

RESCUE HAS BEEN THE VOICE OF IMSARU SINCE JANUARY 1962

WEB EDITION

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RESCUE

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

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FOUNDING MEMBER:
MOUNTAIN RESCUE
ASSOCIATION



MOUNTAIN BIKE AND K9 JOINT TRAINING – NO- VEMBER 18, 2012 FROM THE “LOST” SUB- JECT’S POINT OF VIEW --DODI SWIFT

The Avimor development on Highway 21 above Boise was the destination for both the Mountain Bike Team and the K9 Team on Sunday. The MBT (mountain bike team) hit the trail at 10:45 a.m. and planned to ride the loop that would bring us back to the trailhead. Our group of five, with various levels of skill and experience, found the trail to be a bit of a challenge with some technical spots that forced us off our bikes a couple of times. The trail being wet from the previous night’s rain wasn’t a problem until we had to climb, when we walked our bikes a bit. However, the weather on that Sunday was partly cloudy with a light breeze, and very pleasant. We found ourselves shedding a layer of clothes at one point, and then putting them back on as we approached the latter part of our ride.



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We had a great ride, with only a couple of “tipped over” bikes and a missed turn for two riders who soon rejoined the group. We learned of a few items we should carry with us as a search team, and realized that with the various skill levels of riders we can strategically assign duties to better aid in a search. Our ride took us longer than anticipated, due to this being a new trail to the majority of the group, frequent stops, and walking the muddy hillside.

The plan was for the MBT to meet up with the K9 team at noon, to help them with a mock rescue utilizing the bikers. We were pleased that the K9 team did not give up on us and go ahead without us despite our being about 30 minutes behind schedule. We were also pleased that Ann had pretzels and various other “people snacks,” as Amanda put it, for us to refuel before embarking on a rescue.

So, being the newbie in IMSARU, I energetically volunteered to be the “lost subject” for the K9 team. Ann gave me some general instructions of where to ride, leave my bike, and then go down the trail a bit before finding a spot in the brush by the creek bed. She gave me a radio; I grabbed my jacket and my camelback, and was on my way.

I found where to leave my bike, among some rock piles left for the Avimor construction. I decided to run to the trailhead to speed up the process, walked through the gate and down the trail a bit, then left the trail and radioed the group once I was “in position.” As a “lost subject” and a newbie to boot, I really had no idea how this process worked. I was just excited to be part of the experience. I figured it was going to take the team a while just to get to my bike, since they were on foot, and decided to fully enjoy the warmth of the sun as it peaked through the clouds and I rested after the nice long bike ride. Once the sun was hiding behind the clouds, the temperature changed and so did my comfort level. In an effort to keep warm, I found myself doing some lunges, squats and various other physical activities.

While waiting to be found, I wasn’t completely alone. I saw two other pairs of bikers that were on either side of me, as well as a couple of hikers making their way out of the ravine; none of them spotted me.

I was pleased to hear over the radio that the team had located my bike. This was exciting, because I could actually hear their voices in the distance. I figured they were close, so I packed up my jacket and got my gear ready, assuming they would find me shortly. Well, again being the newbie, I had no idea how the K9 team works. I finally realized that they had no idea what direction I went from the bike. They had to cover a lot of ground, find my tracks, and find my direction of travel after the bikers that I just saw rode over my tracks on the trail.

As I continued to wait, I heard their voices and the dog’s bell, and could see them working their way around the area. I saw the team staying together as a unit, not splitting up to look for my tracks. I knew this was strategic on their part but found myself wanting to learn how this process works.

There was a fence separating the K9 team from me, so this was going to slow down the process. I am certain that if the fence had not been there Cayenne would have found me at that point. But she was focused on the creek bed on the other side of the fence, and thus the team followed her away from my area. It was all I could do to not call out to let them know how close I was, but I decided to be patient and let Cayenne actually locate me where I was. The voices faded and I began lunges again to pass time and to warm the intermittent chill as I waited.

I tried to pass the time in learning how to use my GPS, seeing if my coordinates were similar to what they had transmitted as my bike location. My battery was dying, so I kept turning it on and off to get enough juice to see the coordinates. Again, this helped me learn what I need to do before each trip—make sure my batteries are charged!

