

Web Edition

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RESCUE

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

FOUNDING MEMBER:
**MOUNTAIN RESCUE
ASSOCIATION**



MOUNTAIN RESCUE ASSOCIATION, INTERMOUNTAIN REGION RECERTIFICATION, JULY 8-10, 2005 --CHARLOTTE GUNN

Camp Loristica is a Forest Service group campsite, available by reservation only and only for the short season after snow melts enough to open the road. A few miles out of Mackay and at about 8,000 feet of elevation, it provided the space, terrain and comparatively cool weather we needed for testing search techniques and technical rock skills (high-angle team, low-angle team, and individual skills of five rescue members on each team.) All we had to supply were the water, food, porta-potties, shelters, paperwork, evening activities, tee-shirts, organization, trash service and setting up of problems. Now that we know how much work that is, many of us are calculating that by the time it's IM-SARU's turn again to host the event—required every five years, and with seven teams in our region—we will be too old to be the ones doing the work. We know we wouldn't have managed this time if Bonneville County hadn't been willing to provide the meals with their Dutch-oven catering!



Bill and Jerry take the patient down safely. -Photo by K. Walker

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The cave was cool but the working area was hot. -Photo by K. Walker

Ravalli County SAR, an associate team, did all of their tests on Friday and passed them all; they will be recommended for regular member status at the next M.R.A. business meeting. Three of the other teams did their search problems on Friday afternoon, all six other teams did their technical rock tests on Saturday, and the final three search problems were done on Sunday morning. And yes, IMSARU had to re-do our high-angle rock problem on Sunday also; that's what happens when you pull half a dozen of our most experienced team members for overhead tasks. In addition to Ravalli County SAR, the teams who passed all their tests were Bonneville County SAR, Davis County Sheriff's SAR, Idaho Mountain SAR Unit, Salt Lake County Sheriff's SAR, Utah County Sheriff's SAR, and Weber County Mountain Rescue Unit.

Congratulations to all the teams for accomplishing this goal! And we owe thanks to more people than we can name. Some of the most obvious are: Bonneville County SAR for taking care of feeding over 100 people. Albertson's for donating bottled water, paper goods, soap and trash bags. Ann Finley for letting us use her horse trailer to haul a huge pile of equipment. Bob Meredith and Bill Lindenau for multiple trips to the site to reconnoiter, plan and even fill some potholes in the camp road. And if you want to hear about the lighter side, ask participants about Linda's and Rena's performances as the "hysterical wives" of "lost" subjects, how much motivation Jennifer had for figuring out the compass course, Mac's tales of his tour-guide stories for tourists in New Zealand, or maybe even about the rhyming questions for the "SAR Jeopardy" game.



"SAR Jeopardy" doesn't look exactly like the TV version, but it's more fun. -Photo by G. Gunn

IMSARU members attending included: Eric Zuber, Martha Vandivort, Kris Scovel, Dan Scovel, Phil Sander, Phil O'Bryan, Jerry Newland, Jennifer Newland, Jeff Munn, Bob Meredith, Mac MacIntosh, Bill Lindenau, Doug Knapp, Tom Kearney, Linda Kearney, Tim Henning, Chris Harry, George Gunn, Charlotte Gunn and Todd Culley.

MISSING MAN AT BEAVER CREEK SUMMIT – JUNE 19-20, 2005 --CHARLOTTE GUNN

The pagers went off at about 8 p.m. A 22-year-old male, described as retarded (mental age about 12) and autistic, had flown into Boise that day. His mother and stepfather were driving him up Highway 21 when the young man asked them to stop the car at about 4 p.m. because he felt sick; he got out, vomited, then ran down the hillside away from the highway. A deputy responding to the scene found the subject, but the young man fled from him also. We were asked to respond with all possible haste because of the missing man's mental state, his lack of familiarity with the area and terrain, and the fact that he was not dressed for a night out by himself, especially at that altitude.

