

RESCUE

IDAHO MOUNTAIN SEARCH
AND RESCUE UNIT, INC
BOISE, IDAHO



FOUNDING MEMBER:
MOUNTAIN RESCUE
ASSOCIATION



ALZHEIMER'S WALKAWAY – AUGUST 7-8, 2001 --CHARLOTTE GUNN

Our members had for weeks been looking forward to the class on Emergency Driving, which Debbie and Harry Kindelberger were offering us at P.O.S.T. for our August meeting. However, when Tony Plott called to request our help in searching for an 81-year-old man who had disappeared from a home visit with his wife, all plans changed. I sent a group call to the digital pagers, Rod set up the State Comm page and phone tree, and George turned around those who arrived in Meridian. As a result, 32 people gathered at



Urban base camp, at night. — Photo by George Gunn

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the Capital High School parking lot to conduct a search. Jerry Newland did a great job as O.L., organizing these people into teams and assigning areas.

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Search team, ready to go. —Photo by G. Gunn

several reports that people had seen the man on our flyer. When the track ran out (on city sidewalks where the day's temperature had been in the 90's), foot teams fanned out to search areas where someone might have settled in and/or hidden for the night, and to alert everyone we met to watch for such a person. Local media ran stories and photograph, hoping that someone would recognize the missing man and know where he was. With negative results by midnight, we debriefed and sent searchers home for a few hours of sleep.

We weren't exactly wide awake when we met at Valley View Elementary School's parking lot at 6 a.m. on Wednesday, but there was some

Information indicated that the missing man resides in an assisted care facility but was on a home visit for a few hours. We received a physical description that turned out to fit a surprising number of pedestrians, a description of his clothing, and an indication that he would not be expected to walk very far but is very gregarious and quite likely to strike up conversations (which might be disjointed) with anyone he meets—and perhaps even follow people onto a bus or elsewhere. He had not been seen since midafternoon.

Paula acquired scent articles and asked Jeb to track; his indicated direction of travel matched



Winston and Jerry confer over the map. —Photo by G. Gunn



Suzanne tries to avoid the cameras. —Photo by G. Gunn

relief in knowing that the temperature had not dropped beyond the mid-60's during the night. On the other hand, the additional hours without finding the subject still implied some negative possibilities.

Jim and Suzanne were the bicycle team this morning, and Suzanne reported that



Stine copies down her assignment before heading out

she could have searched more efficiently if a goathread had not punctured her tire. Fortunately, Jim had a pump and “about every five minutes” he pumped up her tire again before encouraging her to continue with cries of “Go, Girl, Go!” Leslie took Mingo to check out some wider spaces, along a creek and along a canal, and the rest of us went in pairs to check or recheck some likely areas—leaving George at Base to deal with maps, communications, decisions, passersby and the media. We not only looked for a person matching the photo and description; we also talked with every jogger, dog walker, and local worker we saw. We handed out

and posted the flyers. (Jim even put them up in the Post Office, but says they were not on the “Wanted” wall.) Several of our people had to work in the afternoon, having stretched their employers’ patience to search in the morning, and we had no new clues nor areas to search. So, we packed up at around noon, and returned the search to the Boise Police.

In midafternoon, the missing man was spotted emerging from the backyard of a house just a few doors down from his wife’s residence. (Almost every house in this area has a tall, solid board fence around the backyard.) Owners of that house were on vacation, and the relative who was house-sitting wondered aloud how the subject could have gotten through the fence. A medical checkup found no ill effects of the experience, and the family was of course greatly relieved at the outcome.



Rick kept track of teams’ progress on the map.

What we want to know is whether the subject had been in that yard the entire time, or whether he had taken a long walk (as indicated by Jeb and by the many people who thought they had seen him) and somehow returned that close to home before entering the wrong yard. Due to his mental condition, we are unlikely to ever know for sure.

