



Founding Member: **Mountain Rescue Association**

Rescue



Web Edition

IDAHO MOUNTAIN SEARCH AND RESCUE UNIT, INC. Boise, Idaho

Vol. 46 Mar-Apr 2013 No.2

In this issue

Recovery Operation Bogus Basin Rd—Pg 1	Winter Camping and Survival Training—Pg 2	Mountain Bike Team Infor—Pg 4	Many Thanks-Cash Donations—Pg4
Ore-Ida Scouting Council Weekend—Pg 5	Spring Search Dog Seminar—Pg 6	Hiding Out for Search Dogs—Pg 7	Public Outreach Events—Pg 7
901 Upkeep Donations—Pg 8	GPS Field Training—Pg 9	More Photos—Pg 10	



Press on the calendar to see upcoming events

**RECOVERY OPERATION FROM BOGUS BASIN ROAD
FEBRUARY 17, 2013
--OWEN MILLER**

At approximately 1500, IMSARU was contacted by Boise County Dispatch to assist in the recovery of a body from a one-car motor vehicle crash off of Bogus Basin Road, just across the Boise County line. The vehicle had veered off the roadway and travelled approximately 375 feet down a steep embankment. The driver, sole occupant of the car, had been ejected from the vehicle and died at the scene. Coordinator Rod Knopp paged us at 1514 for a response.

The first response of five members left the Compound with tech equipment loaded into 901 and Owen's truck. Owen acted as initial O.L. when they arrived on scene at 1635. After a quick briefing with the Boise County Deputy and Idaho State Police Troopers, an action plan was created. We moved our two vehicles into a better position to utilize Owen's truck as an anchor point for the systems, and IMSARU members, under the direction of Tech Team members, began setting up technical equipment on the edge of Bogus Basin Road, with the tripod high directional at the road shoulder. (Using the tripod puts the ropes in a higher position to reduce rope friction from running on the ground, prevents the ropes from carving into the soft road shoulder and thus putting dirt and other small debris into the rope fibers, and also assists with the edge transition for the litter attendants.)

Four more members arrived at 1655 and Dan S. assumed the O.L. position, with Owen acting as Rescue Leader for the technical operations. A large contingent of IMSARU personnel who were returning from weekend training near Idaho City were re-routed to the scene. Once they arrived, John took over setup and operation of the mainline. With limited Tech Team members on scene, Owen managed the belay system

RESCUE is published bi-monthly by the IDAHO MOUNTAIN SEARCH AND RESCUE UNIT, INC.
2519 Federal Way, Boise ID 83705. Editor: Charlotte Gunn, Phone (208) 378-7787 or e-mail
cpgunn@cablone.net Visit our unit web site at www.imsaru.org

while also serving as rescue leader and safety officer. Brad walked down the slope with the coroner, establishing a hand line to determine distance to the deceased subject and checking for additional factors that might influence the raise. It was quickly determined that the distance to the body was approximately 350 feet and would require a knot-pass for the litter to reach the subject. Based on the slope angle, Gregg suggested three litter attendants—an excellent call. Gregg, Tom and Brad took this role.

After a safety check of the system, it was put into motion, lowering Gregg and Tom down the slope with the empty litter, performing the knot pass (which can be an additional challenge when using the tripod) to reach the subject. The system was then locked off while the team loaded the subject and secured him in the litter.

The topside team converted the system to a mechanical-advantage haul system and John briefed the haul team of IMSARU members. Once the litter and three attendants were at the top, the subject was transferred to the custody of the funeral home. The operation was completed by about 1915 and teams headed back to Boise.

IMSARU members also managed traffic control during the final portion of the operation. Working in the narrow space of one lane of Bogus Basin Road was a good reminder for everyone to stay alert to scene safety issues such as traffic (especially distracted drivers trying to view our operations) and visibility of personnel working around traffic as it got dark. Our unit jackets are pretty bright but a reflective vest is a good idea any time you are working near traffic.

Agencies responding to the incident included: Ada County Paramedics, Bogus Basin Ski Patrol, Bogus Basin Facilities/Maintenance (initial traffic control), Boise Fire Department, Boise County Coroner, Boise County Sheriff's Office, Idaho State Police and IMSARU.



