

WEB EDITION

RESCUE

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

FOUNDING MEMBER:
**MOUNTAIN RESCUE
ASSOCIATION**



A FIRST DATE TO REMEMBER

STRANDED MOTORISTS ON SHAW MOUNTAIN – JANUARY 20, 2007

--COLLIN GARNER

The pagers went off at around 5:30 a.m., telling us that a couple of people were stranded up on the Boise Front. After loading up and getting to the Compound, we learned that two young people had been out all night in their Isuzu Rodeo which was stuck in the snow, probably on the Ridge Road off of Aldape Summit. The information was coming from the sister of one of the subjects (she also owned the stuck vehicle) who had heard from her brother via cell phone. He stated that they were not dressed for the weather, were low on gas to keep the car heater running and that the cell phone battery was very low. The sister reported that she had tried to get to them in a four-wheel-drive pickup but that the road was impassible for full-size vehicles.

Bill and I led the convoy from the Compound with my two snow machines and Bill's ATV (unsure of the snow conditions, we wanted to be prepared), and headed up the same route we travel for the annual Race to Robie Creek. The drive up was short and uneventful. At about



—Photo by C. Garner

RESCUE is published bi-monthly by the IDAHO MOUNTAIN SEARCH AND RESCUE UNIT, INC.
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Visit our unit web site at www.imsaru.org



The search team is back on the “main road.”

--Photo by D. Gomez

the time we got unloaded and ready to go in, we were informed that the subjects had been located by Mark—who had gone directly to the site with his ATV—and he was bringing them out to meet us at the summit. The medical condition of the two subjects was unremarkable except for the fact that the driver’s shoes and pants (you guessed it—denim) were soaked from his efforts to free the vehicle. We put both subjects in Kris’s warm vehicle to drink hot tea and get comfortable.

The group decided to have me take my snow machine up to the site of the stuck vehicle for a GPS reading and photos. (Hey, if I dragged the machine all the way up, I was going to ride at least a little bit.) We then turned the vehicles around—my thanks to Bill and Jeremiah for their help—and returned to Boise, including a short stop at a Boise Fire Station to drop Mark off and meet with the subject’s sister, who was happy to see her brother and his friend safe and sound. Oh, by the way, we learned that the two young people were out on their first date.

Well, I guess that you could call it a textbook search—got started early, got on site early, found the subjects and were back to the Compound by 9 a.m.

Thoughts:

- Be prepared for anything, even getting stuck in the middle of the night on the side of a mountain.
- Stay in the vehicle. If they had left the car, this would have been an entirely different search.
- Check road conditions before you leave home. It turned out that this driver’s intention was to drive all the way across the Ridge Road and come out on 8th Street above Boise—where the road is closed by locked gates because of the winter conditions.

IMSARU members participating included Jeremiah Clever, Collin Garner, Dave Gomez, Carl Kidwell, Bill Lindenau, Josh Nichols, Lee Pierce, Kris Walker and Mark Westerdoll. In-town coordinators were George and Charlotte Gunn.

[Editor’s Notes: It was a busy weekend, with a call-out late Friday afternoon for a missing snowmobiler in the Whoop-em-Up/Owl Creek area (found by his friends before we started); the above mission early Saturday morning; a Field Certification class for applicants most of the day on Saturday; SAR field training on Sunday; another call Sunday evening for motorists stuck in the same area as the above mission but this time with a five-year-old girl in the party. (Ada County deputy was able to get to them with four-wheel-drive and we cancelled our response.)

**ELMORE COUNTY SAVES LIVES
STRANDED VEHICLE DECEMBER 2-3, 2006
—CHARLOTTE GUNN**

At 6:30 a.m. on Saturday, December 2, two vehicles left on the Middle Fork Road from Atlanta, where the occupants had gone “for the hot springs.” One vehicle apparently made it back to Boise without incident. The other, running low on fuel, turned off on the North Fork Road to try to go to Idaho City. They ran out of gas, probably between 7 and 8 a.m. It was a dark, cold evening when someone (presumably the friends in the first vehicle) notified authorities that the other vehicle had not returned home.

