



Weber County Sheriff

Search and Rescue Training Newsletter



March 2003

TRAINING AND EVENTS CALENDAR 2003

MARCH

- 04 Classroom: Ice Diving, Winter Mock Search overview, GPS *Art Pluim, Travis Baird, Don Olsen*
- 08 Practical: Winter Mock Search, Monte Cristo, 9 am *Travis Baird, Richard Schroeder*
- 10 Natural Anchor Systems (Ben Lomond Climbing Cen., **must preregister 737-7274**) .. *Wayne Aprill*
- TBA Practical: Ice Dive *Art Pluim*

APRIL

- 01 Classroom: Tyrolean Traverse & V-rig Pick-off
- 05 Practical: Tyrolean Traverse
- 07 Natural Pro Lead Climbing (Ben Lomond Climbing Cen., **must pregrstr. 737-7274**) ... *Wayne Aprill*
- TBA EANx mixed gas dive training
- TBA Airboat & GSLP training *Jeff Malan, Jeff King*

MAY

- 06 Classroom: Advanced First Aid, Swiftwater
- 10 Practical: Swiftwater

JUNE

- 03 Classroom: Advanced First Aid, Raising/lowering Systems (3-season), Helicopter Ops
- 07 Practical: Raising/lowering Systems
- 06-08 MRA 45th Annual Conference, California (Dates may change.)
- 14 Familiarization Ride: OHV & Dirt Bike, Monte parking lot
- 14 Familiarization Ride: Airboat

JULY

- 04 Parades
- 08 Classroom: CPR, Underwater Search
- 12 Practical: Underwater Search
- 12 Practical: Scree Evacuation
- 24 Ogden Parade
- 25-27 Familiarization Climb (Tetons for a Weekend)

AUGUST

- 06-09 Climbing Wall, County Fair PSAR

SEPTEMBER

- 02 Classroom: Trauma/Bone Injuries, Underwater Recovery and Salvage
- 06 Practical: Underwater Recovery and Salvage
- 06 Practical: Rappelling and Ascending (People & K9), passing a knot, Aid Climbing
TBA OEC recerts and classes

OCTOBER

- 07, 11 Classroom and Practical: Incident Command System, Search (3-season)
- 18, 25 First Care course

NOVEMBER

- 04 Classroom: Logistics/support (Radio Protocol, Etc.), Map/Compass/GPS/Orienteering
- 08 Practical: Orienteering

DECEMBER

- 02, 06 Classroom and Practical: Avalanche I (Full course including beacons)

PROPOSED TRAINING AND EVENTS CALENDAR 2004

JANUARY

- 06 Classroom: CPR, Winter Raising/lowering, Winter Survival (Snow Caves/Trench/Clothing/gear)
- 10 Practical: Raising/lowering, Snow Anchors, Winter Survival
- 10 Familiarization/Certification Ride: Snowcat, Snowmobile; Monte
- 10 Familiarization Hike: Snowshoes, Skis, Boards; Cuttler Ridge
- 17, 24 First Care Course

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WCSSAR MEMBER OF:

MRA, NASAR, UTAH SAR

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WEBER COUNTY SHERIFF SEARCH AND RESCUE

AIRBOAT RESCUE; BACKCOUNTRY SKIERS; EXTREME TEAM; K9 RESCUE; MEDICAL; MOUNTAIN RESCUE; MOUNTED POSSE; OFF HIGHWAY VEHICLES; SEARCH; SWIFTWATER & UNDERWATER RECOVERY & RESCUE; WINTER RESCUE

FEBRUARY

- 03 Cold Weather Injuries (Hypothermia, Frostbite), Winter Patient Packaging & Transport
- 07 Practical: Search (winter)
- 20–22 Winter Survival Seminar

Please visit the calendar on the WCSSAR web site planet.weber.edu/sar for updates.

JANUARY/FEBRUARY CALLOUTS:

February 18—Subject was a **17 year-old male**, who is a **diabetic** and a novice **snowboarder**. He was separated from his party at about 1900 hrs. and was two hours overdue for his insulin when we were activated. He was reported to be last seen getting off the Sundown lift and going to the left. Powder Mountain Ski Patrol had searched the area prior to our arrival. We got there around midnight. We thought he had possibly headed out-of-bounds into Wolfcreek Canyon. There was a snowstorm around 2000 hrs. that night which dropped approx. 3" of new snow in a 45 minute period that would have caused whiteout conditions for the patient. The storm also made some tracks hard to follow. We initially called out 4 skiers and 4 snowshoers along with a helicopter (equipped with FLIR and pilot night vision goggles) from the state. Powder Mountain left their lights on for us and provided lift service to get teams up to the area boundary line. Snowmobiles were called out but canceled en route. Subject was located at 0330 hrs. in Cache County at the bottom of the Hidden Lake lift by a snowcat operator who was grooming the slope. He apparently located one of their lift shacks and was staying in it. Powder Mountain leaves their shacks open and heated for cases like these.

