

Winter Retreat

January 2018

Advancing the State of Search and Rescue





Frequently Asked Questions

What is the Appalachian Search and Rescue Conference?

The ASRC is an organization of volunteer search and rescue teams (Groups) who are aligned by the common goal to be the resource-of-choice that responsible authorities will turn to when they need to locate a missing person quickly. Our Groups exhibit outstanding professional qualities, share our simple core values, and possess a strong commitment to locating the lost person.

What is the Winter Retreat?

The Appalachian Search and Rescue Conference (ASRC) sponsors an annual Winter Retreat with the goal to bring together members from each Group to share their knowledge and experience in Search and Rescue. Typically this happens through formal presentations by invited speakers and by side conversations. It is a weekend of fellowship between ASRC Groups and gives a forum for information exchange. Another important purpose of the Winter Retreat is for Groups to come together to discuss the direction of ASRC.

Who can attend and do I have to register?

The Winter Retreat is open to all members of our Groups. This is one of the benefits of membership in the ASRC. To coordinate our planning efforts, we do ask that you complete a [brief registration form available at our website](#).

What is this year's theme of the Winter Retreat?

The theme this year is *Advancing the State of Search and Rescue*. As Search and Rescue practitioners and members of the ASRC, we are always seeking new opportunities to do what we do in a way that finds the lost person as quickly as possible. We want to practice our craft as well as we can, look for opportunities for improvement, and transfer our knowledge to others. We want to be leaders in the practice of search and rescue and be at the forefront of technology, methods, knowledge. The many presentations and discussions held at the Winter Retreat are designed with meeting the goals of our Strategic Plan, SP2020.

Where is the Winter Retreat held?

Bears Den Lodge in Bluemont, Virginia. Bears Den is a PATC-operated property along the Appalachian Trail. We use the main room as our meeting space and there is a full kitchen, dining room, bunk rooms, and toilet facilities. There is also plenty of camping exterior to the building.

The address is: [18393 Blueridge Mountain Road, Bluemont, Virginia 20135](#)

Is food provided?

Yes. Traditionally the ASRC has coordinated food for the weekend making use of the kitchen facilities. Our food is custom catered by one of our own. We do ask for a small fee to help offset costs - typically \$20 to \$30 per person for the weekend. Food allergies and preferences are recorded when you register.

Our Mission Statement

The mission of the Appalachian Search and Rescue Conference is to locate the lost person efficiently by enabling its Groups to provide the best search and rescue services possible to responsible authorities.

Our Core Values

- We expect honesty, integrity, and true professionalism in everything we do.
- We value Groups who show commitment through their training, actions, and leadership to the health and safety of all persons engaged in a mission or training exercise.
- We value Groups who work in close cooperation and coordination with responsible authorities before, during, and after missions.
- We value the fundamental principles and skills of search and rescue as the cornerstone for our Groups to be high quality resources for responsible authorities.
- We value technology leadership and practice innovation as the foundations to advancing the state and art of search and rescue in our region.
- We value search management excellence, with search managers embracing the critically important practices of safe incident operations, quality service to the responsible authority, best practice implementation, and an awareness of risk management.
- We expect teamwork and goodwill among all member teams, regardless of location or practice specialty.

Our Strategic Goals

- Credentialing Program
- Develop Our Groups
- Deliver Content to Our Groups
- Develop Our Remote Support Capability
- Fostering an Ecosystem for Innovation



Summary of SP2020



Weekend Agenda

Day 1: Friday, 12 January 2017

17:00-ish Arrival

Bunks are first come, first served

Chat with your colleagues and visit the overlook

Dinner Service - time determined by Chef

Day 2: Saturday, 13 January 2017

08:00 Breakfast Service

09:00 Welcome

09:20 Presentation Session (see following pages)

12:00 Lunch Service

12:30 Presentation Session (see following pages)

18:00 Break and Networking

18:30 Pre-dinner Social Event

19:30 Dinner Service

Day 3: Sunday, 14 January 2017

08:00 Breakfast Service

09:30 Board of Directors Meeting

Meeting is open to all persons

See agenda on following pages

12:00 Working Lunch (if needed)