IMSARU members participating on Tuesday night included Kit Brown, Winston Cheyney, Joey Clements, Richard Clements, Jim Cooper, Rick Cudd, Charlotte Gunn, George Gunn, Chris Harry, Aimee Hastriter, Tim Henning, Dave Henry, Kris Hoffman, Renée Johanson,

Chris Karnes, Bill Lindenau, Diane Mathews, Paula McCollum with Jeb, Jeff Munn, Jerry Newland, Steve Pack, Leslie Robertson with Mingo, Tony Rockwell, Dan Scovel, Stine Theede, Suzanne Ventura and Tom Wheless. In addition, new associates Ann Crew, Mark Crew, Doug Miller and Jones Turner came out to help. On Wednesday morning, Winston, Jim, Charlotte, George, Chris H., Steve, Leslie, Tom and Suzanne returned, joined by Chris Karnes, David Kennedy, Alex LeBeau, Bonnie Lind and Gene Ralston.

WHAT DOES OUR SAR COORDINATOR DO? LEARN THE SECRETS ON SEPTEMBER 29!

Many of you assume that Rod Knopp has always been the IMSARU Coordinator, and we happily re-elect him each year, but how many of you know what his job really entails? How many of you could and/or would step in and do part of that job if Rod were to be living his other life (out of town, working for a living, etc.) when a mission came down?

One reason why so many of us know so little about the Coordinator's position is because Rod makes it seem easy. When asked about his responsibilities, he makes light of all those hours and all that experience. Now, however, Rod is ready to tell all.

Come to the Compound at 9 a.m. on Saturday, September 29, and spend a couple of hours learning some of the basics about what keeps our unit running. I guarantee you will find it educational, interesting, amazing.

MANTRACKING CLASS IN SMILEY CREEK JUNE 29-JULY 1, 2001 --KIT BROWN

Class instructors were Joel Hardin, UTS; Pres Funkhouser, UTS and Valley County SAR; Mike Barto, Blaine County SAR. Participants were from Blaine County, McCall, and myself from IMSARU.

Except for the hour stuck in traffic while they cleared a wreck off I-84, June 28 was a beautiful day for a drive up into the mountains. I was looking forward to learning how to find tracks in the woods, especially after having watched Tony Rockwell apply those skills in the previous month's search for two teenagers. Tony and his wife planned to camp near Stanley and come over for the class. It wasn't until the next morning that I learned the Rockwells were part of that wreck, through no fault of their own. (A vehicle had crossed the median and gone airborne before smashing into them.) We were very thankful that Tony and Jennifer suffered only bruises despite major damage to their truck and a totaled camper, and I was disappointed that Tony would not be participating in our class.

Our group gathered in the restaurant for breakfast and a short lecture before we headed out to the field. Because there were only a few students in the class, Blaine County graciously decided to pick up the tab for the class fees, which we all greatly appreciated. Despite the small number, we had an eclectic bunch, ranging from ex-hippies to retired military, so the discussions were lively, to say the least. It was a great group.

Chief instructor Joel Hardin worked for the Border Patrol for many years and has over thirty years of tracking experience. When he started showing slides of tracks, it was amazing what he could discern from a faint disturbance of the vegetation. After the slide show, we headed out to the field. Joel, Pres and Mike had laid some trails a few days before and we were to follow them.

On that first day, Mark Sheehan was my partner. We started with a very clear set of footprints that wandered off into the sage and trees. After about two steps, I didn't see anything, but Mark was very patient and showed me what he was seeing step by step. Some of the tracks had been thoroughly trampled by loggers and deer, but we made slow progress until it got dark. We didn't feel so bad, though, when Joel couldn't find the trail in that light either. My back and knees were killing me from crouching and crawling over the rough ground, and I was glad Tony had warned me to wear long pants. After numbing the aches with a beer and taking a long shower, I hit the sack early.

On the second day, we were out in the field by 9 a.m., after a hearty breakfast at the lodge. Mark and I finished our trail, with the help of another participant, and celebrated by drinking about a gallon of water. After lunch, we changed teams so that the more experienced class members could do their testing, while Kelly, Skip and I headed down another trail. Skip has taken several classes and really knew the sign, but this was a first for both Kelly and me. It was hot and we were on a hillside with no cover, crawling around in the dirt. Pres took pity on us after we got off track because of an elk destroying the sign, and guided us back to the right trail.

