

WEB EDITION

Vol. 35 Nov./Dec. 2002 No.6

RESCUE

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

IN THIS ISSUE:

- Missing Hunter Search -p. 1**
- Hunters Trapped by Snow -p. 7**
- Tourist Van Missing above Idaho City -p. 12**
- Mantracking Field Training -p. 11**

FOUNDING MEMBER:
**MOUNTAIN RESCUE
ASSOCIATION**



MISSING HUNTER AT TWIN SPRINGS, NOVEMBER 10-16, 2002 --CHARLOTTE GUNN



We were pleased to get our crew of ten on the road to the Trapper Flat search early Sunday morning, and some of us went back to bed to finish a night's sleep. It was early afternoon when the Boise County Sheriff's Office called to request another search team for a missing hunter. The 28-year-old male was last seen by two hunting companions at about 9 a.m. on Saturday. They said they had turned back to their camp in whiteout conditions, but he had continued on uphill and had not returned by evening. It rained and snowed Saturday night and most of Sunday; the missing man was reported to be dressed in camouflage jacket, sweatshirt and jeans, carrying only a rifle and a

They are smiling because they got a helicopter ride up

pocket knife—no pack, no emergency gear.

Winston Cheyney, Todd Culley, Charlotte Gunn, George Gunn, David Hay, Jeff Munn and Kevin Schroeder made the jarring drive around Lucky Peak and Arrow Rock Reservoirs and on up the Middle

RESCUE is published monthly by the IDAHO MOUNTAIN SEARCH AND RESCUE UNIT, INC.
P.O.Box741, Boise ID 83701. Editor: Charlotte Gunn, Phone (208) 378-7787 or e-mail cpgunn@cablone.net
Deadline of the 20th of the month is required for material to be included in the next month's issue.

Visit our web site at www.imsaru.org



Aerial Search and Transportation for Ground Crews.

Fork of the Boise to just past Twin Springs, where we met Marshall Haynes (Fish and Game Officer for the area) and a couple of the missing man's hunting buddies. In the little bit of remaining daylight, and through the rain, we sent Winston, Todd and Kevin to examine a footprint thought to be that of the subject. Jeff and David went beyond the hunting camp to a stream fork, then ended up bushwhacking up a very steep ridge toward a light we saw flashing just below the peak. We were very excited

that someone was trying to get our attention in the drizzly dark, but Officer Haynes tracked down information that indicated it was actually two bowhunters from Colorado who were setting up their spike camp.

Our field teams returned to Base soaked and cold, dried out a bit, then headed home. George and Charlotte remained on site as base camp for continuing the search.

On Monday morning, we had a great turnout. IMSARU's team included Chris Harry, Tim Henning, Kris Hoffman, Diana Jenkins, Bill Lindenau, Leslie Robertson with Mingo, George Shaffer, Suzanne Ventura with Schatz, Kris Walker and Dan Scovel—who showed up in early afternoon to be airlifted to the top of the ridge for the lovely stroll down.



Suzanne and Schatz “hot unload” just like they practiced. Time spent training the dogs with the help of Guardian paid off on this mission.

We were joined by our Elmore County friends Jeff Berger, Mick Berger, Bobby Singleton and Jim Noland. (Yes, Jim is an IMSARU member also.) In addition, nine family members and friends of the missing man joined field search teams. The terrain is very

steep, upper reaches are snow-covered, and stream banks are brush-choked. It also is a popular hunting area (rifles through Saturday and then bow season), making identification of footprints unlikely.

George and Jim worked as co-O.L.'s, organizing to maximize the coverage of most-likely areas, based on information given to us. Teams slogged their way to the ridges and searched downward, calling the subject's name and looking for clues. I had about two minutes' notice that I was to fly as observer on Guardian's Blackhawk; I felt almost guilty flying over those searchers who had made the stiff climb to the ridgetops. All of us saw tracks and game animals but no one found anything definitely linked to the missing man. Bear and cougar tracks did add to our uneasiness. Tired and muddy, the searcher teams filtered back into Base Camp, where food awaited before their drive home. Sheriff Brown, Jim and George agreed that the search would continue on Tuesday, and there was a strategy session around the maps after dark. The Gunns slept at Base while George S. and Chris took up the generous offer of beds at Twin Springs Resort.