13:00 Cleanup and head home

Saturday, 14 January 2017

09:00-09:20	Welcome
09:20-09:30	Transformational versus transactional leadership Lee Fuell - MARG
09:30-10:10	Lessons Learned from Building and Executing the Maryland 2017 SAR Exercise Carl Solomon - MSAR
10:10-10:40	Bethesda Metro Confined Space Rescue - Lessons for SAR Robert Roller - MSAR, SMRG
10:40-11:00	Break
10:40-11:00	More Bang for Your Buck: Pro Deals and Discounts LuAnn Gatti - NWPAK9SAR
11:00-11:15	“If it’s not in writing, it isn’t policy” Lee Fuell - MARG
11:15-12:00	Near-miss Reporting David Barton - AMRG
12:00-12:30	Lunch Service
12:30-13:30	Putting the Pieces together, Search Strategies for the Hidden Victim - KlassKids Regional Search Operations Center
13:30-13:45	“If you’re not teaching, you’re not leading” Lee Fuell - MARG
13:45-14:30	Should your Group be thinking about branding? Michael Hansen - ASRC
14:30-14:45	Break and Snacks
14:45-15:15	How the NIMS update affects your Group and the ASRC Steve Weiss - SMRG
15:15-16:00	Extended Disaster Operations Don Scelza - AMRG
16:00-16:15	“If you treat everyone the same, you’re not leading” Lee Fuell - MARG
16:15-16:30	Break
16:30-17:00	Basket Hitch vs Wrap-3 Pull-2: which is better? Joe Ray or Keith Conover - AMRG
17:00-17:40	Taking Sweep Width into the Real World Ken Chiacchia - MARG
17:40-18:00	Closing Thoughts and The State of the ASRC Keith Conover - ASRC



see Abstracts on following pages **Presentation Schedule**



Abstracts

Leading Volunteers - Lightning Talk Series

Lee Fuell - MARG

Lee will provide several short presentations and discussions on leadership in the volunteer space. Lee's experience is based on his 33-year Department of the Air Force career and which included extensive leadership education, first-, second-, and third-level leadership experience, and my perspective on how all that applies to volunteer organizations. These lightning talks will provide an overview of the important concepts that leaders should consider and Lee will relate them back to his experience in the SAR community.

Lessons Learned from Building and Executing the 2017 MD SAR Exercise

Carl Solomon - MSAR

In November of 2017, MSAR led the design and execution of a large (over 150 participants) SAR exercise in Frederick County, MD near the town of Thurmont. MSAR teamed with the National Capital Region Incident Management Team (IMT) and Maryland IMT to build a SAREX that exercised the interface and activities performed by both SAR teams and IMTs in a very large multi-agency scenario. MSAR brought in key subject matter experts from across the ASRC and elsewhere to collaborate on the exercise. Additionally, MSAR got approval from Maryland's coordinator for public safety radio communications to perform a coincident communications exercise. We will discuss the steps, the design team took, to: conceive, design, and perform the exercise. We will also discuss the key lessons learned and take-aways from this journey of discovery.

Bethesda Metro Confined Space Rescue - Lessons for SAR

Robert Roller - MSAR, SMRG

Bob will discuss a technical rescue his fire department, Cabin John Park Volunteer Fire Department, performed in downtown Bethesda. The technical rescue performed included confined spaces, vertical access, and extended patient care. Bob will draw parallels between this rescue and those we train for in the wilderness search and rescue community.

More Bang for Your Buck: Pro Deals and Discounts

LuAnn Gatti - NWPAK9SAR

LuAnn will summarize equipment discount opportunities that are available to search and rescue volunteers and Groups.



Near-Miss Reporting

David Barton - AMRG

Learn about this new initiative to improve ASRC members' safety and prevent accidents and injuries. We have developed an online reporting form so that we can measure 1) injuries or illnesses occurring in SAR personnel, and 2) what events occurred leading up to injury/illness or near-misses of such. Our goal is to prevent injuries from happening based on learning and analyzing past events. This session will focus on the background behind these types of systems and how to use it.

Putting the Pieces Together, Strategies for Finding the Hidden Victim

Ray Mooney, Laurie Strite - KlassKids Regional Search Operations Center

This session is targeted for anyone involved in search and rescue and will explore case studies and expose critical statistics surrounding search missions for the Hidden Victim; Child Abductions, Family Offenders and Child Trafficking. What are the "unique" behaviors, conditions and strategies that face resources when called-out on these complex missions? The challenge presented by the Hidden Victims, "Does everyone who goes missing deserve a Search & Rescue response?"

Should your Group be thinking about branding?

Michael Hansen - ASRC

How important is branding to a nonprofit organization and should wilderness search and rescue teams think about it for their organizations? Michael will explore the concepts of branding and its potential benefits for search and rescue organizations.