The second and third days were harder because more of the sign had been destroyed, it was hot, and our eyes were tired. Joel and Pres made us take frequent breaks and showed us how the angle of the light affected our ability to see a track. It was amazing what they pointed out—a broken stick, a damaged bush, a bent piece of grass. Once they pointed it out, it was easy to see the track, but there was more than one occasion where I would've gone off on a wrong trail without their guidance.

This is where the three-person team also became important. Kelly, Skip and I conferred frequently about which track was ours and whether we were going the right way. The point person is in the middle and is responsible for following the track step by step. The sweepers walk a step behind on either side to make sure the trail doesn't change direction. Joel cautioned us about over-analyzing the tracks; it's part observation, part method, and part intuition, and it's important to trust yourself when tracking. Joel also suggested taking a break when things are going well rather than when you are frustrated, because you will be more likely to have a feeling of success.

We never did make it to the end of the second set of tracks, going about half a mile on the two-mile trail. Joel said a sign cutter should be able to clear a trail like that in a few hours, but I think it would take a long time to get that good. After class was over, we had a big barbecue and celebrated. All of us learned something new in the class. I, for one, will never look at the ground in quite the same way.

Tony and I are talking about setting up some tracking practices, so contact one of us if you are interested. Also, IMSARU's October training will be a very basic introduction to mantracking and it will be a chance for everyone to see what this is all about.

SAWTOOTH RELAY RACE

--RENÉE JOHANSON

I'm almost ashamed to admit this, but the Sawtooth Relay was the first race I've worked since joining IMSARU. However, I can honestly say that as my first race, it was an eye-opener. Leslie Robertson, Debbie Ralph and I started out from the Compound toward Idaho City at 5 a.m. on Saturday morning. Leslie drove 903, Debbie drove her truck and I drove my truck in a small SAR convoy. My astonishment at Leslie's lead foot was short-lived when she admitted that 903's speedometer wasn't quite up to snuff and asked Debbie and me to tell her if she was going too fast. My speedometer was working just fine, so Leslie let me move into the lead.

We arrived in Idaho City well before dawn. Unable to locate anyone from the Sheriff's Office or the race organizers, we parked in the gas station parking lot to wait for first light. Strangely enough, as it grew lighter the various lumps that were congregated in every nook and cranny, and even one that was in the middle of a parking lot, began to move about and groan. I was a bit startled at first because I'd taken some of them for rocks before people began to crawl out of their sleeping bags.

As the runners were waking up, Leslie was able to find one of the race organizers and arrange our assignments, and we went to work. I honestly don't know how many runners were involved in the race and I'm even more unsure how many support people and spectators were there, but the number seemed endless as the day wore on. They would stand and park wherever they found a bare patch of ground, heedless of oncoming traffic, officers patrolling the area, and our constant cries of "Move out of the road, PLEASE!" The morning passed in a blur of faces, a few of which became quite familiar either as repeat "in the middle of the road" offenders or as runners and support crew who were kind and appreciative of our efforts at crowd control.

The day was hot, the runners worked hard and were determined, and overall the part of the race we covered went well. I was able to talk with some of the runners while they waited for their relay and was surprised to find that for many of them this was their first year in the race. They seemed excited and eager to do well. It boggled my mind. To my way of thinking, the only really good reason to run is if something *really big* is chasing you. But watching the teamwork, listening to the cries of encouragement that went out to exhausted runners, and seeing how happy both the participants and the support people were made me think maybe the whole "running thing" might not be so bad after all. Regardless of my new insight, I was still relieved to be on my end of the race rather than the runners'. When the relay left Boise County, I got to get into my air-conditioned truck and drive home for lunch and a nap...not necessarily in that order.

**FORGET NATIONAL POLITICS FOR A BIT AND THINK ABOUT
IMSARU ELECTIONS ON OCTOBER 2
--CHARLOTTE GUNN**

Our by-laws say that we will elect officers for the coming year at the General Meeting (first Tuesday) in October, and that's not far off. If you haven't given any thought to who should be our leaders, do it now. We need a mix of experience and new blood, and we have lots of people who have the skills to do jobs well. Sometimes all it takes is for an individual to volunteer or someone else to say "Would you be willing to ...?"

