

WEB EDITION

RESCUE

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

FOUNDING MEMBER:
MOUNTAIN RESCUE ASSOCIATION



**MISSING 87-YEAR-OLD NEAR CLAYTON (CUSTER COUNTY)
ANOTHER MIRACLE IN THE MOUNTAINS– JULY 19-20, 2008
--CHARLOTTE GUNN**

As noted elsewhere in this issue, we were just starting our in-house mantracking class at the Scovels' property near Donnelly when Custer County requested help on a search. An 87-year-old male had disappeared late Friday morning; his ATV was also gone and everyone assumed he had



Litter packaging for a steep carry-out.

Photo by D. Cone

gone for a short ride on one of the roads or trails near home, as he often did. However, the missing man has heart problems, takes medications, has a pacemaker, and can't walk very well or very far, so family began to worry when he did not return. They called the Custer County Search and Rescue, and were joined by many relatives, neighbors

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2519 Federal Way, Boise ID 83705. Editor: Charlotte Gunn, Phone (208) 378-7787 or e-mail
cpgunn@cableone.net Visit our web site at www.imsaru.org

and friends with ATVs, motorcycles, horses and 4wd pickups, and a helicopter from Reeder Flying Service. The area is huge, with many choices of roads and trails, some fairly gentle and some very challenging. When there was no trace of the missing man by Saturday morning, Custer County requested IMSARU's help and we started the long drive.



Searchers came from miles around.

Photo by W. Kimball

The majority of our searchers came down from the Donnelly area, across to Lowman where we met those coming from Boise, and back up through Stanley. A few miles north of Clayton, we turned at the East Fork of the Salmon and continued another 17 miles or so to base camp at the home of the missing person.

Custer County, under the direction of Levi Maydole, was well-

organized, with a converted ambulance as command center, radios, computers, whiteboard listing searchers and their areas, and communications people keeping lists of who was in the field and who had returned. Most of the searchers were familiar with the terrain and tossed around names like the Mine, Railroad Ridge, Road Creek Road, Bluett Creek, etc. as though everyone knew them. It was a bit hectic making the transfer to us—the people from way down in Boise who knew neither the current searchers nor the terrain—but Custer County resources needed a break. If we would take over for the rest of Saturday and Sunday, they could take it up again on Monday. In mid-afternoon there was a report that a worker at the mine said he had seen the missing man there at around noon on Friday, but O.L. Dan Scovel was unable to confirm this report until several hours later. In the meantime, our searchers joined in the road and trail checks and Kim became part of a team to scour the river above and below the home. (Think high



The terrain for search and carry-out.

Photo by D. Cone

weeds, wet boots, aggressive insects....) I was driven by local searcher Phil and his son to the mine, with the request to search it on foot, talk with workers there, etc.; upon arrival it became obvious that the three of us could not begin to accomplish that in the remaining daylight, but we had thoroughly scoured the roadsides for any sign that a vehicle could have gone over the edge.

By briefing at 6:30 a.m. Saturday morning, the report from the mine worker had been confirmed. Dan, Kris and Carl had laid out search areas in that vicinity for more thorough combing. Instructions were that the hasty search had been well done; it was now time to slow down and check everything. (There were some interesting moments when the locals described the eccentric man who lives mostly in the deserted mining town, does not like people poking around, has booby-trapped some places and has been known to shoot at people he didn't want there. He was also described as friends with the missing man, so there was no suspicion of foul play in that sense, but the teams assigned to carefully search the mine buildings were relieved when the eccentric was absent for the day.) There were again ATVs, 4wd trucks, motorcycles, horses, and a few foot soldiers. Wade, Kim and I took Xena up the Bluett Creek drainage, with the task of searching the greenery that grows along the creek. Wade generously chose the rough side of the creek; Kim and I found the heat, steep terrain and altitude (from about 6,000 feet at base camp to near 7,000 feet after a mile's hike) enough challenge; when Xena got hot, she simply found access to wade into the creek.

