



# THE TRACKER

Monthly Newsletter of the Inland Empire Search and Rescue Council

March 2006

Volume 15 Number 3

## So, You Think Your Cold?

Devon Kemp, Orange County Sheriff's SAR

Does the idea of getting cold make you shiver? Not the kind of cold you feel when you run out front in the morning to get your paper. I'm talking

about the kind of cold that grips your toes and keeps you awake all night long. The kind of cold that makes you put on 3 layers of pants and 4 layers of tops.

Does a peaceful and relaxing Saturday morning sound

better to you than sliding down an ice chute, head first, on your back?

Do you get claustrophobic easily? Or even, not so easily?

If you answered "yes" to any of the above questions, then you may want to stop reading now. Go to the next article, where it's safer.

On the other hand, if living outside in the snow, with the lows around 18 degrees, for 2 days with only the stuff in your backpack intrigues you, then keep reading. You're just the type of (crazy) person for the Basic Mountaineering Course.

I could tell from the start that this would not be the average type of field training that I've had in the past: During the training's briefing, Dave "Boy Scout" Pichotta informed everyone he's there as the medic and handed everyone directions to the nearest emergency room. He even handed out directions to the nearest veterinarian emergency room. Good to have a backup, I guess.

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## Atta Boy for San Bernardino County Risk Management

Jon Bechtel, Bear Valley SAR

In February of 2003, while a member of Bear Valley SAR, I was staggering up the Vivian Creek trail on a mutual aid search with San G SAR when I slipped on some wet leaves, did a full twisting front gainer in the pike position and landed like a gut shot pelican. Having recently become a great grandfather, I can look back twenty or thirty years ago when I used to bounce like a golf ball but now I seem to stick a lot more like a fresh cow pie. As my old buddy Mark Rowland always said, "Getting old ain't for wimps."

Three years, two operations, four Titanium screws, countless physical therapy sessions, a truckload of aspirin along with some really understanding members from my current team, the Riverside County Desert Sheriff's SAR who took on a gimp, are finally bringing me within a couple months of once more being back in the saddle and a 100% again. Now you may ask yourself, 100% of what? But we won't go their.

See "Atta Boy" on page 6

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# What's New in Volunteer Forces?

Lt. Glenn Grabiec, Emergency Operations/Volunteer Forces

**G**reetings All! Since my last article in January, it seems as if we have been busier than ever. Just this morning, we kicked off the State Office of Emergency Services Direction and Control of the Search Function course. We are hosting this course in our county. There are about 13 counties represented and almost 20 of our own personnel. We are very happy about the turnout for this course.

Dave Pichotta has been busy at work, (as many of you know), coordinating the Basic Search and Rescue course, the Personal Vertical Skills course, and the Basic Mountaineering course. The mountaineering course was held in the Eastern Sierra and was a great success. Hats off to Dave for all the hard work!

Coming up on May 6th, we are hosting the bi-annual Volunteer Appreciation Picnic. Please attend if you can get away. It should

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## Cold

After the briefing, the teams need to prepare their backpacks and get them weighed by Sonny "Weighmaster" Lawrence. So you thought you were going to live comfortably for these next two days, eh? Nope! "You're going for survival, not comfort", said Sonny. "This pack weighs too much. Take out the tent. And your first aid kit is too big." Fine, but can I still bring my teddy bear?

After learning how to climb, descend, and traverse snow-covered-hills with an ice axe (where someone managed to split their forehead open - "Dave - Help!") it's off to the ice chutes where you practice self-arrest techniques using an ice axe. This is where you learn how to stop yourself from an uncontrolled slide down an ice chute. You're supposed to demonstrate

be a great time. All stations should have a flyer. If not, contact Volunteer Forces for information.

Lastly, I am please to announce that Sgt. Todd Paterson has been promoted to Lieutenant at Court Services. While we hate to see him go, we wish him the best in his new assignment. He will still be spearheading the statewide SAR Memorial Project. His position is being filled by Sgt. Mike Follett from the Big Bear Station. Many of you know Mike and the loads of experience he has in the SAR world. He is excited to be assigned to Volunteer Forces and looks forward to working with the teams out in the field. We are happy to have him as part of our team. That's all for now.

Thank you for all you do!

Glenn ◯

recovering from various positions, such as feet-first, head-first, right-side-up, and upside down (I managed to get "sideways" in there too). You know, just like Rico "Suave" Gallardo is demonstrating. Most people just did one of those positions at a time...

