

**WEB  
EDITION**

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**RESCUE**

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

FOUNDING MEMBER:  
**MOUNTAIN RESCUE  
ASSOCIATION**



**8<sup>th</sup> STREET CALL OUT**

**--Angela Bateman and Charlotte Gunn**

Early Monday morning, September 30, the Ada County Sheriff’s department received a call from a young man named Jason, who said he had a message on his phone machine from his friend Todd. The message stated that he and his girlfriend had rolled his truck. They had gone up 8<sup>th</sup> Street and mentioned passing a bird observatory trail sign. It was unclear if the girlfriend’s kids were with them or not. They did not have any major injuries and had managed to light a fire on top of a hill to help Jason find them but needed help getting out. Our contact was mostly Ada County but the search moved into Boise County as well. The sheriff’s department requested IMSARU’s assistance and the pagers and phone tree calls went out at about 6:00 in the morning.



Our mantrackers found this print everywhere. Photo by K. Walker

Idaho Mountain Search and Rescue Members who responded were:

Compound: Leslie Robertson, George Gunn, Andrew Hyman , Winston Cheyney.

Team 1: In 903 - Jerry Newland, Chris Harry and Kris Hoffman went up 8<sup>th</sup> Street.

Team 2: Dan Scovel and Brad Acker went down Ridge Rd. to meet 903.

Team 3: Kris Walker went up 8<sup>th</sup> Street and met 903, then he and Kris Hoffman covered the road on the back side over to Aldape Summit.

Team 4: Everett Wood and Angela Bateman rode up Rocky Canyon Road to Aldape Summit, then over to Grimes Creek.

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Visit our web site at [www.imsaru.org](http://www.imsaru.org)

Team 5: ATV Crew (trail groomers from Ridge-to-Rivers) Tim Brewer and Jake ran the trails in the area.

The search was momentarily confused when it was mixed up with a second lost person mission that was totally separate from our 8<sup>th</sup> Street call out. Leslie actually returned a call (via Boise County Sheriff's Office) to people who were all back home okay. It was a different set of people that had been overdue from the Terrace Lakes area.

After that mix-up had been solved, the search continued. It was reported that Jason had received another call and that Todd was going to walk out down Hull's Gulch. The teams continued with their road searches and pieces started to come together. Sets of the same footprints showed up at several locations that the teams had covered. As the teams regrouped it became highly likely that



An obvious clue from Todd Photo by K. Walker



Jerry with the "rolled" truck

Photo by K. Walker

The tracks were spotted both up 8<sup>th</sup> Street and around the bird observatory trailhead area. As the teams regrouped it became highly likely that these same footprints were the subjects we were looking for. An interview with a hunter in the area also led searchers to narrow their concentration and they discovered a note on a tree with Jason's cell phone number on it. There was still no sign of the rolled truck but the hunter confirmed that the night before he had seen a two-wheel-drive truck go up and then saw two people walk back down the road some time later.

The search was called off in the early afternoon. But Jerry and Kris W. were still curious so they continued in Kris's vehicle. After gathering additional information from the hunter they discovered the truck that had slid off at a washout. And of course shortly after finding the truck, they turned around to find two guys walking towards

them--Todd and Jason coming back to see if they could get the truck out. Todd and his girlfriend had walked out and Jason had picked them up somewhere near Hull's Gulch on 8<sup>th</sup> Street around 5:00 a.m. Jason had also called to let the authorities know that Todd and his girlfriend were home and safe; this message somehow never got relayed to IMSARU.

Great man-tracking from three teams really opened this mission up. Several teams had drawn the prints and when they all met up, they quickly realized that it was the same person. Jerry deduced that the subjects had probably walked all the way out and that our teams had actually followed sections of the foot tracks over 7.5 miles. Now that's TRACKING!

## **MEMORIAL DAY CLIMB 2002 – MOUNT BRIETENBACK --AIMEE HASTRITER**

On Saturday, May 25, Bob Meredith (with his wife Chriss), Brad Acker, David Hay, Ed Emmel and myself met at the Compound to head out once again to the Pahsimeroi Valley. The goal this time was to summit Mt. Brietenback. This peak is Idaho's third highest at 12,140 (I think) and we were going to attempt it from the southeast ridge.

