

**RESCUE** HAS BEEN THE VOICE OF IMSARU SINCE JANUARY 1962

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# RESCUE

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

FOUNDING MEMBER:  
**MOUNTAIN RESCUE  
ASSOCIATION**



## **RECERTIFICATION 2005—WINTER SKILLS --BRAD ACKER**

We did it! And we did pretty darn good. What, you ask, did we do? We searched for, found and provided care for simulated avalanche victims. We demonstrated personal skills such as knot tying, self-arrest, snow anchor placements, avalanche transceiver searching, and over-snow travel. We performed a high angle technical rescue in winter conditions. Not bad for a weekend's activities. (Cont. on p. 4)



It was a lot more work than it looks like during this lunch break picture.

—Photo by T. Henning

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## PRIEST LAKE SEARCH --CHARLOTTE GUNN

On July 28, 2004, an adult male from Kennewick, WA went sailing alone on Priest Lake. He called a friend from there, talking about the beautiful scenery, and said the wind was very light so he was going to switch from sail to power before continuing to the place where he was meeting friends for dinner. He never showed up for dinner. The boat was found two days later, having apparently run aground on an island, with the Genoa still up but not fastened, the throttle open and the gas tank empty. Witnesses reported seeing the man leave the dock, but searchers could find nothing to confirm location beyond that.



The Ralstons' boat, during the best weather of the search. —Photo by R. Bachman

Canine teams, including Deb Tirmenstein and Ruby from Missoula, worked some of the lake, and Ruby went crazy in one particular area. Gene and Sandy Ralston, working their side scan sonar, found a body in about 350 feet of water and an ROV (remote-operated underwater machine with camera and its own scanning sonar) reached the body on September 2. It was the wrong body!



The canine search teams at work on the lake. —Photo by R. Bachman

The one found had obviously been there for years, not days, and no one locally knew of any reported missing person in that area who might match the find.

At the end of March, 2005, Rusty Bachman, a fellow Kennewick fireman and a

member of the Columbia Basin Dive Rescue Team, organized one more search of the area. Lorraine McLean, also a member of the dive team, came as a driver for the inflatable boat; Gene and Sandy took the side scan and their boat back up—with a major delay in Spokane to have the fuel injectors reseated in their motor home's diesel engine; Deb and Ruby returned with their friends Stacie Chandler and Sage from the Seattle area; George and I loaded Xena in our motor home and went up for logistical and moral support. All of us stayed at The Inn at Priest Lake, some in rooms and some in the RV lot. I bet it's a gorgeous place if the sun ever shines. We, of course, had had warm sun most of the month of March, but this was the week when it rained and snowed and ski resorts throughout the state re-opened.

By now, local law enforcement has researched old newspapers for reports of missing people—and found a dozen over the last century that were presumably in the lake. None, however, were reported missing in that particular area. [It is rumored that the lake was named after a Catholic priest who went missing with his boat in the late 1800's. Could it be he?] Water that cold and that deep keeps the bodies. The canine teams worked the water. Ruby still reacted strongly in the same area as before but also as much as two miles downwind from there; Sage was less insistent but also showed interest in the same spots. There are, of course, lots of questions: Can a dog really smell a body under 350 feet of water? If so, how long does it take at that depth and temperature for decomposition to proceed to the point where a dog could catch the scent? How long does the detectable scent last? Where does it surface? What are the chances that there is a second, undiscovered, body in the same general area?

Gene and Sandy spent lots more hours in the cold rain, working their patterns across areas of the lake. (No, not the whole lake; it's way too big an area.) George and I took Xena on a shore search, working both ways on the island from where the boat was found. We did not expect to make a find and we were right. It's hard to admit that we can't find someone and quite probably never will, but all of us had other commitments within a week or so. Gene and Sandy went on to another search at Lake Pend Oreille, Deb and Stacie returned to their paying jobs, George and I came back to our list of "must-do," and Rusty and Lorraine returned to their grieving community.

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

Thanks to **Spectra Productions** and **KTVB Channel 7** for again giving us the Trout Pond at the Spring Sportsmen's Show as a fundraiser for our work.

We thank all those who designated us to receive their donations through the recent United Way Fund pledging.

Thanks to **Mr. Arnold Buursink** for donating a DVD player which we will use both for training materials and for public presentations.

We also thank the **Boise Snowmobile Club** for their gift of four packs with shovels, probes, flagging and hydration bladders for use on searches.