Rod organized the callout, and eleven members and two area-scent search dogs responded for the two-hour drive up the winding road. Upon arrival, with daylight almost gone, we heard that we could expect the subject not only to fail to respond to calls but to hide from us. One deputy remarked that "It will take dogs to find him," and the steep terrain and thick vegetation made that a logical assumption. The suggestion was to use gentle voices (preferably the female team members, as sounding less threatening), to sound more like we were talking to him than yelling for him, and to avoid marked vehicles and clothing that looked like law enforcement uniforms. We also learned that there was a bear in the area.

Jerry and George organized and supervised the search. Deputies went to the point where the drainage reached the highway on a lower loop, in case the subject might follow gravity to that point. Two man-tracking teams—Kris and Dan, and Tim and Mac—and a canine team of Linda with Smokey, Ann and Tom, headed down to the Point Last Seen (where the subject had fled from the deputy.) A second canine team of Charlotte with Xena and Doug followed a few minutes later. Unfortunately, there were lots of fresh prints all over the area and our people had no way of knowing which set they should follow. (The description of the subject's footwear turned out to be totally wrong, and his soles to be almost smooth rather than the described lugs.) Our trackers separated lines of sign, paying special attention to those headed away from the PLS. The canine teams covered some nearby areas, hoping the dogs would catch human scent despite the lack of helpful wind. When Tom reported that Smokey had showed interest in an area on the way down and that the humans thought they might have heard a sound, Doug and I went back up that way with Xena. There was a sudden sound of movement in the brush no more than a dozen feet ahead, a sound that was either a grunt or a slurred word, and more sound of movement. We thought we had found him! Xena became very agitated, circling around the area but not focusing on one specific spot and not giving me her alert for human scent. Doug and I searched the area as well as we could, knowing that in the darkness and thick brush, a subject who hid and remained motionless would be found only by luck. We finally accepted the logical conclusion that we had disturbed the resting place of the local bear.

The mantrackers' eyes gave out and the canine teams had no more luck, so all teams returned to base at around 3:30 a.m. Jerry called Rod to request additional resources for the morning. Those who had to return to Boise for Monday-morning jobs or for child and animal care started down, with many admonitions to drive safely and remember that there were deer all over the road. The rest of us figured

out places where we might snatch a few hours of sleep...except: Mac and Doug went up to the high point of the drainage area, with night scope and the plan to remain silent while watching and listening for movement. And Jerry took a vehicle down to where the deputies had waited earlier, in case the subject came out after hours of hiding in the cold and dark. Some of us were almost asleep when Jerry radioed that he had the subject, whom he brought back to the motor home for warmth, hydration, food, and Kris's soothing conversation. This conversation elicited the information that he thought his medications had messed up his mind, that he had indeed heard our searchers calling, that he had watched the deputies at the drainage exit point "standing there for a long time" and thought they would shoot him if they saw him, that he had encountered a bear and expected to die, and that it was terrifying to be alone in the forest at night. The only apparent physical injury was a few scratches on a hand, but Kris and Jerry convinced the young man to let the ambulance crew check him out. Family arrived for a relieved reunion and an exhausted search party headed home.

IMSARU members participating included: Dan Scovel, Kris Scovel, Jerry Newland (O.L.), Mac MacIntosh, Rod Knopp (in-town coordinator), Doug Knapp, Tom Kearney, Linda Kearney with Smokey, Tim Henning, George Gunn, Charlotte Gunn with Xena, Ann Finley.

- Lessons reinforced:
- (1) Set up a containment perimeter and maintain it. Had the subject crossed the road and entered the forest in that direction, or had he been picked up as a hitchhiker, we might have waited a long time—or forever—to find out what had happened to him.
 - (2) Remember that the information you receive is often wrong (for example, the shoe sole.) It may also be very helpful, as was the predicted mental state of this young man. When you figure out how to tell from the beginning which is wrong and which is right, please let us know.
 - (3) Always carry full-octane coffee. Poor Jerry had to make it through the last hours of this search on decaf; he still did a great job but we don't want to chance that in the future.

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THANK YOU to Albertson's, to manager Tom Holloway and to assistant manager Mike, for donating paper goods, garbage bags, drinking water and soap to the Mountain Rescue Association recertification camp for the Intermountain Region.