With 48 hours elapsed, the missing man's health problems, and the fact that no one had spotted his ATV in any of the likely places, Saturday morning's mood was sober. However, it was only mid-morning when the aerial searchers spotted "a trace" across the hillside and followed it to the ATV and the subject. (The pilot would later tell us they had flown that same area twice on Friday, finding nothing, but the light angle was apparently different this time.) The missing man had taken his ATV much farther up a rough area than anyone would have expected and had no food, water or other emergency supplies. He reported he had become disoriented, didn't feel well, and decided to just wait for someone to find him...and why had it taken us so long?! A Mackie EMT and many searchers responded to that spot while the air ambulance was on its way; when the litter and more oxygen arrived, the subject was packaged for a carry-out of perhaps half a mile to a pickup, which then transported him on down to the selected LZ. One of our team members reported that the young men designated to clear the trail for the litter bearers did their task so enthusiastically you could have driven a school bus through. Once the helicopter departed for a Boise hospital, it was celebration time. Euphoria is a mild word for the mood as searchers—the majority of them relatives, neighbors and friends of the family—returned to base camp. There was more food than the mob could eat, cold drinks, smiles and tears and lots of hugs. There were even plots to restrict future ATV expeditions--maybe trade the subject's 4wd machine for a 2wd so he couldn't go so far on rough trails....

IMSARU members who then packed for the long drive home included Jimmie Yorgensen, Avery Wynings, Tom Wheless, Rick Thompson, Lori Thompson, Kris Scovel, Dan Scovel, Lee Pierce, William Miller, Beverly Miller, Carl Kidwell, Tom Kearney with Breeze, Linda Kearney, Kim Juda, Charlotte Gunn with Xena, John Ferguson (all of whom had worked both days), Dominick Merrell, Mac Mackintosh, Wade Kimball, Neil Goodfellow and Danny Cone. (The last five had driven up in the wee hours of Sunday morning to join the search.) In addition, Collin Garner participated on Saturday; Rod Knopp and Chris Harry handled in-town coordination.

We were pleased to be able to help with this successful search, but the heaviest work was done by Custer County people: Levi and the Custer County SAR had the command post extremely well organized, with Linda and Linda handling communications throughout the search; fifteen of their members worked one or more days. Family members, friends and neighbors searched all day from when they heard of the problem, then returned to do more of the same on Saturday and Sunday; they not only knew the terrain but were equipped and ready to go wherever needed. (We got the names of 45 spontaneous volunteers from the community, and there may have been even more.) Two professional packers searched all day Saturday; a Forest Service officer and two other horsewomen covered several areas; helicopter pilot Steve West from Reeder Flying Service flew with observers and was ultimately the winning resource.

IT WOULD HAVE BEEN A GREAT MANTRACKING CLASS --CHARLOTTE GUNN

Kris Scovel, Dan Scovel and George Gunn set up an in-house training for July. On Tuesday and Thursday evenings (July 15 and 17), they did the classroom sessions, including some hands-on experience in drawing footprints and with the tracking box. On Friday, 14 of us went up to the Scovels' cabin near Donnelly and set up camp for the weekend in a combination of tents, RVs and spare bedrooms. The majority treated ourselves to pizza dinner in McCall; we had group meals planned for the remainder of the time and Wade was ready to prepare the Dutch oven dinner on Saturday evening. Lines of sign were laid, and Annie Pillars drove down from north Idaho as an additional instructor.

We were just finishing breakfast on Saturday morning when George came in from the porch and announced "We have a mission." Assuming he was setting the stage for the training, we smiled. However, he was serious. We knew that many IMSARU members were out of town for the weekend, so we quickly switched our focus. Those of us who had expected to sleep in the cabin or in RVs hurriedly tried to pack for less comfortable arrangements, and most of us managed to omit one or more important bits of gear. Having re-packed, we drove back down the road to Banks, across to Lowman, and up, up, up almost to Challis. For the rest of the story, see the article on the Custer County search. For the rest of our mantracking class, stay tuned for when we might reschedule.

SECOND NOTICE – DUES CHANGE

As noted in the previous issue, we have changed our dues procedure in order to better align our membership list with those of state and national organizations to whom we belong.

NEW POLICY: Beginning this fall, we will collect dues in advance for the coming year. Your dues for 2009 must be paid before election night in order for you to vote for the 2009 officers. [Elections are supposed to be the first meeting in October; they are sometimes postponed to the first week in November.] In order to be listed as an active member with the state and national organizations, your 2009 dues must be paid before January 1, 2009. Our Treasurer will hold these advance dues payments in a special category until he applies them to the 2009 budget. Questions? Talk to Phil, Jerry or Charlotte.

