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# RESCUE

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

MEMBER:  
**MOUNTAIN RESCUE  
ASSOCIATION**  
SINCE 1960



## IMSARU MEMBERS ATTEND ROPE RESCUE OPERATIONS FEB 18-20 —BY STEVE ARGYLE



Have you ever climbed the grain silos at Paul, ID? Eric Mundell and Steve Argyle attended the Rope Rescue Operations Course of the Southern Idaho Fire Academy in Paul, ID from Feb 18-20. The course was 20 hours of intensive training in rescue operations with the overwhelming majority of time spent hands-on. In spite of the cold and wind, the instructors from the Ada County Special Operations Teams provided exceptional training. The course provided the participants training in hazard recognition, equipment use, and techniques necessary to safely support and participate in rope rescue operations. Training included conducting hazard analysis/risk assessment, equipment, descending, ascending, anchor systems, mechanical advantage, lowering and raising systems, pick-offs, patient packaging and scree evacuations.

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Deadline of the 20th of the month is required for material to be included in the next month's issue.

## **OVER-SNOW TRAVEL AND WINTER SHELTERS TRAINING AND MISSION--JANUARY 18, 23-24 --BY TIM HENNING**

As rescuers, we must be prepared to conduct searches and rescues in all types of conditions, including winter in the mountains of the Northwest. To do so requires that we practice our winter travel and survival skills so that we can do more than survive and be effective during our work. Important skills for backcountry in the winter include travel methods, snow shelters, and proper clothing and equipment; these are what we set out to practice.

On Tuesday evening, Bob Meredith and I split the evening class into two sessions—clothing and equipment needed for winter travel, and snow shelters. In general, searchers must be sure they have the three essential layers of clothing: (1) wicking layer next to the skin, (2) insulation layer for warmth and (3) windproof/waterproof shell. Bob presented a slide show on the construction of several types of snow shelters, including snow trench, snow cave, powder house and igloo.



Winston Cheney talks about winter— in preparation for avalanche training in Feb.

Bright and early on Saturday, a group of us met at the Compound, loaded gear, and headed for Pilot's Peak to frolic in a winter wonderland. Bob met us at the parking lot and informed us that our planned travel route was impassable due to an avalanche. So, for Plan C, we headed up Sunset Mountain. Bob was generous enough to shuttle our packs a mile or so to our camping areas with his snowmobile and its trailer. All of us say thanks!

Adam Chitwood, Robert Gilley and Jerry Newland started making a large snow cave and soon changed their plans to make it a combination powder house and snow cave. It's good that the Boise County building inspector wasn't around, as I'm sure they were breaking numerous building codes with their undersnow cavern. Tom Wheless, Tony Rockwell and I opted for the snow trench, while Bob made a tent his home. The crew that built the cave soon found that they should have reviewed the snow building codes. They had constructed a roof that did not have enough dome shape to support itself. When it was condemned, the occupants found other shelters that would take them in. After dinner, a lot of stories and a couple of lies, the crew hit the sack.

I was having wondrous dreams of lying on a white sand beach with a drink in hand when Tom awoke me shortly before 6 a.m., saying that we had a page from the Boise County Sheriff and needed to respond. Once we found a radio that had the B.C.S.'s frequency, we learned that two snowmobilers were missing in the Pilot's Peak area, across Highway 21 from our camp.

All of us quickly (but not necessarily cheerfully in the cold and dark) packed our gear and headed down to meet the sheriff in the parking lot. So much for our planned day of skiing in the fresh powder!

The sheriff sent a party of snowmobiles in to look for the guy and we sent out a truck to drive the road for any signs of the lost party walking out. The rest of us remained on standby to assist in the extraction or to provide medical assistance if needed. After a couple of hours, the two snowmobilers were found and reported to be in fine shape. With that, we headed to Idaho City for a late breakfast and then home.

P.S.—Those who think MRE's have an infinite shelf life are *wrong*. *Phew!*

### **SAFETY EDUCATION AT WORK** **--RICK CUDD, VICE PRESIDENT AND SAFETY EDUCATION DIRECTOR**

On 21 January, IMSARU supported the annual health fair at Weiser Middle School. Approximately 70-85 young adults, ages 11 to 13, rotated every 15 minutes through 6 stations. We showed the Fox Kids Club videos and discussed the following topics: clothing, hypothermia, shelter, basic survival kit contents and what to do when you are lost. We also showed them a typical 24-hour pack and let them try it on. They were very enthusiastic and had a lot of questions.