Things were going great until about four that afternoon when, almost simultaneously, both vehicles obtained flats, thanks to very sharp little rocks. We decided that, rather than chance any further tire problems, Bob and Chriss would drive back to Arco to get the flat tires fixed. That trip took about five hours. The rest of us had packed ourselves, and the gear needed to set up camp, into Ed's vehicle and drove on to get things settled. Dinner was just about ready when they pulled into camp. Since we were car camping, I decided to try some Dutch oven cooking—my first try. The stew was actually pretty good and dessert (this cherry cake thing) wasn't bad, but I'm looking forward to improvement.

The next morning we headed toward the peak. We had a fairly long, but very nice, hike along a stream. We saw all sorts of tracks and even scared up a moose; he looked a little scraggly but it was still a very cool sight. Eventually we made our way up to the ridge we were using as our route. Bob had come with us this far but opted not to try the summit. We said goodbye and then post-holed off into the distance. Apparently we had reached the mountain about a week after a good snow "dumping" and Bob commented that he had never seen so much snow on this peak.

We spent quite a bit of time determining the route. It seemed that pretty impassable snow had covered some of the normal route and we had to improvise a couple of times. There was a bit of rock climbing, very narrow ridges, and steep snow slopes that I found I don't just love to traverse. It was overall a very interesting trek, but about 4:00 p.m. we decided we had better turn back. In retrospect, this was actually a very wise decision because we were still not quite half way to the summit when we turned around.

On the way home we stopped in Arco to try some old-fashioned BBQ at The World Famous Grandpa's BBQ. My mouth waters, just thinking about it. The food was wonderful and the people incredibly friendly. It was a favorable way to start the journey home.

So, that leaves this mountain unclimbed by our little group. It was, of course, an incredible adventure. Don't worry—we'll be back.

### ***Thank you, Sue Brian***

We have long agreed that the meeting room and office are stuffy and overheated during the summer months, and even suggested that our electronic equipment might be happier with temperature control. Sue has donated an air conditioner to IMSARU, and there's a fair chance we'll agree on how/where to use it by next summer. Thank you, Sue, for this generous gift!

## IMSARU OFFICERS ELECTED FOR 2003

At the general meeting on October 1, the following members were elected as officers for the coming year. An asterisk indicates that a person was reelected to the same office.

President – Jeff Munn *	Logistics Equipment Director – Tim Henning
Vice President – Dan Scovel	Rescue Equipment Director – Bob Meredith *
Medical Director – Renee Johansen *	Public Relations Director – Suzanne Ventura
Secretary – Kris Hoffman *	Training Director – George Gunn
Treasurer – Dave Sorensen *	Coordinator – Rod Knopp *
Facilities Director – Chris Harry *	

These are the people who will form the official Board of Directors and who have accepted the responsibility of seeing that things get done. They are NOT responsible for doing everything themselves. Several other members have volunteered for on-going projects, and we need a lot more volunteers. If you don't want to take on a long-term project, offer to do a one-time job. There is more than enough work for everyone; if you wear the orange shirt and call yourself an IMSARU member, then you are obligated.

## MEDICAL TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES

Medical Director Renee Johansen has arranged the following training opportunities for IMSARU members:

### *CPR Course*

Having offered two classes in October, Renee will be scheduling additional classes to meet demand.

*First Responder with Wilderness Emphasis* – This course will run for sixty hours; schedule can be arranged (twice a week? Saturdays?) Renee must file the paperwork two weeks before the course starts. This is a state EMS course, and those who complete it may test for national registry; each person will pay his/her cost of the test. You must be 18 years old to test, but 17-year-olds can take the course and will then have two years in which to test for national registry.

Cost for IMSARU members includes the text and wilderness portion, but not the testing fee. You may need to purchase your own blood pressure cuff and stethoscope. The fee per person varies according to the size of the group:

6-9 people = \$360 each      10-14 people = \$330 each      15+ people = \$300 each

If you are interested in these opportunities, talk to Renee right away. Note that our official unit expectation is that every member will have basic first aid and CPR training. We encourage higher levels of training for those who have the motivation.