Tuesday morning brought a crowd of perhaps fifty volunteers, including many relatives and friends of the missing man. For IM-SARU, in addition to the four on scene, Jim and Leslie returned and Jerry Newland and Everett Wood came in. John Holwege came later. Renee Johanson appeared in early afternoon, having been delayed by finding a different hunter lost and injured along the road—she treated his injury and drove him to his truck—and Angela Bateman arrived later with sandwiches and other goodies.



Last-minute check of unit equipment prior to fielding over 60 searchers in an attempt to locate a missing hunter.

With so many unknown volunteers, one of our main concerns was to try to organize them to be as safe as possible—no easy task when everyone wanted to “do something” *right now*. George S. and four local volunteers left before full light to check an area seen the previous day. The rest of us spent our efforts convincing people to wait until everyone had arrived. Jim and George then explained the strategy and assigned teams to check some closer-in areas that could be done in a couple of hours—while waiting for the arrival of Guardian and the Sheriff. By mid-

morning, Guardian was flying search teams to the top so they would have time and energy remaining for intensive searching in the high areas and on the way down Brown's Creek and Logging Gulch. (Jim gets a gold star for refusing to send those dressed in cotton to the high elevations and for keeping track of who was on which team.) Almost everyone, of course, wanted the helicopter ride as well as wanting to be part of the major effort.

Unfortunately, all this effort still did not succeed in finding the missing man. Jerry volunteered to continue on Wednesday as O.L. and Sheriff Brown (who had to fly to St. Louis that evening) made it clear to everyone present that Jerry would be the search boss. Jerry, Chris, John and George S. spent the night at Twin Springs Resort after the rest of us sorted gear, packed up and headed down to the valley. Everett said he would return, and Rod recruited a new crew of Angela Bateman, Rob Budka, Mark Buursink, Winston Cheyney, Todd Culley, Martha Vandivort and Paul Wolters. (Welcome back, Paul!) In addition, there was a huge influx of spontaneous volunteers—family and friends who had been there since Sunday, local-area hunters who sincerely wanted to use their outdoors skills to help, and the inevitable thrill-seekers attracted by TV coverage and helicopter transport. Some were dressed for the work and well-equipped; some were not.

Wednesday's search was expanded to cover the Badger Creek drainage, as well as some high areas. Guardian again flew the search teams up so that they could use their time and energy for the searching. By 10 a.m., IMSARU's administrative team had 12 teams, using 62 people, deployed. There is no way to thoroughly search 40+ square kilometers of steep terrain with a 100% POD, but every effort was made to do what was humanly possible. As expected, some volunteers got lost and knew it; others came down a different drainage from where they thought they were. Some

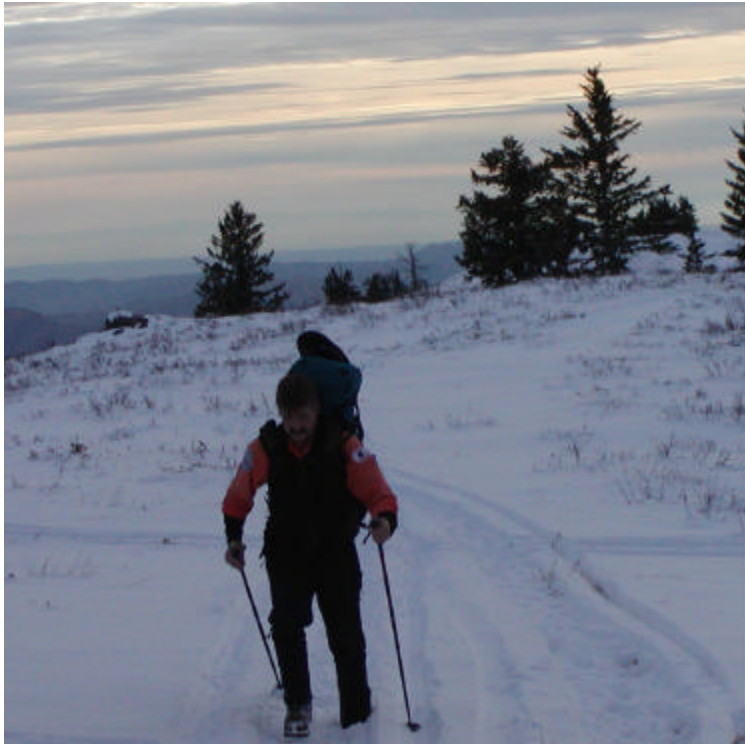


Jim Noland debriefs a team and plots results on map.

teams did not stay together, leaving members to fend for themselves. Guardian had to leave when their allotted time was up, and one team had to find their way back down on foot in the dark. We were relieved when all were accounted for. At the end of this long day, Boise County officers had to decide that the official search was suspended—never an easy thing to say to the family.