Three Elmore County SAR snowmobilers responded from Featherville. Danny Bond, Dave Kinney and Deputy Rick Bohling had already ridden from Featherville to Atlanta and back that day, but out they went again. By the time they found the missing vehicle a short distance from Deer Park, at about 10 p.m., it seemed obvious that the search was moving into Boise County, so the pagers went off at our Christmas party to put us on standby. There were two occupants, one male and one female, in the stranded vehicle. Both were so cold that it was difficult to coax them out of the back seat to the fire that rescuers built just a few feet away. Bohling went down to Deer Park for communications and called for two medical helicopters while Bond and Kinney started the re-warming; they then put the two subjects on their snowmobiles and transported them to Deer Park where medical personnel picked them up and flew them to a Boise hospital.

Meanwhile, the subjects stated that the other member of their party had left on foot to walk out to Idaho City and get help. Temperature was probably 0°F. or below; the missing man was dressed in sneakers, jeans, tee-shirt, denim jacket and ball cap—and it was approximately thirty miles to the highway. The Elmore County crew, fearful of getting stranded without fuel themselves but unwilling to turn away from the search, asked us to re-supply gas and snowmobile oil; four of our people loaded up and started up the road around the reservoirs.

Bohling, Bond and Kinney then tracked the third subject eighteen miles through the dark night. They found him in the ditch beside the road, semi-conscious, and got him on his feet. Kinney put his own coat and gloves on the subject, and they loaded him onto Bond’s snowmobile for the twelve remaining miles to Highway 21. It was not an easy trip, as the subject kept fading out of consciousness and it was difficult to keep him on the machine, but they made it to the highway and met the ambulance that transported the man to Idaho City, where the medical helicopter could pick him up.

According to media reports, all three subjects were treated at the hospital and released. We hope they know how lucky they are.

It’s not every day that a SAR team can say “We saved his life,” but there’s no doubt that at least one of these people—and quite likely all three—would have died if Elmore County’s SAR team had not gone after them as soon as they knew of the problem. Well done, Dave, Danny and Rick! We also applaud Jerry Newland, Bill Lindenau, Chris Harry and Lee Pierce for leaving the IMSARU Christmas party to make that long night drive up around the reservoir, almost to Twin Springs, before turning back when they learned that Elmore County SAR was sending a truck and trailer to pick up their three searchers at Idaho City.

**CHRISTMAS TREE HUNTER – DRY BUCK ROAD TO HIGH VALLEY
NOVEMBER 29-30, 2006
--CHARLOTTE GUNN**

It was a bit past 11 p.m. when the pager went off: A 49-year-old woman from Emmett had gone to the Dry Buck area to cut a Christmas tree and was supposed to return by 3 p.m. She was driving a blue pickup truck; unknown whether it had 4wd. The Gem County Posse was searching the area and reported that snowmobiles might be needed. Five people in three vehicles headed off into the dark, up the highway to Banks and then up the Dry Buck Road. They went as far as they could before turning around to snatch a couple of hours' sleep and wait for daylight.

At daybreak, three more searchers took two vehicles around through Olla to see whether they could access High Valley that way; they drove as far as the snow allowed safe travel and then a bit farther. And shortly after 9 a.m., Bill took off from the Boise Airport with Charlotte as observer.

Bill and I definitely had the plum assignment—it was daylight, there was no worry of getting stuck in the snow, and we had the freedom to follow wherever the tracks seemed to lead. We saw lots of wildlife, including three moose walking along a snowy back road, and were really excited when we saw a blue pickup slowly edging its way down another road. This was shortly after we had discovered via overheard radio traffic that there was another search plane in the area (a real adrenaline jolt, as visibility was limited by terrain and a varying ceiling). Bill established direct radio contact and the two pilots (the unseen one was a relative of the missing lady) agreed on airspace and communications for safety. The other pilot also told us we weren't seeing the subject's pickup because hers is "baby blue" and this one was medium-dark. Oh well, back to work....

Throughout our search, there were the usual difficulties with impassible roads and radio communications; we later learned that the Hawley Mountain repeater we had expected to use was down for repairs. Fortunately, State Communications was loud and clear in their very helpful relay of information. It wasn't yet noon when the word came through that the subject had been located and we could all return home. Later information stated that two friends, who knew where the subject liked to go, went out on their ATV's and found her where her truck had slid off the road. Having made the original mistakes of going alone and driving on when the road got bad, she then had done things right—stayed with the vehicle, started the engine for a short period from time to time to warm up, ate the food she had taken, and waited with the knowledge that she had told someone what she was doing and what time she should be back.