Editor's Note: If you missed the unit's regular medical training nights in September and October, you missed a great opportunity. We got hands-on practice with setting up oxygen delivery and with the automatic defibrillator that is currently being placed in many public sites. Jeff was not allowed to test the theory about oxygen + asphalt, and the defibrillator was a training version that delivers no actual shock, so it was safe, educational and fun.

## **2002 MRA CONFERENCE IN ESTES PARK, COLORADO**

### **--AIMEE HASTRITER**

They say better late than never—sorry this report has taken so long to get to you. The Mountain Rescue Association spring conference took place at the YMCA in Estes Park, June 7-9. It was hosted by Larimer County SAR, who did an excellent job with the organization.

The first half of both Friday and Saturday were spent in classroom sessions. I attended four of these classes and will briefly describe each. The first session I chose to attend was on snowmobile rescue. Frank Nieto from Grand County SAR spoke about different types of patient packaging and patient transport, as well as about injuries associated with snowmobile rescues. I found the injury statistics interesting: More thoracic and spinal injuries were found in drivers than in passengers; however, more passengers ended up with head or abdominal injuries.

The next session was presented by Karen MianECKi, who is in charge of Larimer County SAR's Preventative Search and Rescue (PSAR)—aka safety education. I came away from the meeting with some different ideas for additions to our current available teaching tools and with a strong conviction to do more to teach adults/parents how to prepare their youngsters to be safe in the wilderness. I hope you will see some of these programs implemented sooner rather than later.

On Saturday I attended the discussion of safety factors in mountain rescue, presented by Tim Holden from Rocky Mountain Rescue Group. He presented a lot of statistics on safety factors of the various parts of raising and lowering systems, and compared them with safety factors found in other systems used in everyday life, such as elevators and bridges. He encouraged understanding the concept of safety factors in building systems instead of blindly building every system to a 10:1 ration (the typical MRA standard.) It is important to calculate worst-case scenarios as far as the gear you have, the anchors available, and the way the system will need to be set up (scree evac vs. vertical, weight of load, etc.)

The last discussion I sat in on was about spinal immobilization in the field. Dr. John Nichols from Grand County SAR presented a new algorithm for evaluating spinal injuries in the field before committing a patient to full spinal immobilization. Three years were spent evaluating patients from a Colorado ski area; thanks to this data, guidelines were created that allow for safe, effective treatment in the field without undue stress on the patient caused by over-immobilizing.

Field sessions were held each afternoon. On Friday, I watched an avalanche rescue scenario and caught a glimpse of the demonstration on failure modes of snow anchors. On Saturday, I watched a demonstration of mid-face medical rescues. I enjoyed seeing how another team works with a patient and litter when doing a vertical rescue.

Each evening, we were entertained by a different speaker. Randy Coffman (from the National Park Service) showed slides and told the story of a summit expedition to Gasherbrum II (26,360 feet) in northern Pakistan. Liz Caldwell and Barry Siff (co-owners of MountainQuest Adventures) showed slides and talked of their experiences as adventure racers, as in the Eco-Challenge. The keynote speaker was Malcolm Daly. He had great footage of his rescue from Thunder Mountain in Alaska. It was truly a hair-raising story, luckily with a happy ending—he lived to tell about it. The story was

made even more touching because at least one of those present at the actual rescue was at the MRA conference.

I am excited that I was able to attend this particular meeting. There were two non-U.S. rescue teams present at the convention. The Israeli team from the Negev-Highlands region was working with the Colorado SAR groups to expand their training. Late Saturday night, a small group of us were fortunate enough to view a computer slide show on the Negev Highland SAR team. It was incredible to see the terrain they work in, the equipment they use, and the type of missions they are called out on. I loved to listen to them talk and to hear about their culture and experiences. The other team was from China, the Chinese Mountaineering Association. I did not have an opportunity to speak with these guys but they were impressive. They had just climbed Denali the week before the convention! The MRA is going to work at continuing these relationships, and improve and expand international cooperation in search and rescue.