I managed to get all of the positions done at once, in some crazy way. Kind of like our cat at home does when I throw it down the metal slide.

Then it's time to say good bye to the cars and snowshoe to a snow covered valley where we'll

spend the rest of the day and night. "You've got 20 minutes to build an emergency shelter," someone yells. The whole time I'm digging my 6ft x 2ft x 2ft "trench" in the freezing snow I couldn't get rid of the feeling that I was digging my own grave.

See "Cold" on page 6



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# Look out! Here come the Quads!

John Boatman, West Valley Mounted Posse

As the county starts to move towards unifying and standardizing the All Terrain Vehicle Standards several members of various SAR squads are already collaborating on their trainings. Recently, several squads have gotten together to team up for training. Back on January 29, 2006, members of



Central Mountain SAR and West Valley Mounted Posse conducted a joint training ride at Central's Harrison Street location. Four members of Central Mountain SAR and two from West Valley Posse trained and were exposed to the ATV outline course and a short trail ride. It was a great way for those who have not been through a qualification course to see where there skills are and reinforce proficiency. For those who have previously been through the qualification, this was another opportunity to practice.

On February 19, 2006, seventeen members from Apple Valley Mounted Posse, San Bernardino Mountain SAR, Victor Valley SAR, Wrightwood-Phelan SAR and West Valley Mounted Posse trained and qualified in a new format presented by Deputy Jason Jayne. The day started with an intensive equipment check of both rider gear and ATV safety checks. Required gear for riders are long pants, DOT helmet, gloves and eye protection. The quads were checked for operating condition, lights, tires loose bolts and breaks to name a few.

The new course format was different but it still holds true to the skill level required for ATV deployment in the field. The new course takes the drills and maneuvers from the older course and lays them out in a circular fashion. The riders run the course at a medium speed and as they go around several times, they move to an inner circle. The moving to the inner circles restricts the area for movement and makes the corners tighter. There are three levels of circles total before a rider finds him/ herself circling one cone. Once you've mastered the tighter turns, hold on, you have to do it from the opposite direction. The course also incorporates riding over obstacles, quick stops, quick turns and hillside maneuvers. The time to complete the course is greatly reduced because there are only few modifications that need to happen to alter the course from maneuver to maneuver as opposed to re-setting up the cones for each drill under the older system.

After everyone had a chance to run through the course, a ten mile trail ride was conducted in the foothills along the



east side of Lytle Creek between the creek and interstate 15. The trail ride started with twelve members but was shortened to ten due to elevation, time constraints and weather. There were a lot of positive comments made by the teams over the

See "Look Out!" on page 5

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# Recovery of Dead Bodies ~ How to Cope. Part 1

Adapted from a USAMEDCOM combat stress manual.

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**O**ne consequence of humanitarian and recovery operations is coming in contact with bodies of people that have died under tragic or horrible circumstances. You may be assigned the mission of recovering and processing human remains.

The victims may include women, elderly people, or small children and infants for whom we feel an innate empathy. Being exposed to children who have died can be especially distressing, particularly for individuals who have children of their own.

Extensive experience has been gained from working with body recovery teams during past operations. This information helped them cope with the memories, and it can help you, your co-workers, and your organization take this difficult mission in stride. You can complete the operation proud of what you have done, and return to your usual duties, career and family life without being unduly troubled by the memories — even when those memories include some very sad, unpleasant or distressing details.

## What to Expect

Some body recovery operations involve situations where there are no living survivors. Other situations take place in concert with ongoing rescue, emergency medical care, and survivor assistance activities. In the latter case, the reactions of the living victim may include grief, anger, shock, gratitude or ingratitude, numbness or indifference. Their reactions may interact with your own reactions to the dead. In some situations, the bodies may be distorted or mutilated. Seeing mutilated bodies invokes an innate horror in most human beings, although most of us quickly form a kind of tough mental “shell,” so we won’t feel so badly.

To some extent, we come to see the remains simply as objects, without reflecting that they were once people. Often the bodies are burned, crushed, or otherwise damaged. Sometimes, however, the cause of death leaves few signs on the bodies (e.g., drowning or smoke victims). Rescue

operations personnel often say this is harder to adapt to because of the difficulty in forming that “shell.” Of course, the degree of decomposition of the bodies will be determined by the temperature and climate, and by how long it has been before you can reach them and begin collection.