THANK YOU to all the people who worked so hard to make the above-mentioned recertification testing a success. We especially thank Stan Finn and the Bonneville County SAR group for preparing and serving the meals!

THANKS AGAIN to the H-P employees who continue to donate to us and to the H-P corporation that matches their donations through Global Impact, and to those individuals who designated us for their donations through the Treasure Valley United Way.

APOLOGIES to Access Air Ambulance owner and pilot who effected the river rescue on May 21. I am told that his correct name is Jim Hutchens. That was great flying, and we apologize for mis-hearing the name.

CALENDAR

Aug. 13	Set up the Corn Booth at the Fairgrounds	8 a.m. - ???
Aug. 14	Finish setting up Corn Booth at the Fairgrounds	9 a.m. - ???
Aug. 19-28	Corn Booth at the Western Idaho Fair	10 a.m. – Midnight
Aug. 29	Tear down Corn Booth at the Fairgrounds	Come as soon as you can after you finish work.
Aug. 30	Put away Corn Booth and Equipment Business Meeting afterward if time allows.	6:30 p.m.
Sept. 6	SAR Training – Care and Feeding of Search Managers for Field Personnel – Part 1	7:30 p.m. At the Compound
Sept. 10	K-9 Training – Call Martha Vandivort at 338-0284	
Sept. 13	SAR Training – Care and Feeding of Search Managers for Field Personnel – Part 2	7:30 p.m. At the Compound
Sept. 20	Medical Training	7:30 p.m. At the Compound
Sept. 24	Corn Booth Painting Party	9:00 a.m. At the Compound
Sept. 27	Business Meeting	7:30 p.m. At the Compound

NOTE: We will get back on schedule after the Corn Booth is over. Right now, however, we are focused on this major fundraiser for our annual budget. It takes a lot of people, all volunteers, to set up, work for ten days, then tear down and put away, but please make this your priority.

We need lots of hands to set up the booth on August 10 and 11; with 20 people it goes pretty fast but with 6 people it will never get done.

At press time, we still have more than 25 shift slots to be filled; your friends, family (including teenage kids) and co-workers may enjoy working with you at the Fair if you only ask them. Call Jennifer Newland at 331-1518 to tell her when you can work.

And even though you will be tired at the end of the Fair, so will everyone else. Make one more big effort to help tear down on the afternoon and evening of August 29 and to get the stuff into storage on August 30. We will all then have earned our Labor Day holiday!

K-9 WATER SEMINAR, JUNE 6-8, 2005
--CHARLOTTE GUNN

Northwest K-9, in the person of K.T. Irwin, again sponsored a canine water search training session, and we were again fortunate enough to attend. Our route went through eastern Idaho (rain, rain, rain) and Yellowstone Park (more rain, snow, sleet) to the camp above Cody at about 6,000 feet (more rain and snow), but we arrived in time for Monday's dinner and evening classroom session. Instructors Deb Tirmenstein and Stacie Chandler worked with dog teams from Wyoming, Colorado, Montana and Idaho (Bonneville County as well as IMSARU.)



We spent Tuesday at the Newton Lakes just outside of Cody, where divers cooperated in both on-shore and boat searches, and cadaver scents were placed underwater as well as in simulated evidence searches along the shores. Wednesday's activities were scheduled for the Buffalo Bill Reservoir to allow deeper problems, but the 30 mph winds made that unrealistic so we went back to the lakes. This time it was Rena Ferguson and Buddy who encountered the rattlesnake (which K.T. has now named Lucifer), and it was Dave Forker's Bailey who provided the entertainment: When Dave started to take Bailey out the walkway to the area where cadaver scent under the dock was spreading and making it difficult for dogs to pinpoint the source, Bailey just rolled his eyes, splashed into the water, then waded and swam directly to the scent. Our dogs must get awfully tired of their humans wanting to do things the hard way!

Wednesday's classroom session was a presentation by Dr. Tom Bennett, forensic pathologist, on the processes of death by drowning, changes in the body after death, and a graph for predicting days before surfacing. Not all of Dr. Bennett's photos would appeal to the squeamish, but they didn't spoil our appetites for a delicious steak dinner, some photos of our work, and socializing.