Several things were accomplished at the business meeting, and I must commend Rocky Henderson on his ability to keep things moving right along. We listened to region reports, discussed the concerns about reaccreditation of some teams in the MRA and awarded MRA membership to some new teams. The greatest discussion came with the proposal to increase membership dues. The \$5 dues increase was voted in; as a result, IMSARU has also increased our annual dues by \$5. David Moore is in charge of the MRA museum and is trying to gather memorabilia and artifacts associated with search and rescue. If you have anything you think might be of interest, his contact information will be available at the Compound. I will be setting out a copy of the business meeting minutes, as well as the outlines from my classroom sessions. I encourage everyone to take a look at the information. I was amazed at how much there is to the MRA and at everything they encompass. One last order of business: Rocky resigned as president and Dan Hourihan from Alaska Mountain Rescue Group was unanimously elected to take his place.

**CORN BOOTH, AUGUST 16-24, 2002**  
**--CHARLOTTE GUNN**

Yes, we survived another major fund-raising project. It seems like the Corn Booth is always there, but there are always changes. Our location was farther down Food Row, closer to the carnival rides, with new neighbors. (It felt really strange not to have the Baked Potato booth on one side and the Basque chorizos on the other as they have always been there.) The weather was great—especially welcome after the extreme heat of our previous event at the Fairgrounds, for the Powwow in July. There was some great strolling entertainment; if you didn't see the "cowboy" clowns and Billy's Brass Band, you missed an opportunity. Our gross income was within a few dollars of what we took in last year, though we assume net profit was down a bit because of some increased expenses. And we didn't even have a mission call to strain our resources during the period of over-commitment.

Many thanks to all the members, family and friends who helped us with this important event. Special thanks go to: Everett and Rose Wood, Dan and Jean Iverson, and Terry and Susan Read, who covered the weekday shifts; Jeff Munn for arranging daily starting funds and picking up the money every night, as well as supervising the booth set-up and tear-down; Aimee Hastriter for scheduling the workers for the third year in a row, with some help from Tom Wheless; the Boise-Cascade crews who covered the day and evening shifts for the last day of the Fair; and probably dozens of others whom I fail to mention. This is truly a group effort, and no few people could do it alone.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### **Help Ourselves While Helping Others**

“Ten Thousand Villages” is a store in Hyde Park that offers handcrafted items from around the world. It is part of a system that tries to encourage self-sufficiency for poor people by returning to them a larger share of the selling price for their goods than they would receive through the usual marketing arrangement. Merchandise varies, but includes things like textiles, baskets, toys, jewelry, wood and metal housewares, handmade greeting cards—many great ideas for Christmas gifts.

Kris Hoffman has arranged for IMSARU to provide volunteer clerks on the evening of December 17, from 7 to 9 p.m. In exchange, IMSARU will receive 10% of all sales during that time frame. So, encourage your family and friends to join you in Christmas shopping on the 17<sup>th</sup> at “Ten Thousand Villages,” 1609 North 13<sup>th</sup> Street.

### **Condolences**

Our sympathy goes to Troy Green, whose mother died in late August.

### **NASAR offers “Managing the Lost Person Incident” course in Boise**

This 4-day course, November 22-25, is “for Law Enforcement SAR Coordinators, Volunteer SAR Coordinators, Future SAR Incident Commanders or anyone responsible for managing searches for lost people.” Registration fee is \$245 for NASAR members and \$265 for non-NASAR members. Registration deadline is October 31; minimum class size is 15 and maximum is 24.

IMSARU members, talk to George Gunn if you are interested. For others, the contact person is Rick Mossman. Day phone is 307-242-7209 or 307-543-2559. Evening phone is 307-543-9116. Email is Rick\_Mossman@NPS.gov or rmossman@wyoming.com

### **MRA Business Meeting is January 17-19, 2003, in West Valley City, Utah.**

IMSARU members who want to attend, talk to Board members right away.

### **SARCON 2003 is scheduled for April 24-27, 2003 in Reno NV.**

Our contingent to SARCON 2002 was enthusiastic about the experience. Everyone is encouraged to consider going to this year’s event. At a cost of around \$50 including meals, this has to be the best SAR conference bargain around.