IMSARU members participating were: Brad Acker, Moises Chavez, John Ferguson, Don Fridrich, Dan Herring, Mike Mancuso, Owen Miller, Brian Mitchell, Ann Moser, Liesel Nelson, Alisa Rettschlag, Gregg Rettschlag, Dan Scovel, Kris Scovel, Jamie Simpson, Dodi Swift and Jimmie Yorgensen. Rod Knopp was in-town coordinator.

WINTER CAMPING AND SURVIVAL TRAINING, FEB. 16-17, 2013 --BRIAN MITCHELL

In mid-February, fourteen members participated in winter camping and survival training near Mores Creek Summit above Idaho City. Was it camping or was it survival? All of us took

We picked a spot on the east face of a semi-protected ridge and started on our snow shelters. The snow was about two to three feet deep in most areas and light-textured. With these conditions we decided on powder houses—that is, all except Andy, who chose to form his shelter in a tree well. We built five powder houses over the course of about four hours. By digging a trench around the perimeter and piling the snow, we were able to build a six-to-eight-foot base. Here are a few critical details we learned, some the hard way:

It's important to pack your mound as you go, and do make it a mound; flat tops lack the strength of a dome. We used measuring stakes a foot to a foot and a half deep all around the dome's surface to judge our cave dimensions and prevent thinning the walls too much. Because our snow was fluffy, we needed a fair amount of time to allow the snow to set up and harden. Once it had set up, we dug in from the bottom, trying for a relatively small opening.

Inside, the aim was to build a platform at a level just above the entrance height, to allow ventilation with a little warmth above. I chose the best partner, Gregg, aka the Antarctic Badger; it was like having my own snowblower. We were careful to leave a uniform 18-inch ceiling, popped a vent hole opposite our entrance, did our best to level the sleeping area, and installed a small candle which gave us plenty of light.

While all this digging and packing and sculpting was going on, we received our most significant training. Yes, we had an accident. While Jimmie, Anthony and Dan were finishing the inside of their powder house it collapsed. Fortunately, they were following all the rules (or at least some of them). Jimmie was the only one fully inside; he was buried under about two feet of snow. Dan was in the entrance way and Anthony just outside. They called for help and all within earshot quickly responded. Anthony knew Jimmie's approximate location within the cave and Alisa took aim with a probe. Jimmie would later thank her for a nice scar on his right temple. Once located, we shoveled out our beloved president to find him in remarkably good spirits albeit a bit shaken. The whole ordeal probably lasted between two and three minutes.



Quick lesson: Always use a buddy system when building shelters and be ready for a rescue. What were the contributing factors to the powder house collapse? First, this cave was begun in a bit of a rush. With film crew anxious to wrap up the day, the team chose to start a little early, before the snow had hardened enough. Second, snow pulled from inside the structure was piled on top of the house. This snow was not packed down and, as Gregg stated during our debriefing, added weight without strength. Third, the top of the house was more flat than domed, which took away from its structural integrity. Last, and perhaps most important, they dug out a little too close to the roof. All these factors, and Jimmie's tireless dedication to training us newbies, gave us a valuable lesson.

So after all the excitement and hard work we settled in for dinner and a nice fire. Fortunately, we were able to scrounge up a couple of tents for the homeless and they were able to get a reasonable night's sleep. I don't know if anyone recorded temperatures, but the powder houses probably provided a modest 15-20 degrees above outside temps. Although it was a beautiful day, the night brought strong winds and a couple of inches of new snow—the perfect situation for being in a snow shelter. A few tips for a decent night's sleep: Make it level, use a tarp, don't skimp on a ground pad, have some ventilation and (a gem from my roomie) take an Excedrin PM.

And then there was Andy. His tree well provided shelter but the uneven ground surface kept him sliding and uncomfortable most of the night. He stayed reasonably warm in a minus-10-degree bag.

The next morning, the sun was out and Brad set up the beacon park while we packed up camp. We took turns practicing with our beacons before heading down the hill. Lunch at the Gold Mine in Idaho City was interrupted by beepers and we headed back to the Compound for the recovery mission off Bogus Basin Road.

IMSARU members participating included Brad Acker, Andrew Anderson, John Ferguson, Dan Herring, Gail Long, Anthony Mascola, Brian Mitchell, Liesel Nelson, Alisa Rettschlag, Gregg Rettschlag, Dodi Swift, Greg Weber and Jimmie Yorgensen.

MOUNTAIN BIKE TEAM INFORMATION

--AMANDA LEADER

Lister: If you have asked to be added to the mountain bike team lister, please make sure that (1) you let me know if you haven't received an invite and (2) when you receive the invite you must complete the process to be added to the group.

