



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

RESCUE ME

"That others may learn"

Summer 2001

Volume 4, Issue 1

Grange Fair



GPSAR was proud to be invited back the annual Grange Fair in Trappe, PA.

The team was well represented and gave an educational display as well as assisting in several heat related medical incidents.

Organizers of the event asked that we speak and give a demonstration next year when we return.

Thanks to all the members who attended. Special thanks to the Mounted Unit who hosted us at the event.

Missing New Jersey Woman

Greater Philadelphia Search and Rescue along with several other agencies participated in a day of searching some suspect areas at the request of law enforcement.

This search gave us a chance to work with several new groups as well as some old ones. It was good to see such a mix of people and talents at a scene.

At the request of the responding agency GPSAR responded with a minimal contingent of people.

Regrettably terrain restricted the best efforts of many and canine in many instances. With this in mind while we are done for now we are awaiting the opportunity to assist further on this case to bring closure to the family if needed.

PLEASE KEEP IN MIND!

GPSAR is available to aid your agency or department in cases of lost and missing persons. This service can bring great comfort to the families of the subjects as well and the others involved.

Feel free to contact us should you need our assistance.

Grange Fair, Search for missing Jersey Woman

1

July COQ, Explorer Perspective

2

Missing Adults, Bike Team Back in Business

3

Unified Command, Water Unit Training

4

Explorer Perspective



Growing up is quite possibly the scariest part of being a child. You begin to realize that the world is yours for the taking, and that you have the power to do whatever it is that makes you happy. At no time in your life is this more evident than in your senior year of high school and the summer following your high school graduation. It is then that you must decide where you want to go and what you want to do with your life.

This year, three of our Explorers, Keith David, Shawn Weir and Lauren Murray have all found themselves at that very place. Each has made their choice, and each decision will ultimately have an effect on their relationship with GPSAR.

No other unit on the team has to face the time constraints that the Explorers deal with. After all, we are high school students, and aren't sure where our lives are going to take us. As Keith learned, sometimes it may be away from something you love.

Keith has decided to join the army, and is currently away at boot camp. He was deeply saddened that he would have to take a leave of absence from the

team, a place he has been active in for several years. He will, however, be able to take with him the skills and talents he has learned and developed here at GPSAR and apply them to the military life he has adopted. Shawn has chosen another option. He has decided not to further his education at this point, to work on receiving his pilot's license and plans to enter the work force. He would ultimately like to peruse a career related to flight and aeronautics. His decision allows him to continue his involvement with the team, but he will be able to use the skills he has learned here in any endeavor he chooses to partake in.

Lauren will be continuing her education at Arcadia University this fall where she will be double majoring in education and psychology and minoring in theater and the performing arts. While she will be very busy, she will also be continuing her efforts with the team, and hopes to recruit members while at school. GPSAR is proud of its Explorers and wishes them the best of luck in all that they choose to do.

July 2001 COQ Class

The entire team would like to welcome our latest 6 members. Members Ber-
man, Ewing, Hough, Wright, Hartley,
Jaeb-Morse, and Morse all completed
the July 1, 2001 Call Out Qualified
class.



At this point these new members are ready to begin their respective journeys down various paths. They will eventually participate in the Canine Unit, the Water Unit, the Mountain Bike Unit, and the Rope Unit.

To finish off their basic training new members have to

have First Aid, CPR, Map and
Compass, Ropes and Knots, and
Patient Packaging.

As you can see getting into
Search and Rescue on any level
takes time and effort. We com-

mend the effort of these new members.

They've brought the enthusiasm and we'll supply some guidance and training and the end result will be professionally trained Search and Rescue members ready and willing to fulfill the mission of GPSAR.

MISSING ADULTS

Unfortunately we're starting to see a trend that involves missing adults. Missing children can be found on milk cartoons but adults rarely get the kind of attention we've seen in the news recently.

Thousands of people are reported missing and some make it back home. Many however are never located. With adults sometimes years can pass before they even get reported missing. As we isolate ourselves more and more there is less of a network of people to notice as quickly when we might vanish.

Last week, in discussing the theories being explored in the Levy case, Deputy Chief Terrence Gainer of the Washington police touched on four major reasons why adults vanish: foul play, suicide, deliberate disappearance and amnesia.

Experts say that the first thing that you have to consider with an adult is did they simply decide to give it all up and walk away. In SAR terms is this a bastard search. Life takes different tools on different people. While it might seem inconceivable for any of us to just walk away be assured that right now there are people thinking about or even doing it.

One of the things that we can do as adults is come and go as we please. Children are monitored more closely. Adults can get a better start on running away and they have more financial means to do so.

A missing person differs from a homicide in that you are looking for the person versus the killer. If someone is alive they could be anywhere in the world. It makes the missing person incident much harder to investigate.

There are forensic clues that a body gives us to work with that we are denied with a walkway missing person. Struggles leave threads, hair, blood, skin and more. It makes the job of everyone from the Trackers to the Canine Handlers more difficult.

This kind of case is particularly frustrating and weights heavily on the minds of all involved. It's unfinished business. There is no closure for anyone involved.

Sometimes these kinds of cases can be like one I recall when the gentleman left mad and his wife called the police and they called us right away (which is best). We searched and everything indicated that he was out of the area. While searching it was discovered that the man was eating at a restaurant in the next township over. He had heard about himself "missing" and was embarrassed to come back home.



BIKE TEAM BACK IN SERVICE

Our bike unit is back and training at full strength. Not letting the heat deter us we've been out a few times in the recent weeks with more trainings to come followed by a fall certification of our latest class. GPSAR has had a bike unit for over 4 years and found it to be a valuable asset in the field time and time again.

Bike unit members (like all GPSAR members) are ground searchers first and foremost. The bike is a specialty tool that they utilize when needed.

Anyone wanting more information please contact bikes@gpsar.org



Greater Philadelphia Search And Rescue
PO Box 1163
Glenside, PA 19038
(215) 966-1888 - www.gpsar.org

GPSAR

Mailing
Address
Goes
Here

Unified Command

PennDOT has come up with an excellent idea. It is a statewide program that allows for the smooth coordinating of multiple resources in an emergency. The system is called the Unified Incident Command system.

The basic idea is to improve communication between all of us in emergency services to help to better insure our safety and a better handling of the emergency at hand.

Incident command is not only about who is in charge but who is in charge of what! This is something that is frequently overlooked.

There is always a question of who is in charge of a scene. They've made it simple like it should be. If it's a fire then firefighter's will be in charge. If it's a crime then police will be in charge. And that would mean that if it's a lost person incident then search and rescue would be in charge.

I am sure this new system will allow for the smooth transition of authority as the incident changes but in the meantime it's nice to see that someone is thinking about making things smoother!

Water Unit Training

In a continued effort to better the units skills the Water Unit took out the Avon Inflatable boat for a day of testing.

Despite its lack of use and regular maintenance the boat and motor were coaxed into service. The motor needed some prodding that would not have been possible had members not had similar experiences in the past with both boat motors and motor-cycle engines.

The boat engine will be overhauled so that it may serve more reliably in the near future.

With the rash of flash floods and the such in the area the Water Unit feels the pressing need to maintain a level of readiness with the boat than the team has maintained in the past.

