such a shelter can be costly in energy and body heat loss due to more exposure to the

very conditions that the shelter is to protect from. A shelter must serve the immediate needs of the builder. Each shelter should be built to provide a minimum of body heat loss and a maximum of body protection.

This time of year if you're going skiing, snowshoeing or winter camping for several days, a well-made snow cave is the next best shelter to a cabin with a fireplace. More than a few cross-country skiers out for a casual ski have lost their way or been trapped in a howling blizzard. In these circumstances, knowing how to build a snow cave can mean the difference between survival and death.

When constructing a snow cave, be aware that a small space is easier to heat than a large one, and is also structurally more sound. If your group contains more than four people, you should consider building two caves. Emergency caves can be built in 15 minutes. For the simplest form of emergency cave, find a drift or ridge and dig the cave straight into the snowbank. You can dig with your hands or your skis if you don't have a shovel. The snow should be deep enough to allow room for a roof that's one foot thick; otherwise, a cave-in is possible. Dig the cave only as large as the space your body takes when sitting with your knees drawn up to your chest. Line the cave with pine or spruce boughs, leaves or any other dry material you can find. Climb into your sleeping bag, or if you're not carrying a sleeping bag you should have a plastic tarp or garbage bag in your emergency gear and sit on your mattress pad. If possible, climb into your backpack as well. If you can't fit, put your legs in your backpack and draw them up to your chest. If you have more time and energy, you can build a warmer emergency cave by starting with a tunnel, but only hollowing out as much space as necessary to sit in an upright position. You can straighten your legs in this type of structure by extending them into the tunnel, line the bottom with spruce boughs and sit on your mattress pad.



Larger snow caves take hours to build (approximately 3 hours) and require some type of tool, such as a shovel, mess kit or hard hat, for removing the snow.

## **DUES FOR 2005 ARE DUE NOW!**

IMSARU dues are for the calendar year, so if you haven't yet paid your 2005 dues, do so now. New applicants pay \$50, which covers their first orange shirt, set of patches, etc. as well as the year's dues. Continuing members pay \$30. According to our by-laws, if you haven't paid by the first week in April, you are no longer a member and will be dropped from mailing and callout lists. Note that the "pay-by" date may have passed by the time the March-April newsletter goes in the mail, so this paragraph right here may be your last reminder. Also, those members who have a unit pager with a discrete number owe \$36 to keep that pager active. (If you carry a pager that has only the group call, there is no individual fee.)

Give your cash or check to Charlotte Gunn and be sure to get a receipt. Printed below is the list of those who have paid their 2005 dues before this goes to the printer. If you think you paid but are not on the list, talk to Charlotte.

Barkley, Jake (new)	Mathews, Diane	Robinson, Darcy (new)
Barrett, Tony	Metz, Jon (new)	Sander, Phil
Brunson, Mick	Moomey, Ron	Scovel, Dan
Buursink, Marc	Newland, Jennifer (new)	Scovel, Kris
Cheyney, Winston	Newland, Jerry	Tremayne, Cori (new)
Finley, Ann	Noland, Jim	Vandivort, Martha
Halle, Leni Sue	O'Bryan, Phil	Westerdoll, Marc
Henning, Tim	Rae, Vern (new)	Wheless, Tom
Hurst, Robin (new)	Ritzenthaler, Dave	Zuber, Eric
Knapp, Douglas (new)	Robertson, Leslie	

We also have eight Life Members, who no longer pay dues:

Engleman, Tony	Kline, Bob	Strasser, Ted
Gunn, Charlotte	Knopp, Rod	Wood, Everett
Gunn, George	Meredith, Bob	

### **ALL WRAPPED UP**

Again this year, R.E.I. invited us to wrap gifts at their store during the ten days before Christmas. We had been making our hand-made bows since October, and offered patrons their choice of topo maps or more traditional Christmas paper. Jennifer Newland was the Christmas elf of 2004, as she organized our project, purchased materials, scheduled workers and generally made sure everything was ready. We thank her, as well as all the people who contributed their time and energy to this P.R. and fund-raising event. And we especially thank R.E.I. for providing this opportunity to IMSARU.

P.S. – If anyone hears of topographical maps that are available for recycling, please let us know! Since so many people now have computer software to print their own maps, and even stores are printing on-demand, our supply of special wrapping paper for next Christmas is pretty skimpy. (Think about places like survey or engineering firms, who might have stacks of old maps that they no longer use in that form....)

