

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

Rescue

Web Edition



Vol. 47 Nov.-Dec. 2014 No.6

CPR Training	Navigation Training	Disaster Responder course for HRD K-9s	Officers elected for 2015
White Earth Tracking Course	Holiday Parade	Tracker Training	IMSARU Christmas Party
Thank you. Thank you. Thank you	Joint training with Gem County	Preparing for MRA Winter Recert	Thank you IMSARU Members



Press on the calendar to see upcoming events

**CPR TRAINING – NOVEMBER 18, 2014
--CHARLOTTE GUNN**

The third Tuesday of each month is our regular Medical Training night, and this was our time for members to update their CPR cards—a requirement both of our local unit and of the Mountain Rescue Association. The Idaho Center of Emergency Medical Training (ICEMT) supplied the mannequins and the instructors, and a roomful of IMSARU members took advantage of the opportunity.

We stacked the chairs and cleared floor space for realistic hands-on practice of single-person breathing and compressions, compressions only, infant CPR and use of the training AED's. And of course we were reminded about precautions to protect the provider. Working in small groups, anyone having trouble with opening the airway or placement of hands for compression found ready help from more experienced members.

In reality, we aren't likely to use these skills on a routine SAR mission unless it's one of our own members who overstresses, but we also do standby first aid for community activities including fun runs (considered an oxymoron by some) where there is more likelihood of a participant being in need.



Collin explains how to do CPR on an infant. —Photo by K. Swickard

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



—Photo by F. Castellon

Many thanks to ICEMT for supplying this training at very low cost to us. It was especially nice that the instructors included former IMSARU member and now ICEMT head Collin Garner, and current member Jake Gillis, as well as David Oliverrez. They tailored the instruction to the reality of our experience rather than just giving us a canned, one-size-fits-all class.

NAVIGATION TRAINING--OCTOBER 18, 2014 --TOM RAND

Hats off to Chris Brookman who prepared the exercise, Gregg Rettschlag who tested it, and Don Fridrich who stayed at base for radios and laptop. If you didn't do this training, you had better get your sorry ass in gear the next time it comes around, because this is key for anyone in SAR.

Traditionally, GPS, map, and compass navigation are taught divorced from each other, but in this exercise you were forced to keep switching so that you could see the limitations of each skill as well as how they complement each other. It was so educational each time you thought you were at one place on the map but couldn't navigate to the right place because you didn't really know where you were on the map in the first place. You got to know your teammates' strengths and weaknesses in real problems in the field. My team got tired of my asking "Can we cheat yet?" (meaning to use the GPS to see where we really were when navigating by map).

It didn't hurt that we had banner weather to thoroughly enjoy the day. Many of us were introduced for the first time to Polecat Gulch preserve, one of the newest foothills access points in the Ridge to Rivers system tucked between Collister Road, Cartwright Road, and Pierce Park Lane. We did max out the parking, since we were almost 30 strong for this.

If you get a chance, be sure to ask Chris Brookman how he uses Google Earth and other mapping programs to design these accurate scenarios navigating to physically identifiable landmarks at precise GPS coordinates; it's really clever.

In addition to Chris, IMSARU members participating were Ron Christensen, Nikki Contreras, Don Fridrich, Taylor Grisham, Dan Herring, Linda Kearney, Tom Kearney, Andrew Kuraitis, Siw Lea, Amanda Leader, Mike Mancuso, Brandon Mart, Ted Marx, Ann Moser, Tom Rand, Alisa Rettschlag, Gregg Rettschlag, Jamie Simpson, Jen Skeldon, Andy Stehling, Leanne Thurston, Scott Walls, Kacy Watkins, Greg Weber, Tom Wheless and Jimmie Yorgensen.

[Back to Top](#)

DISASTER RESPONDER COURSE FOR HRD K-9s --ANN MOSER



Siw and Yuki entering the tunnels.

Three members of the IMSARU K-9 team and their dogs were invited to attend a five-day Disaster Responder course for human remains detection dogs. The seminar was in Elko, Nevada, sponsored by the Elko County Sheriff's Office and Search and Rescue. IMSARU attendees were Jamie Simpson and Yoki, Siw Lea and Uki, and Ann Moser with Watson and Cricket.

The course was designed to include intense, personalized training for certified K-9 teams. Greg Strickland, a FEMA and law enforcement K-9 handler from Florida, was our primary instructor. Doug Fisher, K-9 handler for Elko County S.O. and master trainer for the American Society of Canine Trainers, also assisted for two of the days. We started with a classroom session on K-9 deployments in disaster scenarios, including hazard awareness, decontamination procedures, scent theory, and K-9 and handler fitness. We then moved to our first rubble pile and worked on motivational exercises and the dogs' final response at the cadaver source.