IMSARU members included: Chris Harry (O.L.), Tom Kearney, Carl Kidwell, Karen Limani, Josh Nichols, Lee Pierce, Rick Thompson, Everett Wood and Charlotte Gunn. Ada County Aerial Sheriffs' pilot was Bill Miller. Rod Knopp and George Gunn handled in-town coordination. David Thigpen came in to help the tired and snowy searchers unload trucks.

Notes: (1) If you've never driven the Dry Buck Road, an adventure awaits you. However, do not seek it out at night nor when the weather is unfriendly. Tom will also tell you that it is even more intimidating when your vehicle's four-wheel-drive fails.

(2) High Valley and its surrounding area have roads and tracks all over the place. Even from the air, it sometimes took a while to figure out which one went where. We could sometimes tell from the plane which vehicle tracks were cars/trucks and which were snowmobiles, but suspect that finding one particular vehicle in the area could be a daunting task.

CALENDAR

NOTE: all meetings are at 7:30 P.M. at the Compound unless otherwise noted.

Jan. 30	Business Meeting	7:30 p.m.
Feb. 6	General Meeting	7:30 p.m.
Feb. 10	K9 Training – Contact Martha Vandivort at 338-0284	Time and Place T.B.A.
Feb. 13	Medical Training	7:30 p.m.
Feb. 20 & 22	SAR Training—Avalanche Safety	7:30 p.m.
Feb. 24	SAR Field Training—Avalanche Safety	Time & Place T.B.A.
Feb. 25	K9 Training—Contact Ann Finley at 336-1485	Time & Place T.B.A.
Feb. 27	Business Meeting	7:30 p.m.
Mar. 1-4	Trout Pond at the Sportsmen’s Show -- Western Idaho Fairgrounds Call Kris Scovel at 376-7573 to volunteer.	
Mar. 6	General Meeting	7:30 p.m.
Mar. 10	K9 Training – Contact Linda Kearney at 321-1175	Time & Place T.B.A.
Mar. 13	SAR Training	7:30 p.m.
Mar. 17-18	SAR Field Training	Time & Place T.B.A.
Mar. 20	K9 Handlers’ Meeting	6:00 p.m.
Mar. 20	Medical Training	7:30 p.m.
Mar. 24	K9 Training – Contact George Gunn at 378-7787	Time & Place T.B.A.
Mar. 27	Business Meeting	7:30 p.m.
Apr. 3	General Meeting	7:30 p.m.
Apr. 10	SAR Training	7:30 p.m.
Apr. 12-15	SARCON at Reno (Washoe County)	
Apr. 14-15	SAR Field Training	Time & Place T.B.A.
Apr. 17	Medical Training	7:30 p.m.
Apr. 21	Race to Robie Creek – Need 20-25 volunteers!	
Apr. 24	Business Meeting	7:30 p.m.

MEDICAL CERTIFICATION REFRESHER CLASS

On January 23, our Medical Director Collin Garner, assisted by Jeff Hewitt, brought in all the manikins, trainer AED’s, paper work and training video for our monthly medical meeting. He had announced this as a chance for members to inexpensively renew their CPR certification which is required for MRA members. It must have appealed to our membership, as 28 people showed up and stayed involved all evening, listening to instruction, asking questions and doing the hands-on practice. The certification is the American Heart Association’s card for BLS for Healthcare Providers (CPR and AED). Thank you, Collin and Jeff! (Photos on p. 12.)

THANK YOU! THANK YOU! THANK YOU!

Thanks to the many generous individuals and groups who have recently made donations. (The first three should have been listed in the previous issue; our apologies for the delay.)

Caldwell Eagles Auxiliary 3691
T-Mobile

Donna Bostard

Jim and Myrtle Hall, in memory of David Hay
Betty Robertson
Margaret Mulhern and Bruce Goslovich
St. Alphonsus Regional Medical Center
Cabela's for giving us the opportunity to wrap Christmas gifts in their store.

Diane Fields
Paula and Phil O'Bryan
Ann Heltsley
Lee and Al McGlinsky

We are an all-volunteer group, dependent upon fundraising activities and donations for most of our budget. We never charge anyone for our services. Thank you for your help in keeping us ready to answer the calls.