### **Plan ahead for NASAR national conference in Reno, May 28-31, 2003**

### **Put the IMSARU Christmas Party on your Calendar**

This year’s party will be on Saturday, December 14, at the Western Village Mobile Homes’ Community Center. (If you ever visited Larry Novak, this is where he lived—on Ustick just a bit west of Maple Grove.) Jennifer Newland’s parents, Woody and Judy Hart, now live there and will be our official hosts. It will be a potluck supper, starting at 6 p.m. Serious awards for the year will be presented—give your suggestions to Rod--and Diane and Charlotte are already chortling over their ideas for the non-serious awards. (Diane and Charlotte promise to protect your identity if you “tell on” someone to them.) If you want to help produce the awards, talk to Rod, Diane or Charlotte.

**MISSING ATV RIDER—SEPTEMBER 25, 2002**  
**--CHARLOTTE GUNN**

The early-morning call said that a 65-year-old male, reported to be in good health and presumably well-equipped, had taken his ATV from above Idaho City in toward the Thorne Creek Fire Lookout. He did not return Tuesday evening, when expected. IMSARU responders included Pam Green with Inca, Troy Green with his ATV, Charlotte Gunn, George Gunn, Chris Harry, Diane Mathews, Chris Patterson with his ATV, Leslie Robertson with Mingo and Martha Vandivort. Coordinator Rod Knopp and Leslie did the in-town organization while the rest of us gathered and awaited further information. It was, for example, unclear whether we should go in past Arrowrock Reservoir to the Cottonwood Campground area or head for Idaho City and work our way in from that side. Anyone familiar with Boise County knows that decision could have a major effect on conduct of the search.

When Boise County Sheriff 39 told us that the subject's truck had been located a few miles from Idaho City, and that a witness reported seeing the missing man yesterday "on top" and headed toward Thorne Creek, we launched our resources. (The other piece of good news was that the subject was riding a bright yellow machine—much easier to spot than the frequent black and olive color choices.) Ada County Aerial Sheriff Jerry Terlishner took off from Boise Airport with Martha as observer; Chris H. and Diane in 903, followed by Pam and Troy, headed up Highway 21 to maintain radio contact with the aircraft and consult with Sheriff 39. They reached the subject's vehicle and started setting up base camp while George, Charlotte, Leslie and Chris P. were still on the road.

As so often happens, before we got any of our ground personnel in the field, the call came through that someone had picked up the subject and given him a ride to Boise. As is also frequent, some of us were in the black hole of no radio contact so that we did not get the news until we met 903 headed back down to the valley. (We professional SAR people considered that a major clue.) We got back to the Compound and unpacked in time to go out for lunch before resuming our various plans for the day.

**MISSING HUNTER – OCTOBER 16, 2002**  
**--CHARLOTTE GUNN**

We really didn't want to shovel dirt back into that gaping hole in the front yard, so Rod's call at 9:30 a.m. was our excuse. A man in his early 30's was reported missing by his hunting partner. The RP said they had eaten lunch together in the drainage between Wolf Creek and Chapman Creek (across from the Warm Springs airstrip), then separated to work their ways back to the vehicle; the subject had not arrived by 10 p.m. The RP drove this morning to the lodge where they had camped, and called the Boise County Sheriff's Office.

By 11 a.m., Bill Lindenau was on the road with his ATV and Everett Wood was heading for camp to interview the RP. Chris Walker and Tim Henning were planning to meet the team at base camp; Jerry Newland, Chris Harry and George Gunn were still rounding up personnel and equipment. (A major computer glitch had put our phone tree and map-printing machines out of action.) Charlotte Gunn was sitting on the runway with Ada County Aerial Sheriff Bill Miller, awaiting final clearance for takeoff. Boise County Sheriff reported the missing man had walked out. Oh well.