Thanks again, K.T., for setting this up! IMSARU members attending were Martha Vandivort with Angie, George and Charlotte Gunn with Xena.

P.S. If you have never entered Yellowstone Park via the Bear Tooth Highway, you have a treat awaiting. A section of the highway toward Red Lodge is currently non-existent due to slides, but do take advantage of this scenic drive if you ever get the chance.

LARRY NOVAK SAR COMPOUND CLEAN-UP DAY
--MARC BUURSINK

On Saturday, May 21, a few hardy souls gathered to clean up the Compound. Turnout was light, but for good reasons: IMSARU has been busy with many other activities this season, including nearly continuous training for recertification, a very active safety education program, and attendance at seminars and conferences. As a result, many of our members were busy with these activities or taking the day to finally tend to their own homes. Nevertheless, the weather was beautiful and the working pace was very relaxed.

We put away gear for storage that had been lying on the garage floor and then swept the floor. We fixed the tripped GFCI outlet that was hiding behind the corn-booth panels, so now the fridge is stocked again with mission-ready beverages. The last of the OSB board was put up around the garage door and breaker-panel, so our new insulation is well protected from run-ins with equipment. We cleaned out some more of the old meeting room and the corn-booth storage room; as a result the dumpster eye-sore is no longer with us! We had expert help with stacking the meeting room chairs, sweeping and mopping the floor, and putting all the chairs back in neat rows. Outside and around the compound we trimmed and pulled weeds, mowed the lawn, and sprayed for weeds (the goat-heads are back in full force and will need tending-to this summer). And once again, for lunch we had a very tasty and welcome BBQ cooked up by Rod Knopp. Thank you to Kris Walker for donating the SAR BBQ.

Helping out on Saturday were Joel and Jeff Munn, Chris Harry, and Tim Henning.

MOTORCYCLIST MISSING FROM DEER PARK – JUNE 5, 2005
--LINDA KEARNEY

Late Sunday morning, the pager goes off. We have a motorcyclist who didn't return to camp last night. It will take about two hours to get to the site at Deer Park beyond Idaho City. It's pretty country with the mountains, streams, and a lot of wildlife (deer and elk) darting across the road. Jerry and Chris have taken the first truck and gone ahead. The rest follow: Everett, Ron, and Mac in the unit truck; Kris and Cory in the van; Ann, Smokey and myself in what the unit calls Tonka (GEO tracker). Mick and Doug will join us later.

When we arrived at base camp, the white tent was up. We put the sides up and split it down the middle, one half for the Incident Commander and the other half for logistics. Soon the IC (Jerry) had a computer, maps, and everything else he needed to run a mission. From what we were told, we expected this search to go several days. There was a lot of land to cover and the subject could be anywhere and in any condition.

It was decided that the unit members would set up and run the base camp. There are a lot of jobs that people don't even think about. You need a person to keep track of the volunteers, someone to handle the radio and the sat phone, a person to take care of a t-card system so the IC knows who is where and

who can be used, people to hand out equipment.... The list is endless for the jobs behind the scenes.

The sheriff's department had done some scouting for tire tracks and had found some down the road. Team 1 was sent to follow that track. Team 2 was sent in a different direction to see if the subject came out on that trail. The teams checked in every 10 minutes. Team 3, two ATV's from the Idaho ATV club, checked all the different campgrounds.

Team 1 still had a track to follow. Team 2 didn't see one. Both teams were having a rough ride. There was a lot of windfall in the paths. At one point Team 1 had to lift his bike over a fallen tree 3 feet in diameter, as there was no way around it. Team 3 came back and said they had found nothing. Team 2 returned, as they were running out of fuel and hadn't seen anything. Team 1 kept on going. He still was following the track.

It was getting late now, almost dark. Team 1 was worried he didn't have enough fuel to make it back. He also knew how rough the ride was to get this far. It would take the same amount of time to get back to base camp. He came to the creek and could see a bike on the other side. He called in to find out what color bike we were looking for. Blue and white, yes, it looked like he had found the bike. But now came the problem of crossing the creek. Team 1 felt it would be safer to cross the creek on foot. Kris gave him pointers on how best to cross a creek when unsure how deep it was. Using sticks and good foot positioning, he made it. He confirmed it was the right bike but no rider was around it.