On Thursday, some of the IMSARU people most involved in administering this search met for a

debriefing session to talk through what we had done, what we felt we had accomplished, and ideas for improving our operations when huge numbers of spontaneous volunteers are involved. The consensus was that we had done all we reasonably could do, given the terrain, weather, resources and information, and that we would not continue this search unless the Boise County S.O. specifically requested that we do so. The end....? Oh no.



Jerry heads into the gathering dusk.

Late Friday morning, a fixed-wing pilot reported spotting a site below the Thorne Creek Lookout (beyond our search area) where predators were obviously feeding; he was unable to determine whether it was an animal carcass or a human body. With Everett as driver and communications link, Tim, Jerry, Kris W. and Paul went in as far as they could toward the top and then slogged their way over nasty terrain and through the snow in search of this site. Several hours after dark, they gave up and returned home exhausted. Phone lines were busy as administrators consulted and agreed that we could not in good conscience fail to check out this sighting...and that the only practical way to do so with our fatigued personnel was by helicopter. Can IMSARU

afford to hire a helicopter for such a task? No. However, there seemed to be no one else willing and able to do it, so Rod made arrangements with Idaho Helicopters.

On Saturday morning, Kris H., Dan and Martha drove two vehicles up as far as they could go, for communications and also to transport if needed. Leslie and Rod stayed on the radio and phone at the Compound all day—and devoured the roast chicken that Annie Heltsley brought along with the sports drink and other goodies for field kitchens. Chris H. and Jerry did the aerial search. They were just about to give up after 30 minutes of looking in the area described by the fixed-wing pilot when they spotted the bloodstains and predators. It was an animal carcass.

Editors's thoughts: This was a very difficult week—terrain, weather, long hours of searching, long drive to base camp, lack of closure. It is very difficult to end a search without finding your subject; inevitably, you wonder if we could have/should have done something differently. Many of our people were taking time off from work in order to join the teams, and many spent multiple days on the project. I am proud to be part of a unit that will volunteer so much to help strangers, and that did it so professionally.

Were we perfect? Of course not. There is never a mission where we don't learn something, get some idea of how to do things better next time. We had a mix of gray-haired experience and strong young muscles, and we needed both. Sorry to say it, but there will be more paper-work the next time we are dealing with spontaneous volunteers. (We probably don't participate in a mission of this size more than once or twice a year—and many of those are being run by other agencies that ask us to come in and work under them.)

Many thanks to the people and agencies that were so helpful. Guardian's aerial searching and their transport of search teams were a wonderful resource that made it possible to search much more of the high areas. Twin Springs Resort gave free room and board to all searchers who needed it—including hot showers! The Boise County Sheriff's Office, as usual, gave us great freedom to organize the actual search as we saw fit, and rounded up all sorts of resources, from on-scene officers to the helicopter and crew to water and batteries. Marshall Haynes, Fish and Game officer, came in as a volunteer the first night to get us started while the Sheriff's personnel were tied up with the Trapper Flat mission and all their other duties. Families and some employers of our searchers supported their decisions to spend long days away from home, leaving others to take up the slack of everyday obligations. Members who were unable to go to the field came to the Compound early and late to help load and unload equipment. And Rod seemed to be always there on the radio and/or phone; I hope he has caught up on sleep since then.

The drive up around and above Arrow Rock Reservoir is a bone-rattling adventure. Those who did it multiple times will have their vehicles in for front-end alignment next week. Those of us who took the longer but smoother Prairie route home on Tuesday night were delighted by the moose and startled at the snowmobile-size rock in the middle of the road.