(Cont. from p. 1)

As a fully accredited team in the Mountain Rescue Association (MRA), we are required to undergo testing of our skills on a periodic basis. On March 4-6, the Intermountain Region of the MRA gathered at Brighton Ski Resort outside Salt Lake City. Teams from Idaho, Utah and Montana took part. Salt Lake County Search and Rescue hosted the event, and many thanks go to Steve Achelis for heading it up. Attending the recertification for IMSARU were Bob Meredith, Jeff Munn, Aimee Hastriter, Jerry Newland, Eric Zuber, Tim Henning, Phil Sander, Martha Vandivort, Bill Lindenau and yours truly Brad Acker.

Being excited to get the weekend underway, we left Boise early and got to the Brighton ski area before any of the other teams. The registration table was not even set up yet, and we had even stopped at the Black Diamond store to drool over gear. This early arrival was a good thing because the sleeping accommodations were first-come first-served. The weekend was already shaping up to be pretty good. We made a great pick on accommodations, The Brighton Manor. We all got to sleep in a bed; some of us had to share but still we got a bed! Dinner that night was on our own and, not wanting to drive all the way back to Salt Lake City, we tried a restaurant a couple of miles down the Big Cotton Wood Canyon. The food was good but the term; "Mountain Prices" definitely did apply.

The next day, Saturday, 6 am came pretty early and we were up and hauling gear to the base of operations, the rustic Wasatch Mountain Lodge. It was easy to get us all there because this was also the location for breakfast. After a wonderful breakfast, all the evaluators were briefed and we received our assignments for the day. Each unit needed to provide two evaluators; Bob Meredith and Jeff Munn served as evaluators on behalf of IMSARU. Units were also asked to provide some victims if we had people to spare. We did, so Martha and Phil were nice enough to volunteer, not knowing of course what it was they would be asked to do. The rest of us headed uphill with sled in tow. Up, up and up. Did I mention up? The base area is at 8755 feet, so right off the bat you're a couple of O-2s short of a full deck. Add a sled full of gear and an 800-foot vertical climb.

Needless to say, we were happy when we reached our avalanche scenario location. We located the reporting party and found out what had happened to him and his friends. We had four victims to look for. Two of us started a course search with our avalanche beacons and quickly found the first partially buried victim (Martha). She was injured and frantic. We called for medical attention and continued our search. Within ten minutes we located and unburied two victims that had transceivers and started a probe line to locate the fourth victim who had not been wearing an avalanche transceiver. A couple of minutes into the probing we located the fourth victim and dug him out. Meanwhile, our team packaged Martha, the first victim, placed her in a litter and removed her from the scene. After we completed our scenario it was time for lunch. We hiked up a little further to a small shelf, above which the high angle scenarios were taking place. We munched on a great sack lunch and bottled water, all of which was hauled up by Bonneville County SAR because the snowmobile could not make it up that far.

After lunch we headed over to the personal skills area. We were tested on placing snow anchors and building systems, self-arrest, over-snow travel with crampons, knot-tying skills, and avalanche transceiver search. We all did pretty well but Tim Henning stood out by finding the two

buried transceivers in the fastest time. In addition, Tim was using his Ortovox F2, dual frequency transceiver. This just supports what experts have been saying with regard to all this new digital transceiver technology. If you don't practice with your transceiver and know what it is telling you, it's no good. Good job, Tim!

We all slept pretty well that night and started it all over again Sunday morning at 6 am. After breakfast we headed back uphill to perform our high angle rescue. This time we had to climb even farther up than the day before. Sometimes I'm amazed at the places someone will go just to get hurt. When we reached the scene Jerry acted as medical provider and, with the help of Tim and Bill, packaged the patient. Meanwhile, we set up a lowering system using one large tree as a main line anchor and placed three pickets as dead-men for a belay system. The victim was in an interesting position so it took a little while to get him immobilized and placed in the basket. Jerry and the victim were lowered to the slopes below and Tim rappelled on a separate line to help tend the litter. In the process, as part of the skills testing, we had to pass a knot on the main line system. This was done smoothly with Phil working the brake bar and Eric working the load release hitch. With the scenario completed, it was time to pack up and get down.