In addition to seeing mutilated or non-mutilated bodies, you will often have to smell the bodies and other associated strong odors. You may have to touch the remains, move them, and perhaps hear the sounds of autopsies being performed, or other burial activities. These sensations may place a strain on your capacity to do the work and/or may trouble you with nightmares and memories. The following are things you can do to help. Being exposed to large numbers of dead bodies is not a normal part of human experience. Therefore, when you are exposed to bodies, you should not be surprised that you have thoughts and feelings you are not used to. You may experience sorrow, regret, repulsion, disgust, anger, and futility. **REMEMBER, THESE ARE NORMAL RESPONSES TO THE ABNORMAL SITUATION IN WHICH YOU HAVE BEEN PLACED.** In fact, it would be surprising if you did not have at least some of these emotions. You may start to see similarities between yourself (or others you love) and those who have died. This could lead to feelings of guilt (“Why wasn’t it me?” or “Why can’t I do more to stop it?”) or anxiety (“It could have been me”). Again, these feelings are NORMAL given the situation. Humor is a normal human reaction or “safety valve” for very uncomfortable feelings. In body handling situations, it naturally tends towards what is aptly called “graveyard humor.” Don’t be surprised at finding this in yourself or others.

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See “How to Cope” in the April Tracker

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## Look Out!

whole day. It was a great time to get together with different teams and see what everyone is riding, what equipment people are using and to pool resources. Due to the awesome participation, additional open trainings are sure to be scheduled in the future.

West Valley Posse has the following dates scheduled for any team members to join; April 29, 2006 at the Harrison Street SAR facility, September 16, 2006 at Kessler Park, Bloomington, and November 18, 2006 back at the Rodeo grounds. Each training will start at 9:00 a.m., as the horse folks say, "in the saddle". Each training date is held in rain or shine.

In addition, West Valley Posse team has a ride only, no qualification, scheduled for June

17, 2006 in Lytle Creek. The exact location is to be determined but the ride will consist of trail ride from Apple White to the backside of Mount Baldy. If interested, plan on a full day of riding as well as an approved method of carrying extra gas. If anyone wants information regarding the upcoming rides please contact me, John Boatman, via email, [jinboatman@aol.com](mailto:jinboatman@aol.com).

I also want to thank the efforts of David Jayne, Ron Mead as well as Jason Jayne for taking their time to assist in what might become the largest ATV qualification training we have hosted. Thanks. D

## Can you Speak ICS?

Shannon Kovich, San G/Valley of the Falls SAR.

What is ICS you say? Well... it's the way we do business nowadays. San Bernardino County has been "playing" ICS for many years, but now we are training all members of our SAR community in this management type, so that everyone involved in each incident will know the whole picture. Have you ever wonder how

ICS stands for Incident Command System. It involves the assignment of a "Command" Team, and "General" staff positions. These staff positions then work together to decide an Incident Action Plan (IAP). This IAP will show all aspects of the operation, including weather, subject information, and assignments, among many other things.

The ICS system grows as the incident grows, allowing a 1-7 supervision ratio, 5 being optimum. This allows the work of a large incident to be spread among many people. Each one having a specific area of responsibility.

After the 24 hour class was completed, several of the my classmates had the

See "ICS" on page 8



the management team comes up with their assignments, and why they do the things they do? Well, once you understand the ICS system, then you will understand the many processes, which come into play. We can no longer just send people into the field and randomly run these operations. Accountability is necessary, and this is what ICS does for us all.



Continued from page 2

## Cold

The next thing to learn is snow anchors & belaying. There are multiple anchor techniques: Snow pickets, ice axe, load distributing, horizontal, picket rows, and a bollard (isn't that a dance?) too name a few. Personally, I would have just used that BFTP (Big Fat Telephone Pole) in the middle of the valley, but I guess we don't always have one of those lying around. Belaying went just as well: "You mean I was supposed to remember how to tie a Munter?" I mutter. "But that's why I have this fancy ATC..." Frank "Ropes" Hester doesn't buy it: "Use the Munter. And put your gloves back on."

Okay, so we get through the anchors and belaying stations and then it's time to cook dinner. Of course, all we have are those little jet stoves that boil water, so "dinner" is whatever freeze-dried meal you could buy that you add boiling water to. And did you know that water boils at a lower temperature when you're at 8,100 ft versus sea-level, so "boiling" doesn't necessarily mean "hot"... and so you end up with not-so-hot sweet and sour pork on rice. "Hey Dave: you got a pizza in that truck?"