I heard their voices again with much relief and knew the team was headed to the trailhead. Now I was confident they would be able to track me. Sure enough, Cayenne headed right toward the bush where I was hiding. She turned though, before reaching me, and went back to the team. But she quickly returned to me and with great excitement let the team know she had located me. She was rewarded with a treat, and all was good. It was a successful “rescue” on a beautiful day at Avimor. This was a great learning experience for me—both the bike ride and being the subject of a search. The waiting was also good for me, as I rarely sit and do nothing for fifteen minutes, let alone for better than an hour.

Mountain Bike Team members were John Ferguson, Amanda Leader, Jeff Munn, Dodi Swift and Jonathan Wheless. In addition to Linda Kearney and Cayenne, who were assigned with Jake Gillis and Dan Herring to search for me, four other K9 teams and six additional volunteers trained on this day.

HELP WANTED—NEED IMSARU ARCHIVIST

Having been in existence since 1961, it is no surprise that IMSARU has a whole lot of old records stacked in boxes and file drawers and notebooks—old membership lists, copies of by-laws and policy statements with multiple revisions, past newsletters, news clippings, photos, old financial records, etc. We have a very few members who have been here for forty years or more and a great majority who joined within the last five or ten years. If any continuity of the IMSARU history is to be maintained, someone needs to sort and organize all of these old papers... and yes, discard useless and duplicate pages.

Randy Jordan is already working on transferring our videotape records to DVDs. Who will handle the paper records? This is not a quick project; it will require a lot of time that can be spread over many months; it needs someone who has been around long enough to have a feel for what IMSARU is and who has the initiative to ask when he or she questions the relevance of an item. It also needs someone who will commit to the long term.

If you have an interest in supplying this kind of service to the unit, please talk to Charlotte about what it involves. This can be a one-person or a small-team effort. It really needs to be started before more records disappear.

**GPS FIELD TRAINING – OCTOBER 13, 2012
(Better known as “How do I get the toggle button to do what I want?”)
--DAN HERRING**

The early morning rain did not stop participants from enjoying GPS field training at Table Rock. Steve was initially concerned that the rain would present members with slippery, boot-grabbing Idaho mud, but the sun and wind quickly dried the trails and we had a perfect day for training. Not only did we have excellent training, but we enjoyed a nice hike while accomplishing it!

Topographic map and UTM coordinates review was conducted at the Compound and then we quickly headed to Table Rock. Once there, Steve gave us the UTM coordinates for the four locations of the “victims,” assisted us with entering the coordinates into the various models of GPS units, and then divided us into three teams. Each of the four locations had an ammo box with log sheets for us to enter proof of locating the coordinates; as a reward, Steve had graciously also placed various chocolate candy bars in the boxes.

All three teams successfully found the ammo boxes and each of us discovered various quirks of the GPS units such as interference/reflections from large rocks, cell phones, power lines and vehicles; and incorrect headings when nearing the targets. We also found that we needed to coordinate watching the terrain and the GPS to safely traverse the area, avoid trespass on private land, and minimize the distance traveled (e.g., how to get around an active quarry).

The day ended with debriefing at the parking area and enjoying the chocolate bundt cake that Charlotte provided (even though Francisco was wondering where the milk was!)

IMSARU members attending were Delinda Castellon, Francisco Castellon, Charlotte Gunn, Dan Herring, Siw Lea, Maegan Reinholtz, Gregg Rettschlag, Byron Wachtler and Jimmie Yorgensen. Instructor was Steve Huffman.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!

The Smiley Creek Lodge sponsored Ann Moser and K9 Watson to participate in the ASCT cadaver dog seminar in Elko. (Ann and Watson are a certified K9 cadaver search team and have worked many missions in Idaho as well as traveling to other states when requested.)