Robie Creek: If you are volunteering for the Race to Robie Creek and are interested in making a Robie Creek debut for the bike team, let me know. Due to the numbers of volunteers needed, there are no guarantees you will be on a bike, but let me know and we'll see what happens.

Next Team Meeting: May 7th at 7:00 p.m. at the Compound.

Other: We now have team shirts and a bike rack! Next month we plan to schedule a ride at Wilson Creek in Owyhee County and have a bike maintenance class.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

MANY THANKS TO THE FOLLOWING FOR CASH DONATIONS

Mr. Freeman Tate, Mr. Donald Fidler and other unnamed donors via the Combined Federal Campaign.

Idaho Capital City Kennel Club

Boise Basin Protective Association

Ms. Kate Lenz who made the donation on behalf of her employee Gail Long.

ORE-IDA SCOUTING COUNCIL WEEKEND--APRIL 6, 2013 --GAIL LONG

IMSARU volunteers took a SAR presence to the Ore-Ida Scouting Council's skills weekend at Willow Creek camp area north of Emmett, ID. Our group set up the pop-up shelter in the Council's demonstration area along with a mountain man group, a Civil War era re-enactment group, a blacksmith, and several other groups demonstrating primitive skills or holding Q&A sessions.

We set up the IMSARU shelter to resemble a hasty command post, with gear hanging or neatly stored around it. Tables held representative field gear, including radios, GPS units, maps and navigation aids, visual aids, books about search and rescue, and field guides to Idaho and Oregon.

Scout troops came by the shelter as they progressed through their skills competition course and received a brief history of IMSARU, the group's mission, and some of the field equipment we use during missions. The presentations were kept very short and they "evolved" as the troops presented different ages and interest levels from the hundreds of Scouts who came by.

Most of the Scouts were easily engaged and asked some great questions that Everett was able to field. Greg was able to capture some of the Scouts' attention with stories of Antarctica, which he cleverly brought back around to local winter travel and preparedness.

In addition to IMSARU, the Civil Air Patrol and the Valley Wide React team were there to add to security communications and order. Members of these groups came by the IMSARU booth to chat about gear and pass the time between troop visits.



Feeling a bit adventurous, Everett and Gail sampled the beaver the mountain men had roasting over an open fire in their demonstration area. Gail pronounced his sample good but Everett's was a bit dry. Neither man expressed an interest in further beaver consumption. Despite some cold spells, blowing rain, wind gusts and cannon blasts, the all-day event went very smoothly and the Scout leaders expressed their thanks and excitement for what IMSARU can bring next year.

Everett Wood, Greg Weber and Gail Long
manned the Scouting display.

—Photo by G. Long

home some valuable lessons for both. Conditions were ideal for training...meaning the haul in was exhausting, the snow was less than ideal and overnight conditions were severe.

The morning started out perfect, under sunny skies and mild temperatures. We packed gear on the litter and turned Dodi, Andy, Anthony and Gail into sled dogs. The trek up was about a mile and a half and took us until about noon. We were accompanied by our friends from Idaho Public TV, Sauni, Jay and Tim.

SPRING SEARCH DOG SEMINAR, MARCH 21-24, 2013

--ANN MOSER

The IMSARU K9 Team hosted a search dog seminar, with ten IMSARU dog/handler teams and eleven other participants from Snake River Search, Clearwater County SAR, Owyhee County Sheriff's Office, Elko County (NV) SAR, Calaveras County (CA) SAR, and Wyoming K-9. Instructors were Janet Wilts from Grand Teton National Park and Jackson Hole Search Dogs; Beat Marti from Jackson Hole Search Dogs; and Bonnie Whitman from Yellowstone National Park and Western Montana Search Dogs. They also brought two able assistants, Erin Palm and Eric Buttmann.

Thursday and Friday were dedicated to human remains detection training and instruction. We spent much of the first day at Randy Jordan's warehouse, working on scent boxes, indication skills, and a few challenging hanging scent sources. For the lunch break we went back to the Compound, where Gregg Rettschlag and Jen Skeldon served up grilled burgers. On Thursday evening, two Idaho Fish and Game Conservation Officers, Kurt Stieglitz and Brian Flatter, presented a trap and snare awareness class. They showed us various types of traps and how to remove a dog from a trap or snare. On Friday we braved windy conditions and worked around the large rock outcroppings at the end of Technology Way. Each team got to independently work a plane crash scenario.