We had a debrief of the scenario and headed back to the lodge for lunch. The weather was great the entire weekend and the roads were good for driving. It was hard to believe that we were done with winter recertification. For months leading up to this event, we practiced all our different skills over many weekends and during Tuesday night meetings. Winston Cheyney put on a good avalanche training class and field outing. We explored more of the ground around Tim Henning's cabin during a winter patient packaging training weekend. Phil Sanders and Eric Zuber got to take their first steps over the edge of an ice sheet to pull themselves across a high line we build at the base of Smith Falls during another training weekend at Bob Meredith's cabin. We got to soak it all up and relax for the next three hours, until we stopped for dinner and started to talk about the summer recertification that we will host in July!

### **ATV IN RIVER; DRIVER MISSING – APRIL 9, 2005** **--CHARLOTTE GUNN**

On Friday, April 8, a 48-year-old man and his 26-year-old son left the family camp above Twin Springs at about 11 p.m. on an ATV to go to a hot springs. About a mile from their camp, the ATV left the road; it and both men tumbled down a steep embankment and into the Boise River. The younger man was able to climb back up to the road and get help. The older man had disappeared. (The river is not especially deep in this spot—witnesses said the wheels of the overturned ATV were visible above the water—but it is very swift at this time of year.)

The call for help went to Elmore County, even though the reported location of “seven miles downstream from Twin Springs” is in Boise County. Jim Noland requested our help at midnight, and we responded with a team of eight. (The actual site was about seven miles upstream from Twin Springs, and so was in Elmore County.) The drive up around Lucky Peak and Arrowrock reservoirs was as narrow, twisty and rough as we remembered it; darkness, lack of sleep and deer all over the road did not improve it.

The younger man had an obvious fracture of facial bones and was transported by helicopter to a

Boise hospital while those on scene searched for his father. Our team arrived at the site just as the searchers from Wilderness Ranch Fire Department found the body washed up at the edge of the river, about three-quarters of a mile downstream from the accident location. We were released at 3:45 a.m. to make the long drive back to town.

IMSARU members responding included Eric Zuber, Everett Wood, Dan Scovel, Tom Kearney, Linda Kearney, Chris Harry, George Gunn and Charlotte Gunn.

Note to those of you who participated in the Shemwell search: Suzanne called Saturday evening to thank us for our response. She stated that the subjects are related to their friend Herve, and that the younger man apparently had no other serious injuries except the smashed jaw, which was surgically repaired today.

### **RAVALLI COUNTY SEARCH AND RESCUE TEAM, M.R.A. CANDI-DATES—EXTREME TRAINING, APRIL 7-8**

In case you missed the news reports, Ravalli County Search and Rescue Team had a spectacular mission just a month after passing the first of their three field tests to qualify as a Mountain Rescue Association team. According to the reports, a college student, hiking with friends, fell at least 100 feet down steep rock, fracturing his skull, pelvis and hand bones, plus injuring neck vertebrae, a knee and teeth. His friends were able to call for help via cell phone, but there was no helicopter available that was equipped to extract him—so Ravalli County did it the old-fashioned way.

The following information is again based on media reports: Ravalli County and an accompanying EMT performed first aid, used a full-body vacuum splint to immobilize the patient, then lowered him in a Stokes litter some 650 feet in two pitches. If that wasn't enough, the bottom pitch ended in a waist-high creek, from which point the team carried the litter a few hundred feet to an ambulance.

**Great job, Ravalli County! After that, your official high-angle rock test in July should be a piece of cake.**

### **TROUT POND 2005 --LESLIE ROBERTSON**

David Beale of Spectra Productions promised me that he ordered great weather for the 2005 Trout Pond at the Spring Sportsmen's Show and boy, did he deliver! In my ten-year memory of doing this event, it was the first time that we did not have snow. The good weather brought lots of junior fishermen, which "netted" IMSARU about \$2,000.

As always, our heartfelt thanks go out to our sponsors: Spectra Productions and KTVB Channel 7. Special thanks to Mick and Jase Brunson for volunteering to work three shifts, and to Tom and Linda Kearney as well as Charlotte and George Gunn for working two shifts each.

