

WEB EDITION

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RESCUE

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

FOUNDING MEMBER:
**MOUNTAIN RESCUE
ASSOCIATION**



MISSING ATV RIDER IN BANNER RIDGE AREA – OCTOBER 1, 2006 --DAVID GOMEZ AND CHARLOTTE GUNN

The phone tree was activated at 8 a.m. on Sunday to let us know there was a mission. This being the weekend of the tracking class in McCall, there was some uncertainty as to how many people would show for the search. Fortunately, a dozen members responded.



Unfamiliar with the area + Unfamiliar with the machine + Traveling alone =
TROUBLE.

—Photo by D. Gomez

Mission: An ATV rider was last seen Saturday morning, riding toward the Enchanted Valley Overlook in the mountains near Lowman. The rider was unfamiliar with the terrain and riding a borrowed machine. We were looking for a 42-year-old male with a history of medical problems that included possible blackouts if proper medication was not taken; we were told that he had no food, water nor medications with him and assumed he had spent the night out in the mountains.

Several searchers were already involved before we got there, including Forest Service personnel, Sher-

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iff's deputies, volunteer firemen from Lowman, the owner of the ATV and his friends. As O.L., Jerry met us at the Boise County Sheriff's Office and briefed us before we headed up to the Banner Ridge Road to set up base camp. On the way up Banner Ridge, we came to a dirt turn-off that a Forest Service officer had flagged because there was a fresh single set of ATV tracks heading down it. Jerry sent David and Lee down that turnoff with specific instructions on what to do and look for, while the rest of the team headed on up to find a good spot for base camp.

Base Camp (C.G.): There were several requirements for base camp—near enough the ridge-top to have communications with both sides, space to park vehicles and set up shelters, and coverage for our satellite phone. We tried to set up the command post so that Jerry would have a gorgeous view across the valley, but had to move to the other side to access the satellites. Even before the shelter was up, we were trying to keep track of where the other searchers were working and what they had covered, in order to select our own search areas. Dog

kennels went in the shade, people sorted through their packs to prepare for the rough terrain, and Everett and Ron did the first sweep on their ATV's. Foot teams were just ready to head out when the call came from Team 1.



Team 1 (D.G.): Lee and I started our sweep at

about 11 a.m. We were told to take the road to its end, searching any forks off the road as we went and flagging them as checked. The map showed this road as a dead end, so we would go back up to Banner Ridge Road and continue to base camp after completion of our assignment. After checking a couple of small forks off the main road, Lee and I realized that we were following a single set of ATV tracks on a dead-end road. Either we were going to find a trail not on the map for the ATV to go another way, or we were going to find an ATV. We hiked 4.5 easy miles on the road and followed the tracks right to the missing ATV at

It was a beautiful day to be in the mountains, as long as you weren't the one lost.

—Photo by D. Gomez

1:30 p.m. The machine had gotten stuck while trying to cross over a fallen tree on the trail. We did a quick search of the area but no ATV rider was in sight. We did manage to find some good footprints and flagged them for later analysis. Our instructions were then to preserve the scene until the dog teams could get there.



Two computers, three radios, a satellite phone... Don't you wish for the "good old days" Jerry?

—Photo by K. Walker

The dog teams arrived, as did our ATV searchers, foot searchers, the Boise County deputy and a Forest Service officer. We were a bit startled that the two officers were carrying high-powered rifles, but learned that this was in reaction to our reporting an empty firearm holster on the found ATV. Breeze (a tracking/trailing dog) was not definite on direction of travel, but did show strong interest in the ravine just off the road; Tom (Breeze's handler) suggested that an air-scent dog would be most effective at searching that ravine. Charlotte's reply was not totally cheerful, but she, Xena and Dominick did make the trek down, across and back up to the road, with no finds. At about this point, Joe Corlett of the Ada County Aerial Sheriffs arrived overhead with Bob as aerial observer, and they covered a lot of ground along likely travel routes.

Having searched the immediate area around the ATV with no luck, we decided to send one dog team (Dominick, David, Lori and Charlotte with Xena) zig-zagging along a series of ridges that formed a logical route to Highway 21, which was occasionally visible and audible from our location. It was only about one and one-half miles, but included an 1,100-foot elevation change. The other dog team (Tom with Breeze, Rick and Lee) would continue searching roadsides back up to where we had left our trucks on the far side of a wash-out.

When the downhill team reached Highway 21, we radioed for a vehicle pick-up, as we were several miles away from and many feet below base camp. To our surprise, the response was that we would have to walk to the bridge and cross the river before a vehicle could get to us...but there was no river in sight. [It later became clear that base camp, hearing our radio transmissions through multiple relays, thought we had gone down a different drainage and come out on the far side of Lowman.]