On Saturday and Sunday we switched to live finds. After a Saturday morning classroom ses-

sion on scent theory (and a Dutch oven breakfast cooked by Jimmie and Leslie Yorgensen), we moved up to Pine Creek, near Idaho City. All teams started with "runaways"; this is basically a game for new dogs to learn the recall-refind and for experienced dogs to maintain and sharpen their skills. Throughout these two days, new dog/handler teams continued to work on the recall-refind and short searches. Advanced teams worked larger challenging search areas in the forest, and our two trailing dogs also got to work.



HIDING OUT FOR THE SEARCH DOGS

--McKENNA DOUTHIT (GRANDDAUGHTER OF ROSE AND EVERETT)

This was a very entertaining experience that I am lucky to have had. It was very interesting to see how the dogs and their handlers worked together. It was amazing to see how much the dogs loved what they were doing. Although each dog had a similar approach to searching, each was slightly different. A few of the dogs were very close to me, then they would walk away and go in a different direction, then a few minutes later they were back and found me. When the dogs found me, some of them would sniff me, then go back to their handlers, come back and sniff me and want to play, or just want me to pet them. Even though the dogs make a team complete, the dogs wouldn't be able to do what they do without their handlers. The groups of handlers I got to help were so kind to me, and I could tell that they are very, very passionate for what they do.

RECENT PUBLIC OUTREACH EVENTS

--GREGG RETTSCHLAG, VICE-PRESIDENT

We've had numerous opportunities for public outreach in the first quarter of the year. These community events involved a diverse set of groups and presentation topics.

The year started with a request from the Idaho National Guard for SAR awareness training for their Quick Reaction Force. The possibility exists that this group could find themselves deployed to the field in a situation requiring them to assist IMSARU or other SAR groups. The training consisted of four-hour sessions held once a month in January, February and March. We started in January with an overview of our group and the requirements for an individual to be field deployed with IMSARU. The second half of this first session covered the anatomy of a search, culminating in a tabletop exercise based on one of our past searches. Gregg Rettschlag and Dan Scovel were the presenters for this session.

The second and third sessions covered our specialty teams. In February, Julie Gibson gave the group an overview of K-9 SAR, including the path to certifying a dog team for search as well as what is expected of someone functioning in a support role with a K-9 team. Then came the fun, as Linda Kearney and Cayenne demonstrated their skills at finding a Guardsman hidden in the motor pool. Julie and Libby were up next with a demonstration of Libby's skills in human remains detection (HRD). The February session concluded with Dan Scovel very adeptly handling the difficult chore of taking the stage after the dogs exited. Dan introduced the group to the art of mantracking, following up on his introduction to the topic with an account of his experience tracking a missing Wyoming man on a volcano in Japan. Finally, the March session found Owen Miller leading a two-hour overview of technical rescue. Owen covered the training progression for members of our tech team, tech equipment, and the building blocks of technical systems. Gregg Rettschlag then led a discussion of litter evacuations and a hands-on session with some of our patient transport equipment.

The third week of February let us know that we have no problem staying busy even when the mission pagers are silent. First up, the rock stars of our public outreach and safety ed programs

were called to the stage for a presentation to fifty or so members of the Sirius Fun 4-H group. Ann Moser, Kimber Smith and Barb Clark, along with their K-9 ambassadors (Cricket, Marcie and Raffie), did us proud with a one-hour K-9 SAR presentation. Throughout the year, Idaho Power—one of our regular supporters—invites us to give safety education programs to various employee groups and we are happy to oblige. Francisco Castellon, Gregg Rettschlag and Jimmie Yorgensen gave a one-hour program to twenty-one people of the office/clerical staff. It included our standard safety ed topics (an IMSARU introduction, trip preparation, the rule of 3's, ten essentials, and what to do if lost or stranded). We hope our partnership with Idaho Power will continue to offer us more opportunities to speak to their employee groups. Rounding out our mid-February presentations, Mike Johnson was invited to speak to an ATV group that counts our own Steve Huffman among its membership. Mike covered trip preparation based on the ten essentials.

March presented us with the opportunity to meet a past and present supporter of IMSARU, the Boise Basin Protective Association. You may have noticed all those cabins along Hwy 21 north of Idaho City (and there are also many you can't see); owners of those cabins comprise the BBPA. Gregg Rettschlag attended their annual meeting in Boise, introducing them to our unit and covering a few backcountry trip preparation ideas as well as some things to keep in mind if events go awry.