**CALENDAR**

April 16	Race to Robie Creek – All day; lots of help needed!	
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	K9 Handlers Meet	6:00 p.m.
April 26	Business Meeting, including presentation of BSU Communications Class project	7:30 p.m. At the Compound

**NOTE CHANGES IN TRAINING SCHEDULE FOR MAY!**

May 3	SAR Training – Low Angle Rescue – Jerry Newland	7:30 p.m. At the Compound
May 7	K9 Team Training – Call Winston Cheyney for details.	
May 10	SAR Training – High Angle Rescue – Jeff Munn	7:30 p.m. At the Compound
May 14-15	SAR Field Training – Systems – Jerry & Jeff	Time & Place TBA
May 17	Litter Attendant Skills/Medical Care during Raising or Lowering	7:30 p.m. At the Compound
May 24	Business Meeting	7:30 p.m. At the Compound
May 31	NO MEETING SCHEDULED AT THIS TIME	
June 4	K9 Team Training	Time & Place TBA
June 7	SAR Training – Incident Command System	7:30 p.m. At the Compound
June 14	SAR Training – Search	7:30 p.m. At the Compound
June 18-19	SAR Field Training – Mock Mission	Time & Place TBA
June 21	SAR Training – Litter Attendant – Scree Evacuation	7:30 p.m. At the Compound

- |            |   |                              |
|------------|---|------------------------------|
| July 5     | Tie up loose ends for the Recertification Weekend                                   | 7:30 p.m.<br>At the Compound |
| July 12    | Pack for Rock and Search Recertification Weekend                                    | 7:30 p.m.<br>At the Compound |
| July 15-17 | RECERTIFICATION WEEKEND – ALL members needed for teams, evaluators, logistics, etc. | Details available soon.      |

ALSO PUT ON YOUR SUMMER CALENDAR THE DATES FOR THE WESTERN IDAHO FAIR, AUGUST 19-28. Yes, it runs through Sunday this year. We will need everyone's help to set up the booth, process and sell corn, and take down the booth; it's the major part of our income for the year!

**SERVICE LEARNING PROJECT BENEFITS IMSARU AND BSU  
STUDENTS  
--PAT TRUMAN**

Eight Technical Communication graduate students who are enrolled in Dr. Roger Munger's English 519 Publications Management course at Boise State University are well on the way to finishing our Service Learning project of developing new training and outreach documents with IMSARU. On March 7, IMSARU Training Director George Gunn, Dr. Munger, and our team liaison Debra Baker signed the Project Plan signifying agreement regarding the project purpose, document content and formats, and draft review and deliverable deadlines.

Working in subteams to accomplish our goals, the E519 Team is developing a New Member Manual and an Instructor PowerPoint presentation and manual for Field Certification and two "About IMSARU" PowerPoint slideshows for community outreach. While providing a service to IMSARU, we are gaining valuable input from Unit members as well as "real-world" workplace experience communicating and problem-solving with clients. IMSARU's involvement fulfills a key element of Service Learning, and we are grateful for all the time and mentoring George and Charlotte Gunn, Ron Moomey, and other members are dedicating to our project progress.

**What is Service Learning?**

Service Learning combines academic study, workplace service, and reflection. The principles students learn in class are immediately applied to meeting a community need. Throughout the semester, students are given in-class opportunities to reflect on how course information relates to their service project work, including input received from the community organization client. The Service Learning movement is international. Students at all education levels are involved in service learning classes. You can find out more about Service Learning at:

[www.servicelearning.org](http://www.servicelearning.org)



**E519 Team:** (Seated) Pat Truman, Karen Dunlop, Angela Fleischmann, and Beth Mooney. (Standing) Lori Pennington, Shane Smith, Debra Baker, and Jeremy Jensen.

## What is Technical Communication?

Technical communicators are professionals who write and develop information products such as web pages, procedure and training manuals, reports, proposals, software help files, white papers, data sheets and marketing publications.



Dr. Roger Munger smiles to inspire!

Technical communicators work in business, industry, and government, and more than half work in computer hardware or software companies. If a person can write well, is curious about science and technology, enjoys interacting with people, likes learning new ideas, and has the ability to work independently, then the field of Technical Communication might fit well with his or her professional goals. Boise State University offers a BA degree in English with a Technical Communication emphasis, a Masters degree in Technical Communication, and two Technical Communication Certificates. You can learn more about BSU Tech Comm programs at [www.boisestate.edu/techcomm](http://www.boisestate.edu/techcomm) and by using the terms “technical communicator” or “technical writer” to search the Internet or online career sites such as [www.monster.com](http://www.monster.com).

At the April 26 IMSARU business meeting, the E519 Team will formally present our Project package to IMSARU officers and members attending that evening. We met many of you at the January 29 Field Certification training, and we look forward to seeing you all again.



Tom and Karen are still smiling after hours on their feet.

—Photo by C. Harry

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