### **WILDERNESS FIRST AID CLASS – JANUARY 11-13-15, 2005 --CHARLOTTE GUNN**

Ron Moomey, our Medical Director in 2004, had as one of his goals to offer wilderness-oriented first aid training and certification to our members. He declined to run for reelection but carried through on that goal by becoming an instructor for the Red Cross Wilderness First Aid course. Using two evenings plus all day Saturday, Ron taught the course to his first IMSARU group this past month, and we had fun as well as learning a lot. The course uses texts, lectures, PowerPoint info and hands-on practice; Ron added a video on the use of a C-collar and lots of first-hand experiences. Thank you, Ron, for all your time and talent and energy! Thanks also to Mick Brunson and his son Jason for your help with the demos.

IMSARU members receiving their certification (good for three years) are Brad Acker, Mick Brunson, Anne Finley, Charlotte Gunn, George Gunn, Linda Kearney, Tom Kearney, Doug Knapp, Jeff Munn, Vern Rae, Phil Sander, Kris Scovel, Martha Vandivort, and Eric Zuber.

Ron is offering the class again in February, so call him immediately if you want to take advantage of this opportunity. (Remember that, as members of the Mountain Rescue Association, IMSARU members are expected to be trained in basic first aid and CPR. Also note that Ron is making this class available to us at half the usual cost.)

## **THANK YOU! THANK YOU!**

We greatly appreciate the financial support from the following groups and individuals:

**R.E.I.** – for providing us with the opportunity to wrap gifts in their store during the two weeks preceding Christmas, with donations for the service going into our treasury.

Donors to **United Way** who designated us as the agency to receive their donations.

**H.P. Employees** who contributed to us through the H-P Employees Charitable Giving program and whose donations are matched by the company.

**Diane Fields** for a cash donation.

**Phil and Paula O'Bryan** for a cash donation.

**Dan and Jean Iverson** for a cash donation.

**Bob Meredith** for the donation of his Suburban, which has already been reincarnated as our truck 902. (903 is now retired.)

Idaho Mountain Search and Rescue Unit, Inc. is an all-volunteer, non-profit 501(c)(3) corporation. We have no paid officers or employees, and all our members volunteer their time as well as supply their own personal equipment. We never charge anyone for our services, and we greatly appreciate those who help us continue to serve the public.

## **CHRISTMAS PARTY AND AWARDS, DECEMBER 11, 2004**

**--CHARLOTTE GUNN**

It was another good celebration of a year's worth of work and training and frustration and success. Thanks to Woody and Judy Hart for again hosting our party at the Western Village community center, and to Jennifer Newland for coordinating the preparations. As usual, we had lots of good food, good company and good laughter. Diane Mathews and Charlotte Gunn presented awards for some of the year's funny and embarrassing moments; by popular request, Jerry and Jennifer Newland again compiled a DVD of photos and music that brought back lots of memories.

Kris Walker presented medals to people who had participated in missions and training during the year (and had not received the award in 2003) and George Gunn recognized those who had attained a higher level of training and certification.

George also presented the award to **Rod Knopp** in thanks not only for his leadership through the past year as Coordinator and resident Wise Man, but in recognition of this being forty years that Rod has given to IMSARU and to the larger service of volunteer search and rescue.

Rod then presented the awards to some other members who did more than their share during 2004:

Engraved pocket-sized multitools went to: **Tony Barrett** for his work on adapting radio technology for SAR field work and his volunteer service in keeping our printer happy. **Chuck Bricker** kept our trucks running through another year, including finding someone to do emergency body work very cheaply. **Ed Emmel** keeps our pagers and radios operating, and comes to the Compound to re-do radio installations whenever we change equipment. **Linda Kearney** is the unit's new "energizer bunny," participating enthusiastically in training, missions, dog training, fundraising, work parties, and everything else that happens. **Tom Kearney** has participated in almost everything the unit has done since he joined last spring—missions, training, fundraisers, work projects (including lots of extra time on the vehicles), dog training. **Bob Meredith** is our continuing technical expert, contributing his knowledge and skills to keep our technical equipment updated and teach others how to use it, and has volunteered to head up preparation for our technical re-certification tests in 2005. **Ron Moomey** not only directed our medical training in 2004, but participated in missions, training, work projects, and—on his own—attained certification to teach Wilderness First Aid for our members. **Jeff Munn** again took a couple of weeks out of his life to get us through the Corn Booth—set-up and take-down of the booth plus running the register tapes and picking up the money every night. **Everett Wood** participated in a large number of missions, often donating use of his own equipment (ATVs and truck, especially) and also worked all weekday shifts at the Corn Booth.