Day Two was confined-space work. In the morning, we practiced raising and lowering dogs and handlers in harness at the Elko Fire Station, with firemen Andrew Crouch and Jeremiah Dickinson running the rope system. We then moved on to the Elko Readiness Center for the confined-space training, using a series of underground tunnels originally built for training firefighters. Entry into the tunnels was via a man-hole-type entrance, and each dog and handler team was lowered into the tunnel in harness. Once underground, we had to conquer other obstacles, including a ladder, and various distractions, such as dead rabbits that had unfortunately gotten into the tunnels. Most of the dogs were not particularly thrilled to be in there, but they all worked into the cadaver source independently. Once we were raised out, we immediately worked each dog on an easy cadaver source on the surface. Again, all of the dogs recovered well and got right back to work.

On Days Three and Four, we worked the dogs on various rubble piles, gravel pits, and other obstacles. The primary goal was for the dogs to work confidently and independently away from the handler. The last day was a bone identification course, taught by archeologist Anita Sapula. We ended the day with a human bone scatter search, first by humans then by the dogs. No surprise: The dogs tended to find more bones.

Special thanks to Cheryl Cuthbertson of Elko County SAR for organizing such a spectacular seminar!

[Back to Top](#)

OFFICERS ELECTED FOR 2015

As our by-laws state, we elect officers for the coming year at our general meeting in October; the previous year's officers plus those newly elected then work together to propose a budget for the following year; and at the general meeting in December the new officers officially take charge and the members vote on the budget.

We are fortunate in having people willing to keep their leadership positions for more than one year as well as having at least a couple of changes to provide fresh viewpoints. Below is the list of IMSARU's 2015 officers. The Vice-President and Medical Director are the newly-elected.

Coordinator – Rod Knopp	Medical Director – Francisco Castellon
President – Jimmie Yorgensen	Technical Director – Owen Miller
Vice-President – Ron Christensen	Facilities Director – Brad Acker
Secretary – Amanda Leader	Logistics Director – Tom Wheless
Treasurer – Phil O'Bryan	Public Relations Director – Delinda Castellon
Training Director – Gregg Rettschlag	

These are the people responsible for specific tasks. Obviously, we depend on and appreciate the dozens of other individuals who voluntarily perform important tasks that keep us a healthy organization that is focused on our goals of Search, Rescue and Safety Education. The majority of our officers and other members work fulltime jobs to support themselves and their families, so we also thank their families for letting us have a large amount of their time and energy.

WHITE EARTH TRACKING COURSE IN NORTHERN MINNESOTA OCTOBER 6-10, 2014 --TOM RAND

Siw Lea and I had heard about how special the White Earth JHPTS (Joel Hardin Professional Tracking Services) course was, so we jumped on the opportunity to go. The course covered five days with forty-six hours of experience, including two night tracking exercises. The majority of students were conservation officers for tribal and public lands, so the emphasis was on tracking evidence in a game management or law enforcement capacity rather than the SAR focus we typically follow.

We partnered on teams with experienced trackers. One of the students was signcutter Dick Wilker from Idaho and another was journeyman Marcus Lemasters from Virginia. All of the students were certified trackers at Basic or higher levels. Instructors were Jo Peterson from California and Joel Hardin in person.

Though prairie was close to our west, we were tracking in forest at a transition between boreal conifer to the north and hardwood aspen/basswood/maple like the rest of the upper Great Lakes region. Once you get past the fatigue, it just seems normal to track daily for many hours despite twenty mph winds with high temperatures in the 30's, and we were sifting through drifts

[Back to Top](#)

of fallen leaves. I particularly appreciated seeing how experienced trackers resolve conflicting sign, make their own mistakes, catch their mistakes, revise strategy, then return to the correct line of sign.

JHPTS is a program with a tremendous variety of offerings, so I encourage anyone with any interest in learning the skill to go to their website. This experience also made us appreciate the ongoing training on our tracking team at IMSARU. Siw and I, both newly Basic certified the previous month, were told, “Gee, you can really recognize sign...and how long have you been doing this?”

HOLIDAY PARADE – NOVEMBER 22, 2014 **--DELINDA CASTELLON**

Having instructed everyone to meet at 7:45 a.m. to ensure we got down to the staging area before traffic became too crazy, I woke up late and called to advise I would meet the others downtown. Ron graciously offered to drive the truck pulling the command trailer while Jen stayed behind to gather any other late arrivals.