Mike Johnson and Steve Huffman met with Boy Scout troop leaders in Nampa, continuing our work with Scouts throughout the valley. They gave a map and compass presentation to a group of about twenty-five troop leaders, giving us the ability to impact a lot of Scouts through a "train the teachers"-style event.

The fifth graders at Teed Elementary in Kuna were reading Canyon Winter, a book about a young boy who survives a plane crash. In March, IMSARU was invited to offer the kids tips on how to stay safe when the family heads to the woods and mountains. The students of Teed were joined by two of their fellow fifth-grade classes to form a large group of around ninety. Julie Gibson led them through her presentation, "Take Five--Stay Alive," assisted by Francisco Castellon, Linda Kearney and Gregg Rettschlag. Now to figure out why the Q&A session kept drifting toward questions about getting honey from a beehive....

More invites for PR and safety ed are already on the calendar. For members who haven't had the opportunity to join us for a presentation, give it a shot. Come see how it works, and how the material is presented. First-timers can always come along just to observe and give a bit of moral support. It's nice to be able to offer the community tips to keep them safe as well as to meet people genuinely interested in what we do.

MANY THANKS to Gregg Knighten of Newman's Wheel Tire and Alignment in Ontario, OR for donating the alignment of our truck 901, to the Les Schwab Tire Centers of the Greater Treasure Valley area for donating a complete set of new tires for 901, and to Danny Cone of Cone Automotive in Ontario, OR for donating the labor to replace the auxiliary battery and the in-tank fuel pump, fix the air conditioning, stop the windshield crack, and do the general servicing of 901. We greatly appreciate all this help to keep our aging truck ready to respond.

Hewlett-Packard's HP Company Match and employees Barbara Poston and Kurt Ostwinkle, who have donated regularly to us for many years.

Also, David and Shirley Leonard have donated a large amount of equipment for K9 water search training to our K9 Team.

GPS FIELD TRAINING – MARCH 16, 2013 --MIKE JOHNSON

We picked a really beautiful day for a little hike in the Boise foothills and to become more familiar with our relatively new GPS units. The weekend before, Tom, Jeff and I laid out the course with four waypoints; the objective was to locate each in order.

We split into three teams: Team 1, led by John, included Amanda, Moises, Anthony and Mark. Team 2, led by Gregg R., included Dodi, Gail, Jen and Don. Team 3, led by Tom, included Gregg W., Byron and Brian.

The course included some incline, terrain navigation, orienteering and a little route planning. Waypoints 1 and 2 were fairly close to one another but with an obstacle between them—a deep draw choked with brush. One team chose to backtrack slightly to avoid the draw but climbed a steep hill in a more direct route to their destination. The other teams elected to follow the trail. As it turned out, both choices were correct.

Team 1 started first and located Waypoint 1 very quickly. At each waypoint, coordinates to the next were in a waterproof bottle; without locating each waypoint, the team wouldn't know the location of the next. Do or die, you might say!

Team 2 left Base just as Team 1 was leaving the first waypoint. We staggered the teams this way so that each team had to decide how to get to the next waypoint without any influence from other teams. As each team moved through the course, whoever was handling radio communications would call in to Base with an update.

As each team determined the coordinates to the next waypoint, members would load them into their GPS units, locate the point on their map and determine how best to get there. At the fourth waypoint we included another challenge—they had to change the coordinate system and datum to find the final destination. The course was designed to force each participant to make the necessary setup changes, learn to interpret and to use the GPS just as we do when on a mission. Everyone did a really nice job and I think all left with a better understanding of their use.

To finish off the day, a few members of the Bike Team (Amanda, John, Jeff and Byron) unloaded their bikes and cruised up the trail while Gregg R. went for a run.

Participants included Moises Chavez, John Ferguson, Don Fridrich, Mark Gerasimas, Amanda Leader, Gail Long, Anthony Mascola, Brian Mitchell, Gregg Rettschlag, Jen Skeldon, Dodi Swift, Byron Wachtler and Gregg Weber. Special thanks go to Jeff Munn and Tom Wheless for their assistance and challenging ideas in setting up the course.

More Photos



K9 Seminar—Linda and Cayenne

Mtn Bike Team



Powder House—Gregg and Alisa