Team 1 was now asking if there was a better way out than the way he came but none could be found. However, now that he had crossed the creek, there was a ranger station about a mile down the road. There he would have shelter for the night. The radio exchange went like this: Base to Team 1, "There is a ranger station about a mile down the road. Do you mind spending the night?" Team 1 to Base, "Not if you call my wife and let her know I'm ok. Is the ranger station locked?" Base to Team 1, "Yes." Team 1 to Base, "How do I get in?" Base to Team 1, "Use a rock or log." Team 1 to Base, "How much trouble will I be in for doing that?" Base to Team 1, "This is a search scenario; you are ok."

Team 4, a plane, is just starting out for the airstrip at the ranger station. They will drop off fuel for Team 1 and do a quick search of the area. Team 1 is now walking towards the ranger station. He radios in that he sees smoke there. We are all waiting by the radio hoping that the missing person is there.

The plane lands at the ranger station. The person comes running out, hoping he is going to get flown home. It is our missing rider. Since the plane seats only two, it is decided that both the subject and Team 1 will spend the night at the cabin. A Parks and Recreation clean-up crew will go in the next day with chain saws to clear the trail for the motorcycles.

Our job is done. All we have left to do is pack up and return home.

IMSARU members included Mick Brunson, Ann Finley, Chris Harry, Linda Kearney with Smokey, Doug Knapp, Mac MacIntosh, Bob Meredith (air observer), Ron Moomey, Jerry Newland (O.L.), Cori Tremayne, Kris Walker, Everett Wood. The pilot was Wayne Thiel, recruited by the Ada County Aerial Sheriffs when none of their members were available. Jim Noland and Elmore County Deputy Bowling also responded to this near-the-county-line incident. And Eric Zuber, Charlotte Gunn and George Gunn delayed their departures for Moscow and Cody in order to do the in-town coordination.

TRAINING – MOCK MISSION – JUNE 18, 2005 --CHARLOTTE GUNN

Jerry set up a good practice of search, medical response and technical evacuation, all of which we will be demonstrating at our MRA recertification tests. A 33-year-old female and her two daughters, ages 11 and 13, had been dropped off at Bonneville Point to hike down to a road behind Micron, where the



Jennifer learns how it feels to be the victim.

-Photo by C. Newland

husband/father was to pick them up for a family picnic at Discovery Point; the family had done this kind of outing several times and were familiar with the area, but never joined the rest of their kin at the park.

When our team reached the field, Jerry became the deputy on scene, Dan was O.L. with George as mentor, Chris remained at base for a multitude of tasks, and the rest of us formed field teams with ATV's, mantrackers and area scent dogs as special resources.

When we found the two

girls on the trail down over the cliffs, they told us of their mom falling and telling them to go for help but were vague on exactly where the accident had happened, giving only the approximate time they had spent walking since leaving her. They did report that mom was still conscious when they left, so of course we continued calling her name while spreading out over hillsides and gulches.

Jennifer, however, followed the planned scenario by "becoming unconscious" and was pretty well hidden in her rocky gulch. When a team found her, medical attention was the first priority. Chris and Jerry brought the gear out from base; Phil O. was in charge of setting up the extrication (with Bob as mentor); Bill and Tom first used ATV's to ferry equipment from the trucks, then parked the ATV's with wheels against big rocks as braces and used them as anchors. And yes, a large and sturdy sagebrush was a third anchor. Jennifer miraculously recovered consciousness long enough to consent to use of the neck brace as well as the backboard, and maintained her calm while



Jerry represented IMSARU on early-morning radio.

-Photo by G. Gunn



Expectations for search management have become more complex. In this picture from the motorcyclist search (page 7) note paperwork, satellite phone, radios, computer, maps etc. To help team members know how to respond to—and in spite of—this new environment, the September training will focus on Search Management as it impacts field members.

-Photo by C. Harry