We were pleased to be assigned #37 (having been one of the last in 2013) and all had the same responses to the weather: “Wow, this year is not nearly as cold as last year.” Although the forecast called for rain showers, we were all feeling very comfortable as we showed off our stylish orange jackets.

The parade began promptly at 9:30 a.m. We took our group picture, merged into our place, and the parade went off without a hitch. The crowd was appreciative, calling out encouragement, and we could hear the children begging to visit our “stars”--our K9’s and their handlers. The children also loved the candies we handed out, with the lollipops seeming to be the biggest hit.

Thank you to all our volunteers who came out to help us support the parade and to show some of the resources we have to help people who get into difficult situations. IMSARU members in



attendance were Chris Brookman, Delinda Castellon, Ron Christensen, Taylor Grisham with K9 Sasha, Dell McNees with K9 Rainn, Jen Skeldon with K9 Kato, Andy Stehling with K9 Rifle, Liz Swan, Ken Swickard and Carol Wellman.

TRACKER TRAINING – DECEMBER 7, 2014 --CHARLOTTE GUNN



Alisa, Siw and Kris take a close look.

were twenty-four hours old and one that had been laid forty-eight hours previously. Teams of two and three followed these sign lines, ending with the challenge of determining where their sign-layer had crossed a double-rut dirt track.

At our debrief, there was no disagreement on the most valuable part of the training; all of us need and want more practice in aging.

IMSARU Tracker Team members participating included Dan Herring, Siw Lea, Tom Rand, Alisa Rettschlag, Dan Scovel, Kris Scovel and Ken Swickard. Charlotte Gunn set up the exercise.

After a harsh cold spell in early winter, we got unusual warmth and then rain, giving us a chance to track in conditions not commonly found in this corner of Idaho—soft soil with a short layer of fresh green under a pile of dead and fallen weeds. More common was the obvious heavy use by people and their dogs of a public area on the edge of Boise, but the track-layer was not going to drive a long distance to lay tracks on four successive days.

We spent the first hour comparing the four parallel tracks, from three days to one hour old, as a lesson in aging. (For those who think the freshest track is the easiest to follow, try this sometime.) We then moved to three longer lines of sign, two of which



Dan and Dan try to see what is under the weeds.

IMSARU CHRISTMAS PARTY – DECEMBER 6, 2014

Thanks to Mike Mancuso and his volunteer crew for arranging our use of the Fish and Game building, which has perfect facilities for our party, and for setting up and decorating both the “Trophy Room” and the kitchen area. We did not see all of Santa’s reindeer, but one of the “trophies” was definitely a deer with a blinking red nose.

After we all stuffed ourselves at the potluck dinner, we watched a short video of Mountain Bike Team activities, then Charlotte Gunn and Diane Mathews presented the “non-serious awards”

[Back to Top](#)

to commemorate various funny and/or embarrassing moments from events throughout the year, which ended with a short PowerPoint of photographic memories.

President Jimmie Yorgensen then recognized some of the many members who have served the unit during the year, noting that his list is incomplete and that it is impossible to mention all of the volunteer service that keeps us ready to respond to emergencies. Jimmie presented our special blue vests to three members who have contributed in multiple ways:

Amanda Leader did the research and planning, then started our Mountain Bike Team which is so dedicated that they not only do regular rides throughout the biking season but have scheduled snowshoe/ski events to stay in shape through the winter when bikes don't function well. She also continues to serve as our efficient Secretary.

Chris Brookman works in many areas of SAR. In addition to being a volunteer EMT with Boise County, he has presented several of our medical trainings and helped develop and coordinate several SAR training sessions.

Ron Christensen is our newly-elected Vice-President and has participated in almost every training, mission and other activity since he joined IMSARU.

The final presentation was the *George Gunn Distinguished Service Award* to **Mike Johnson**. In addition to his participation in multiple missions and training sessions over the years, Mike spent two years as Training Director, where he devoted many hours to setting up regular training sessions that were realistic, educational and enjoyable. He then spent another year as Vice-President, responsible for the SAR academy for new members as well as for coordinating all safety education programs.

Congratulations to the recipients of these awards, and many, many thanks to all the members who have used their time and talents in so many ways to keep us strong and prepared!

THANK YOU! THANK YOU! THANK YOU!

Ron Christensen

David Granger

Cheryl Flury

The Capitol Gypsies Good Sams Club

Taran Randall

Al Jones and Smiley Creek Lodge for supporting K-9 Team Attendance at the Disaster Responder Course for Human Remains Detection Dogs in Elko, NV

United Way of Northern Utah and all who donated to us via the Combined Federal Campaign

Idaho Mountain Search and Rescue Unit, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation. All our members are unpaid volunteers; we have no paid staff or officers. Our budget is supported by fundraising projects (especially, selling corn-on-the-cob at the Western Idaho Fair), by grants and by donations from individuals and groups such as those listed above. We greatly appreciate your help in keeping us ready to respond whenever and wherever we are requested by an official agency.