On 13 February, IMSARU team members went to Idaho City to work with Girl Scouts from Boise. We had a short snowshoeing trip, learned the importance of the buddy system and held a discussion about wilderness safety, clothing, hypothermia, shelter, basic survival kit contents and what to do when you are lost. The Girl Scouts also provided great training. IMSARU members participating in the effort are now certified in the tightening and adjusting of all types of snowshoes. A great time was had by all. Special thanks to Pam Green for bringing Inca and conducting a short mock search.

On 14 February, IMSARU team members conducted training for the Girls Scouts at Horizon Elementary School. The troop was preparing for a winter camping trip on February 25 in McCall. Approximately 10 young women and 6 adults attended. The topics covered were the buddy system, clothing, hypothermia, shelter, basic survival kit contents and what to do when you are lost. Other topics covered for adult leaders included: knowing local emergency contacts and area emergency room locations, first signs of hypothermia and steps to take. We also conducted Q&A for all.

Safety Education is one of the main purposes of our organization and of the national MRA. You can help! Call Rick and volunteer for one of these scheduled dates:

Idaho City - 3 March - Monroe Elementary School. Need 5 IMSARU members.

Fruitland - 17 March - Fruitland Middle School Health Fair. Need 2 IMSARU members.

Boise - 24, 25, 26 March - FAA Meeting at the Double Tree Riverside. Need multiple assets.

May 6. Hunter Safety Class. Need 4 IMSARU members.

**RULES TO LIVE BY AS A SAR VOLUNTEER  
--BY SGT. JONNI JOYCE, ZEBULON P.D., NC  
(REPRINTED BY PERMISSION)**

Just my perspective:

1. Never criticize your law enforcement incident commander in public. He has more responsibilities than you could ever imagine.
2. Never release details of a search that you assisted on that was under L.E. jurisdiction. You might unknowingly compromise a criminal investigation.
3. Understand that when you volunteer as a searcher, you have to work within a system. Things might not go your way and you are not in charge.
4. The time for constructive criticism is at the official multi-agency debriefing. Respect the individuals you might disagree with by disagreeing with them there.
5. Never blame anyone for the death of a victim. It is cruel and inhumane.
6. Don't engage in "My dog could have...would have" after-the-fact conversations. It is unprofessional and not necessarily true.
7. Don't assume you are better trained or more suited for duty than the other guy. Keep your ego in check.
8. Remember, it is not the responsibility of the L.E. to know your abilities...it is your responsibility to make that contact prior to being needed.
9. Be prepared to answer questions on insurance, mutual aid agreements, and type of training/testing standards that your team uses to L.E. administrators. They have liability issues that must be addressed that you are not aware of.
10. If you want to make a difference, remember you effect change by working within the system. That means holding your tongue, not participating in self promotion, and working for a higher calling than oneself.

Law Enforcement and SAR Volunteers must work together. Lives are at stake. We both have bad apples with big egos. It is up to us to keep those individuals in check and not let their negativity ruin the good that can be accomplished together. We are stronger together than apart. And only together can we achieve miracles. I challenge all Law Enforcement and SAR Volunteers to "Be a Bridge." We have differences. Let's engage in open and honest communication with one another so we can understand each other's perspective. Only then can we learn from one another. Only then can the two professions join as one, in a partnership united in the mission of saving lives. Let's work together... **"So Others May Live."**

[Editor's Note: Jonni taught a seminar on training dogs for water search in Blackfoot last summer. We very much enjoyed her combination of canine skills, law enforcement perspective and humor.]

## WHAT DID WE DO IN 1999?

Coordinator Rod Knopp has compiled statistics on our activities, as requested by MRA. These show 17 actual missions, plus 7 stand-by's when we did not actually go into the field. We also worked at 3 public races, where we supplied communications and basic first-aid services. In addition, members of our unit supplied 61 hours of talks and presentations for public education, and spent an estimated 6575 people-hours in training. I wonder what non-SAR people do with their spare time?