How the NIMS update affects your Group and the ASRC

Steve Weiss - SMRG

Steve will review the October 2017 update to the National Incident Management System to describe new incident management considerations at the federal level. Part of this review will describe potential effects the NIMS update will have on individual Groups and the ASRC as an organization.

Extended Disaster Operations

Don Scelza - AMRG

Disaster operations take both a physical and emotional toll on those who respond. Long work shifts, lack of equipment, lack of physical comforts and the burden of the enormity of the event all wear on the rescuer and reduce her ability to function and the levels of proficiency required. This talk will look at the physical and emotional aspects of responding to disaster events. The talk will cover common issues and will suggest a number of actions that can be taken by the incident command staff and by the individual rescuer.



Basket Hitch vs Wrap-3 Pull-2: which is better?

Joe Ray or Keith Conover - AMRG

Joe Ray of Allegheny Mountain Rescue Group conducted research funded by a grant from the Mountain Rescue Association. It confirms some received wisdom about anchors, challenges other received wisdom, and will likely change rescue anchor practice worldwide.

Taking Sweep Width into the Real World

Ken Chiacchia - MARG

Yeah, yeah - you've all heard me and Bob Koester yammer about SAR theory and how we need to improve our SAR management decision making through tools like sweep width. But there's been a shadow hanging over the field: How do we know that ESWs measured in, say, Moraine State Park in Butler County, PA, will produce PODs that we can accurately use to decide where to put subsequent search efforts in, for example, State Game Lands 117 in Beaver County - let alone near Morgantown, or Charlottesville?

We're starting to crack that problem. Using data from our previous ESW studies and new statistical tools, and trying to keep the math down to a minimum, I'll show how we may be able to get more precise ESWs than we could previously, in a way that starts to let us look at differences between teams, weather conditions, and locales -- and which begins to shed light on how much error we're taking on with our assumptions, and how it compares to the FTL estimates of POD that we've used historically. Not quite what will be in the new paper - we'll need new data for that, which we're collecting - but the analysis will be much like the next paper's.

Closing Thoughts and State of the ASRC

Keith Conover - Chair, ASRC

Keith will end the session of talks by presenting his take on the state of the ASRC, its current directions, and an outlook for the future. A perfect segway to Sunday's Board of Directors Meeting!





Weekend Menu

Day 1: Friday, 12 January 2017

Dinner Service

Spaghetti, Garlic Bread, Salad

Day 2: Saturday, 13 January 2017

Breakfast Service

Savory Sausage Breakfast Bake, Scrambled Eggs, Fruit

Lunch Service

Lentil and Sausage Soup, Ham Florentine Sandwich Ring

Dinner Service

Southwest Beef Shortribs

baked with tequila, beer, chili powder

Roast Chicken Pieces with Sherry Vinegar Sauce

baked with sherry, vinegar, and dijon mustard

Roast Vegetables, Green Peas and Cheese Salad

featuring Rolls à la Wiess

Desserts and Sweets

Chocolate Macaroon Pizza, Cranberry Tart with Nut Crust,
and Sticky Toffee Pecan Pudding

Day 3: Sunday, 14 January 2017

Breakfast Service

Omlet Rolls with Fried Potatos

Beverages available throughout the weekend

coffee

hot tea (regular and decaffeinated)

breakfast apple and orange juice

Menu is subject to change at the discretion of the head chef



Sunday, 14 January 2017

I. Call to Order/ Safety Moment

II. Participant Roll Call

III. Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

IV. Officer Reports

- A. Chair
- B. Treasurer
- C. Training
- D. Operations

V. New and Unfinished Business

- A. Search Manager applications & vote (if any)
- B. Proposed updates to the administrative manual
- C. Proposed updates to the logo
- D. Conference alerting procedures and improvements
- E. Remote planning status and steps forward
- F. Credentialing committee update
- G. Version 8 Training Standards status and path forward
- H. Training video initiative status and path forward
- I. Conference product sales - store vs. cafe press

VI. Good of the Order

VII. Adjourn

Agenda items subject to change



Notes

Use this space to take notes during the weekend.
Or write down your suggestions for 2019 and send to the Chair.



Allegheny Mountain Rescue Group (AMRG)

Blue Ridge Mountain Rescue Group (BRMRG)

Maryland Search and Rescue (MSAR)

Mountaineer Area Rescue Group (MARG)

Northwest Pennsylvania K9 Search and Rescue (NWPAK9SAR)

Search and Rescue Ohio (SAR-OH)

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