Rod also presented engraved knives to another group of members, who contributed even more than "more than their share":

**Kris Walker** shared technical expertise and personal equipment for many missions and training sessions, worked on our photo I.D. project, and encouraged others to be involved. **Martha Vandivort** participated in a large number of missions, public relations events and work parties; she worked with both the technical team and the dog training group; she (together with Linda K.) scheduled workers for the Corn Booth; when something needed to be done, she was there. **Kris Scovel** continued as secretary, including many of the details that keep the organization running, participated on missions, and continued to use and improve her mantracking skills. **Dan Scovel** was deeply involved in safety education and public-relations presentations; he was responsible for new-member oversight, including the Field Certification classes; he participated in missions and work projects; and he continued his mantracking passion. **Chris Harry** spent untold hours on our vehicles--repairing, cleaning, repacking and improving—often before the rest of us even knew there was a problem; he also participated in missions and trainings. **George Gunn** got us through another year of organized training, participated in almost all missions, worked on committees and focus groups, worked with the dog handlers, and volunteered for lots of tasks that no one really wanted to do. **Charlotte Gunn** kept the newsletter going, participated in almost all the missions and several training sessions, continued to assist with financial work, helped with fundraisers and work parties, trained and deployed her search dog, and baked chocolate goodies for many occasions.

The Distinguished Service Award, fondly known as “The Rock,” went to **Jerry Newland** for several years’ cumulative service to IMSARU. This includes serving as Training Director and now President; leadership and active participation on many missions; sharing skills in training; safety education, public relations and public-service events; always being there and doing whatever needed to be done.

## **SPECIALTY TEAMS DO SPECIAL TRAINING**

All field members of IMSARU are generalists first, and are expected to participate on as many missions as their schedules and personal conditions allow. However, some members choose to also pursue training in a special skill *in addition to* what is expected of everyone. This means additional training sessions, both with IMSARU and through other seminars/classes, and it means showing up on missions whether or not one expects that special skill to be important. As George is fond of saying, “The mission we end up doing is often not the one we thought we were going to do.” Some of our specialties include Search Management, Technical Rope Work, Search Dogs, Mantracking. If you have additional time, energy, and interest in one of these skills, join the training group; these groups are open to all IMSARU members.

***The Technical Team*** gets a lot of attention this year. Not only did we have two technical missions this past October, but we have MRA re-certification tests coming in March (snow and ice) and July (technical rock). The Tech Team meets at the Compound on the first Monday of each month at 7 p.m. (probably not in March because they will have just returned from Salt Lake County). As the weather improves, there will be additional training in climbing areas near Boise. Talk to Bob Meredith for more information.

***Search Dog Handlers*** are meeting monthly to review policies and procedures. More importantly, there is an official full-group field training scheduled each month. Besides these, all canine teams train from one to three times a week, in smaller groups that depend on the handlers’ personal schedules. The *search dogs need subjects!* The dogs need to search for people they do not know, in order to be ready for the real thing. The subject either lays a trail or hides in a designated area and waits for the canine team to find him/her. No experience necessary; the handlers will show you exactly what to do—and all our dogs are friendly. Scheduled full-group trainings are February 26, March 12, April 10, May 7 and June 4; there will be lots of others on weekends and weekdays. Call Charlotte Gunn at 378-7787 to talk about this.

***Mantrackers*** get their certification through professional classes offered by Joel Hardin, U.T.S., etc. They also get together for group practices in the Boise area. Talk to Dan Scovel or Kris Scovel for information on when and where they will be training.

***Search Managers*** need lots of actual mission experience as well as skill in navigation, handling people, the ICS and ability to multi-task with minimal sleep; good judgement is critical and intuition is also helpful. Talk to George Gunn if you want to know when and where seminars will be available. More important, get all the mission experience you can and let people like George, Jerry and Dan know you want to learn the management skills.

**CALENDAR**

Feb. 8	SAR Training – Technical Snow/Self-Arrest	7:30 p.m. At the Compound
Feb. 12-13	SAR Field Training – Technical Snow/Self-Arrest	Time & Place TBA
Feb. 15	Medical Training	7:30 p.m. At the Compound
Feb. 19	Medical Field Training at Henning-Mathews cabin	
Feb. 22	K9 Handlers' Meeting IMSARU Business Meeting	6 p.m. 7:30 p.m. At the Compound
Feb. 26	Search Dog Training – Call Tom Kearney at 321-1175 for info.	
March 1	Review & Pack for Recertification Test	7:30 p.m. At the Compound
March 3-6	Trout Pond at the Spring Sportsmen's Show Call Leslie Robertson at 362-5352 to volunteer	At the Fairgrounds
March 5-6	MRA Recertification Test – Ice and Snow	Salt Lake County, Utah
March 8	Debrief Recertification Experience	7:30 p.m. At the Compound
March 12	Search Dog Training – Call Charlotte Gunn at 378-7787 for info.	
March 15	Medical Training – Medical Assesment & Care in an Alpine Environment	7:30 p.m. At the Compound
March 22	Business Meeting	7:30 p.m. At the Compound
March 29	No Meeting Scheduled at Press Time—Listen for Announcements	
April 4	Technical Team Training	7:00 p.m. At the Compound
April 5	SAR Training – Knots – Martha Vandivort	7:30 p.m. At the Compound