## **DROWNED MEN IN ODELL AND CRESCENT LAKES (OREGON)** **--Charlotte Gunn**

At the end of June, 2002, two adult men and two adolescent boys were fishing in Odell Lake, between Bend and Klamath Falls, when their boat swamped near Sunset Cove. One man and one boy managed to make it to shore. Someone who had his boat at the dock raced out and pulled the other boy, quite hypothermic, from the water where he was suspended by his life preserver. The other adult, wearing no PFD and reportedly unable to swim, had been seen clinging to the sinking boat. He apparently went down with it.

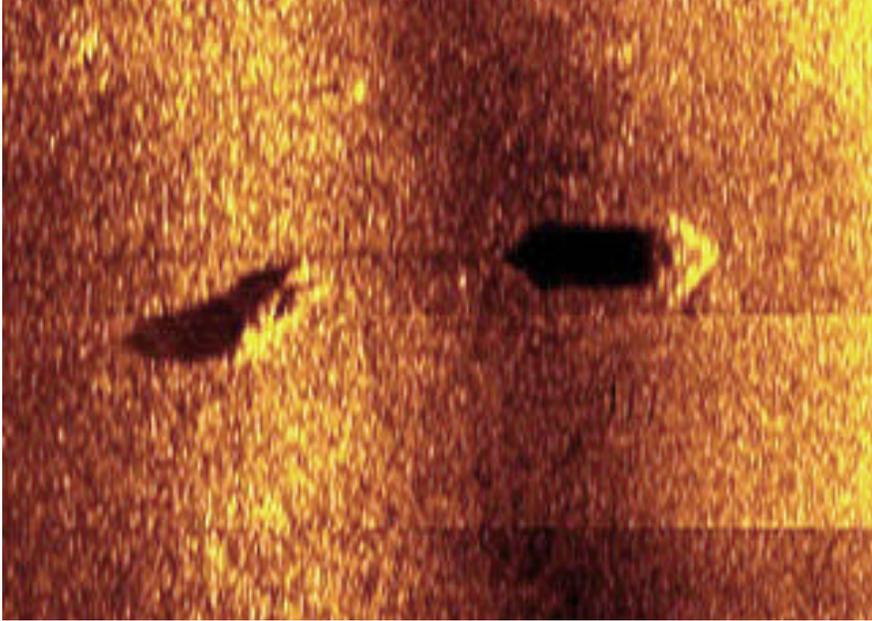
On October 2-3, we drove with Gene and Sandy Ralston through the usual “Welcome to Oregon” rain. At Odell Lake, they rigged their boat and sidescan sonar, but the water was too rough to do any searching that afternoon. We were up before daylight on October 4, and the weather cooperated. One hour and eleven minutes after setting up the search pattern and beginning to run it, Gene and Sandy had the image of the missing man, some 60 feet inshore from the sunken boat, at a depth of 125 feet.

The first sighting is the euphoric moment, but is not the end of the mission. Divers would not be available until the next day, and it was necessary to make an additional confirmation sweep and then begin the tedious process of setting a buoy with the line running directly down to the victim’s location. (Pulling a weight off the bottom and swinging it the correct distance and direction at the end of a 125-foot line underwater is no simple task; you obviously cannot see the weight, and it takes an additional sonar pass after each movement, to determine progress.) Family members came to Sunset Cove and walked out to the point where they could see the markers; they then spent the night at the campground.

We returned to our RV’s, a short distance away on Odell Lake but several miles by road, to unwind from Friday’s task and prepare for Saturday’s. On Saturday, the wind was back at daybreak, piling up



whitecaps and complicating all boat maneuvers. The Klamath County Sheriff's Dive Rescue Team rigged their gear while Gene and Sandy went back out to check the buoy location. The TV reporter didn't want to don a PFD, but decided she could do so when it was the only way to be allowed on a boat, so Gene helped her complete her story. After positioning the dive boat and making adjustments to breathing and communications gear, the diver went over the side. (The dive team was using



Sidescan image of one of the subjects. Object at right is target placed for the divers.

