



# THE TRACKER

Monthly Newsletter of the Inland Empire Search and Rescue Council

July 2005

Volume 14 Number 7

## SBSD Mounted Parade Detail Places 1st

Anona Gasca, Phelan Equestrian Patrol

**S**BSD Mounted Parade Detail earns a 1st place at the *101st City of Huntington Beach 4th of July Parade*, Theme: *"Huntington Beach Celebrates the American Spirit"*

This patriotic parade is known as the largest Independence Day parade west of the Mississippi River.

It was televised and accommodated 250,000 spectators and 375 parade entries. This parade is highly

competitive. All PD horses and riders were given the "white glove" treatment, and scrutinized for horsemanship knowledge/skills and equitation.

The SBSBD Parade Detail was entry #206, and members waited in "troop front formation" after the 8:00 AM prejudging until it was time to fall into 206th place in a parade that started precisely at 10:00 AM. The PD proceeded in correct formation of "three columns of three". Sworn and volunteer uniforms were presented. SBSBD riders smiled and waved at the thousands of cheering spectators as they rode four miles down the exciting red,

white, and blue parade route embellished with confetti, balloons, and waving flags.

The following nine parade riders proudly represented the "American Spirit" of the SBSBD mounted units (and the work they do to support the Sheriff's Department) throughout the largest county in the United States: Darla Bonem, Carla Cronin, Kathy Dupper, Anona Gasca, Judy Gonzales, Cassandra Hale, Marie Mendoza, Jeff Lewison, and Tom Schneider.

A special thank you goes to "ground support" (Darrell, Brian Cronin, Ed Dupper) for helping with driving, horse handling, and moving rigs from staging to disbanding are

This was a true effort from our Sheriff's mounted teams. Phelan EOP, East Valley Mounted Posse, West Valley Mounted Posse, Morongo Mounted SAR, and Mounted Enforcement, participated in event. The parade detail is open to any mounted person associated with the volunteer units within the SBSBD. It is great training and a fantastic experience that allows us to be more responsible on our mounts. We usually train the first Sunday of each month at the rodeo grounds. If you are interested, contact Tom Schneider at [tom\\_kasey@eee.org](mailto:tom_kasey@eee.org).

A big "Thank you" goes to anyone who had a hand in helping this be a very successful experience for SBSBD including those at Volunteer Forces and Sgt. Dave Caddel and staff at Public Affairs.



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# What's New in Volunteer Forces?

Lt. Glenn Grabiec, Emergency Operations/Volunteer Forces

I have some great news to report regarding the personnel here in Volunteer Forces. First of all, Mike Schlax, whom most of you know, was just promoted to sergeant and is being assigned to Morongo Basin Station. Even though we will all miss him, he is very deserving of this promotion and will be a tremendous asset to the department. We wish him the very best. Who will take his place you wonder? I have chosen Deputy Dave Pichotta. Dave has been involved in SAR in various capacities over the years and is looking forward to the challenge. He has been assigned to this unit since January, but has wanted to work here most of his career. He is very knowledgeable in the area of SAR, but wants to learn more. I believe he will capably fill Mike's shoes, which is not an easy task.

Our Reserve Coordinator, Jim Mahan, is also moving on and is going to the Bombs/Arson Division. Jim has only been here since January, but he has become a valued member of the team. One of his career goals has been to work in Bombs/Arson, so we wish him the best.

We are receiving two newly-promoted corporals. Bryan Lane is coming to us from Twin Peaks Station. Bryan is on the Department's Dive Team and is SAR-savvy. He is looking forward to working with the volunteers and is a great choice for this unit. Thad Riley is coming to us from the

Yucaipa Station. Thad has worked with volunteers over the years and is a great advocate for our mission. He also expressed a great desire to be assigned to this unit. Both intend to stay in this assignment for quite some time.

Now let me shift gears a little. Many of you are aware that in January, two of our SAR team members had their personal equipment stolen from a department vehicle while on a mission. I am sorry to report that even after an extensive effort into resolving this matter, I have learned there is no way a public entity can replace personal equipment. This goes for paid employees as well. I am happy to report that we were able to assist these two gentlemen with the support of Footprinters, a local law enforcement-based charity organization. Hopefully, nothing like this will happen in the future.

On a personal note, I have really enjoyed meeting many members from different teams. Though we are going to make a concerted effort to get out and introduce ourselves at your meetings, it is difficult since there are 109 volunteer units! Please do not hesitate to stop in down here and have a cup of coffee or cold drink on us. We are here to support you!