CALENDAR

| | | |
|-------------|---|--|
| Aug. 9 | Set up Corn Booth | 9:00 a.m. at the Fairgrounds |
| Aug. 10 | Finish Setting up Corn Booth | 10:00 a.m. Fairgrounds |
| Aug. 12 | Final Details at the Corn Booth—If Needed | |
| Aug. 15-24 | Corn Booth at the Western Idaho Fair (We sell 11 a.m.-11 p.m., but extra time is prep and clean-up.) | 10 a.m.-midnight daily |
| Aug. 25 | (MONDAY) Take down Corn Booth | As soon as you can after work. At the Fairgrounds |
| Aug. 26 | Unload Corn Booth & Put Away – Business Meeting | 7:30 p.m. Compound |
| Aug. 28 | Mantracking Training – Contact Jimmie Yorgensen at 345-1450 | |
| Sept. 2 | SAR Training | 7:30 p.m. at the Compound |
| Sept. 6-7 | SAR Field Training – Mock Mission | Time & Place T.B.A. |
| Sept. 9 | General Meeting | 7:30 p.m. at the Compound |
| Sept. 12-14 | Joel Hardin Mantracking Class at McCall – Must be Pre-registered! | |
| Sept. 16 | Medical Training | 7:30 p.m. at the Compound |
| Sept. 20 | K9 Training – Contact Winston Cheyney at 345-6329 | |
| Sept. 21 | Mantracking Training – Contact Ann Finley at 336-1485 | |
| Sept. 23 | Business Meeting | 7:30 p.m. at the Compound |
| Sept. 30 | NO MEETING SCHEDULED AT THIS TIME – STAY TUNED | |
| Oct. 3 | K9 Training – Contact Linda Kearney at 321-1175 | |
| Oct. 7 | General Meeting | 7:30 p.m. at the Compound |
| Oct. 14 | SAR Training | 7:30 p.m. at the Compound |
| Oct. 18 | SAR Field Training | Time & Place T.B.A. |
| Oct. 19 | K9 Training – Contact Kim Juda at 395-1054 or 866-3150 | |

**MISSING HIKERS--NORTH FORK OF THE BOISE RIVER
BARBER FLAT AREA--JULY 27, 2008
--CARL KIDWELL**

Most People don't plan on getting lost, stranded, or needing rescue. That is why our pagers will go off at odd hours of the night. This time the pagers went off at 12:37 a.m on Sunday morning. The Boise County Sheriff's Office requested our assistance in locating a couple of overdue hikers.

Four women left Saturday for a leadership retreat 3-hour day-hike up the Crooked River. By the time they fully realized that the trail had disappeared, they were unable to make their way back to their starting point. Equipped with a map, two of the women hiked out of the canyon to an ATV trail only to realize that they would need to follow the ATV trail for 12 miles to get to a public road. These two brave gals decided instead to descend back into the canyon and body-float down the river one and a half miles to the Forest Service road.

We arrived on scene at the Forest Service road to find a couple of Boise County Sheriff's officers and two shivering women. That left two more women somewhere up the creek (so to speak). The two that floated out had changed into dry clothes and were warming up. The other two that were still out there were not dressed for the chilly mountain nights. Plus, they were wet from trying to follow the river.

Base camp was established where the Forest Service road crosses Crooked River. This provided a location to use the emergency lights on the vehicles as attractors for our two subjects. Both unit trucks, Owen's personal vehicle and Collin's personal vehicle were well equipped with emergency lights. As a further attractant, Collin also pointed a directional spotlight up-river. The spotlight punched a hole right through the darkness and illuminated the river.

The two women who had floated out were able to provide valuable information used to formulate the initial search plans. We formed two search teams. The first team was assigned to follow the ridgeline on the north side of Crooked River and to locate the ATV trail. The second team was assigned to follow the river upstream. Both assignments offered good chances of locating the subjects and provided good containment of the search area.

The teams left base camp by 3:45 a.m.. Not much more than one hundred feet from base camp there was no trail. There was side-hilling across steep loose dirt, scree fields, or thick brush...but there was no trail. Traveling upstream was slow but that was OK. This was not a race. This was a search, in the middle of the night. Searchers would stop every 100 feet or so and call the subjects' names but the roar of the river made it difficult to listen for a response. As time progressed, listening for a response was further complicated in the early morning hours by the faint chirps from far-away awakening birds that could almost be mistaken for a lost hiker whistling.

Shortly before 7:00 a.m., searchers had a visual on the two lost hikers; within 15 minutes, a search team was with the two women. Other than being cold, shivering and having a few cuts and bruises, the women were OK. This was good news. This was great news. No member of the search teams wanted to even think about having to carry a patient out of there in a litter

across the side-hills, scree and brush. We gave the subjects dry clothing and hot tea to provide warmth. The team on the ridge could also see the subjects' location and made their way down the canyon towards them. The going was slow .