After dinner we practice using the avalanche transponders. These are the little devices that skiers wear around their necks in case they're caught in an avalanche. If someone in your party gets caught in an avalanche, the rest of the team is supposed to switch their transponders over to "receive" and then locate your body within 5 minutes. 20 minutes later the teaching evolves into a game of "go fetch", where Mark "Smiley" Kinsey hides the "target" transceiver in the snow somewhere and the 5 of us guys compete with each other to try and find it first --- sort of how my Golden Retriever plays fetch.

Around 9 o'clock everyone calls it a night and turns in to their snow trenches. Everyone except me and Gary Ziebarth. We wait until everyone's asleep and then set up our tents (yeah, we smuggled them in - don't tell Sonny). We crawl in and try to fall asleep, but our toes are aching from the cold and if you move, there's a good chance you'll fall off of the sleeping pad and get cold. Really cold. From a quick survey the next morning it sounds as if most people only got a couple of hours sleep.

Sunday morning starts at around 0530 with muster being called by Sonny. Ironic, isn't it? Sonny wakes us all up when it isn't sunny at all.

Sunday is test day and it only takes a couple of hours to get us all up, packed, tested (I passed!) and on our way home. Most of the tests are pretty straightforward, all except the avalanche transponder test. This is the stuff that puts a sparkle in Jack "Pieps" Nelson's eye. He knows how to hide those things so that you can't find 'em. Behind trees, next to stumps, under branches. Of all the tests, this is the one that gives most people trouble... and that was because most forgot to turn the darn things on! Live and learn.

Overall, this BMC field class was a fantastic exercise in surviving & operating in the snow. Some really neat students and instructors showed up to share knowledge, experience, and a few laughs. I sure am glad I had the experience to do this, and I hope a few of you out there will take the challenge too. 

Continued from page 1

## Atta Boy

I reported the injury the same day that it happened, did all the paperwork and followed up with the obligatory ER visit. If any of you-all have the misfortune do a face plant while on duty be sure and dot all the Is and cross all the Ts so you may have the same positive results that I did.

San Bernardino County Risk Management and their courteous, efficient staff really came through for me when I needed help. When you're injured in the line of duty they can't seem to do enough for you. What ever you need in the way of treatment, advise, or help in any way, shape, or form is their for you without any delay. So folks, remember, BE SAFE. But if you do happen to be as clumsy as I was, you will be taken care of. 

# 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.

## 2006

### March

#### 4, 5, 18, & 19 — BSAR (Basic Search and Rescue)

Call Volunteer Forces for more information.

#### 6-10 — Direction and Control of the Search Function

Call Volunteer Forces for more information.

#### 11 — Commanders/Coordinators Meeting

Call Volunteer Forces for more information.

#### 13 — Searching for Victims of Predator Abductions

Call Volunteer Forces for more information.

#### 14 — Searching for Victims of Predator Abductions

Call Volunteer Forces for more information.

#### 15 — IESARC Meeting

Call Volunteer Forces for more information.

#### 24-26 — BMC Field Check-off

Call Volunteer Forces for more information.

### April

#### 29 — West Valley SAR's 10th Annual Run for Rescue & Safety Fair

Call 909-221-5119 for more information.

#### 30 — County Wide Mounted SAR Training. Hosted by Morongo Mounted

Call Dave Nicolet @ 760-363-7475 or 760-831-5743 for more information.

### May

#### 6 — Volunteer Appreciation Picnic

Call Volunteer Forces for more information.

#### 6, 7, 20, & 21 — BSAR (Basic Search and Rescue)

Call Volunteer Forces for more information.

#### 8-12 — Direction and Control of Search Function, Search and Rescue Course

Call Volunteer Forces for more information.

#### 16 — CERT Training Conference

Visit [www.certconference2006.com](http://www.certconference2006.com) for more information.

#### 17 — IESARC Meeting

Call Volunteer Forces for more information.

#### 17-18 — Sgt. Heller's Tracking

Call 909-473-2695 for more information.

### June

#### 4-5 — Sgt. Heller's Tracking

Call 909-473-2695 for more information.

#### 3, 4, 10, & 11 — TRBC (Technical Rope Basic Course)

Call Volunteer Forces for more information.

#### 15-18 — 2006 MRA Conference

Visit [www.marinsar.org](http://www.marinsar.org) for more information.

### July

#### 8 — Rope Skills County-wide Recertification/TRBC Remediation

Call Volunteer Forces for more information.