*Glenn Grabiec*



# A Day of Serious Fun Training

Tanya Mauldin, Victor Valley SAR

What is “serious fun” search and rescue training? Would it be performing a grid search to find a Humvee? Or a tracking exercise with a rattling visitor? Or a dog named Rusty who moves from lap to lap seeking attention? How about a delicious steak dinner and tasty breakfast? Or learning that we have two lefts and two rights?



The twenty-four hour training at Cactus Flats on the weekend of June 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> was all of the above and more. The training began at noon with a check-in quiz. How many fingers and toes does Robin have? The answer was eighteen as thumbs are not fingers.

The attendees were divided into four teams and there were four training stations. The four training stations were land navigation, tracking, knots, and evidence search.

Land navigation began with a refresher about the use of the compass. Then, we were asked if we remember our conversion factor to calculate meters from paces? I did not remember and had to do a rough estimate in the field. Later that day, during the tracking exercise, I realized that I had written the factor in the back of my notebook so I would not forget what it was. Is memory the first thing to go as we retire?

The tracking exercise was a great refresher about the responsibilities of the various positions of a tracking team. The lead person or point is following the tracks while the two flankers are watching to make sure that the point person does not track into a cactus. The flankers are also

looking for other clues. We were reminded that a team leader is also responsible to keep the tracking team keen and boredom at bay. Ask Ron Thy about his visitor who rattled him so he would not become bored with his training station.

There is Not a lot to say about Knots except practice is the only way to keep the how to tie the knots in our heads and not slip away. Team One got to watch our coordinator Deputy McCurley tie a seat harness while wearing a gun and agreed that the two do not mix.

The evidence search station was to find a list of items that were not hidden but sitting out in the open. How many walked right over an item or placed a walking stick almost on top of it to have another team member see the item you did not see? We were asked to find a Humvee, which turned out to be a few centimeters in size.

At about 18:00 all the team members shared a dinner of steak and then sat around a campfire until it was time for bed. The next morning, the members met around the campfire again and had breakfast. We had a great laugh as we watched Rusty sniff the air, smelled breakfast cooking, and flew out of my lap to see if Mike Cimmarusti would need his help.

Then the fun began again as the team members learned their right from their left. One team member on a quad was blindfolded and a second team member talked the blindfolded member through the obstacle course. How many of you told the blindfolded member to turn left and then

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# Don't Let the Oak Be on You

Patrick Burns, San Bernardino Mountain Search and Rescue

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**W**ith the fires of two years ago and record rainfall this year, conditions are ideal for Poison Oak. I have been on recent searches and trainings, and have found the Poison Oak growth the heaviest I seen in years.

Poison Oak (*Toxicodendron Diversilobum*) is widespread throughout California. Generally, it is found below 5,000 feet. It is heavily regenerated by disturbances such and fire. Many of the areas of our recent searches (Katz, the Baldy drowning's, Waterman Canyon, and many more) are abundant with poison oak.

Identified by its trifoliate leaves, typically having three leaflets (sometimes five), poison oak exposure accounts for 10% of lost work time by the U.S. Forest Service. But don't think you can be exposed only from the leaves. Like many of our local vegetation, poison oak will go dormant during the winter months, losing its leaves, making it harder to identify. Unfortunate for us, the uncharacteristic plant stems can lead to exposure just as painful.

Urushiol is the toxic substance that causes the allergic reaction. The rash is a reaction of your body's immune system. Some people are so sensitive that it takes only two micrograms (one millionth of an ounce) to create an allergic reaction. To put this in perspective, 80% to 90% of adults will get a rash if they are exposed to as little as an amount equal to one grain of salt. It is extremely dangerous in burned out areas due to the residue residing in the

soil and ash. While dogs are immune, a SAR member can be contaminated from your dog, clothing, back pack, etc. It is very difficult to wash off and, in the very early stages, can be spread by scratching. Symptoms may not appear for days or even weeks after the contamination.

So, if exposed, what do you do? If you think you have been exposed you need to shower immediately. Do not use soap or hot water. The soap may help spread the oil and the hot water opens your pores. Make sure that all clothing, including shoes, are put in a separate bag and washed twice. Do not use soap or hot water during the first washing. There are some preventative products on the market. They are usually sprays and creams that you can apply to your clothing or skin. The best prevention is long pants, long sleeve shirts and gloves.