Image by Gene Ralston

surface-supply NITROX, which involves major cables and two people to deploy and retrieve them, as well as the standby diver and other personnel.) Despite the time limitations of this deep a dive at almost 5,000 feet elevation, the first diver located and retrieved the body. He stopped 30 feet below the surface, where two other divers helped bag the body and then take it on up to the litter on the boat. We were very impressed by the professional skill they displayed in making the recovery so quickly under difficult conditions. Family members expressed emotional appreciation at having the body recovered.

Divers and Sheriff's Office personnel also retrieved the sunken boat and brought it in to the boat ramp to load it on a trailer. While everyone was debriefing and packing gear, two officers went over to nearby Crescent Lake and reported that it was markedly calmer than Odell. So, the whole crew moved the few miles to Crescent, to search for two more drowning victims.

These came from two separate incidents, one sixteen months ago and the other a year before that. Both were canoeing accidents, and in each case a young male was missing and presumed dead while the other occupants of the canoes either made it to shore or were picked up from the water. Both were in very deep water; however, the lake level had dropped 38 feet this year, so divers hoped to be able to work at least one of the sites if they had a specific location. For the more recent incident, Gene had been able to contact an eyewitness—a fisherman who had picked up two survivors in the water—and this man agreed to come over to the lake and identify the spot. He went out with Gene and Sandy, who then set up their search area centered on this spot, and had an image of the body about half an hour later—in 160 feet of water. Due to the limited daylight remaining, most personnel left for the night. Those of us who stayed had access to showers and then camped.

On Sunday morning, Gene and Sandy took the Stokes litter to the site and dropped it as a target—weighted to remain in place on the bottom and attached to a surface buoy with a line that the diver could follow down. A pass with the sidescan confirmed that the target was six feet from the body (not bad for a first drop!) and the dive crew came out to do the recovery. They again used surface-supply NITROX. Unfortunately, the first diver discovered that the bottom was covered with

deep silt and he immediately sank in to his waist, greatly hindering visibility and maneuverability. With this information, the dive team revised their technique and the second diver was able to grab the body.

Everyone else then had some down time while Gene and Sandy went out to locate the third subject for this weekend. Some reports put the two incidents very close together; other information had them miles apart. Since this technology--wonderful as it is and with a lake bottom basically clear of obstacles and visual distractions--covers a swath only 50-60 feet wide on each pass, it is important to narrow the search area to the most likely spot in order to avoid wasting days; "search the lake" is not a viable option. Once the people in charge agreed on the search area, it did not take long to pick up the body image on the sidescan. However, this one was in 170 feet of water, and had been down more than two years, so the decision was made to try to get good video images of the body before deciding whether to attempt recovery. A shallow diver, controlling the underwater camera on a long cable, was able to get a brief shot before dark.

On Monday, four and five people at a time were on the Ralstons' boat all day, trying to get the "good video images." It was extremely frustrating. They had two buoys in the vicinity of the body, and a compass heading and approximate distance from buoy to directly over it. However, the next requirement is to place the boat in just the right spot and hold it there. Anyone who has ever tried to do that with a bit of breeze will start to understand. So we set an anchor, estimating angle and distance to allow the boat to drift to just the right spot. (You can't just drop the anchor vertically, as it won't hold.) Then the wind direction changed. We set a second anchor and tried to use the two of them to put us at the apex of a triangle. The wind direction changed again. We moved the buoy to where its anchor was right next to the body (verified by a new sidescan pass) and tried to hold the boat next to it under power. Meanwhile, that beautiful camera was swinging at the end of 170-180 feet of cable. With the field of vision about two feet wide, and the handler having no knowledge of nor control over which way the camera turned at any moment, it is no surprise that we were unsuccessful. (Note that even if the camera had picked up an image in passing, there is no way to guide it back to the same spot except luck.) It was the kind of day when technology seems to get your hopes up by presenting seemingly simple processes and then smashes those hopes with major complications.

Before leaving home, Gene had made arrangements to borrow an R.O.V. (remote-operated underwater vehicle) in case of need, if the Klamath County authorities would pay only shipping costs and insurance. Cell phone calls and faxed contract forms zipped back and forth, with the R.O.V. to be shipped from Colorado Tuesday afternoon. Deputy Don Spicher left the lake near sunset with a whole list of tasks to be accomplished before Tuesday morning; the Ralstons and the Gunns settled in for another peaceful night in their RV's, though Sandy planned to stay awake and listen for the raccoons that had obviously explored the boat during the previous night. (We found no damage but those muddy pawprints were definite evidence.)

