



"Proudly Serving PA, NJ, DE, and MD since 1979"

RESCUE ME

"That others may learn"

Winter 2000

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Enemies In The Field For SAR

Three of our big enemies in the field are time, terrain and temperature. Failure to have as much information on any of these three can lead to a less effective field experience.

Time: We need to get out there with at least a scouting team as soon as possible. When we get there we need to get all of the timeline info we can on the subject.

Terrain: Failure to know the terrain of an area leads to putting resources in dangerous situations as well as possibly placing them in areas

not best suited for them (i.e. Equines on rocky unstable hills.)

Temperature: Not knowing the weather is a major error but less common than in the past. We need to know the weather from approximately 1 day prior to the subjects being last seen up to the next 2 or 3 days that we plan to be in the area.

While this might be simple it is forgotten at times. Please call SAR early if only as technical advisor's prior to actual deployment. The time saved could save a life.

LESSONS LEARNED— THE PRESS AS A RESOURCE.

In years of Emergency Services experience I'd be hard pressed to remember a handful of co-workers and team members that liked dealing with the press. I must say that I feel the same way but to a degree have seen the light.

We've all had our incidents good and bad with the press. I had one a few years back that people use as an example in training classes of when everything goes wrong.

After that I took it upon myself to take a Public Relations class. I did not agree with everything said but I looked at things differently afterwards.

The press is a resource for us in the field. A tool that we can utilize to aid us in getting feedback from the public about the missing persons we search for. We can't be everywhere but utilizing the press we can expand our reach.

Some tips:

- (1) Assign someone to deal with the press early into the operation.
- (2) Respect the confidentiality of all people involved.
- (3) In the words of Sgt. Joe Friday of Dragnet, "Just the facts".

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Newsletter Update

We'd like to thank everyone for the feedback on the newsletter. Let us know if you need more information on something contained within or want to add something to a future issue. All reasonable requests will be considered.

Please keep in mind that the newsletter is also available (usually about a week earlier) online at www.gpsar.org/sarnews.html

Give us some feedback via newsletter@gpsar.org whether you prefer print or digital issues in the future.

Tip of the month

Never and I repeat NEVER use actual missions to test out new products. The only new thing that you should have in the field is batteries and food. Other than that everything else should be pre-tested trusted field tools. This doesn't mean no to try new items. What it does mean is that you should try them at trainings, mocks, etc. Get the kinks out so that you can focus on the task at hand on the mission and not have to worry about learning something new or breaking something in.

We've all been out with that person with new shoes suffering through a task. That person cannot give their full attention to the task. Don't be that person. Work it out beforehand.

Successful Search In Cheltenham

The team was contacted on Nov 2, 2000 by fireboard to contact Cheltenham emergency management regarding an ongoing search for a 12 year old missing boy.

The people at the township wanted guidance and we were happy to accommodate. A short time later we were contacted again and asked to take over the search management of the operation.

A review of the facts indicated that this young man had done this before but had always been home by late evening. He had recently been suspended in school and was sorry and left a note to his mother indicating same.

After about 6 hours the boy was located and returned safely to his parents. It turned out

that he was, as the evidence suggested hiding and evading searchers moving throughout the area.

We'd like to thank all organizations involved for the excellent professional and cooperative effort put forth that resulted in a happy ending for this young man and his family. Special thanks to Cheltenham's Emergency Services for giving us all the support we needed to do our job.

When he was found there was a relief that came over people that could not be quantified. It was that feeling that we all need once and a while. That booster shot that reminds us why we go places in the middle of the night to help strangers. Why we do things for free that we wouldn't do for any amount of money.

Training & Details & Meetings

Officers Meeting - Every 3rd Sunday @ 11:00 am
Business Meeting - Every 3rd Sunday @ 12:30 pm
Training Workshop - Every 3rd Sunday @ 1:00 pm -
COQ - Winter 2000
First Aid, CPR - Winter 2000
MSO - Winter 2000/2001

* Canine training on Tuesday nights and Saturday mornings. Contact canine@gpsar.org

* Equine certifications / training's by appointment. Contact equine@gpsar.org

For complete information contact training@gpsar.org

Thermal Detection - Magic or Tool?

Somewhere out there that missing person is waiting for assistance because they cannot help themselves. Time and the elements are our enemies. We need every edge we can get. We have canines, equines, trackers, and good old ground pounders. Now we also have the LF-5 Thermal Detection Device.

This handheld wonder detects even the slightest changes in thermal signatures. By using this small hand held device in a sweeping motion, the LF-5 has detected humans and other types of heat sources at ranges of over 1000 meters in open areas and through 100 meters of dense forest, day or night. What does this mean to you? You can detect your missing persons position and take necessary actions to help them.

Now before anyone goes getting upset and tries to pick about this new magic there is something that you must be clear on. This is not a tricorder...it requires training to be used properly. You have to work with it and learn to read it like a canine.

You'd be amazed and the things that can set it off in the field. Basically anything that retains heat. At night large rocks retain a lot of heat! Until you

get used to it it looks like a person. Gas pockets can divert it also. It excels in water and for clearing dense woods and large fields.

While this device is not a miracle tool it will give you back more than you put into it with a little work and training.

The folks at Bonner-Technologies are constantly refining the unit and eagerly take good suggestions. The LF-5 has been fine tuned to assist it in finding decomposing remains.

I wish it had a mount on it for a laser for pointing and a tripod screw. Other than that it has been good for me.

If you'd like to see it let me know at newsletter@gpsar.org It can be seen on the web at <http://www.bonner-tech.com/lifefinder1.htm>



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CERT and Other Community Education We Offer.

Sergeant Park, Captain Hopkins and Chief Corrigan attended FEMA's train the trainer for the CERT program that the team has been teaching for a few years now. GPSAR is proud to say we were amongst the few there that have taught the class and the only SAR team to get it's trainers trained by FEMA and PEMA.

The training was 3 days long in Reading and there were representatives in attendance from several counties.

GPSAR was asked to teach the light search and rescue portion. Chief Corrigan handled the demo with his usual skillful use of a small but colorful power point presentation.

CERT is but one class that we have chosen to offer to the community. Working to fulfill our secondary mission of educating the community has shown us that we can help more people through education.

We can offer the following:

CERT— The basic CERT program consists of 16 hours and is available to those civilians

requesting the skills necessary to be a successful part of the emergency preparedness and response.

First Aid / CPR—This is the usually first aid / CPR class with 3 year cert on the first aid and 2 year on the CPR.

Water Rescue—Basic water rescue skills following PA Fish and Boat standards.

Lost In The Woods—Child survival program to help children that find themselves lost.

Hug A Tree —Child survival program to help children that find themselves lost.

Manager of Search Operations—This is the most current course that has been updated after 20 years of reevaluating the original data by the people that created the original training.

Search Management for the Initial Response Incident Commander—A comprehensive course that covers the basics for setting up the critical first operational period.