## HIGH-TECH MAPPING

Training Director Bob Meredith has been investigating the programs which allow one to download maps and print copies as needed. Some obvious considerations are availability of maps of our area, clarity, detail, inclusion of navigation markings, etc. Bob has compiled his resources into a notebook, and offers to let any member who has a special interest in this topic borrow the book with the understanding that it must be returned promptly.

## DOGS PASS C.G.C. TEST

Four novice dogs passed their required C.G.C. obedience test on February 19. They are Jeb (with handler Paula McCollum), Sam (with handler Jerry Newland), Huey (with handler Debbie Ralph) and Geshem (with handler Jane Foreman).



Good dog!

This test, together with an agility test and some specific handling tasks such as loading into a vehicle with another dog and allowing a stranger to pick up the dog, is pre-requisite to field testing for mission readiness. We are happy to see these dogs progressing, and congratulate their handlers on all the hard work.

Thank you, Pam Green (of "That Darn Dog"), for teaching and testing these skills.

## DOG TRAINING NEVER ENDS

On Saturday, February 12, Eric Mundell set up our wilderness training on BLM land south of Kuna and five teams braved the mud and raw wind. Access to the first-choice site was going to be too muddy, so we used a different corner of sagebrush for various tracking and air-scent problems. Leslie announced that she was going to limit her exposure because she had to be healthy for a family trip on Tuesday—so guess who was the “victim” in the field when the drizzle turned to downpour. And Diane is now the unit’s official non-forecaster, having predicted that “The storm is going around us” about three minutes before the sleet arrived.

Eric, you’d better be careful: Some of us have high expectations ever since you arranged that comet show during a night practice, but we could become disillusioned.

## MEDICAL TRAINING CONTINUES

Most of our mission calls do not involve major medical situations, or the experts are near and we can soon turn the subject(s) over to them. Occasionally, however, we are it. All field members are expected to take at least a basic first aid course, and our monthly medical meetings (on the third Tuesday except when the schedule gets revised) are designed to refresh our memories, communicate new approaches, and modify standard procedures to fit our off-road SAR missions.



Steve shares his expertise.

On January 11, *Jeff Waldeck* took us through the procedures for fractures and sprains, from the initial patient evaluation through the standard Rest, Ice, Compression and Elevation. We then practiced improvisation of splints, using only what would normally be available in field packs. The results weren’t all elegant, but they were good practice for our backcountry reality when we may be miles from fancy equipment and long hours from motorized transportation.

On February 15, paramedic *Steven Pack* reviewed for us the basic approach to an accident or injury site, reminding us of the rescuers’ responsibility to protect themselves and assess safety of the site before rushing in. Steve then continued with patient assessment and cur-

rent recommendations on administering CPR. We also discussed what should be in personal and unit medical kits, with our usual wide variety of opinions on exactly what is and is not worth the weight and space.

## **SPECIAL EVENTS -- PLAN YOUR CALENDAR**

### March 2-5 Trout Pond at the Western Idaho Fairgrounds

This is probably our second-most-important fundraiser of the year. Spectra Productions, Channel 7 and Intermountain Outdoor Sports supply the setup and all of the equipment; we supply the people power. It's labor-intensive but of short duration: Thursday evening, Friday evening, Saturday day and evening, Sunday day. Please say yes when Leslie Robertson or one of her assistants asks you to work a couple of shifts. Dress for early spring outdoors in Idaho (usually sun, rain, wind, snow, cold and heat—often all in the same day) and bring your own snacks or money to visit the refreshment stand indoors. The veterans also show up with fish rags and long-nosed pliers or hemostats to remove hooks.

### March 10-12 MRA Intermountain Region Snow and Ice Conference

Bonneville County is hosting this training and re-certification opportunity. Topics include safety, over-the-snow travel, anchor systems, snow and ice technical skills, avalanche skills, medical skills in the outdoor environment, incident assessment and response, personal equipment. Ice and snow is one of the three required skill areas for MRA teams. Talk to Bob Meredith, Tim Henning or Jeff Munn about joining IMSARU's delegation to this event. (Other teams should contact Dave Ferguson of Bonneville County Sheriff's Search and Rescue at (208) 524-7418 or e-mail him at dave.ferguson@anlw.anl.gov for information.)