Idaho Mountain Search and Rescue Unit, Inc. also greatly appreciates cash donations from the following individuals and organizations:

Boise Basin Protective Association

BSA Troop 123

United Way of Northern Utah (Intermountain Combined Federal Campaign)

Your Cause, LLC: Employees of H-P and Hewlett-Packard's matching fund

American Baptist Women's Ministries

John Dickey

The Race to Robie Creek Committee

Bill and Jackie Clark Memorial Foundation

MISSING HUNTERS – NOVEMBER 9, 2012
--CHARLOTTE GUNN

Boise County called our Coordinator at 01:30, but Rod was nice enough to let us sleep until a bit after 05:00 before sending out the pager, text and phone messages that asked us to report to the Compound by 06:30. Seven members, plus the camera man from IPTV who plans to follow us through a year, left the Compound shortly after the planned time, with another ATV rider to follow as soon as he made a repair to his trailer.

The story was that of a family who live above Idaho City. Mom told the kids that morning that Dad was probably going hunting; when the kids returned from school, both parents were gone. The only vehicle missing was the two-person ATV, so the assumption was that the couple had used that vehicle to go hunting together. The 17-year-old son and a neighbor had gone out to likely areas on their machines and called the FRS channel that the family used, with no reply. When the parents still weren't home at a logical hour, one of the children called the Boise County Sheriff's Office.

We had verbal directions as well as several forms of maps—with road names or road numbers—to lead us to Crooked Summit. Unfortunately, any actual road signs we found coincided with neither names nor numbers. The good news was that Boise County Sgt. Jim Kaczmarck knows every inch of that part of the county and guided us in by radio past innumerable dirt roads, trails and paths; we then moved on up to Clear Creek Summit for a better staging area. Sgt. Kaczmarck also had a plan for an organized search to locate the missing ATV, and the son and neighbor came to our staging area to answer further questions.

Steve and Tom headed down on ATVs to search part of the Daggett Creek Road; Owen and Aaron headed off in Owen's truck to some specific road areas. Everett arrived with his ATV and we were just forming an additional team when an anonymous hunter came walking out of one of our potential search areas and told of an ATV sitting at the end of the trail. He even knew the license number and it was the one we wanted! We called back our scattered teams and started ATVs, searchers and K9 in along that trail. Someone (perhaps disgruntled at the ATV being on that trail?) had piled brush and logs in several places, giving our lead team some physical exercise in clearing the way. That lead team reached the reported ATV at about the same time as the missing hunters.

It was a typical hunting episode: The couple had gone in farther than they expected before getting their elk. The evening then turned dark and foggy, making navigation difficult, so they built a fire and spent the night. Both seemed in good condition, although they might have spent a more comfortable night had they not left their coats on the ATV when the day was warm and they did not expect to be gone for long. They would have to go back in later to carry out the meat, but of course knew their children were worrying about them.

IMSARU members responding included: Aaron Carroll, Charlotte Gunn, Steve Huffman with two ATVs, Owen Miller, Ann Moser with K9 Watson, Tom Wheless, Everett Wood with ATV and Jimmie Yorgensen. Rod Knopp handled in-town coordination.

BLACK FRIDAY EVENT AT CABELA'S – NOVEMBER 23, 2012 --DELINDA CASTELLON

Cabela's invited Idaho Mountain Search and Rescue to serve donuts and hot coffee to individuals standing in line for the special deals in their Black Friday Event. Our morning began at about 03:30 hours, with a crowd of over 1,600 people in line. Cabela's supplied a couple of pop-up tents as preparation sites for the refreshments. Rather than waiting for individuals to approach us (who would dare step out of line?!) we decided to go along the line and ask people if they would like a nice hot cup of freshly-brewed coffee. Few passed up this offer. The K9 teams walked along with those of us serving the coffee and donuts, providing an impressive visual and a chance to pet a warm furry creature.

People of all ages were waiting to get a chance at their choice of special deals; we learned that the first person in line had been there since 13:00 hours on Thanksgiving Day. When the store opened at 06:00, individuals slowly made their way into the store. That did not end the value of hot coffee, as many people were not well equipped for their long hours in the cold. As the line shortened, we took the show into the store with more coffee and donuts for the shoppers. It was about 07:15 when we began wrapping everything up, leaving the coffee and donuts on tables at the front of the store.