[Back to Top](#)

JOINT TRAINING WITH GEM COUNTY – NOVEMBER 2, 2014

--CHARLOTTE GUNN and JULIE GIBSON

Thanks to Julie Gibson, who has a foot in each county, our K-9 team was invited to a horse ranch above Black Canyon Reservoir for a joint training exercise. The road up is in decent shape but not built for hurry. When we missed the turn-off to the ranch, Jimmie took truck 901 with the trailer on up to where he could turn around, then back down to another turn-around before entering the Y-branch that was the driveway. Jimmie showed no signs of stress but I was totally amazed at how easily he maneuvered those vehicles.

Emmett High School students from Key Club came out and hid for dog teams. One of the students is doing his senior project on Search and Rescue, so he picked the brains of his team members as well as observing the different aspects of SAR planning. Several additional IMSARU members went along to walk with the handlers, as well as a few of us to get some hands-on training with the latest equipment in our command trailer. Gem County foot team members paired with IMSARU teams to make this a true joint training. County Sheriff Chuck Rolland and Gem County SAR liaison Bill Conklin came out to view our command trailer and checked out the training for a bit.

There were multiple cadaver sources placed on fake bodies, in fields, in a vehicle and in a barn, as well as “lost” people waiting to be found, so more than one K-9 team could work at the same time. Clues were placed in blank areas to give practice in clue awareness and marking waypoints. It was also good training in navigation and communication skills, and in keeping track of who was where doing what.

Don Fridrich devised our command center software for recording the huge amount of data that is generated by multiple field teams; he says it is not yet finished, but it sure is impressive! Jimmie Yorgensen worked as O.L. to send people where requested and Gregg Rettschlag handled mapping and downloaded the GPS tracks of dogs and handlers, while Vicki Swickard, Ken Swickard and I used the program to keep track of team assignments, communications from the field, etc. Needless to say, the Gem County SAR members were envious of our set-up, but we resisted hints that we could just leave the trailer and its technology there.

IMSARU K-9 teams participating included Julie Gibson with Libby, Taylor Grisham with Sasha, Linda Kearney with Cayenne, Siw Lea with Uki, Ann Moser with Watson and Cricket, Jamie Simpson with Yoki, Jen Skeldon with Kato, Leanne Thurston with Hudson, and Andy Stehling with Riffle. We apologize for not getting a complete list of participants but appreciate all who turned out for the event.

PREPARING FOR MRA WINTER RE-CERTIFICATION, MARCH 21-22

Not only is the technical team holding extra training for members certified as Rescue Technician or Rescue Specialist, but the Avalanche Rescue Training (classroom on January 20, field training January 24-25) is required for those who will be on the re-cert team. However, all members are welcome at the Avalanche classes.

[Back to Top](#)

THANK YOU, IMSARU MEMBERS

In addition to the special awards presented at our Christmas party, there are dozens of members who deserve recognition and thanks for going above and beyond. Jimmie mentioned most of these at the party, and there are more than can be printed here. Each one deserves far more than a sentence, but let's make a start:

Tom Wheless has spent uncounted hours getting our new truck ready to go.

Don Fridrich custom-built search management software for IMSARU, specifically designed for the way our missions and activities work...and user-friendly.

Justin Ahlin is a professional who operated the equipment to fix a leaking water line and then to drain "lake IMSARU" from our parking lot.

Greg Weber arranged for the city to place a streetlight near our dark property.

Jen Skeldon certified her search dog and has restarted our mentor program.

Dell McNeess sees to the physical printing of our newsletters and is also working on the mentor program.

Jeff Munn supervised the setting up of the corn booth and is active with both the tech team and the bike team.

Dan Herring, our resident expert on ELT's, is involved in our Safety Ed and unit training, certified as a Basic tracker this year, and works with the tech team.

Gregg Rettschlag hates public recognition but his work as Vice-President for two years and now his second year as Training Director is outstanding. The rest of the team always feels better when Gregg is on the mission, and he almost always is.

Jimmie Yorgensen not only takes seriously his official duties as President, but also mows the lawn, plows snow off the parking lot, puts energy into the tracking team.

Rod Knopp, also allergic to public recognition, is the heart and soul of our unit. He is usually the first responder to a page, and knows who to call and which questions to ask. When Rod is in-town coordinator, everyone else knows that he will get us what we need in the field...often before we realize we need it.

[Back to Top](#)