Do not assume that the same old people will continue to do the same old job forever. George, for example, has already announced that he does not intend to continue as Training Director next year because he wants to devote his time and energy to interagency projects and training. There may be others who want a different challenge or who want/need to take a break from the commitment.

It has also been suggested that we consider subdividing some of the major responsibilities, since our unit has grown so much. No one seems to think that we should elect thirty different officers, but how about if some of the officers were administrators—ultimately responsible—but had willing appointees doing many of the actual tasks? The Vice President could be the President's understudy while supervising/teaching someone else to organize Safety Education and someone else to set up the General meetings. (All of these tasks are specific responsibilities of the V.P., as is keeping track of applicants and new members—a job which we have already split out as an appointment.) The Logistics Director could oversee individuals who take care of radios, of base camp supplies and equipment, of vehicles. The Property Manager could coordinate those who do indoor cleaning and repair, outdoor cleaning and repair (have you noticed Jim Cooper mowing grass and whacking weeds every week?), paperwork, etc. You get the idea.

Be prepared to discuss the above idea at the September 25 business meeting. Also, volunteer yourself and/or suggest candidates for the various offices to the Nominations Committee: Pam Green, Suzanne Ventura and Chris Karnes. Note that our by-laws list pre-requisites for three of the offices. The Technical Equipment Director must be or have been a Rescue Specialist. The Coordinator and the Training Director must be or have been a Rescue Specialist or a Search Specialist. Also note that in order to vote on October 2 you must be an active, dues-paid-up member. If you are unable to be present on that date, you are allowed to give a written proxy to another member who can then cast your vote.

CANINE LOSSES

HOBO VOM HAUS SHOAL

May 13, 1993 -- August 7, 2001

Hobo was athletic, agile and bold, charging through life at a full run. Our first high-drive dog, she taught us much more than we taught her. She was always ready to go, and worked with whichever one of us could go as handler. Wilderness air-scent search was her first love but she did more water missions for drowned subjects, working from canoe, dory, rafts, motorboats and jetboats on all kinds of water. Her last mission was on the Payette River on June 7 and 11 of this year; we had to lift her into and out of the rafts but there was nothing wrong with her nose and her spirit.

After a long battle with GSD degenerative spinal myelopathy, Hobo has found peace. She is running free with the Angel Pack, chasing her Kong, barking at cats and checking out every scent that reaches her nose. We miss her.

--Charlotte and George Gunn



LADY -- Search Dog with Lori and Bob Bennett

Lady retired from SAR work a few years ago when her handlers' life responsibilities took new directions, but she was the last living member of our first group of SAR dogs. Lady lived up to her name, always friendly and gentle, though subjects were sometimes surprised to find a large GSD sitting on their laps as soon as she found them. And it wasn't her fault that her "bear bell" was less than soothing to searchers trying to sleep in the outfitter's tent on the Chicken Peak mission.... Old age finally overtook Lady the first week of August and she, too, joined the Angel Pack.

Also, Diane Mathews and Tim Henning have in recent months lost both of their collies. **Quad** and **Mister** trained with many of our earlier search dog candidates, in addition to being loyal companions to Diane and Tim.

**DOCUMENTATION – GENERAL MEETING, SEPTEMBER 4
--CHARLOTTE GUNN**

Some of us take notes during missions; some of us never write anything down; some of us just assume that “someone else” is keeping track. Who needs to record what information and why?

Lt. Gary Raney-ACSO, started with the law enforcement perspective, reminding us that an innocent-seeming call can turn into a crime scene and that we volunteers could end up testifying in court months or even years later about what we saw and did. Our job in the field is to see what could be evidence and to protect it until an officer can deal with it. Photos, flagging around the scene, measurements from identifiable points, GPS location in the back-country—can all be useful. And any individual who has been involved in a crime scene should write his/her own personal description with as much detail as possible, as soon as possible.