While some people are immune, most of us that are exposed will have some degree of reaction. Like bee stings, usually the more you are exposed the worse the reaction will be. The rash will usually last about two weeks. While there are no "cure all" remedies, there are a few medications that may offer some relief. Probably the most effective relief will come from Prednisone (a steroid) but it has its own negative side effects. Atarax or its generic, hydroxyzine, is supposed to make you itch less. From personal experience, I used a prescription product called Clobex, which is a topical lotion. It did help take some of the edge off the itch. D

# Letter of Thanks



## Office of the Sheriff - Coroner Public Administrator

James H. Allen  
Sheriff-Coroner-Public Administrator

Brian E. Muller  
Undersheriff

May 12, 2005

Sheriff Gary Penrod  
PO Box 569  
San Bernardino, CA 92403

Sheriff Penrod:

I want to take this opportunity to thank you for allowing your valued staff to provide much needed assistance to the Mariposa County Sheriff's Office during the Pearse Search which occurred during the last two weeks of April, 2005.

The search for "Grandpa" Doug Pearse, an 86-year old Mariposa resident, was initiated when he was reported missing on the afternoon of April 21, 2005 after his vehicle was found abandoned in the Summit Camp area of Mariposa County. The massive search, which included the best search teams and resources in California, was suspended after 10 days of 24-hour searching. Investigation and clue based searching will continue until his disappearance has been resolved.

I would also like to especially commend your Search and Rescue paid and volunteer staff that responded to our assistance call. The professional assistance offered by these men and women was very welcomed and appreciated by this office and the community. Please extend my gratitude to each of them.

Again, I want to thank you and your personnel for your assistance.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "D. Binnewies".

Doug Binnewies, Captain  
Public Safety Division

*Stem - please extend  
my appreciation to all.*

A large, stylized handwritten signature in black ink, likely belonging to Brian E. Muller.

P.O. Box 276

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## Training

Continued from p. 3

needed to say “no, your other left” as you were telling them to turn right versus left because you were facing a direction opposite to the blindfolded person.

It is always fun to learn or refresh our skills in a fun atmosphere. The training in June provided all the team members with a serious fun twenty-four hours of training.

D

# Calendar

For information or to submit an event, contact the editor at [editor@thetracker.info](mailto:editor@thetracker.info). Appearance of items in this section does not necessarily imply endorsement by the SAR Council or the County of San Bernardino. Call if you have any questions about a particular listing. To save space, persons to contact and numbers for multiple listings of *Department-approved training providers* are consolidated in one place at the bottom of this page.

## 2005

### April

#### Apr 16—Personal Vertical Skills Check-off

Hosted by West Valley SAR. Contact Bob Gattas ([rgattas@earthlink.net](mailto:rgattas@earthlink.net)) for information.

#### Apr 30—West Valley SAR 9th Annual Run for Rescue & Safety Fair

Visit [www.thetracker.info/calendar/FlyerRun&Fair05.pdf](http://www.thetracker.info/calendar/FlyerRun&Fair05.pdf) for more information.

### May

#### May 14-15—West Valley SAR Training

Rope Training. Contact Bob Gattas ([rgattas@earthlink.net](mailto:rgattas@earthlink.net)) for information.

#### May 18—IESARC Meeting

19:00 in the main conference room at SBSB HQ.

### June

#### Jun 4—West Valley SAR Training

Night ELT exercise. Contact Bob Gattas ([rgattas@earthlink.net](mailto:rgattas@earthlink.net)) for more information.

### July

#### Jul 2—Valley of the Falls SAR Pancake Breakfast and Raffle

Visit [thetracker.info](http://thetracker.info) for more information.

#### Jul 16—West Valley SAR Training

Rope rescue training. Contact Bob Gattas ([rgattas@earthlink.net](mailto:rgattas@earthlink.net)) for more information.

#### Jul 16-17 & 23-24—Technical Rescue Basics Course

Contact Mike Schlax at VFU ([msclax@sbscd.org](mailto:msclax@sbscd.org)) to sign up. A \$50 deposit is required.

#### Jul 20—IESARC Meeting

19:00 in the main conference room at SBSB HQ.

### August

#### Aug 12 & 13—Air Rescue Team Fundraiser

"Hollywood Bowl Style" concert in La Verne. Tickets are \$55.00, which includes food. Contact [stephen.miller39@verizon.net](mailto:stephen.miller39@verizon.net) for more information.