With both search teams together, team members discussed possible evacuation routes and chose to escort the two subjects downriver to base camp. One hour after finding the two subjects, both search teams had rendezvoused and the subjects had warmed up. Then everyone collectively made their way downstream towards base camp. The teams were only a mile or a little more away from the base camp, but the terrain dictated the pace. We all knew that it would still be hours before reaching it. Eventually we could hear shouting and hollering from the missing hikers' friends and relatives as we turned the final bend and spotted base.

Everyone made it back and everyone went home. The way home included a late breakfast for ten in Idaho City. IMSARU members responding to the mission (and breakfast) included Collin Garner, Dave Gomez, Chriss Harry, Tom Kearney, Carl Kidwell, Rod Knopp (In-town Coordinator, missed the breakfast--sorry Rod), Owen Miller, Patty Miller, Dan Scovel (O.L.), Tom Wheless and Avery Wynings.

IN MEMORIAM: TERRY READ

Terry Read died suddenly on July 13, 2008. He worked for many years with Idaho Mountain Search and Rescue as a volunteer at our Corn Booth at the Western Idaho Fair, including several occasions when he used his vacation time to work the weekday shifts. A couple of years ago, Terry and his wife Susan took our very worn Corn Booth aprons home to wash them...and returned the next day with new replacements. We will miss you, Terry, this August at the Fair and for many years to come.

MISSING 10-YEAR-OLD – JUNE 15, 2008 --CHARLOTTE GUNN

It was just past 10 p.m. and getting dark when the Ada County Sheriff's office asked us to help look for a ten-year-old boy who had been missing for about two hours. We asked our people to respond directly to the staging area, at State Street and the old Horseshoe Bend Road, and sixteen of them headed in from all directions. Dan Scovel was discussing search areas and tactics with the sergeant in charge when the call came in: The missing boy had contacted a private citizen several miles away, and given his name and phone number; she phoned the authorities. The boy was reported to be soaking wet—presumably from a drainage canal that traverses the area—but unharmed. Yes, this was the same deaf and autistic boy for whom we searched the Barber Park area last year when he was nine years old. And yes, he's supposed to wear a tracking device at all times but has obviously figured out how to take it off.

IMSARU members responding included: John Ferguson, Collin Garner, Charlotte Gunn, George Gunn, Chris Harry, Aimee Hastriter, Tom Kearney, Carl Kidwell, Wade Kimball, Ross Mackintosh, Dominick Merrell, Lee Pierce, Dan Scovel, Kris Scovel, Tom Wheless and Avery Wynings.

MAN MISSING FROM CAMPGROUND – JUNE 6, 2008 --CHARLOTTE GUNN

It was almost 7:30 p.m. when the call came in from Boise County that there was an apparent walkaway from Irish Point Campground at Arrowrock Reservoir, with the possibility that the missing old man might be suicidal. We learned later that the 55-year-old subject had reportedly come to Idaho from South Dakota to attempt a reconciliation with his [estranged? ex?] wife, but she wasn't interested. An acquaintance was supposed to pick him up at the campsite on Thursday but found no one there and left a note. When the acquaintance returned on Friday, his note was still in place, so he opened the tent and found inside a note of ambiguous meaning. As he should, the acquaintance then notified the Sheriff's Office.

Knowing there was limited daylight remaining, sixteen of us headed up the road around Lucky Peak Reservoir and then Arrowrock. It is a favorite drive for those who dislike smooth surface, width, straight stretches and guardrails along steep dropoffs. Upon arrival at Irish Point and after consultation with Boise County deputies, we sent out three teams: K9 Watson is cadaver certified, so he was part of the team sent to scale the steep hills above the campsite; their lights made a nice show by the time they descended just before midnight. K9 Xena is water certified, so she and her team got the shore search, which was alternately easy and very challenging; however, the slight breeze was offshore and therefore not helpful. Xena did manage to get wet and muddy before ending the sweep. The third team was mantrackers. They had a pair of shoes from the subject's tent as examples; these were obviously not on his feet when he left the tent for the last time, but the soles showed an unusual wear pattern that might be distinguishable in footprints made by different shoes. And a tracking/trailing K9-in-training attempted to pick up a direct trail from the tent.

