



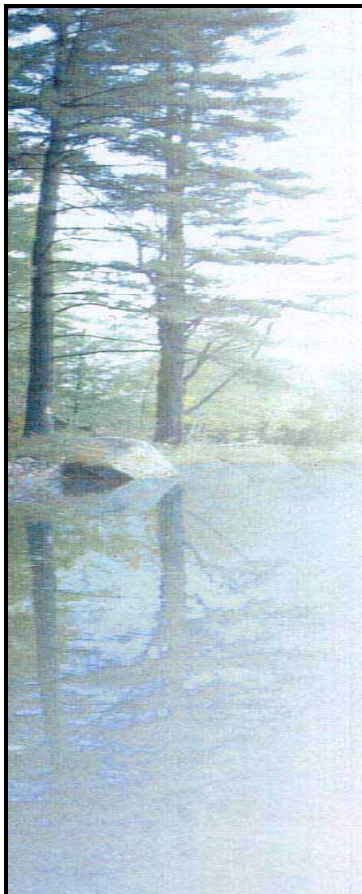
Greater Philadelphia Search & Rescue

RESCUE ME

Serving PA, NJ, DE & MD since 1979

Holiday 2004

2003-4



Main Story

2003—The Year In Review For GPSAR

2003 was a great year for the growth and development of GPSAR. We'd like to thank everyone that helped us move forward in this year.

Special thanks to Montgomery County Office of Emergency Services, Nextel, and all the others that help us do the job that we do.

During the year we do many things. Here's a breakdown (all times represent "person hours"):

Training - up to three times a week we've completed 2500+ team training hours this year. This does NOT include indi-

vidual members training.

Community Educations / Outreach—this is where we reach out and help people by educating them not to have to need our services because they get themselves out of a bad situation. Nothing is more effective or rewarding than this in the long run. We invested 1203 + hours into this part of our operations.

Meetings - plain and simple... we've got to meet to resolve team business. No one likes meetings but we couldn't operate without them. We spent over 450 hours meeting.

We training up to 3 times a week (usually around 2). We

do community education. We meet and finally we use everything together for searches for people.

Searches—last but not least we assisted in locating missing persons. This # came in at over 400 hours.

All in all it adds up to a complete and fulfilling year for our membership.

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"We are there to serve the victim. The members signed up to serve the victim Since the victim is unavailable or unwilling to guide the membership we have leaders that facilitate directing the assistance of the victim via the members."

Training Topics

State Police Training

GPSAR was requested by the Pennsylvania State Police to do an 8 hour class / field training. This training was attended by officers from throughout the region.

The training was on search basics and how to utilize and work with a Search Team.



The outside portion consisted of a demonstration of how our canines work in the field.

The class was well received and we'll be offering it again in the near future as it's helpful to the State Police and any SAR team they might be inclined to work with.

It was our pleasure to be involved with this innovated class. Thanks should go out to everyone that was involved in it's becoming a reality.

Education / Outreach / Searches

Searches— Mocks

SEARCHES

Amongst the contacts since the last newsletter there were 2 for active searches in our area. Happily both searches: one for a 15 year old autistic boy and another for a 83 year old man had positive outcomes.



Two good outcomes in a row was a big plus. One of the main factors that influence a positive outcome is contact us early in the incident. With any operation laying a the foundation in the beginning is paramount to a good outcome. Doing other-

wise can cause time to be wasted by people having to reorganize into the operation.



Please contact us early into the operation if only for some guidance and advice. The level of assistance you get from GPSAR can be determined by your departments needs. We can do anything from a phone consult to a full team response to assist you.

MOCKS

GPSAR recently had a mock drill in Chester County. A mock is a more robust training where we bring in the elements of real

chaos into the normal training.

The mock was all day and people showed up to find the vehicles of two missing people. As tasks were assigned and the scene assessed teams got an envelope with random circumstances that would happen on an actual search.

The mock went well and the monkey wrenches thrown our way helped test our skills. All in all lots of lessons were learned and realized and that's the point of training after all...isn't it?



For Your Review Light The Way

The list of lighting options has grown out of control. LED is the new thing and works well in some instances. INOVA has some fantastic LED products that rival old fashioned lights at a fraction of the size and hundreds of times the burn time. While LED lights are great they do have limitations in that they seem to be diffused in shorter distances so they aren't as good for fast moving applications like as a bike light.

All in all they're a good light but probably shouldn't be used as the only light in the field. Personally I use them whenever I can and kick in an old fashioned krypton type light or the such when the situation dictates.

See what works for you and tell me how it turns out.



TECHNICAL TOPICS

On Rope...Safely

We did lots of rope work this year. Can't have enough rope work but that's just my opinion. Rope is one of those magical areas that you never stop learning.

Although people like the glamour of high angle that just isn't the world we live in in this area. Most work is low angle scree type extractions or simply traversing an area to get to a victim.

Another aspect that is



highly underrated is the ART of patient packaging. (Yes, it's an art). Five

people can do it 12 different ways and all be right. Make sure that you and your people have a system that you agree upon for your organization.

We've got some dynamic team building plans for rope in the upcoming year.

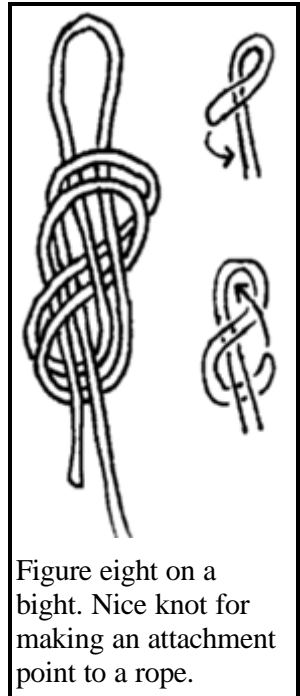


Figure eight on a bight. Nice knot for making an attachment point to a rope.

Q & A:

Why We Do The Things We Do

Why do you wear those loud yellow shirts?

Safety is the main reason. The color serves many other purposes including being excellent for quickly spotting ticks and getting them off when in the field.

Why do GPSAR people show up at a scene at different times?

Unlike a firehouse or ambulance GPSAR members live all over. We have members

in other states. Rather than delaying a response and meeting up and heading in all together we go right to



the scene. The upside to this is that we can always have a contingent to an area due to our members being scattered throughout the

area.

How is GPSAR funded?

We do not get any Government funding at all. We fall between the cracks in this geographic area. Most of our money actually comes from our members supporting the team in various ways. Yes, we pay to volunteer! Estimates vary but it can cost a volunteer up to \$1000 to get started gear wise depending upon their... zealously.

Top 5 Safety Mistakes On Rope

- #5—No protective gear.
- #4—Wrong equipment.
- #3—Wrong knots / sloppy knots used.
- #2—Rushing
- #1—Too many "experts"



Greater Philadelphia Search and Rescue

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Receipt Info
Name
Address
City, State, Zip

Tips to Click

What can you do to preserve a scene for a SAR team?

#1—Minimize foot / scent traffic in the area so that we might have a better change of a faster find.

#2—Have the information we need available...subject stats, picture, map of area.

#3—Keep track of where you have placed and worked people in the field.

#4—Locate a clean scent article that you can take us to.

#5—Call early

Member News Phil & Justice

To meet Phil you wouldn't immediately know that he's a very kind and gentle person.

Phil is a tall stocky man whom many might mistake for a retired police officer.

This is probably a result of his hard

New York accent and his no-nonsense approach of getting



to the point. Phil and his canine partner Justice have

been with the team for over 2 years now.

While they could be doing anything Phil loves doing outreach events and loves the people almost as much as Justice.