

Winter Retreat

January 2019

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 cash 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, 11 January 2019

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, 12 January 2019

08:00 Breakfast Service

09:15 Welcome

09:30 Presentation Session (see following pages)

12:00 Lunch Service

12:30 Presentation Session (see following pages)

17:15 Break and Networking

18:30 Regional Wine and Cheese Tasting

19:30 Dinner Service

Day 3: Sunday, 13 January 2019

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, 12 January 2019

09:00 - 09:15	Welcome
09:15 - 09:45	Lessons Learned as an ASRC Manager Carl Solomon - BRMRG, MARG
09:45 - 10:00	Overview -People, Processes, and Tools - Adv in SM Don Scelza, et. al - Various
10:00 - 10:45	The ASRC Seat Harness 2.0 - Upgrade of Essential SAR Gear Gene Harrison - ASRC Founding Member
10:45 - 11:00	Break
11:00 - 11:45	Cave Rescue Victoria Airey, Bru Randall - NCRC
11:45 - 12:00	Creation of a Simulation - Adv in SM Don Scelza, et. al - Various
12:00 - 12:30	Lunch Service
12:30 - 13:00	Should your Group be Thinking about Branding? Michael Hansen - ASRC
13:00 - 13:45	Advanced MESH Networking for SAR Operations Gene Harrison - ASRC Founding Member
13:45 - 14:00	Effective Sweep Width in Search Management - Adv in SM Don Scelza, et. al - Various
14:00 - 14:15	Break and Snacks
14:15 - 15:00	ASRC Individual Membership - Issue Review Brian Maier - SAROH
15:00 - 15:45	Repeaters and Retransmitters Gene Harrison - ASRC Founding Member
15:45 - 16:00	The Northumberland Rain Dance - Adv in SM Don Scelza, et. al - Various
16:00 - 16:15	Break
16:15 - 17:00	Search Management in the Internet Age - Adv in SM Don Scelza, et. al - Various
17:00 - 17:15	Closing Thoughts and The State of the ASRC Keith Conover - ASRC



see Abstracts on following pages **Presentation Schedule**



Lessons Learned as an ASRC Manager

Carl Solomon - BRMRG, MARG

Learn about the stuff they probably didn't teach you in search management class. Discover some of the lessons that an ASRC Search Manager has learned over the years. Discuss mechanisms to improve your own performance as a search manager.

Overview

People, Processes, and Tools - Advances in Search Management

Don Scelza - AMRG, Patty Lindsey - MARG, Ken Chiacchia - MARG,
Carl Solomon - BRMRG, MARG

An overview of the advances and a review of an exercise where these advances were used in a realistic search simulation.

The ASRC Seat Harness 2.0 - Upgrade of Essential SAR Gear

Gene Harrison - ASRC Founding Member

Back in 1974 when Rita Cloutier, Ray Cole, Gene Harrison and Keith Conover started the Appalachian Search and Rescue Conference, they used seat harnesses tied from 1" tubular webbing. A few diehard vertical cavers sewed their own harnesses from 2" seat belt webbing, but commercial sewed climbing harnesses remained an expensive item, rarely imported from Europe, for a decade or two after this. After careful analysis, Gene Harrison designed a tied harness that seemed to be superior to other tied harnesses. After due consideration, the ASRC adopted it as the official ASRC harness, and the ability to tie one has been an ASRC certification requirement for some 40 years. In this talk, Gene will provide an update to his original design.

Cave Rescue Update

Victoria Airey, Bru Randall - NCRC

Victoria and Bru have an update from the National Cave Rescue Commission (NCRC) and will discuss potential interfaces between the NCRC and the ASRC.

Creation of Simulation

People, Processes, and Tools - Advances in Search Management

Don Scelza - AMRG, Patty Lindsey - MARG, Ken Chiacchia - MARG,
Carl Solomon - BRMRG, MARG

This talk provides useful hints on how to create realistic training exercises and improve the training experience of the people in your organization. Presenters will discuss the processes to craft and execute a compelling, realistic search and rescue exercise. We will focus on the exercise and scenario development of the November 2018, SARTOPO SAREX in Morgantown, WV.

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.

Advanced MESH Networking for SAR Operations

Gene Harrison - ASRC Founding Member

Learn how we could provide our own private SAR mission networking, and optional access to the Internet, even at a remote ICP.