SPECIAL THANKS TO TWIN SPRINGS RESORT
--CHRIS HARRY

Thanks so much to the Twin Springs Resort for their outstanding support of our November 10-16 search. Tom and his crew took great care of us. They invited us to spend the nights during the search. George Shaffer and I took up the offer on Monday night. We were treated to a chili dinner, showers and hot tub. On Tuesday, John Holwege, Jerry Newland and I spent the night. After a delicious dinner of spaghetti and French bread, we debriefed with friends and family, followed again by showers and hot tub. We even got the loft to ourselves as a place in which to plan the next day's search before snatching a little bit of sleep. Breakfast was also available in the mornings. We issued a radio to Tom, and whatever we needed, he had it at base camp shortly after the request—and we were not charged for anything. Hats off to them for their generosity!

WHEN IT RAINS IN THE VALLEY, IT SNOWS IN THE MOUNTAINS HUNTERS STRANDED AT TRAPPER'S FLAT, NOVEMBER 10, 2002 --WENDY CAMPBELL

The first call came at 10:30 p.m. Saturday night, requesting searchers to meet at the Compound at 11:30 p.m. to search for some hunters in Boise County. Welcome to the glamorous side of Search and Rescue! The mission was then postponed until 6:30 a.m. on Sunday so we could search in daylight. Initial information indicated that seven hunters and their horses were stranded in deep snow about three miles from their vehicles, and needed help getting out. As we got closer to the site, the information changed to seven hunters, their horses and game, stuck sixteen miles from the horse trailers, which were no longer hitched to the trucks!



It says we are here. Now where are they?

One of the hunters had called his wife on his cell phone to let her know they were stuck, and she had relayed the information to the Boise County Sheriff's Office. When we stopped at the S.O. for final directions, there was a dusting of snow on the ground. We drove over the Mores Creek Summit, where the snow got a lot deeper. There was about a foot of light, powdery snow where we turned off Highway 21 at Crooked River Road to follow Forest Service roads toward Graham. Bill Lindenau

volunteered to drive his truck ahead of the caravan to check out the road. (The concern was that all of us would get into the area and be unable to get out if there weren't any good turn-arounds.)

We found a turnout/camping area off of the road and decided to set up base camp there. Dan Scovel, Everett Wood and Jerry Newland in 903 backed into the area; Leslie Robertson, Suzanne Ventura, Renee Johanson and I began trampling down the snow so we could set up the shelter and stove. Bill, Chris Harry and John Holwege, in Bill's truck, headed up the road toward the stranded party but after about four miles the snow became too deep and they got stuck while turning around. Apparently several trees and a lot of shoveling were used in a

bid to get good traction. In the meantime, two snowmobilers passed base camp; we flagged them down and they agreed to tell the hunters we were coming.

By this time, Everett and Dan had Everett's truck chained up. They took Renee and Jerry with them, carrying first aid gear, but were unable to proceed any farther than where Bill's truck had turned around. Meanwhile, a group of snowmobilers passed by and took John with them up the road, while Bill and Chris went up on Bill's ATV, carrying a gas can for the subjects' trucks. (They had apparently run out of gas in snow that covered the front tires of their trucks, but were able to spend the night in the vehicles and were relatively protected from the weather.) Renee and Jerry also ended up going with this group of snowmobilers.

Jerry and Renee reached the subjects at 1:15 p.m., reporting three to four feet of snow at the top of the pass. They also reported that one of the snowmobiles had started a small avalanche across a narrow slot in the road. Renee and Jerry offered first aid, which was refused. Only one hunter followed their urgent advice to change into the dry clothes all claimed to have available. They also refused hot drinks until persuaded that there would be no charge for the service—at which point they rapidly drank up almost all the supplies.

A grader had been called from the Forest Service to clear the road to the hunters' trucks. There was feed available for the horses, and the hunters didn't want to leave them nor their vehicles, so they chose to stay overnight again and wait for the road grader. Sheriff Gary Brown and Chief Deputy Craig Coash came in on snowmobiles and determined there was nothing more they could do in the situation.

Jerry and Renee were going to walk back down to base camp, but the Sheriff gave Renee a ride and some of the private snowmobilers went back up to get Jerry. When IMSARU left the search area, the subjects were still on the mountain with their horses and gear, and the grader was digging its way up the road to them. Renee and Everett stayed overnight at base camp so they could provide emergency medical support should it be required.

The hunters and their gear finally made it out on Tuesday, thanks to the road grader and the gasoline supplied by the B.C.S.O. Media reports stated that they would be billed for the cost of the road-clearing. Please note, however, that IMSARU does not bill for our part in the mission.