Tuesday was mostly a day of waiting. Yeah, that's tough work but someone had to do it—spend a beautiful sunny day in an almost-deserted campground beside a sparkling lake. We did make some new sidescan images of the body from different angles, divide the 600 feet of new rope in half and splice eyes into ends, do some more customizing of the newly-constructed acoustic target Don had brought, shop the metropolis of Crescent Junction.... And the Ralstons had visitors that night. It started with strange noises and their camper shaking. Gene opened the door far enough to see the



Dive helmet with TV camera and cable used for NITROX dives.

Photo by Gunn

two raccoons on the bumper; they then scampered up the back ladder to the top and checked it out. When he opened the top hatch and yelled at them, the coons scampered back down the ladder (headfirst, in case you have ever wondered just how agile those beasts are.)

Don returned by 8 a.m. on Wednesday, and we set the new target about 18

inches from the body, removed the old plastic target which had dragged away, and set two anchors to stabilize the boat. Mark Benson picked up “Hattie” (the borrowed R.O.V.) at the airport and got her to the lake before noon. After lunch, we read the manual, assembled “Hattie” and put her in the water off the end of the dock to practice the controls, since none of us had previously operated such a machine. Much of this whole mission was very sombre, but there was half an hour or so when you would have thought four grown men had a 3-D version of the radio-controlled cars you see people whizzing around their driveways. The R.O.V. actually has a surprisingly short learning curve, but it is definitely worthwhile to practice first in shallow



Klamath Falls Dive Team prepares to recover body from Odell Lake.

Photo by Gunn

water until you learn how little motion of the joystick translates into the turns, dives and ascents you want. The crew then returned to the marker buoy, sent the R.O.V. down the anchor rope and recorded on video extensive views of the body on the bottom of the lake—before being blown off the water by the usual afternoon winds. The Ralstons and the Gunns then packed up and headed for home, knowing that the dive team planned to try for recovery on Saturday. (A phone call during the weekend confirmed that this third body was also recovered.)

This was an incredible mission for search and recovery. About the only high-tech equipment not in use would be a mini-submarine, but it was the human skill, experience and dedication that made it succeed. I am awed by what I saw and what I learned, and cannot begin to name all the people who deserve appreciation. Marine Deputy Don Spicher was with us every step of the way and doing much of the behind-the-scenes stuff as well; he was great to work with, and we hope he got some sleep after this was over. The Klamath County Dive Rescue Team is a bunch of volunteers who are highly trained and willing to risk themselves in public service; I would never want to do what they do but am very glad they do it so well. The Klamath County Sheriff's SAR provided many backup services throughout the weekend. The Shelter Cove Resort gave us RV spaces for the first two nights on scene; the Forest Service let us use a closed campground; the Crescent Lake Resort caretaker gave us access to showers and electric power; and everyone we worked with seemed happy to share their own expertise and at the same time learn anything new they could. Thank you, Klamath County, for sharing this awesome experience with us.

**Thoughts from an amateur:**

1. As always, body recovery is not our favorite SAR job, but we know it is an important service to the family and community. Their relief is our reward.
2. This work requires total team effort. Gene and Sandy do outstanding location work with the sidescan sonar, but that leaves the bodies still at the bottom. The divers are well trained and plan every detail but they can't retrieve what they can't find, and the size and depth of these lakes make diver search unlikely to succeed. Add in all the other kinds of support with equipment, logistics and information, and you have a major operation.
3. I wish we had had trained water search dogs available, to see how they would react to the age and depth of these subjects, as our former dog never worked this kind of problem. (Yes, search dogs work well in conjunction with sidescan sonar and divers.)
4. I will *never* go out in a boat without wearing a PFD.
5. Wish I were rich enough to buy an R.O.V. as a Christmas gift!

**REMEMBER THE  
CHRISTMAS PARTY  
14 DECEMBER '02**