The subject was located in an area where the ski lifts had been closed for over 4 hours prior to his becoming missing. He was in generally good shape although his blood sugar was very high and his kidneys were showing initial signs of stress. There apparently was a problem with the Fire Department requesting a medical helicopter even though indications were that it was not needed. Lt. Malan and Sgt. Randall will again talk to the Fire Department to try to get this settled. During debriefing Dpty. Toll stated that it would have helped had the SAR members actually been able to talk directly to the witnesses that last saw the subject. Some of the information SAR were told was not correct, for example, we found out later that other witnesses had sighted the subject at a later hour to the right of the Sundown lift. John Sohl suggested that we always have snowmobiles respond to be available to shuttle personnel during the search for when the lifts quit and for sweeping trails and roads between personnel shuttles.

February 22, 2306 hrs.—We received a call for support to get Fire Department paramedics up to a remote cabin. The problem was a **mother and daughter with carbon monoxide poisoning** in a cabin near Sun Ridge. The Fire Department called for two Life Flight (the entire current fleet) helicopters but didn't know to direct them to the cabin and so had the choppers land in Evergreen Estates. We informed the FD that the pilots are quite capable of locating a cabin and thus got the choppers to the right spot to evacuate the patients to a hospital. We also used the two snowcats and a snowmobile that were at the Winter Seminar to ferry personnel and to evacuate the rest of the family. Unfortunately the Mighty Mouse snowcat lost its cooling system a few hundred feet from base and just barely made it back. (It is now at the shops for repair.) Then the fan on the Chrome Dome snowcat hit the radiator and caused a major but manageable leak to the cooling system on that vehicle. Chrome Dome was able to limp in and limp out well enough to just barely complete the task.

Report by Don Olsen—2315 hrs. Saturday night (Feb. 22) at the Environmental Center by North Fork Park, Lt. Malan received a call that a 36 year-old female and 10 year-old female were both found unresponsive in their cabin up at Sunridge lot #51. Lt. Malan and Sgt. Brad Randall were joined by Kris Harrop, Steve Carver, Branden Loock, and Don Olsen in responding to the incident. The road to the incident at Sunridge was not passable by four-wheel drive vehicles. Lt. Malan



instructed the team to load up a snowmobile and the snowcats, Mighty Mouse and Chrome Dome and proceed to the incident staging area.

The Fire Department was at the staging area and had called in two LifeFlight helicopters. The report was that both patients were found unresponsive in the bathroom of the cabin suffering from the effects of Carbon monoxide poisoning. Our teams arrived at the staging area at about 0030 hrs. Branden Look unloaded his sled and headed for the scene. Upon arrival at the cabin, Branden transported the LifeFlight flight nurse and the 10 year-old patient to the helicopter LZ several hundred yards away. Lt. Malan departed the staging area for the remaining patient's location in Mighty Mouse with Paramedics and their gear. Mighty Mouse experienced a mechanical failure (radiator hose burst) a few hundred yards from the staging area and had to return, out of commission.

Chrome dome left the staging area with Kris Harrop, Don Olsen, a relative of the patients, and a person who called for help. The road was very washboard and covered with six inches of new snow. About one mile from the patients' cabin, Chrome dome experienced a mechanical failure. The right track struck a small rock (about 6-8 inches in diameter) that was covered in snow. The resulting impact and the washboard terrain contributed to the radiator fan striking and puncturing the radiator sending steam into the cab of the snow cat. The team attempted communication back to IC via VHF radio (SAR 155.160) but was unsuccessful; we did not have an 800 MHz radio.

The vehicle was stopped to investigate the damage. Branden joined up with the team and returned to report the situation to IC and to get jugs of water for the damaged radiator. Kris bent and straightened the fan blades out of the radiator to allow us to continue to travel. Watching the temperature gage closely, we made the remaining trip to the cabin. The family wanted desperately to be transported back to the staging area to get to their vehicles and join their family members at the hospital. Kris and Don performed a closer inspection of the radiator and fan. We believed we could make the trip back to the staging area with the remaining family members safely.

At about 0245 we arrived back at the incident staging area. The family members exited the snow cat and made their way to hospital. Kris and Don loaded Chrome Dome back on the trailer and made their way back to the Environmental Center. All team members arrived back at the Environmental Center by 0400 Sunday morning.

DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE—JOHN SOHL

The **March 4 classroom session** will cover the details of the winter mock search. There will also be an overview and review of GPS systems. Following that will be a session on ice diving with a review of the safety procedures. The March 4th, Tuesday night meeting will also include a special presentation by Sheriff Slater on the future direction of SAR throughout the western US. It will be a more detailed version of the presentation, mentioned below, that he gave to the attendees of the Winter Survival Seminar last week.

The **primary field training this month** will involve all winter teams and the logistics team. It will be a winter mock search on Saturday March 8th at 9 am at the Monte snowmobile parking lot. We will cone off a section of the parking lot near the large shed on the east side of the lot for us to park so that we are not intermixed with the general public. We would like to start mobilizing right at 9 am so please arrive early enough to get your gear ready before 9. We plan to involve snowshoers, skiers, sleds and snowcats. We are also planning to work extensively with GPS and APRS (Automatic Position Reporting System).



Scott Willis and Don Olsen in Chrome Dome at the Winter Survival Seminar.

We will be using snowcats and snowmobiles to insert telemark skiers and snowshoers. Skiers will probably get some practice being pulled behind snowmobiles. Also, it would be good to bring your climbing skins just in case. There is terrain that the snowmobiles cannot get into reliably and what we typically do for a real search is ferry snowshoers and/or skiers into position to search those areas. This mock search will give us practice at doing that.

All teams will be going to GPS positions so don't forget to bring your GPS if you have one. Also we want to get the APRS functioning. APRS is a system that connects a GPS to a radio that automatically sends position information back to IC for tracking on a computerized map. The field team does nothing, the radio, GPS and a small interconnect box sits in the top of their pack and periodically sends a data packet back to base with their location.

The other important field training for March will be the **ice dive**. Because we are working on the APRS system and need several key members of the dive team for that project and because some of the dive team members are also on the snowshoe team, we will try to move the ice dive to a day that does not



Kris Harrop driving Chrome Dome at Winter Survival Seminar.



Mike Jenkins brought K9 companions Sylvi and Chrisie to the Winter Survival Seminar: Left & middle: Mike Hansen & Chrisie. Right: Probe line during the avalanche session.

conflict with the mock search. For those WCSSAR members who have never attended an ice dive, you are welcome to come observe. It is an interesting (and somewhat dangerous) process.

Again, those members of the climb team have several training sessions coming up at the **Ben Lomond Climbing Center**. March's session will be on placing natural anchors.

The **Winter Survival Seminar** was a success. Thank you to all the instructors who presented at the seminar. In brief we had the following sessions: National Weather Service weather technology, winter first aid, snow shelters, avalanche, GPS and computerized mapping, Air Med's largest helicopter and a pistol shoot snowshoe competition (think of it as a modified biathlon).

Sheriff Slater addressed the attendees at the Winter Seminar. He relayed information about the status of search and rescue in sheriff's departments throughout the western U.S. Because of liability, professionalism, desires for improved community service and other pressures, we can expect sheriff's SAR teams to be moving in the direction of standards and accreditation. Our mountain teams (climbers, technical climbers and winter back country skiers) are trained to the international MRA (Mountain Rescue Association) standards. We can expect most teams and most counties will be moving in similar directions, possibly towards MRA, NASAR (National Association of Search And Rescue) or comparable standards. There is (and has been for quite a while) a slow movement towards redefining the Utah SAR Association (of which, we are all members by the way). The new direction of the Utah SAR Assoc. would be towards training and standards. It should be noted that the WCSSAR training calendar is designed, in part, to meet the MRA standards. On the whole, WCSSAR is generally ahead of the curve on providing training to meet national standards. *[Director's note: To comply it is assumed that members attend the training, this is an area that many of us need to improve upon. The membership logs will be reviewed in May to access each member's status and attendance in this important area.]*

The **NASAR 2003 convention** is being held in Las Vegas during May. If anyone is planning on attending this you must let us know ASAP so we can review the possibility of covering the cost of registration.

Please welcome new SAR member **Kyley Slater**. He will be primarily on the Logistics and Winter (snowmobile) teams. He works as a dispatcher for the combined Ogden-Weber dispatch center and is a certified EMD (Emergency Medical Dispatcher).

We received two **thank you letters** recently from families that we have touched. (I've removed the names of other people referenced in the letters and the last names of the letter writers since this newsletter gets posted on the Internet.)

Below: Rick Schroeder, Lane McPheeters, John Sohl and many others worked long hours to build an 11' diameter igloo.