Special thanks go to the snowmobilers for their help with this mission, especially to Gerald Werner and Brent Evans of Kuna and to John Evans of Boise, who came back up with snowmobiles to transport Jerry and Renee. We also thank Forest Service officer Annie Heltsley for her help and support, including the soup and the Rice Krispie treats.

It turned out to be a very busy weekend for IMSARU. While our team was out in the snow, a call went out for an additional team to search for a missing hunter near Twin Springs, also in Boise County and near the Elmore County line. On our way home in the dark, we were flagged down by a subject with a flashlight. His car had gone off the road, and we gave him a ride back to Boise.

VSAR NEWS
--CHRIS HARRY

After many months of planning and the first six weeks of training, VSAR is now field-certified. They had their mock mission on October 19. The scenario was a ten-year-old girl who had gotten into an argument with her parents and had run away. The search took place off Chinden, just down the hill from H.P. The youth members performed exceptionally well and the advisors were highly impressed. Special thanks to Ken Murry for getting his ten-year-old niece and her mother to be the subject and the reporting party. We are working to come up with a joint training program for IMSARU and VSAR, so you may start seeing them at IMSARU meetings and trainings in the near future. As always, IMSARU members are welcome at any VSAR activity.

WHAT DOES THE “FINANCIAL OFFICER” DO?
--CHARLOTTE GUNN

In an effort to ease the burden on our Treasurer and improve communications between him and the general membership, IMSARU has accepted my offer to be an appointed volunteer. Beginning immediately, I am doing the following tasks:

- Processing incoming funds. I write the thanks/receipt for donations (except in circumstances where someone else should do so—and I have talked to that person), keep track of who pays dues for 2003, deposit funds in our account.
- Tracking reimbursement requests. The revised forms are in my mailbox in the Office, and they need to come to me when filled out. I will nag people for missing information before sending the forms on to Dave, who will write the checks. I will also follow up to see that the checks get back to the appropriate people, and will arrange the second signature on the checks as needed.
- Serving as intermediary for fund-raising events. I will be nagging the person in charge to collect all the receipts, etc. and summarize the account, before I deposit the money and pass the information on to Dave.
- Taking on additional financial tasks that may be helpful to the unit.

Please help me out by funneling incoming funds and requests for money through me. Also, let me know how I can help improve the process.

GIFT-WRAPPING AT R.E.I.

This is one of our pleasantest ways to make money, but we need your help to do it. The R.E.I. store on Emerald (at Towne Square Mall) is again providing supplies and space at the front of their store. Pam Green and Sue Brian are organizing the event and have already made hundreds of the beautifully rustic bows that can be found nowhere else. Now all we need is YOU to help wrap those gifts, December 13-24. There are two shifts on most of the days, and we need two or three people for each shift; friends and relatives are welcome. No great artistic talent is needed—if you can handle a box, a topo map and Scotch tape, you are qualified. If you haven't already signed up to do your share, call Pam NOW.

NOTES FROM CHRIS HARRY, FACILITIES MANAGER

Steps Toward Finishing the Garage Interior. Thanks to a \$1,000 grant from Trus Joist, we're one step closer to heating the garage. Western Heating & A/C ran a natural gas line to the garage and set it up to accommodate our two hanging heaters; a line was also run into the back half of the building to accommodate our other furnace. All that is left to do now is install them, which we hope to accomplish in the near future—if anyone has experience in this, please let me know—and then to do the insulation when we can find the money. This project also gave us a push to finally clean out the garage, as everything had to be moved out of the gas piper's way. Thanks to George and Everett for responding to the mid-morning phone tree to help me do this, as well as to all of those who helped clean and put everything away at the November general meeting. I might add that Western Heating & A/C did the work at a substantially lower price than similar bids from other companies in the past.

Trash Removal. I have named the little green trailer "The Dumpster." Any normal trash may be deposited in it. I will make runs to the dump as needed to empty it. **Do not deposit any hazardous waste!** Paints, oils, batteries, fluorescent light bulbs and things of this nature must be disposed of separately. Place these items under the workbench in the garage and I will take care of them. There are a tarp and bungee cords under the spare tire cover on the trailer, in case someone else decides to empty it. (If you take an uncovered load to the dump, there may be a hefty fine imposed.)