IMSARU Coordinator Rod Knopp talked about the information he needs for our unit statistics, for M.R.A. reports, for potential reimbursement through the state search-and-rescue fund. This includes who went on a mission, departure and return times (and assurance that all did return), and mileage for each vehicle; equipment (ATV’s, aircraft, search dogs, snowmobiles, boats, etc.) used and how many hours each was active; and the same information about members of other groups that worked with us. Rod noted that individuals who drive their own vehicles to the mission and/or supply specialized equipment can apply through him for personal mileage reimbursement, but that many of our members instead treat that as a donation to the unit—which can be deducted by those who itemize deductions for income tax. (Obviously, this requires additional record-keeping.)

Leslie Robertson spoke about individual and base camp responsibilities for documentation, reminding us that we need to have paper and writing implement handy at all times. We frequently receive a briefing at the Compound before leaving on a mission and additional briefing at the site. Write down this information or pick up the printed sheet if we are so lucky! When searching, significant spots need to be reported via radio and marked with flagging; that flagging needs team number, individual names, date, time, etc. in indelible ink. And of course someone at base camp has to check out and back in such unit equipment as radios and GPS units, and one or more people are responsible for keeping the radio log. The person keeping the log is often NOT the one doing the actual radio communication, and only on the smallest of missions would the O.L. personally keep the log. (Therefore, if you really are anxious to go into the field but the O.L. says you are needed in base camp, try to remember that you are being tapped for one of the most critical tasks.)

The meeting closed with a debate over just how much miniscule-but-legible information Leslie can fit on a three-by-five card.

CALENDAR

Sept. 16	Search Dog Training – Call Paula McCollum at 853-6543	
Sept. 18	SAR Training – Challenge activities and Preparation for the weekend	7:30 p.m. at the Compound
Sept. 22-23	Family Camp and SAR Olympics	Time & Place TBA
Sept. 25	Business Meeting	7:30 p.m. At the Compound
Sept. 29	SAR Coordinator’s Workshop	9 a.m. At the Compound
Oct. 2	General Meeting – ELECTIONS	7:30 p.m. At the Compound
Oct. 6	Search Dog Training – Call Chris Karnes at 362-8874	
Oct. 9	SAR Training – Intro to Mantracking Awareness --Tony Rockwell and George Gunn	7:30 p.m. At the Compound
Oct. 13	SAR Field Training – Intro to Mantracking Awareness --Tony Rockwell and George Gunn	Time & Place TBA
Oct. 16	Medical Training	7:30 p.m. At the Compound
Oct. 21	Search Dog Training – Call Charlotte Gunn at 466-8345	
Oct. 23	“Extra Tuesday” of the month—Not yet decided whether there will be an IMSARU meeting (Call one of the officers when the date is closer.)	
Oct. 30	Business Meeting	7:30 p.m. At the Compound
Nov. 3	Search Dog Training – Call Chris Karnes at 362-8874	
Nov. 6	General Meeting	7:30 p.m. At the Compound
Nov. 13	SAR Training – How Do You Know Where and How Well You Have Searched? – L. Robertson & C. Gunn	7:30 p.m. At the Compound

TIGER WOODS WON'T BE THERE, BUT IT'S A GREAT FUND-RAISING OPPORTUNITY
--LESLIE ROBERTSON

Albertson's has given IMSARU 100 tickets for the Boise Open golf tournament September 20-23. We can sell them for \$25 each (in fact, we must sell at that price—no discounting allowed) and keep all of the money we collect. We have to return any unsold tickets, together with a signed statement and accounting form, but it's a no-risk proposition that demands a minimum of effort from our members. If you think you have an opportunity to sell some at your office, in your neighborhood, to friends and relatives, or wherever, contact Leslie directly at 362-5352 **as quickly as possible.**

CORN BOOTH, AUGUST 17-25, 2001
--ROSE WOOD & CHARLOTTE GUNN



The booth framework, going up or coming down.

fort to operate IMSARU's major fund raiser each year, and we could not do it without the unit members, their families, friends, co-workers, groups such as Boise Cascade and That Darn Dog who do this good deed every year, and all the other volunteers who help us.

