



The Official Newsletter of GPSAR

RESCUE ME

Greater Philadelphia Search & Rescue

Proudly Serving PA, NJ, DE & MD since 1977 - www.gpsar.org

When a person is lost or endangered, seconds can mean the difference between life and death. Fortunately, there is available, a dedicated search and rescue group - Greater Philadelphia Search And Rescue (GPSAR).

Founded in 1979, GPSAR has a primary response area within the States of Pennsylvania, New Jersey and Delaware, however, GPSAR has been requested by, and responds to missions in other States as well.

SEARCHES

The second quarter of 2008 turned out to be a busy time for GPSAR. We received over a dozen callouts which were located across Pennsylvania as well as New Jersey. Several of these involved a standby status. Those standbys were located in Chester, Berks, Bucks and Pike Counties in PA and Gloucester County New Jersey during the months of April, May and June.

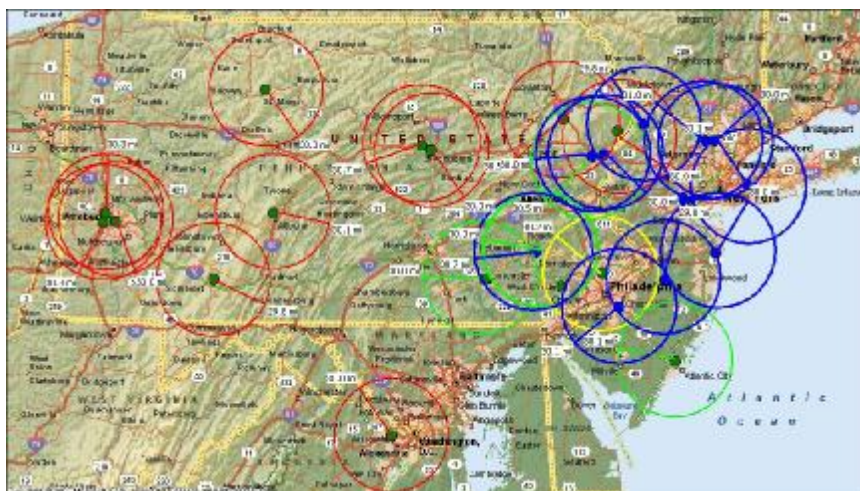
Sadly, the month of May was closed out with a call to the Susquehanna River in York and Lancaster Counties. A young Iraqi War Veteran apparently went overboard in rough water. A concerted effort from family, friends and several area Search teams including GPSAR was in vain. The subject was eventually located deceased.

The Month of June held a search in Sussex County New Jersey for a 57 year old woman with dementia who had been missing for over 24 hours. GPSAR contributed to a find of the slightly dehydrated but otherwise intact subject.

It is always rewarding to see family members reunited after such an emotional event impacts their lives.

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People go missing more often than we realize. There are advocacy groups to help with the very young and the very old.

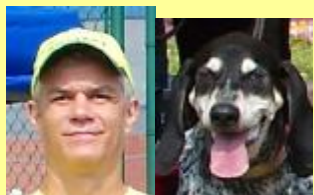
Unfortunately those that don't fall in those categories, frequently leave their families with no advocacy group to support them in the time between missing and calling for a Search and Rescue team. This is an effort to bridge that dangerous gap in time.

Lost persons need an advocate outside the structure of the law enforcement community. While there exists various agencies that deal with specific groups (infant / child, dementia, etc.) our goal is to assist those **in** filling the gaps. One major gap being the "rest of us" 25 - 65 **that** simply don't make it home for an unknown reason.

Our goal is to allow the public to not have to reinvent the wheel with each request to law enforcement regarding lost persons. They would contact law enforcement immediately of course but they'd also contact us. We'd help them with the things that people do not think of and have to remember in the middle of a deep emotional crisis (fliers, contacting hospitals, media, etc.) **Law enforcement simply does not have the staff or focus for these things.** Routine is take a report and proactively wait. Routine, unfortunately, is supported by statistics in that the majority of lost and missing persons are simply "overdue persons". We're looking at that minority that we see on the news that grips us even if exposed to only a few a month.

Check it out at www.sarfast.org.

Member Profiles



Donald Young & Doc

Don is the owner of Young's Classic Car Care where he details classic vehicles.