Security of our Property. At the last Board meeting, new security measures were approved. Effective every year when the new Board of Directors takes office, all the combinations to the building will be changed. It will be the responsibility of the new Board to determine who needs access to certain areas. We will do away with keys for the most part, as it is too easy to have copies made. The following areas will require codes for access: gate, meeting room, office, garage, storage rooms, and equipment room. **THE CODES MAY BE GIVEN OUT ONLY WITH APPROVAL FROM THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS!** The Facilities Manager must be notified of everyone who has the codes and to which areas, as this will be documented.

Another Security Concern. On Monday, November 25, one of our members was driving by the Compound when she noticed the office door standing open but no vehicles in the lot. When she checked, she found lights and computer on, office wide open, but no one present. (The outer gate was locked.) Again, if you are the last one to leave the building: Turn out all lights, turn off the copier and/or computer if they have been used (not the big printer, as it remains in sleep mode), turn the thermostat down below 60 degrees, and **Be sure all doors are locked and firmly closed, and that the gate is locked with the padlock set at 0000.**

DUES ARE DUE IN JANUARY

IMSARU's dues are for the calendar year, so get out your checkbook soon. Exact amount will be decided at the Board of Directors meeting after this goes to press, but current dues are \$40 for new members and \$25 for continuing members—and the membership has already voted to increase those by \$5 to cover the increase in our M.R.A. dues. Our policies and by-laws state that the dues are to be enough to cover certain expenses (shirts, patches and manuals for new members; newsletters and

dues to regional and national associations for all members; etc.) and we will be adding up those costs to see how we are doing. So, if someone gives you cash for Christmas....

Also, those who carry digital pagers need to pay that annual fee in January. (There is no cost to individuals who carry the tone pagers—just a commitment to respond regularly.)

And, remember that this year you will be making all payments through Charlotte Gunn, Financial Officer. Leave a check, with a note about its purpose, in her mailbox at the Compound or give cash to her personally and be sure you get a receipt.

IMSARU CHRISTMAS PARTY, DECEMBER 14

The party starts at 6 p.m., in the Community Center of the Western Village mobile home park. Western Village is at 9390 Ustick Road, between the stoplight at Maple Grove and the one at Mitchell. The entrance to Western Village is between pillars on the north side of the road, across from Kimble Street and just west of Patricia Street. (If you are headed west on Ustick from Maple Grove, you will pass the “Cat Doctor” on the south side, then the big white house that sells antiques on the north, and you’re almost there.) [\[See map elsewhere on the web page\]](#) Once you turn into Western Village, the Community Center is on the right at the first corner. Turn at that corner and park in the RV lot beyond the Center. Woody and Judy Hart will be our hosts; Martha Vandivort is obtaining the supplies; Jennifer Newland, Leslie Robertson and Suzanne Ventura will take care of decorations. Rod Knopp is arranging the serious awards; Diane Mathews and Charlotte Gunn are preparing the not-so-serious presentations. All of us will help clean up at the end.

PLAN NOW TO ATTEND!

INTRO TO MANTRACKING, FIELD TRAINING --TONY ROCKWELL

After a full house at Tuesday night’s training, covering the basics of mantracking, a dozen came out for the field training on Saturday, November 16. A few of the tracker team arrived in the morning for a little advanced practice and to set up for the afternoon training. Thanks to Diane Mathews, Wendy Campbell, and Christy Karnes for their assistance!

The 1 pm training got started with a quick review: how to set up your tracking stick, things to measure, team formation and expectations for the day. We then formed several three-person tracking teams and began the kneeling, crawling and eye-straining session that drew some attention from the general public. The teams included Nick Tratz, Nate Hardison, Chris Whitham, and Trenton Juey from our VSAR group; Dirk Larson, Laura McCutchau, and Bob Maxson, with Wendy and Christy joining in as team leaders. Diane, Chris Harry and I roamed between the teams and assisted, answering questions and encouraging the teams. Kris Hoffman and Dan Scovel joined us after returning from the morning mission, and successfully completed a line of sign – displaying their advanced skills by doing so in record time. All in all, it was a successful introduction to tracking in the field.