### April 15 Race to Robie Creek

We supply communications and basic first aid along the half-marathon course from Boise to the Robie Creek park. We also laugh at the clever signs and decorations, console runners and walkers whose bodies are letting them down, and join the picnic at the end. It takes about 25 people to do our job well, so please keep this Saturday open and do your share of IMSARU's public service work.

### June 16-18 Water Workout Weekend

Bonneville County hosts this one also—for divers, search dogs and their handlers, boat handlers, and other interested SAR workers. The site is different this year, moving to Big Elk Creek YMCA Camp on Palisades Reservoir; we hear rumors that there will be wonderful home cooking as well as the on-site sleeping quarters. If you don't hear from Bonneville County when the date gets closer, contact Dave Ferguson as listed above.

### Changes to Training Schedule for April and May

Due to some of the special activities noted above, our carefully-planned training schedule has been adjusted. April 15 would normally be our field training day, but the Robie Creek Race does not schedule around us. So, we are moving Navigation and Bivouac to May 9 (Tuesday evening class) and May 13-14 (weekend field training). We are still planning to work on the Climbing Wall at Nampa Rec Center on April 22, so will use April 18 to train on ropes, knots and rescue rigging. (April 4 and April 11 evening meetings will be given to preparation for the Race to Robie Creek.)

### Track Aware and Tracker 1 Classes in Idaho this Summer

IMSARU will not be hosting a tracking class this year, but there will be one in Blaine County, June 16-18, and one in Bannock County, August 25-27.

## CALENDAR

Mar. 2-5	Trout Pond at the Spring Sports Show	Western Idaho Fairgrounds
Mar. 7	General Meeting	7:30 p.m. At the Compound
Mar. 10-12	MRA Intermountain Region Snow and Ice Conference	Bonneville County
Mar. 14	SAR Training	7:30 p.m. At the Compound
Mar. 21	Medical Training	7:30 p.m. At the Compound
Mar. 26	Dog Training—Contact Pam Green at 362-9272	
Mar. 28	Business Meeting	7:30 p.m. At the Compound
April 1	Dog Handlers' Meeting and Training Contact Paula McCollum at 853-6543	
April 4	General Meeting—with reps from Robie Creek Race committee	7:30 p.m. At the Compound
April 11	Medical Meeting—Prepare for Race to Robie Creek	7:30 p.m. At the Compound
April 15	Race to Robie Creek	
April 18	SAR Training—Ropes, Knots, Rescue Rigging	7:30 p.m. At the Compound
April 22	SAR Training on the Climbing Wall	Time T.B.A. Nampa Rec. Center
April 25	Business Meeting	7:30 p.m. At the Compound
May 2	General Meeting	7:30 p.m. At the Compound
May 9	SAR Training—Navigation and Bivouac	7:30 p.m. At the Compound

**DO THESE PEOPLE LOOK LIKE THEY'RE HAVING FUN?**



Debbie spends an overnight to print the newsletter. She and Pam then deliver it to George and Charlotte's house, where the four of us spend another 2-3 hours folding and stapling. Rod spends some hours per month to update the mailing list and then print labels. It takes an additional 2-3 hours to label and bundle for bulk mailing, and a trip to Boise to give it to Leslie, who then delivers it to the Post Office. Mailing costs are over \$100 per issue, for approximately 700 copies.

Is this a plea for sympathy? Nope. But thanks to Tony Rockwell and Debbie Ralph, our newsletter is now on-line. If you would just as soon read your copy there, helping us save time, money and trees, please let us know. Check it out at <http://www.imsaru.org/newsletters.html> then mail the form to:

Idaho Mountain Search and Rescue Unit  
P.O. Box 741  
Boise, ID 83701

Or send the same information to [cgunn@execu.net](mailto:cgunn@execu.net)

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Yes, I will read the Rescue newsletter on-line, so you can take me off the mailing list.

(Please Print)

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Eric Mundell  
training for a  
climbing expedition  
to Kansas.

Be sure to look at  
our web site:  
[www.imsaru.](http://www.imsaru.com)

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