STATISTICS FOR 2006

The following statistics are the ones required from members by the Mountain Rescue Association for their annual report. The terminology is from the MRA form, and the information was assembled by our Coordinator, Rod Knopp. [The same mission may be listed in more than one category. A mission, for example, could involve both search and technical rescue.]

Item Number	Total Number of:	Number
1	Missions, including stand-bys	22
2	Mission man-hours	2295
3	Subjects rescued	26
4	Search missions	17
5	Technical missions	5
6	Avalanche missions	0
7	Recovery missions	0
8	Subjects recovered	0
9	Missions outside your primary service area	2
10	Missions where aircraft were used	5
11	Missions where medical aid was performed	1
12	Public education presentations	20
13	Public educations man-hours	117
14	Training events	82
15	Training man-hours	3754
	Activity Types	
16	Hiking	3
17	Climbing	
18	Skiing (Downhill and cross-county)	1
19	Snowboarding	
20	Snow Machine	
21	Hunting	5
22	Aircraft	1
23	Automobile/Motorcycle	6
24	Mountain Biking	
25	Other (Describe) Fishermen, Walkaway, Boat Accident	6

CHRISTMAS PARTY – DECEMBER 2, 2006

What makes a great Christmas party? A table loaded with so much tempting food that you can't possibly remember any diet resolutions you may have made beforehand? Lots of congenial people who share conversation, memories, ideas and laughs? A beautifully decorated home that invites you in from the moment you find the right address? The chance to thank and applaud those who have been especially important in making another year successful? Pagets going off near the end of the party, to remind us who we are???

We had all of the above and more. Bill and Marty Lindenau hosted the party, and they must have spent all of November putting up decorations. Lori and Rick Thompson, Lee Pierce and Linda Kearney arranged supplies and set up the tables and chairs. The rest of us pitched in on the food and fellowship.

After we all had stuffed ourselves [no, three trips to the food room is not excessive] Diane and Charlotte presented their traditional review of the year's lighter moments, from the No-Doz to Kris Scovel for staying up most of the night as in-town coordinator for the yurt mission in February, to the Bat-Man and Robin masks for Rod Knopp and Kris Walker who did a two-person rescue of a stranded boat in late October.

Serious awards then included:

- George Gunn presented name tapes and rockers for their patches to new members who have completed their year's probation—Danny Cone, Collin Garner, David Gomez, Carl Kidwell, Jennifer Newland, David Thigpen, Lori Thompson and Rick Thompson. (Others not present will receive these at a later date.)
- Dan Scovel presented the award to Rod Knopp for his skills, wisdom, experience, and long hours of in-town coordination as he directed us through another year of missions.
- Rod then presented the remaining awards in a manner that many of us treasure. As one recipient expressed it, "He makes you feel appreciated."

Small LED flashlights engraved with recipients' names went to:

Tony Barrett for his efficient work as Secretary, his work on publicity for the unit, and his willingness to work on committees.

Tim Henning for behind-the-scenes contributions to IMSARU's technology needs.

Ron Moomey for his work as New Member Coordinator, for his response to multiple missions, and for his work in teaching the Wilderness First Aid classes, as safety personnel at public races and at fundraisers.

Phil O'Bryan for the many hours of behind-the-scenes work in keeping our finances in order, and explaining the accounting to us lay-people.

Martha Vandivort for pitching in on whatever needs to be done—missions, fundraisers, public events....

Kris Walker for contributing equipment as well as outstanding skills to missions, and for his willingness to help others learn.

Brightly-colored carabiner flashlights, also engraved with recipients' names, went to: George Gunn for multiple missions, both in the field and in-town coordination; work as Training Director and on safety education and fundraising; work with dog training group and mantracking class; participation in long-term planning and special projects.

Linda Kearney for multiple missions, where she does whatever needs to be done; many hours as Facilities Director; work on K9 training, mantracking and all fund-raising events, and volunteering to work with VSAR.

Tom Kearney for multiple missions, where he pitches in on many tasks; for fund-raising and public-service events; for logistics work, including willingness to take over when Chris announced his move.

Carl Kidwell for multiple missions; for enthusiasm in learning new skills, including many classes, seminars and certifications; for pitching in on projects of every sort; for volunteering to work with VSAR.