IMSARU has been selling corn-on-the-cob at the Western Idaho Fair since before it moved to the current fairgrounds, and we have refined the process to a "routine," but there are always surprises. This year we discovered that our location had been moved a few feet—no big deal except that the distance and

Once again, the Western Idaho Fair has come and gone. All of the midway rides, games, exhibits, vendors and food booths have moved on to the next stop or have been packed away for next year's fair. To all who participated in the organizing, set-up, scheduling, working volunteer shifts, arranging for supplies and all of the other details, we say **CONGRATULATIONS FOR A JOB WELL DONE AND THANK YOU, THANK YOU, THANK YOU TO ALL.** It takes a tremendous amount of time and ef-



Tim demonstrates acrobatic skills.

direction to water and sewer access meant we had to flip-flop the interior arrangement and could hook only two of our three stoves to the gas line. This sure felt different to some of us old-timers and required some getting used to. (Life could have been more difficult. Our neighbors on one side started their set-up by having George cut off their padlocks because no one had the key, and neighbors on the other side had to physically move their booth about halfway through the preparations. We ended up being very close neighbors.)

The weather was extremely hot on both weekends—triple digit temperatures even. Despite the light crowds on the weekends, our gross was within a few hundred dollars of last year's, so we hope to be financially solvent for at least a few months.

As always, there are many more people deserving of special mention than we can possibly include. Jeff Munn again supervised the physical set-up and supplied more than his share of the labor and sweat; he also arranged the money for each day, counted it late at night and faxed the daily reports—and worked shifts besides. Aimee Hastriter somehow retained her sanity while scheduling the workers for all shifts and re-scheduling when people copped out; Aimee also worked five shifts herself. Everett and Rose Wood, Dan and Jean Iverson, and Terry and Susan Read worked all five of the weekday shifts; the Woods, the Iversons and Troy and Pam Green also dealt with all the surprises and



Kit and Chris cool off and work at the same time.

glitches that are inevitable on opening day. Tim Henning had the gall to schedule a family trip during the Fair, but he designed and constructed new anchors for the shelter posts, and worked on both the erection and dismantling of the booth. (There is still some speculation about how he was dressed for the set-up.) Twelve people showed up for the Saturday and Sunday of setting up—almost all the same people both days—and eighteen pitched in to take down the booth and haul everything back to the



How many ears would you like?

Compound on August 26, including Kit who staved off collapse by treating us all to sandwiches.

The best story that has so far been passed along for this article is of Everett digging the starting change out of his backpack one morning. For ease of handling, he sat down on the big cardboard case of napkins. However, the case was not full so he wound up sitting rather deep in the box and needed a few helping hands to get out—after the owners of those hands could quit laughing.

P.S. – It's almost certain that there will be a mission during Fair week each year, when our resources are already stretched to the limit. This year it was an evidence search for a law enforcement agency, which involved only four of our members and so did not create a major staffing crisis.

VISITORS ARE WELCOME
--CHARLOTTE GUNN

That's true for humans and search dogs as well; we have recently enjoyed some time with traveling search dog teams. Xena's sister Ursa brought her human, Noreen McClintock of Mono County, California, to Nampa for a couple of days. Then Janne and Vikki Anderberg of Absaroka Search Dogs (Montana) stopped with their dogs for a day in Boise. In both cases, we were able to find a few available people to do some informal field training, and very much enjoyed the chance to watch each other work and to share ideas.

FAMILY CAMP TRAINING WEEKEND,
SEPTEMBER 22-23

September training is specifically designed to be comparatively relaxing after the stress of Corn Booth time, and to encourage families and significant others to spend some time with the IMSARU members they hear so much about. Tom Wheless is making the campground arrangements and will have more details for us soon. We will relax, do some SAR games and fun competitions, relax, eat, tell stories, relax and enjoy each other's company. So shake out that tent or dust off the camper, plan some easy camp meals, and join us for the weekend.