Rick Schroeder and Don Olsen



John Sohl tries out his snow shelter



Sgt. Brad Randall in Mighty Mouse



Air Med at the Winter Survival Seminar



Thank You Letter #1:

We just wanted to give our heartfelt thanks to the Weber Search and Rescue team. We appreciate the hours spent looking for our son on Ben Lomond, New Year's Eve and New Years Day. We know this is a volunteer organization and appreciate your dedication and service to the people of Weber County. We also wish to express appreciation to all who helped in any way, in locating, medically assisting and helping our son. Thank you Again, Phil and Susan.

Thank You Letter #2:

Weber County Sheriff & Search and Rescue: I sent this thank you to the editorial page, but in case it doesn't get printed or you don't happen to see it, please accept my most sincere thanks, Donna.

January 22, 2003, THANK YOU ALL

I have a huge debt of gratitude to acknowledge to the Weber County sheriff's Department and their Search and Rescue Team, to Community Treatment Alternatives, and to my neighbors and ward members especially XXXX for finding and rescuing my son with autism from a muddy pond late Saturday night. We had been looking for him for six hours. There is not much chance he would have survived the night had he not been found. My heart is bursting with gratitude for what these people did. Words are so inadequate. I have always felt that nothing could be worse than losing a child. Thank you. Donna.

CLIMBERS/BACK COUNTRY SKIERS NEWS:

The February 8th **Snowbasin familiarization** was a success, thanks to Mike Jenkins. There is the chance that we will do another one someday in the future that will specifically involve skiing all the way to the bottom of out-of-bounds areas such as Hell's, Cold Water, Taylor's and Burch Creek Canyons. It is assumed that each canyon would be done on different days. The schedule for this will depend on snow and avalanche conditions and will likely happen next season due to poor snow conditions this year.

There are two sessions remaining in the introductory lead climbing classes at the **Ben Lomond Climbing Center**. The March 10th session is on natural anchor systems, i.e., how to place climbing (and thus, rescue) anchors into weaknesses in the rock. This would be an excellent session for all members of the non-technical climb team. (Members of the technical climb team have no need to attend these classes.) The April 7th training will be on beginning lead climbing with natural protection. You must preregister for these classes and WCSSAR will pay the course fees. Contact Wayne Aprill at the climbing center at 737-7274 to preregister.

DIVE/SWIFTWATER/AIRBOAT NEWS:

Ice Dive at 9 am at Cemetery Point. The date is still TBA because of the mock search.

K9 NEWS:

Nothing new.

LOGISTICS/DISPATCH NEWS:

If you would like a **tour of Dispatch** to see how the 911 system works and how call outs are initially handled then please contact Don Olsen. If there is enough interest he will set up a tour based on everyone's schedules.

Logistics Team members need to do a review of the coordinate systems that we use for tracking and directing teams in the field. Specifically, we should evaluate our use of Lat/Long and decide if UTM might be worth the effort to convert to. Adopting UTM would require significant training and practice on the part of WCSSAR members. On the other hand, it is easier to use in the field and is less prone to errors in reporting the numbers.

Logistics also needs to complete work on getting the **APRS** functioning. If this system works, we can pursue funding to procure more units. This would be an enormous asset to IC and would relieve field teams from having to mess with their GPS units while on the move.

MEDICAL NEWS:

Nothing new.

MOUNTED POSSE NEWS:

They are holding a **rodeo** on March 1st.



SEARCH/OHV NEWS:

Nothing new.

WINTER RESCUE/SNOWCAT NEWS:

The **snowcats** are **both out-of-service** at the moment. Mighty Mouse blew a hose or something and is at the county shops for repair. Chrome Dome had something happen to the fan and radiator that caused the two to meet at high speed thus redesigning the shape and function of the radiator. This will require a new radiator for Chrome Dome and hopefully an evaluation of why it was able to hit the fan, clearly something needs to be modified here. It was embarrassing to rescue someone and then have to ask them for some antifreeze.

Rick Schroeder asked how much more wood was needed for the **office at the snowmobile parking lot**. Jeff Malan stated there have been some changes in personnel with the state and that the contract is being looked at again.

PREVENTATIVE SEARCH AND RESCUE NEWS:

Jeff Stark stated he was starting a **CERT class** on March 27th at 6 pm and then the following three Thursdays. It will be held at the Harrisville City Offices. If there is anyone interested in helping Jeff, he would appreciate it.

FINAL NOTES FROM THE EDITOR

Thanks again to **Patsy Winchester** for her fantastic minutes!!!

When attending a call out (or any SAR event) always sign in/out on the attendance roster.

This newsletter is intended to be for the benefit of all WCSSAR members.

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Additional images of AirMed training at the Winter Survival Seminar