Bob Meredith for continued excellence as Technical Director; for navigation training sessions; for special projects such as the climbing wall and working on Corn Booth stoves.

Jerry Newland for multiple missions, often serving as O.L.; for untold hours on special funding projects; for cheerfully steering us through another year under his presidency.

Dan Scovel for multiple missions; for deep involvement in safety education; for his calm wisdom when problems arise; for his dedication in maintaining skills as Wilderness First Responder and as Apprentice Tracker.

Kris Scovel for multiple missions; for effective organization of public-service and fund-raising events (as well as working shifts there); for maintaining her Apprentice Tracker certification and encouraging other members to develop their skill.

Rod also presented a new personalized briefcase to Charlotte Gunn, to help her keep track of her many IMSARU projects, including multiple missions, editing the newsletter, doing background paperwork (reimbursement requests, thank-you notes, bank deposits), making safety education presentations, working on K9 training, preparing for and working shifts at fund-raising events, and inventing the humorous awards for the Christmas party.

And our Distinguished Service Award ("The Rock") for 2006 went to Chris Harry for his participation in most missions, his immediate response to equipment problems and long hours at the Compound re-packing vehicles and making sure things were ready for the next call-out, and his work on planning and VSAR.

Oh yes, that pager call near the end of the party? That was the Elmore County crew calling to let us know the subjects they were tracking had headed into Boise County. See the mission report on page 3.

Many thanks to all who made this event so successful, especially to Bill and Marty for sharing their home. We hope they realize that once we've enjoyed their hospitality, it becomes the traditional location.

ADD AVALANCHE TRAINING TO YOUR CALENDAR

Class sessions will be at 7:30 p.m. on February 20 and 22—yes, that's a Thursday—at the Compound. Field session will be on Saturday, February 24—Time & Place T.B.A.

The article below is reprinted by permission of The Times Journal.

The Times Journal

December 21-27, 2006 • Our 57th Year • No. 11

RUSSELL SPRINGS, KENTUCKY

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IDAHO SEARCH TEAM FINDS BODY ALMOST IMMEDIATELY—

Body of September drowning victim recovered by ‘amazing’ technology 6 minutes —

BY GREG WELLS
TIMES JOURNAL MANAGING EDITOR

December 21, 2006 LAKE CUMBERLAND - After days of driving the more than 2,000 miles to get here, Gene and Sandy Ralston got up Monday, loaded and set up special equipment, and within 6 minutes of beginning their search had found the body of Shane Pierce. Dozens of searchers had unsuccessfully hunted for the body of the 37-year-old Indiana man on numerous occasions since Pierce fell out of his boat at high speed on September 8.

Their near-instant success in locating the body wasn't a matter of luck; it was the use of new sonar technology. The Ralstons are biologists and work as environmental consultants, but they serve their fellow man by recovering drowning victims all around the country. For nothing more than their out-of-pocket expenses, this couple drove from Idaho over the weekend to find Pierce.

Roger Pierce, Shane's father, had learned of the couple from a friend who had found them through the internet, and for Roger it was something of a prayer answered. "What did I want for Christmas?" Roger asked. "I wanted to find my dead son." He said the thought of his son lying there somewhere on the cold bottom of the lake was the first thing in his mind every time he woke up. "Friday was his birthday," the bereaved father added.

The Ralstons, of Idaho Mountain Search and Rescue, came in at the Pierces' request to pick up the search for their son. Kentucky Fish & Wildlife Officer Tony Wright took them to the two spots in the lake where he found the boat and where witnesses said they saw Pierce flip out of the side of his boat the day before this year's Lake Cumberland Poker Run. Wright had recorded the GPS coordinates of the location during the first attempts to find him. The Ralstons

fed that data into their on-board GPS system, established a search grid, and lowered the specially-designed side-scanning sonar device -- called a "towfish" -- into the lake. Six minutes into the first line of the pattern they had a clear image of a body on the mud bottom 91 feet below the surface.

The team returned to the dock to retrieve the Ralstons' remotely-operated robotic submersible. It was decided that it would be quicker to use the robotic arm on the submersible to bring Pierce to the surface than to contact and wait for divers to assemble and make the cold-water dive. Once the equipment was assembled and the boat was again moored in the proper place, Gene Ralston piloted the machine to where Pierce lay, while Sandy played out the control lines. The on-board camera allowed him to grasp Pierce's wrist with a robotic grappling arm on the device, and Sandy hauled them both gently to the surface.