April 10	Search Dog Training – Call Linda Kearney at 321-1175 for info.	
April 12	Patient Assessment in Wilderness and Vertical Environments	7:30 p.m. At the Compound
April 16	Race to Robie Creek – All members needed to help	All Day
April 19	SAR Training – Anchors – Tim Henning	7:30 p.m. At the Compound
April 23-24	SAR Field Training – Anchors and Systems	Time & Place TBA
April 26	Business Meeting	7:30 p.m. At the Compound

**ADDITIONAL TRAINING DATES FOR MAY-JULY, SO YOU CAN PLAN AHEAD**

May 3	SAR Training—Technical Rescue Organization	
May 10	Litter Attendant Skills/Medical Care During Raising or Lowering	
May 17	SAR Training—Technical Mission—Jerry Newland	
May 21-22	SAR Field Training: Ascending—Kris Walker Rappelling—Bob Meredith	
June 7	SAR Training—Search Skills	
June 14	SAR Training—Low Angle Review	
June 18-19	SAR Field Training—Mock Mission: Pulling it all together	
June 21	Litter Attendant—Scree Evacuation	
July 5	Tie up loose ends for the Recertification Weekend	
July 12	Pack for Rock and Search Recertification Weekend	

**NOTE THAT THIS CALENDAR INCLUDES SOME CHANGES IN TRAINING DATES AND SUBJECTS. THIS IS OFFICIAL AS OF PRINTING DATE, BUT THERE WILL UNDOUBTEDLY BE MORE CHANGES AS WE DEAL WITH THIS YEAR'S COMMITMENTS.**

## **WE NEED EVERYONE FOR THE RECERTIFICATION TESTING**

Remember that IMSARU is hosting the regional MRA re-certification testing on July 15-17. This session will cover both technical rock and search management. We need ALL our members for this weekend. If you are not participating on one or both of the testing teams, we need you for logistics. Please mark this on your calendar today!

And in your spare time, look at additional opportunities to learn—conferences, seminars, classes—more about SAR in general, mantracking, search dog training, technical rock, or whatever is your personal passion.

## **IMSARU GARAGE INSULATION --MARC BUURSINK, PROPERTY MANAGER**

We insulated the Larry Novak Compound garage this winter. With the addition of two ceiling-mounted gas heaters installed by Bob Meredith, the garage has now become a much more hospitable building in which to train, repair and store equipment, and fix up the vehicles.

This past winter, we obtained bids to insulate the garage ceiling and two walls. (The other two walls either have garage doors or face the existing building.) Once the bids were in, the Board voted at the annual budget meeting to allocate funding for the work and opted for the thicker R-rating, and the membership approved. Before the work could begin, a garage clean-up team assembled and got to work. We filled a dumpster with discarded equipment, and compacted and moved the remaining equipment to one side of the garage in preparation for the insulation workers.

Our new insulation was installed on January 5, 6, 7 and 10. An IMSARU crew was on standby at the Compound during the days, to assist the insulating crew in case of need. Halfway through the installation, another crew of volunteers moved the equipment from one side of the garage to the other. Because IMSARU had just spent quite a sum of money on insulating the garage walls, we wanted to protect our investment against bumps and bruises; we therefore covered the walls with 4' by 8' OSB panels. It took some careful measuring and sawing, but all the receptacles and switches remain accessible. Finally, after careful planning and coordinating, equipment and vehicles returned to their original homes later in January.

Members helping with the garage clean-up, equipment moving, vehicle and boat juggling, day-time assistance, wall boarding and move-in were Brad Acker, Tony Barrett, Mick Brunson, Charlotte Gunn, George Gunn, Chris Harry, Tom Kearney, Rod Knopp, Bob Meredith, Dominick Merrell, Jeff Munn, Vern Rae, David Ritzenthaler, Tom Wheless, Everett Wood and Eric Zuber.

## **WE BE WARM!**

We thought we were living in luxury when we finally bought the old motel and remodeled it for our use. We were sure we were living in luxury when we added the garage. Now we have insulation and heat. It's OK Marc; we will try to get used to not freezing while working or training here!



**IDAHO MOUNTAIN SEARCH AND RESCUE UNIT  
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