Note: IMSARU will be sponsoring another UTS (Joel Hardin) Mantracking class April 4-6, 2003. For those who want to attend more than one class and progress more rapidly in tracking competence, there will be many other sessions in the region: Enterprise/Joseph, OR, May 16-18; Moscow, ID, May 30-June 1; Logan, UT, June 6-8; Klamath Falls, OR, June 20-22. There are additional arrangements pending in Montana and Wyoming. Talk to Tony Rockwell for more information.



Some of our newer members work on the tracks.

VAN STUCK IN THE SNOW, NOVEMBER 29-30, 2002 **--CHARLOTTE GUNN**

Boise County requested IMSARU to look for and help a family, reportedly eight people including children, whose van was stuck in the snow above Idaho City. They were said to be out-of-state visitors who had come down from Lowman to Idaho City, turned left at the school and then continued up the Centerville road to the junction near the dump, where they had turned left—intending to come out at Horseshoe Bend. They had driven about 1-1/2 hours beyond Idaho City when the van got stuck in the snow. The driver had placed a cell-phone call with the above information, but was unfamiliar with the area and wanted help getting the family out. IMSARU responded with fourteen people: Angela Bateman, Richard Clements, Charlotte Gunn, George Gunn, Kris Hoffman, Renee Johanson, David Kennedy, Jim Noland with ATV, Leslie Robertson, Kevin Schroder, Dan Scovel, George Shaffer, Kris Walker and Everett Wood with ATV. Rick Marston and Bob Sargent of the Centerville Fire Department met us on site.

We set up base camp at the junction where the vehicle was to have turned left, and sent out seven vehicles with two people in each, to cover the most likely roads from that point (Deer Creek Road and Spanish Fork.) Along these roads, searchers were looking not only for the white van but for areas that had both snow and cell phone coverage. (We were unable to get the information of which cell tower had the call until well into Saturday morning.) Various family and friends, including one who had talked with the subject via phone, stopped by to tell us where they had searched and where they thought the family might be. What we felt sure of, after several hours of searching, was that the van was not where it was supposed to be. There are, of course, numerous spurs and logging roads leading off the main roads, but our searchers got out and looked for recent tire tracks at these branches; sometimes it was obvious that there had been no traffic and sometimes it was impossible to tell.

With no sign of the missing vehicle, we had to assume that the driver had not turned where he thought he had, and we increased our area to the Elk Creek Road, and from Placerville over Alder Creek Summit. In the wee hours of the morning, we started vehicles back to the valley, requesting a fresh search team and an aircraft to take up the search again at daylight. (At some point in the cell-phone conversations, the driver had stated that they had blankets with them and would be all right through the night.) Everett and Richard elected to spend the night in the field, having wandered through a maze of logging roads that would be better navigated in daylight. The rest of us returned to Boise between 4 and 6 a.m., checking in with Rod Knopp, who had been in-town coordinator through the night.

As it got fully light Saturday morning, Everett and Richard were headed down to Idaho City in search of a hot breakfast and four fresh searchers were headed up to continue the mission: Rob Budka, Aimee Hastriter, Tim Henning and Martha Vandivort. Then came the call we needed. The driver had walked out to where he found a Forest Service road sign; with that number, teams knew where to look. Yes, they had missed the turn in Idaho City and had gone up Elk Creek Road; the van had skidded on a piece of road that was on neither of our maps (topo nor Forest Service) and they had spent the night there.

One pickup carrying relatives was ahead of our three vehicles en route to the site, so there was lots of help. Aimee and Martha got the stove going and produced hot chocolate and hot noodles, and Aimee loaned dry socks to a subject with cold feet, while everyone else discussed the best way to get the van safely back on track. There were only a few inches of snow, but conditions were a bit slick. With the help of tow ropes and straps, and IMSARU chains applied to the van's wheels, everyone headed back to Idaho City. Everett and Richard finally got their hot breakfast; the subjects checked in at the Sheriff's Office, and our people returned home to their interrupted weekends.

Notes: Special thanks to Rod and Leslie for the long hours they put in on both Friday and Saturday. It doesn't sound glamorous, but those in the field know how helpful it is to have someone at the Compound to help with arrangements, information and ideas.

Tim suggests that 903's standard gear should include an extra set of tire chains (for lending), a come-along, and some warm clothing (for lending.)

Martha, we're sorry you missed the "Harry Potter" movie that was on your Saturday-afternoon schedule, but are glad you chose to serve IMSARU.

**Be sure to check out the 2003
training calender on the
website.**