FIELD CERTIFICATION CLASS FOR APPLICANTS

On Saturday, January 20, New Member Coordinator Ron Moomey had organized a session of our introductory class for those who wish to join IMSARU. This is an overview of what we do, how we do it, policies and procedures, and some specific details in how to avoid embarrassing oneself or the unit. With the help of several officers and experienced members, the following new people completed the session. Those with asterisks also passed their pack check and are now eligible to be called for three-season non-technical missions. Congratulations to: Nate Bonebrake*, Jeremiah Clever*, Casey Fatzinger*, Wade Kimball*, Mike Mancuso*, Jim McColly, Rachell McColly, Mike Morrison*, Wyatt Nebeker* and Jimmie Yorgensen*. Jason Griffin also completed the class and pack check, and will be added to the list as soon as we track down his paperwork.

FIELD TRAINING – JANUARY 21, 2007

After the Tuesday evening class where George, Charlotte and Tom presented an overview of what search dogs do well, how they do it, some of their limitations, and how other team members can be most helpful when assigned to a team that includes a canine, it was time for some outdoor demonstrations and training exercises. When SAR field training was announced for this Sunday morning, the forecast was temperature in the low 30's with cold rain. Doesn't that sound inviting? Instead, we got blue skies, enough wind for the area-scent dogs to work, and a great day to be outdoors.

We met at Bonneville Point, showed some new volunteers how to lay tracks for the tracking/trailing dogs, then placed subjects farther afield for the air-scent dogs. Our handlers tend to pounce with glee upon "new scents" for their dogs to work, but we tried to make sure that every non-handler got the chance to walk with a couple of dog teams working problems as well as to be the subject for one or more dogs.

Dog handlers participating included Ann Finley with Tarek, Charlotte Gunn with Xena, George Gunn as a Dog Team Leader, Linda Kearney with Smokey and Darzan, and Tom Kearney with Breeze and Midge. Other IMSARU members were Carl Kidwell, Wade Kimball with his brother Jack, Karen Limani, Clint Matthews, Josh Nichols and Jeff Pile.

IT WAS A WRAP AT CABELA'S --CHARLOTTE GUNN

We had at least three hundred bows left from last year, and had two bow-making parties plus people working at home to increase the supply. That sounds like a generous start to the gift-wrapping season, yes? After buying hundreds of commercial bows and wrapping many gifts with no bow at all (“I’m mailing all these packages” or “We’re carrying these on the plane and



Tom denies any artistic skill, but he is an expert at making boxes.

--Photo by G. Gunn.

bows will just get scrunched” were the most common explanations) we had a grand total of two bows left at the end of the December 24 shift. We were busy Christmas elves! We did use topo maps again this year for those who wanted them, and the camo paper was very popular the first weekend; unfortunately, it’s too expensive to buy in large quantities.

We worked the three days after Thanksgiving, December 8-10, and December 15-24. With three or four people on most shifts, that’s a lot of dedication from volunteers. However, with some help from relatives

and friends, our members made it happen. It was not unusual for the first hour and a half or so in the morning to be very slow, but after that it was hard to find time for a break. It is rumored that a couple of our number-oriented members were trying to figure out how many square feet of wrapping paper we used, but I doubt they succeeded. I wonder what Lianna Pope (a former member who spearheaded our first gift-wrapping stint many years ago) would have thought of this 2006 version of her project?

Many thanks to Cabela’s—especially to **Beverly Ward** and to **Byron Winmen**--for helping us set up this fund-raiser in their huge new Boise store. It’s a beautiful facility and they gave us good work-space; we supplied the materials and get to keep all the profits. Kevin Schroeder did a heroic job of buying supplies (often on short notice), picking up money, and scheduling workers. And we thank all of our members who made time in their busy holiday schedules to contribute to IMSARU in this way. Our budget needs for equipment and training always exceed our resources, but 2007 will be a bit less pinched because of this successful fund-raiser. Now, how many years will we need to do this in order to buy a new unit truck—or at least one with less than 100,000 miles on it when it comes to us?



It was a crowded classroom for our CPR class, with 28 people gaining certification.



Karen listens to the answer about the AED.