#### 19 — IESARC Meeting

Call Volunteer Forces for more information.

### August

#### 7-11 — Direction and Control of Search Function, Search and Rescue Course

Call Volunteer Forces for more information.

### September

#### 8-10 — SAREX 2006 Sponsored by Butte County SAR

Call Volunteer Forces for more information.

#### 20 — IESARC Meeting

Call Volunteer Forces for more information.

### October

#### 7 — Morongo Basin SAR's 27th Annual Desert Run

Call 760-365-8185 for more information.

#### 7, 8, 21, & 22 — BSAR (Basic Search and Rescue)

Call Volunteer Forces for more information.

#### 13-15 — SAR City

Visit [www.sarcity.org](http://www.sarcity.org) for more information

### November

#### 15 — IESARC Meeting

Call Volunteer Forces for more information.

### December

#### \*Course / Provider

#### Contact Name

#### Phone

#### email/URL

BSAR / Vol Forces

Dave Pichotta

(909) 387-0678

[dpichotta@sbcsl.org](mailto:dpichotta@sbcsl.org)

CMC Rescue School

John McKentley

(800) 235-5741

[www.cmcrescue.com](http://www.cmcrescue.com)

On Rope1

Bruce Smith

(423) 344-4716

[www.onrope1.com](http://www.onrope1.com)

Rigging For Rescue

Mike & Joanie Gibbs

(970) 325-4474

[www.riggingforrescue.com](http://www.riggingforrescue.com)

Ropes That Rescue

Reed & Jayne Thorne

(520) 282-7299

[www.ropesthatrescue.com](http://www.ropesthatrescue.com)

TRBC, PVSC, NCRC / Vol Forces

Don Welch

(760) 244-7340

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Mountaineering / Vol Forces

Frank Hester

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[flhester@aol.com](mailto:flhester@aol.com)

West Valley SAR Training

Bob Gattas

(909) 980-8820

[boobali@gte.net](mailto:boobali@gte.net)

# ICS

opportunity to use their skills, like the very next day, when the City of Highland had a 12 year old missing child. The three-man ICS team, which included Mike Ward, Tony Webb, and myself. The subject was located, unwillingly, after a 15 hr search of a 7-block area of the city. Including several apartment complexes, which required armed SAR personnel to hand out flyers. The team performed excellent, having a full IAP completed for each team member when they arrived. Thanks guys!!

Here is a list of the personnel who attended the ICS class taught by the San Bernardino County Fire Department.

- |                   |                       |
|-------------------|-----------------------|
| Armijo, Armando   | Kinsey, Mark          |
| Baars, Aaron      | Kovich, Shannon       |
| Baars, Sandra     | Loenhorst, Bill       |
| Bervel, Debbie    | Podboy, Wes           |
| Bullock, A. David | O'Brien, Corinne      |
| Burns, Pat        | Pari, Gabe            |
| Debruyne, Charles | Rifenbark, Mike       |
| DeWeert, Sandi    | Rowland, Mark         |
| Dexter, Rich      | Schneider, Tom        |
| Feibush, Charles  | Ward, Mike            |
| Heald, Cameron    | Webb, Tony            |
| Kams, Frank       | Wells, Denton (Denny) |

# 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 [mbsar\\_desertrun@yahoo.com](mailto:mbsar_desertrun@yahoo.com) or calling 760-365-8185.



**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](mailto: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 SBSD star on the side is microwavable. Available at Volunteer Forces.

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

**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 Kathy at Aviation (909-356-3800). Go to [www.cafepress.com/helicopter2](http://www.cafepress.com/helicopter2) to purchase these items.

## Rescue Net

If you are a HAM radio operator, IESARC has started a Rescue Net on Keller Peak every Tuesday at 2000 hrs. The frequency is 146.985 with standard offset and the PL Tone is 146.2. If you have any question, please contact Mike Ward at:

[rockywinds@aol.com](mailto:rockywinds@aol.com)

## 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](mailto:hugatree@nasar.org)

## 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](mailto:editor@thetracker.info)

## Join the SAR Email List

To improve communication in the county, there is a new email list called SARInfo. This email list will facilitate county-wide discussions for those who subscribe. To subscribe, send an email to:

[SARInfo-subscribe@sbsar.org](mailto:SARInfo-subscribe@sbsar.org)

When you are ready to post to the list send email to [SARInfo@sbsar.org](mailto:SARInfo@sbsar.org).

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