#### Aug 20—West Valley SAR Training

Rope rescue training. Contact Bob Gattas ([rgattas@earthlink.net](mailto:rgattas@earthlink.net)) for more information.

#### Aug 24—Central Mountain Rescue Annual Fundraiser, "An Evening at the Improv".

Visit [thetracker.info](http://thetracker.info) for more information.

### September

#### Sep 17—West Valley SAR Training

Search exercise. Contact Bob Gattas ([rgattas@earthlink.net](mailto:rgattas@earthlink.net)) for more information.

#### Sep 21—IESARC Meeting

19:00 in the main conference room at SBSB HQ.

### October

#### Oct 1-2—Morongo Basin SAR 26th Annual Desert Run Fundraiser.

This exciting event is held on Soggy Dry Lake in the Johnson Valley OHV. This is a fun family event, not a race. There will be food, music and prizes. So bring your motorcycle, quad, buggy or 4x4 and have enjoyable weekend. For more information call (760) 369-9999.

#### Oct 14-16—West Valley SAR Training

Map & Compass training. Contact Bob Gattas ([rgattas@earthlink.net](mailto:rgattas@earthlink.net)) for more information.

#### Oct 15—Personal Vertical Skills Check-off

Hosted by the Cave Rescue Team. Sheriff's Aviation in Rialto. Contact Mark Kinsey ([mkinsey@caverescue.net](mailto:mkinsey@caverescue.net)) for more information.

### November

#### Nov 19—West Valley SAR Training

Night scenario. Contact Bob Gattas ([rgattas@earthlink.net](mailto:rgattas@earthlink.net)) for more information.

### December

#### \*Course / Provider

BSAR / Vol Forces  
CMC Rescue School  
On Rope1  
Rigging For Rescue  
Ropes That Rescue  
TRBC, PVSC, NCRC / Vol Forces  
Mountaineering / Vol Forces  
West Valley SAR Training

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[www.riggingforrescue.com](http://www.riggingforrescue.com)  
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## Articles Wanted!

*The Tracker* needs you! Please send articles to share with your colleagues. Send in a mission report or a trip report. Write an article about a team training. *The Tracker* has a wide national audience. Anything related to search and rescue is worthy of publication. Please send submissions to:

**editor@thetracker.info**

## Hug-A-Tree

NASAR has taken over the Hug-A-Tree program, and they are in the process of updating the program. They are interested in contacting any past presenters. If you are a past presenter, or are interested in becoming a presenter please contact NASAR at :

**hugatree@nasar.org**

## Classifieds

Contact the Editor to place or remove any item.



**SBSD Commuter cups** with star and motto. \$16. Features generous 16 oz. capacity, stainless steel construction, double-walled insulation and fits virtually all auto cup or mug holders.



**SBSD Search and Rescue decals.** \$5. The decals are 3.5" X 3.5" and can be stuck on the outside of just about anything or on the inside of a window. The price is \$5.00 each and can be purchased by contacting SarDesertRun@aol.com or calling 760-369-9999.



**Earrings (1/2")** \$10 and **Lapel Pin/Tie Tacks (5/8")** \$8. Fund-raiser for Morongo Mounted SAR Team. For ordering info contact Kim Miller at millerkm@29palms.usmc.mil or call Kim at (760) 367-1148 or (760) 367-1148 evenings.

**SBSD Coffee cups** \$5. High-gloss ivory coffee cups with gold-colored SBSB star on the side is microwavable. Available at Volunteer Forces.

**SBSD SAR Pens** \$10. High-quality, refillable ink pens with SBSB star and "Search & Rescue" on side. Great gift idea! Available at Volunteer Forces.

**Custom SAR/Expedition Topo maps.** \$14.95. See the web site for full details!

**Garmin Offers NASAR Members Discounts.** NASAR has an agreement with Garmin to distribute its entire line of consumer GPS products and a handful of its aviation products to the SAR community. Join NASAR at [www.nasar.org](http://www.nasar.org), and shop the store at [www.nasar.org/garmin/default.php](http://www.nasar.org/garmin/default.php).

**Air Rescue Team.** The Air Rescue Team is selling T-shirts and baseball caps. To purchase them contact Diana at VFU (909-387-0641) or Helen at Aviation (909-356-3800). Go to [www.cafepress.com/helicopter2classifieds](http://www.cafepress.com/helicopter2classifieds) to purchase these items.

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