He came to us from Bucks County Search and Rescue with his two dogs (Doc and Joey).

Don is a true SAR enthusiast that is willing to do whatever it takes to get a job done with or without his canine partners (This is a trait that can be rare in handlers).

Don travels further than most of our members to get to trainings and details and has one of the best attendance records despite the distance.

TRAINING TOPICS

Training Never Stops

As always, GPSAR continues to gather twice a week to train together as a team. The sessions start off with a socialization time for the K-9s in attendance. Also it gives the humans a time to catch up and discuss issues and advancements that the dog partners are dealing with. In addition to twice-weekly training, members attend other skill enhancement sessions.

Several members attended the Pennsylvania Search and Rescue Council's annual SAREX. This 5 day event gives the council members and other SAR personnel the opportunity to learn something new and/or

enhance known skill sets. Some sessions throughout the event are just for fun and it also allows those attending the chance to socialize and get to know other teams and their members without the stress and urgency of a "lost person incident"

Some of the training sessions included ropes, cadaver training, agility, crime scene protection, clue awareness and man tracking.

Certifications in K-9 First Aid were acquired by two members during the event and nearly the entire team was able to attend the quarterly meeting of PSARC.

In Our Opinion:

The Greater Good

Teamwork.

The term is tossed around the office and in the sports arena. Posters are printed up with sayings about what teamwork is. Together everyone achieves more. We all want team players. It sounds good. It looks good on a resume'. But, what does it really mean? In our society today it appears that the word *team* creates a culture of competition. In our line of work competition doesn't work.

In the words of one of our members, "Teamwork is an opportunity that you don't normally have in life. The chance to be with folks that have the same goal and you support and pull from each other to achieve that goal." Wow, isn't that beautiful?. An opportunity... Possibilities...

TIP FOR THE MONTH

Whats the best gear to have?

Whatever you have to work with because that is all that matters. Gear that is untested and at home is useless.

Plan to improvise!



GPSAR Hits The Small Screen

Greater Philadelphia Search and Rescued had a unique opportunity on May 3rd, 2008. While some of the team went directly to SAREX several make a stop in Temple, Pa. to be filmed by the crew of the cable show, **CLEAN HOUSE**.

A former SAR compatriot, Phil Wheeler, was chosen to be on an episode of this popular 'reality tv' show.

The show had a yard sale and the proceeds went to GPSAR. Those monies went to help with insurance payments for the year.

Greater Philadelphia Search and Rescue personnel continue community outreach efforts at area community events.

Throughout April, members attended several events specifically tailored for children starting with a gathering of Boy Scouts for an Emergency Services Day at Springmill Fire Co. on April 5th.

On April 10th, members traveled to Springfield Middle School to talk about their K-9 friends and helped the students overcome some of their fears associated with dogs. Some of those same students even volunteered to be subjects in demonstration searches on the school grounds. The demos ended successfully with lots of smiles and doggie kisses.

GPSAR reinforced it's continued commitment to the environment by contributing to the Fort Washington State Park Earth day observance. Members

got down and dirty sprucing-up several areas of the park and mulching the playground.

Glaxo-Smith-Klein invited us a back once again to take part in their Take Your Child to Work Day. A few team members and their K-9 partners spent their day doing-show-and-tell with employees of GSK and their children.

We returned to Fort Washington Park on May 3rd and spent some time with the Boy Scout troops of the North District Council. Several members and a few dogs contributed to the boys experience at their Camporee. A few scouts helped out with the K-9 exercises. There were a lot of questions generated as the K-9s went through their paces doing air scent and tracking/trailing demos.

While some of the members

we at FWSP a few members were in Temple, Pa. being filmed by **CLEAN HOUSE**. (as mentioned above). At the same time, several other members of GPSAR were at the annual SAREX. (see Training).

The first weekend in May continued to be a busy weekend as we attended an event at Hibernia Park sponsored by the Chester County SPCA. After a week off, We had another busy weekend, some of our members attended West Vincent day, while others attended a HazMat Class at the Montgomery County Fire Academy. We would like to thank the staff of the academy for putting the class together for us.

Members traveled out to Harrisburg to attend the Pa. Fire Expo to finish up the month of May.