The good news was that while we were waiting for Kris to arrive and transport us, the call came through that the missing man had walked into Lowman. He was being treated by Lowman Ambulance personnel for hypothermia, with a core temperature of 94 degrees, but did not seem to have major problems.

IMSARU participants included: Everett Wood with ATV, Kris Walker, Rick Thompson, Lori Thompson, Lee Pierce, Jerry Newland (O.L.), Ron Moomey with ATV, Dominick Merrell, Bob Meredith (aerial observer), Tom Kearney with Breeze, Chris Harry, Charlotte Gunn with Xena, David Gomez, and Ada County Aerial Sheriffs pilot Joe Corlett.

Lessons reinforced:

1. Even after picking a ridgetop location, direct communication is not guaranteed. The satellite phone worked most of the time for calls to Boise, but field teams often had to relay through other teams. If GPS coordinates come through accurately after a couple of relays, consider yourself lucky.
2. Descriptions of medical conditions and terrain led us to expect a subject who was injured or worse. We still called his name and sent messages over the Family Service radio on the channel he was supposed to be using. This was the right thing to do, even though he couldn't hear us this time.
3. David had two dirt bikes in his pickup but no experienced rider to go with him. It turned out that the dirt bike would have made the trip down the dirt road to the missing ATV much faster, but we were still right to not send a solo searcher into that terrain.
4. A subject who has a 24-hour or more head start can be a long way from the Last Known Point (the stranded ATV).

ANNOUNCEMENTS

In July, Linda Kearney and Carl Kidwell earned their *Basic Tracker* status. They were also two of the ten members who attended the end-of-September class in McCall, and we applaud their developing skills.

OFFICERS ELECTED FOR 2006 --CHARLOTTE GUNN

Elections on October 3 resulted in the following people being chosen to lead IMSARU through another year. An asterisk indicates that the individual held the same position for 2005.

Coordinator – Rod Knopp *
President – Jerry Newland *
Vice President – Dan Scovel *
Secretary – Tony Barrett *
Treasurer – Phil O’Bryan *
Logistics Director – Chris Harry *

Rescue Director – Bob Meredith *
Public Relations – Kris Scovel *
Medical Director – Collin Garner
Training Director – Eric Zuber
Facilities Manager – Carl Kidwell

Thanks to everyone who accepted nominations for office, for being willing to take on the work and responsibility. And to those who are not officials: Remember that these jobs are bigger than any individuals can/should do alone. It is the officers’ job to see that things get done—not to do it all themselves. Do your part by volunteering for one or more projects...maybe spearheading a fundraising activity or mowing the grass every week during the growing season or cleaning the bathroom and/or floors every week or two. Say yes when someone asks you to help, but don’t just sit back and wait to be asked; talk to the officer in charge of the activity for which you have the interest and ability.

You can even invent a title for your volunteer/appointed job and sound as important as the people who are continuing in their non-elected (and non-Board) positions for another year:

New Member Coordinator – Ron Moomey
Web Master – Dave Ritzenthaler

Financial Officer – Charlotte Gunn
Newsletter Editor – Charlotte Gunn



Dan Scovel teaching at the most recent **Field Certification** class which met on Saturday, September 16. The following applicants attended: Randy Kyrias, Carrie Laird, Clint Matthews, Owen Miller, Josh Nichols. Welcome to all of you, and we look forward to your becoming active in our unit.

CALENDAR

Oct. 17	Medical Training	7:30 p.m. At the Compound
Oct. 22	K9 Training – Contact Tom Kearney at 321-1175	
Oct. 24	Business Meeting	7:30 p.m. At the Compound
Oct. 26	(THURSDAY) Planning & Budget Session For all 2006 and 2007 Officers	7:00 p.m. At the Compound
Oct. 31	NO MEETING unless you hear otherwise. Happy Hallowe'en!	
Nov. 4	K9 Training – Contact Martha Vandivort at 338-0284	
Nov. 7	General Meeting	7:30 p.m. At the Compound
Nov. 14	SAR Training – Sign Aware --Dan Scovel and Kris Scovel	7:30 p.m. At the Compound
Nov. 18	SAR Field Training – Sign Aware	Time & Place TBA
Nov. 19	K9 Training – Contact Ann Finley at 336-1485	
Nov. 21	Medical Training	7:30 p.m. At the Compound
Nov. 28	Business Meeting	7:30 p.m. At the Compound
Dec. 2	Christmas Party at the Lindenaus' See information and directions in this issue.	7:00 p.m.
Dec. 3	K9 Training – Contact Linda Kearney at 321-1175 (Date is tentative.)	
Dec. 5	General Meeting	7:30 p.m. At the Compound
Dec. 12	SAR Training (NO Field Training the following weekend)	7:30 p.m. At the Compound

A DAY IN THE CORN BOOTH --DAVID GOMEZ

Another year and another successful Corn Booth at the Western Idaho Fair! I searched the archives and found some day-by-day accounts of time spent in the Corn Booth, so this year I thought I would be different. A Day in the Corn Booth is the story I will tell.