Effective Sweep Width in Search Management

People, Processes, and Tools - Advances in Search Management

Don Scelza - AMRG, Patty Lindsey - MARG, Ken Chiacchia - MARG,

Carl Solomon - BRMRG, MARG

This talk looks at ways of uniting old and new processes to create better tools to help search managers deal with the problems of obtaining accurate PODs.

ASRC Individual Membership - Issue Review

Brian Maier - SAROH

Brian will lead a discussion about the factors and considerations surrounding ASRC individual membership. This discussion is a lead-in to the Board of Directors meeting to be held on Sunday, 13 January 2019 (see page 10).

Repeaters and Retransmitters in Search and Rescue

Gene Harrison - ASRC Founding Member

Delve deep into Gene's extensive knowledge of radio communications to find out: (i) what are relays, repeaters, and retransmitters, (ii) why retransmitters always beat repeaters, and (iii) why communications is your lifeline. Operational requirements for many scenarios will also be discussed.

The Northumberland Rain Dance

People, Processes, and Tools - Advances in Search Management

Don Scelza - AMRG, Patty Lindsey - MARG, Ken Chiacchia - MARG,

Carl Solomon - BRMRG, MARG

Is it a Game of Thrones reference? Attend this talk to find out.



Abstracts



Abstracts

Search Management in the Internet Age

People, Processes, and Tools - Advances in Search Management

Don Scelza - AMRG, Patty Lindsey - MARG, Ken Chiacchia - MARG,
Carl Solomon - BRMRG, MARG

Organizations looking to continuously improve their performance often look at the triad of: People, Processes, and Tools. One of the things the ASRC is known for is its continuous efforts to enhance the state of the art in lost person search. This talk looks at a set of processes and tools that act as force multipliers for the command staff of a lost person search.

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 segue to Sunday's Board of Directors Meeting!





Weekend Menu

Day 1: Friday, 11 January 2019

Dinner Service

Swedish Meatballs with Egg Noodles
Garlic Bread
Salad

Day 2: Saturday, 12 January 2019

Breakfast Service

Cinnamon Buns, Sausage, Scrambled Eggs, Fruit

Lunch Service

Beef-Mushroom Barely Soup
Potato Colcannon Soup
Cornbread

Dinner Service

Pork Roulade

filled with apples, sun-dried tomatoes, and sage

Pomegranate-glazed Chicken

Cider-Sage Gravy

Cumin Roasted Carrots with Wild Rice and Chickpeas

Butternut Squash, Brussel Sprouts, and Apple Stuffing

Rolls a la Glenn

Desserts and Sweets

Berry Crisp

Mini Tiramisu Cakes

Apple Yogurt Cake

Day 3: Sunday, 13 January 2019

Breakfast Service

Omlet Rolls, Pecan Tassies

Beverages available throughout the weekend

coffee

hot tea (regular and decaffeinated)

breakfast apple and orange juice



Sunday, 13 January 2019

I. Call to Order/ Safety Moment

II. Participant Roll Call

III. Approval of Previous Meeting Minutes

IV. Officer Reports

A. Chair

B. Treasurer - **including end-of-year ROSTERS**

C. Training

D. Operations

V. New and Unfinished Business

A. Annual General Meeting season and upcoming BOD meeting dates

B. Search Manager applications & vote (if any)

C. Proposed updates to the administrative manual

i. Individual/Sustaining membership

ii. Insurance

iii. ASRC Corps

D. Potential new ASRC Groups

E. Conference alerting procedures and improvements

F. Remote support status and steps forward

G. Credentialing committee update

H. Version 8 Training Standards status, proposed new training guide, and path forward

I. Training video initiative status and path forward

J. Conference product sales - store vs. cafe press

K. Records policy including HIPPA concerns

L. Liability release procedure and documentation

VI. Good of the Order

VII. Adjourn

Board of Directors Meeting Agenda



Notes

Use this space to take notes during the weekend.
Or write down your suggestions for 2020 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)
Shenandoah Mountain Rescue Group (SMRG)

This work is licensed under the *Attribution-ShareAlike 4.0 International License* (CC BY-SA 4.0) . To view a copy of this license, visit <https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/4.0/> or send a letter to Creative Commons, 171 Second Street, Suite 300, San Francisco, California, 94105, USA.

This license lets others remix, tweak, and build upon your work even for commercial purposes, as long as they credit you and license their new creations under the identical terms. This license is often compared to “copyleft” free and open source software licenses. All new works based on yours will carry the same license, so any derivatives will also allow commercial use. This is the license used by Wikipedia, and is recommended for materials that would benefit from incorporating content from Wikipedia and similarly licensed projects.