This is the warm part of the service, after following the crowd inside the store. Ask one of the participants how comfortable it was outside...and how they could make coffee faster than the electric percolators would. —Photo by D. Cone

We thank Anita and Kimber at Cabela's for helping to coordinate this event, and we thank Cabela's for their generous donation to IMSARU. I would like to personally thank everyone who showed up at 03:30 to participate in this event. The members who gave up their sleep in order to help were Tom Wheless, Dodi Swift, Jamie Simpson with K9 Yoki (Jamie also brought her dad), Ann Moser with K9 Watson, Kelsey Mahoney, Linda Kearney with K9 Cayenne, Mike Johnson, Dan Herring, Don Fridrich, Cory Fischer, Danny Cone, Barb Clark (and her sister), Francisco Castellon and Delinda Castellon.

NEW MEMBERS COMING ABOARD --CHARLOTTE GUNN

We have had a steady stream of curious visitors recently; when we ask how they heard about us, the most common answer is "I saw your website." Thank you, John Ferguson, for all the work you do to make our website attractive and functional!

Once a visitor decides to join, he or she fills out the application form and pays new member dues (higher than dues for continuing members, as the new members are also buying a manual, their first official orange shirt and set of patches). Our vice-president, currently Gregg Rettschlag, then sets up a field certification class once there are half a dozen or so applicants. Actual schedule varies according to individuals' schedules, but this one met for three hours each on Monday and Wednesday evenings and another four hours or so on Saturday (November 26 and 28, December 1). The class gives an overview of many different topics, from unit history and policies to required training for each certification level to specialty teams. We sometimes describe it as "Basically, how to avoid embarrassing yourself or embarrassing us in public." Each applicant must also pass a pack check before being eligible to be called out on three-season missions; additional training or confirmation of winter experience and equipment will be required for winter missions. And of course we also do a background check.

Upon completing the above, applicants become Probationary Members for a year. During this time, they are welcome and expected to participate in training sessions and other unit activities. They must turn in an Activity Sheet verifying the minimum number of activities and signed by active members. The Training Director, currently Mike Johnson, will recommend full membership once all requirements have been met...but of course that's just the beginning of on-going training and participation.

The following people have now completed their application, dues, Field Certification class and pack check; we welcome them as Probationary Members: Don Fridrich, Julie Gibson, Jeff Lissick, Anthony Mascola, Jen Skeldon and Dodi Swift. Tyler Enderson and Cory Fischer have also completed the first three steps; I am unable to track down their pack check verifications at press time but assume that will be cleared soon.

WHO WE ARE

Idaho Mountain Search and Rescue Unit is a 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation. Our members are all unpaid volunteers who choose to donate their time and skills to help those in trouble, especially in Idaho's back-country. We are members of the national Mountain Rescue Association and re-certify every five years to their testing standards for Search, Technical Rescue and Winter Rescue. We try to respond wherever we are called by any official agency that requests our help. We never charge for our services, but depend upon fundraising projects and donations for support. Thank you to those who help make our work possible.



K9

TEAM CERTIFIES AS FSA DISASTER SEARCH TEAM --BARB CLARK

Two years, some sleepless nights, lots of mud, some blood and a few torn ligaments, a LOT of traveling and more money spent than putting my son through college, but we finally did it... Raffey and I passed the FSA or FEMA type II evaluations. What does that mean? It means we are certified to deploy as a state and regional K9 resource for live victims in the event of a disaster, natural or man-made, collapsed structures and wide area searches.

Raffey embraced a rigorous training program of daily fitness routines that include strength, endurance and flexibility, obedience training including stay on command for up to five minutes without a handler present, and many distractions like other dogs, people, food and even a live chicken. In addition, he learned to climb a ladder to a second story, cross planks high above my head, rappel from tops of buildings and even balance on a teeter-totter. All of that was even before he learned the fine art (or rather, game) of searching for a live victim. For a disaster search dog it is all about the game. And Raffey relished the pursuit of playing that game.

On Sunday, December 3, Raffey and I tested with our FEMA counterparts at Utah Taskforce 1 out of Salt Lake City, successfully completing the FSA. The evaluation for the *Fundamental Skills Assessment* (FSA) consists of:

- Testing for lack of aggression toward dogs and humans.
- Obedience testing, including a long down, heeling and walking through a crowd off-lead.