None of us were successful. In the meantime, law enforcement continued their investigation with phone calls to South Dakota, interviews with the RP and the former wife, a media appeal for anyone who had seen the missing man, a report that he had been seen in Boise recently.... They suspended the search, pending further information. We fortified ourselves with brownies and headed home. The advantage of driving that road at night is that headlights usually give you some warning of oncoming vehicles around the many bends, so you have a chance to search for a wider spot.

IMSARU participants included Danny Cone, Ann Finley, George Gunn (O.L.), Charlotte Gunn with Xena, Chris Harry, Tim Henning, Mike Johnson, Linda Kearney, Tom Kearney with Breeze, Bill Lindenau, Ann Moser with Watson, Lee Pierce, Dan Scovel, Kris Scovel, Tom Wheless, Avery Wynings. Rod Knopp handled the in-town coordination.

FINAL CALL FOR THE CORN BOOTH 2008

Our regular schedule gets put on hold in August as we invest so much effort into our major annual fundraiser, selling corn-on-the-cob at the Western Idaho Fair. Since we are an all-volunteer group, dependent on fundraising projects and donations for our survival, we stretch ourselves to the limit. By the time you read this, the booth parts and equipment will already be loaded into vehicles and maybe even assembled at the Fairgrounds.

We set up the booth on August 9 and 10, finishing on August 12 if necessary. The booth will be open and selling corn from 11 a.m. to 11 p.m. every day of the Fair, August 15-24. We must take down the booth and transport it back to the Compound for storage on Monday, August 25, starting as soon as people can get there after work.

Members, spouses, teenage children, adult relatives, neighbors and friends are all welcome to help, and you will be surprised how many of them enjoy the chance to spend the day in a Fair booth if you just ask them. We supply the entrance tickets; you and they shuck, cook, butter and wrap the corn and then sell it. If you haven't already talked to her, call Diane Mathews at 375-3671 to volunteer.

Please help as much as you possibly can. We need 20-25 people to set up the booth and the same number to take it down, plus two shifts of workers each day of the Fair. Don't hesitate because you don't know how to do things; for every task you can learn on the job and there will be experienced people to help. See you there!

THANK YOU! THANK YOU! THANK YOU!

Lawrence and Teresa Walters for the donation in memory of Terry Read.

To the following businesses that supplied parts at discount prices for the project of getting our newly-acquired 4wd ambulance, donated by *Crouch Ambulance Service* ready to go again as a mission command center:

Gentry Ford and Dave Scott, Parts Manager (Baker City, OR) for the clutch and ring gear.

CSK PROSHOP (Ontario, OR) for the discounted Transmission Cooler.

Transmission Exchange, Inc. (Salt Lake City) for generous discounts on parts.

A1 SpeedOomotive (Fruitland, ID) for machining the press plate.

Blankinship's (Ontario, OR) for the air filter.

And we especially thank *Danny Cone* of *Cone's Automotive* (Ontario, OR) for arranging the above donations and for personally donating the labor to diagnose and repair the vehicle.

DBA Black Oak Casino (Tuolumne Band of Me-Wuks, Tuolumne, CA) for a generous cash donation to IMSARU's Side Scan Sonar Fund, in honor of Gene and Sandy Ralston's work in locating drowning victims.

All the individuals who donated to us via *United Way of Treasure Valley*.

FAREWELL TO INCA

Few of us had ever heard of a flat-coated retriever until Pam Green chose one as her second search dog. Inca filled that role as well as being a friendly family dog, the mother of a litter that provided additional search and show dogs, and an example in Pam's dog training classes. Inca died in July, having almost reached her thirteenth birthday.



What we always hope for...A happy ending to a dark steep search. (story on page 6)

WHAT/WHO IS IDAHO MOUNTAIN SEARCH AND RESCUE?

Idaho Mountain Search and Rescue Unit, Inc. is an all-volunteer group dedicated to saving lives through safety education and through search-and-rescue.

We respond whenever and wherever a law enforcement agency requests.

WE NEVER CHARGE ANYONE FOR OUR SERVICES.

Our most common task is *search*, usually away from main roads but occasionally in urban areas for children, Alzheimer's patients, etc. (We do not do felony searches nor do we rescue vehicles.) We are trained to organize searches, using the ICS procedures as appropriate, and will search on foot or via ATVs and 4wd vehicles. We also have specialists for technical rescue, K9 search (area search, water and cadaver), mantracking and mountain bike search.

To contact us: **Call State Communications at 1-800-632-8000 and ask them to page Mountain Rescue.**