A day in the Corn Booth for me is usually at the end of a working day. I have worked all day and race to the Corn Booth to take over from the day shift. I make sure I have the tickets I need to get in and head for the Fair. As I enter the Fair, I look around at all the booths, scoping out the food we will want to trade for later.

I get to the Corn Booth and responsibilities slowly shift from day crew to night crew. There is a list of who should be there, but where each works is decided as we arrive. Where do I feel like working today? There are several jobs available to choose or be chosen for.



Charlotte and Everett make one last check before opening for business.

Photo by B. Lindenau

Shucker: The most relaxing of the positions available. You sit in the back of the booth and shuck corn. You can usually have a good conversation with fellow shuckers and it is a good opportunity to get to know people better. Last year I tried to get my fellow shuckers to strike up a chant but never got any takers; this year I did manage to find some adventurous ones to sing camp songs to pass the time. In this job you really have to watch out for the corn silk, as the corn silk police come by to make sure you are getting all the “hairs” off the ears.

Cook: The cook is in charge of making sure that we have enough corn cooked and ready to go. You get a basket of corn (25-35 ears) and put it in a big pot of water in the field stove for seven minutes.

After seven minutes, you hook the basket and pour the corn into a giant bin for the rest of the team to work on. The tricky part of this job is having the right amount of corn cooking at the right times so that you don't run out during a rush. I think one of you still owes me on a bet you lost because I didn't run out of corn the entire night. The hazards of this job include getting burned and, worse, getting heckled if you run out of corn.

Jammer: This sounds pretty brutal but turns out to be a pretty easy job as well. Once the wet hot corn is unloaded from the basket into the bin, it is your job to jam the skewers in the ends. A skewer is necessary so that consumers can have loads of butter in their mouths and not on their hands.

Butter Spreader: This job entails taking a brush and slathering each ear with loads of melted butter. This is probably the secret ingredient that makes our corn the best. The Butter Spreader is also in charge of quality control, watching for damaged ears or broken skewers.

Sellers: Working the front counter is probably one of the harder jobs because you have to be on your toes most of the time. You get a few breaks now and then but you also get some rushes when there are several lines of people waiting to buy corn and soda. One in this position does get to see more of the people who go to the Fair. The Seller is also in charge of getting the last few ears sold at the end of the night. You do this by calling them in just like you would call a chicken at feeding time.

Trader: Ahhhh, the most rewarding of the positions at the Corn Booth. The traders are not chosen or trained; they are born and bred to do the job. A Trader takes a lull in the action and turns it into a cornucopia of Fair food for the workers at the Corn Booth. The idea is to trade corn for various samples of food from other booths. If it's done correctly, everyone goes home feeling a few pounds heavier at the end of the shift. From personal experience I can say there is a lot of fattening food available for trading at the Fair.

At the end of the night, everyone pitches in to get things cleaned up and ready for the next morning. You fill the salt and pepper shakers, restock the napkin holders and make sure all the pans and utensils are cleaned. All the garbage goes to the overflowing dumpsters. Everything can usually be done in half an hour or so, depending on how big a crew is working.

As you walk away from the Fair, you have a sense of accomplishment since you know you helped enable IMSARU to operate for another year. You also got to know some of your fellow members by name and by character so that when you go out on missions you will know your teammates better. Although it is demanding to work at the Corn Booth after a full day on my regular job, it can also be lots of fun. I really enjoyed working there this year and look forward to doing it again next year.

[Editor's Note: We thank everyone who worked at the Corn Booth, on the preparations and on the final clean-up. In addition to our members, many relatives, friends and community members contributed their volunteer labor. Special thanks go to Bob Meredith, who disassembled, cleaned and repaired our stoves as well as adding the leveling legs required by the Fire Marshall; to Chris Harry, who took charge of setting up and tearing down the booth; to Rose Wood, Everett Wood and Susan Read, who covered the weekday daytime shifts; to Martha Vandivort for scheduling the workers.]

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 2, AT 7:00 P.M.

THE CHRISTMAS PARTY COMETH

--CHARLOTTE GUNN

Mark your calendar now for Saturday, December 2, at 7 p.m. This is our big social occasion and celebration each year. It will be a potluck dinner, with soft drinks, hot beverages and table service supplied by the unit. Spouses and special friends are invited to join us and listen to us tell stories (mostly true) of adventures in 2006 and in years past. Dress is as casual or as fancy as you choose...but you won't see much international orange.

We will present awards for special service, and also humorous awards for embarrassing or just plain funny moments. Nomination forms for both kinds of awards are available in the meeting room and need to be filled out before the end of October. Take a few minutes to write your praise of members who have done more than their share and your version of incidents that everyone can smile at.