- Directability testing over a baseball diamond course, where the dog is sent out to various locations while the handler remains stationary.
- Agility testing over an obstacle course, up ladders, under low bridges and through dark tunnels.
- Thirty-second focused bark alert off the rubble.
- Rubble search for two victims in 15 minutes, in a pile with an area of 3500-5000 sq. ft.
- Evaluation of the handler's skills in briefing and debriefing, safety assessment, canine health assessment, and search strategy.

Thanks to everyone who helped in building our props, volunteering to play the victim, offering training advice, tug, pull and simply put up with his Labrador ways for the past two years. It has been a labor of such love and reward, but I could not have done it without the support of you all. Thanks!

Next step: FEMA CE exam, which will allow us to be deployed on a national or even international scale.



TRACKING TEAM TRAINING SESSIONS --CHARLOTTE GUNN

Winter is often less attractive for practicing our mantracking skills, but it doesn't always stop us. On November 25 we met at the Avimor development above Boise at 10 a.m. Jimmie and I had laid tracks the previous morning, just as the precipitation started—from sprinkles to drizzle—and we did not know from our homes in Boise how much more had fallen overnight. When we returned on Sunday morning, it was obvious that the rain had continued. We had worked at making good “signature prints” in the hard dirt at the start of two novice tracks up the hill and through the brush, but those had washed out considerably so we made new signatures that morning. Not only did this help the novices draw their prints and know what they were looking for, but it gave them side-by-side comparisons of the fresh tracks and the same prints 24 hours older and after rain. Alisa joined 3 novice trackers from Malheur County to make two teams for those tracks; they did well at dealing with less than friendly terrain and vegetation, but admitted they were happy to see the “clues” we had left along the way.

Meanwhile, journeyman trackers Kris and Dan were working their way along the more challenging track that left the trail and headed into thick brush near the creek bottom. Instead of “signature prints” they got a general area where two people were last seen on the trail, and their tracks were definitely not a straight line. Kris and Dan followed all the way down to the diversion dam, where they found two of the three clues (missing only the key that was the same color as leaves), and then following the tracks back up to where they rejoined the trail.

On December 3, we met indoors for Kris's challenges on identifying prints. After some viewing and discussion of various footwear types and sole patterns, we divided into pairs. Each pair, back-to-back, was to have one person draw a sole pattern as the partner described it. If you think that is simple, try it! This was frustrating but entertaining, and definitely an educational experience. Participants at this training, in addition to instructor Kris Scovel, were Nathan Channer, Charlotte Gunn, Dan Herring, Linda Kearney, Siw Lea, Tom Rand, Dan Scovel and Jimmie Yorgensen.

NOTE: Those of us who have Tracker certification are expected to keep up our skills in between missions and official classes by practicing with our eyes on the ground. Those who are working toward their certification certainly need hours of practice in between official classes, and these training sessions are free, close to home and with people you know who are eager to help you learn. Those who don't know what trackers do and/or why they are part of IMSARU are invited to join us for at least a couple of sessions. You may find yourself intrigued and wanting to learn more; you may find the work not the kind of thing you want to do personally but you will at least have some idea about what tracking is and how it fits into SAR. What is more, every searcher needs to be alert for possible tracks of the missing person.

Actual certification requires performance at one or many official classes, which are expensive and often at a distance from us. The more you learn before and between these professional classes, the more quickly you can progress. Besides, we have a lot of fun doing this!

**CHRISTMAS PARTY – DECEMBER 1, 2012
--MICHAEL MANCUSO AND CHARLOTTE GUNN**

Once again, Randy Jordan generously arranged for us to use an empty warehouse, with lots of space for our annual holiday celebration. Volunteers set up tables and chairs, organized supplies, decorated walls, and constructed an outdoor scene that acknowledged and represented the various unit teams. The winter scene included stuffed dogs in orange SAR vests, a mountain bike decked in Christmas lights, a decorated ATV, Rescue Randy on hands and knees tracking “footprints” across the snow, and another Rescue Randy hung in his rope harness on a nearby wall. The potluck dinner was a grand array of food that we never get in the field, with approximately 60 members, family and friends sharing and enjoying the fellowship.

Thanks to Michael Mancuso for volunteering to chair the party organization this year. He was helped by Randy Jordan, Linda Kearney, Siw Lea and Rose Wood. Several other people also provided valuable assistance, including Randy’s son Matt, Tom Kearney, Bill Lindenau, David Oren, Everett Wood and Jimmie Yorgensen. Randy’s friend Chris Gilmore generously donated the use of a nice sound system for the party and lots of his time setting it up and making sure the Christmas music sounded good.

Alisa joined the usual Christmas elves, Diane and Charlotte, to present “awards” for special moments and events of 2012, some of which were pats on the back and some of which the honorees would have preferred to forget. President Jimmie Yorgensen then presented the following serious awards:

To Amanda Leader, who has not only taken on some routine tasks at the Compound and accepted the job of Secretary for 2013, but who also put together all the requirements for a Mountain Bike team that came into existence this year, a Mountain Rescue tee-shirt embroidered with “Mountain Bike Team Leader.”

To the K9 Team, a basket full of dog treats and people treats for all of their work in weekly training, mission participation, and public events. Sometimes a request for IMSARU’s help is specifically related to our trained search dogs and handlers; some of them have made multiple out-of-state trips to help in difficult searches and for specialized training. They always represent us well.

Jimmie presented plaques to the following:

To Delinda Castellon for all of her work on public relations and fundraising projects. We haven’t figured out when she sleeps, as she seems always to be working on another idea that will bring us good publicity and/or financial support for our volunteer unit.

To Danny Cone for his time and expertise in keeping our equipment, especially our vehicles, ready to go. He also shows up for almost every mission as well as many of our special events, always cheerful and energetic, and contributes ideas for a large proportion of our projects.

To Tom Wheless (in absentia) for the hours and skills he contributes behind the scenes, especially in vehicle and radio care. When this equipment returns from the field, Tom faces hours of checking, cleaning and repacking in order to be sure things will be ready for the next pager call.

Jimmie then called Kris and Dan Scovel to the podium to receive a gift certificate for dinner at a local restaurant, hoping that will give them time to sit down and be together...since they have spent so much time on mantracker training (instructing both in our IMSARU team and at professional classes in other states), organizing IMSARU's participation in the Race to Robie Creek, fielding phone calls and otherwise being available for thoughtful suggestions when needed.

The next group received fleece vests with the MRA logo and their names:

Ann Moser has just completed multiple years as the IMSARU secretary. She also shares her professional approach to SAR K9 training, where she and Watson have again certified in cadav-



er and wilderness air-scent, but where she also constantly helps others with advice and by example. She responds to most missions and to multiple requests to “bring a dog” to public events.

Gregg Rettschlag is our newly-elected Vice President who has already earned his service award by his enthusiastic involvement in missions, training sessions, safety education, public events, and sense of humor.

Mike Johnson has provided IMSARU with a solid, organized and enjoyable training program. Month after month, members come back to the next meeting talking about how much they learned and how much fun they had at the recent training. In addition to the sessions where he is the instructor, Mike does an excellent job of pulling in other skilled members to be in charge of sessions. He also arranged the new roof for our Corn Booth, participates in a major proportion

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Owen Miller (in absentia) is starting his third year as Technical Director and keeps the Tech Team aware of new developments in the field while stressing basic skills and safety. He also spent a lot of time this year shepherding a grant through to fruition, and can probably offer a seminar on the complications of ordering special “uniform” jackets from a firm based in Canada and coordinating the paperwork for and from the granting institution.

Last but not least, Jimmie presented “The Rock” award to Linda Kearney. This is an award for distinguished service over multiple years. It is not awarded for any one accomplishment nor is it given every year. Linda earned it for her many years of doing whatever needed to be done—from work projects at the Compound and serving as Facilities Manager, through volunteering to work with the new member mentoring program and then as New Member Coordinator, helping set up the Christmas party, participating in a large number of missions and training sessions, to taking ID photos and making membership badges. Whenever something needs to be done, we can count on Linda to volunteer. Other major accomplishments have included uncountable hours of working with the K9 Team (where she certified her second dog this past May) and the mantracking team (where she earned her Apprentice certification this summer).
Congratulations, Linda!



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--DELINDA CASTELLON**

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