This year the party will be held at the home of Bill and Marty Lindenau, at 1407 S. Cotterell Way. The following directions come from Bill; if you get lost on the way, call Bill at 850-3055.

“Heading west on Overland, pass Maple Grove and turn right (north) on Cotterell Way. Stay to the right past Delaware. After you pass Delaware, there are two big willow trees, a stump, a pine tree and a maple tree in the yard on the left. The house has a brown roof.”

MANTRACKING CLASS, SEPTEMBER 29-OCTOBER 1, 2006

--CARL KIDWELL

The tracking class in McCall may have left the search unit a little short-handed, as ten of us were gone. As we drove by the Lowman turn-off on the way home, we even made jokes, “Hey, maybe we should head home through Lowman just in case there is a search.” When we pulled into town at about 5 p.m. on Sunday, Linda noticed that her husband's van was not in the driveway; Tom and one of their search dogs were gone. We called the Compound and Rod confirmed that there was a search in progress up near Lowman. We were asked to stand by while Rod checked with the search manager.

I am not sure if we were ready for a search. We were tired and our eyes were tired. Learning to track is demanding but rewarding. The tracking class began three days earlier, on Friday, and lasted through Sunday. IMSARU sponsored the class presented by Joel Hardin Professional Tracking Services. Most of us arrived on Thursday, the day before class was to begin. The early arrival gave us a chance to choose our accommodations. Just over half of the IMSARU members attending stayed at a three-bedroom cabin on the lake, informally dubbed Lakeside Manor. In the evenings, we could sit on the deck and watch the deer pass on the beach below us. Arriving early also gave us the opportunity to have Thursday evening dinner at Lardo's. This was to be our final meal before surrendering to institutional food.

At 7:00 the next morning, we found that the institutional food was actually quite tasty. Class began at 8:00. The first thing that you would notice about the class is its size. There were close to forty people, including the three instructors. Attendees came from several different counties in Idaho, plus from Montana, Oregon, Washington, Wyoming, and Canada. After several hours of classroom training, we were all out in the field. Several advanced students were separated from the class to work on advanced tracking problems while the rest of us divided into eight groups of three and followed separate tracks or lines of sign.



Marv tells “war stories” during an eye break

Photo by B. Lindenau

One student was so focused on reading sign that he did not notice he was stepping on a hornets’ nest. The mad hornets immediately swarmed into the group of thirty people. There were several nasty stings from the incident. Pres, an instructor, was stung on the hand, causing it to swell to about twice its size. Our own Linda also received a couple of stings on the arm. Eventually things settled down and tracking resumed. After a dinner break, we were all back in the field to track at night with flashlights. We called it a day at about 10:00 p.m.

The next day we continued with field training. The bees did not cause any more interruptions. However, a bear and her cub wandered over to the sign lines. The bears apparently did not have any interest in the thirty people staring at the ground. So the bears, along with about a dozen or so deer, would nonchalantly tromp over the sign lines, giving the students a sample of field contamination. Training Saturday lasted until dinner and continued in the field Sunday morning until noon. Several of the students who have had previous training were given task-oriented field exercises.

Everyone who attended the class learned from it. The event gave us a chance to develop tracking skills using local terrain. Joel Hardin is one of the best trackers in the world. He has a knack for teaching you a little more than what you had intended to learn. It was also a great opportunity to



Basic tracking students spend a lot of time on their knees.
—Photo by B. Lindenau

mingle with some of our fellow searchers from Idaho and beyond. This class was a big event; one can only imagine how much preparation and planning went into this. Thank you, Dan and Kris Scovel, for organizing the event (although Dan claims that it was mainly Kris’s effort). Also, thanks to George Gunn for finding the location. The Pilgrim Cove church camp provided great lodging and food. IMSARU members attending the class included Zandra Baldwin, Ann Finley, George Gunn, Linda Kearney, Carl Kidwell, Karen Limani, Bill Lindenau, Josh Nichols, Dan Scovel, and Kris Scovel.

But after three days of staring at the details in the dirt, our eyes were sour. Plus, there was the two-hour car ride to get back to Linda’s drive-

way. We were a little tired for a search, but I would not have wanted to miss that training. The phone rang. It was Rod, back at the Compound, regarding the status of the missing person in Lowman. That story is someone else’s article.

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THANK YOU to the individuals and organizations who supported us with cash donations:

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All members of Idaho Mountain Search and Rescue Unit, Inc. are volunteers who donate their time and supply their own personal equipment. They also pay the fees to attend outside training events such as the Mantracking course and Search Dog seminars. Group expenses, such as specialized rescue equipment, unit trucks, in-house training and safety education presentations, are funded by fundraising projects, dues and donations. Some very specific direct expenses of search-and-rescue missions are reimbursed by the state search-and-rescue fund. (The latter does not reimburse any expenses for body searches.)

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