

APPALACHIAN ALERT

THE APPALACHIAN SEARCH & RESCUE CONFERENCE
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CHARLOTTESVILLE, VIRGINIA 22904-0440

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A Publication of the Appalachian Search & Rescue Conference, Inc.

Appalachian Alert collates information submitted by Appalachian Search & Rescue Conference, Inc. (ASRC) teams, and presents information of interest to the wilderness search and rescue community in the mid-Atlantic region, and activities of the ASRC board of directors, its committees, ASRC group and training events, and related business. Information should be received by the Editor -- at his address shown below -- the first week of every month.

If individuals or ASRC groups wish to report SAR related research or present opinion pieces, Appalachian Alert may be the forum for that presentation. Appalachian Alert is mailed to colleagues and programs in other states and regions involved in lost person SAR services and related emergency services.

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Winter is giving way, reluctantly, to spring. The cycle of the seasons continues. In the same way, the ASRC seasons progress. This month as the land begins to green and flowers spring up with splashes of color we face of a time of decision.

this year our annual meeting will be in Maryland. We will meet in the morning to decide officers for the new year ahead and to finish off any last minute items of business. In the afternoon the Conference will hold its annual meeting and there perhaps we will face and discuss some of the changes which the Board of Directors has been working on.

If you elect new delegates at this time of year and they have not been Board members, they will come to the Board of Directors meeting on Saturday, April 23, with little knowledge of the way the Board operates and its long and convoluted history. Share with them the Minutes of past meetings. Tell the stories of events, the good and the bad so they will come prepared to work on the future of the ASRC.

The Board has recognized the need for change in its corporate structure. This Board began the steps to move the Conference in a new direction. This Board now, is trying in the agonizing slow way of working through things to change.

Why change? The ASRC is a crux point. We must begin to change, not our mission, but the way we do business. We have encouraged growth. If we continue to encourage expansion, we can't operate as we have in the past. Any organization reaches a point where the sheer weight of numbers affects the way it is managed or not managed. That is the crux we are at now.

We need to grow up and out. We are being looked at by groups in Pennsylvania interested in ASRC membership. And, there are groups in Virginia expressing an interest in becoming a part of the ASRC. Our current way of doing business at the Board level is too slow and cumbersome. We need streamlining badly.

We need to keep our focus on doing our mission of saving lives. But, we need to help Groups operate, not hinder them. We must develop a true SYSTEM of training and testing so we really do have response capability that we a

are in fact sure of. We need to be sure of what each person at what ever level can do. We really don't know that today.

We have used consensus to operate. When the ASRC was small, this worked well. But, we are at a point when in order to reach consensus we take hours of discussion about each and every point. We must start trusting people and their wisdom. Instead of endless discussion we need to use the brains and heart of our people in committees to return to the Board of Directors with options which can be voted on, not revisiting the same discussion the committee had in arriving at the options.

But, we are about to elect new officers. It is possible that the Board of Directors will elect individuals who have no or little history in the organization and that leadership may not see the need to look to the future. I hope that, in the Board's wisdom, this will not happen. We shall see this month.

ASRC ANNUAL MEETING AND CONFERENCE TRAINING

On Saturday, April 23, the ASRC Annual Meeting will be held with the Maryland Search & Rescue Group hosting the meeting. The regular Board meeting with election of new officers for the next year will begin at 1000 hours. The Annual Meeting will begin at 1330 hours. Both meetings will be conducted at the M/SAR training facility in Columbia, Maryland at the American Red Cross, 5430 Vantage Point Rd.

Directions: I-95 north from I-495 around Washington (or I-95 south from I-695 around Baltimore) to Route 175. West on 175 towards Columbia. Continue thru 6 traffic lites on Route 175 and cross over Route 29. Get into left lane. At next left turn, turn left on to Vantage Point Rd. Continue for 200-300 yds until sign on right for Oakland Manor. Turn right and enter drive. Look for small cape cod style house to the left of the large manor house. ASRC meeting is in small house. If lost, call pager (301) 513-6955. Someone will call to assist you.

On Sunday, April 24, there will be Alert Officer (AO) training in Columbia for those signing up. Persons interested must call Camile Birmingham from BRMRG at (804) 979-7254 to register.

There is sleeping bag on cot space at the M/SAR locker Friday and/or Saturday night. There is a frig and electric stove for cooking. Sorry, no showers. If you need to stay overnight please contact Peter McCabe at (301) 596-5554 evenings after 2200 hours next week.

ASRC training on Sunday, April 24, will be hosted by the Potomac Valley Rescue Group from the University of Maryland. Training will be at the Carderrock section of the C&O National Park in Maryland. Beginning at 0900, Tom Cochrane from PVRG will present a program on using sign cutting techniques in search and rescue activities. Tom will also demonstrate the use of natural materials to be comfortable in (or survive) a sudden storm or deteriorating weather situation. Recreational climbing is also available following the training which will conclude by 1300.

SAR IDENTIFICATION CARDS IN VIRGINIA

The ASRC has worked out a process for ASRC teams to obtain SAR ID cards in Virginia from the Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles. All teams have received written information on this process. Further information may be obtained by calling Dave Carter, ASRC Chair.

ASRC GROUP TRAINING ACTIVITIES

Tidewater Search & Rescue Group (TSAR) is hosting a lost person simulation at Chippokes State Park in Surry County VA during May 14-15. Primitive camping is available if prior arrangements are made. Call Ruth Carter (804/466-8094) to indicate your attendance and to indicate whether you want to serve as Incident Staff during the simulation.

TSAR is also hosting a vertical rescue simulation at Seneca Rocks, West Virginia during September 10-11. Further information on this will be made available in coming issues.

ELECTRONIC MAIL

Four ASRC teams have Internet capabilities through one or more of their members. These are AMRG, BRMRG, M/SAR, and SMRG. Are there others out there in Cyberland?

If you have a computer address, please send me a message on INTERNET at peter_mccabe@ed.gov. I will collect this information and make it available for all to use. Using this technology, we can begin to pass a great deal of information back and forth between groups. And, the system can be used to process reports back and forth from ICS operations in the field to state and local responsible authorities.

NEWS OF INTEREST FROM MARYLAND

The Maryland Institute for Emergency Medical Services Systems has recognized the ASRC as a non-transport Emergency Medical Services Basic Life Support Unit providing off-road emergency medical search and rescue services in Maryland. Similar recognition has been given to M/SAR. In the coming months, arrangements will be made for access to a Maryland-wide emergency communication network used for emergency medical services.

M/SAR has been asked by the District of Columbia to develop a 2 year program for involving youth in emergency services. The grant program will involve training provided in coordination with three District departments; Police, Fire and Ambulance, and Emergency Preparedness, in the development of an Emergency Services Corps.

NEWS OF INTEREST FROM PENNSYLVANIA

The Pennsylvania Search & Rescue Council Board has recommended to the Director of the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency that a series of steps be initiated to directly involve PEMA in operations management of lost person and downed aircraft incidences in the Commonwealth.

NEWS OF INTEREST FROM VIRGINIA

A training schedule for ground search and rescue institutes has been released by the Virginia Department of Emergency Services.

The Virginia Search and Rescue Council will meet on Saturday, April 30, at the Virginia Department of Emergency Services Training Center in Richmond.

RSAR training scheduled for April 23 will include litter handling and semi-technical evacuations

APPALACHIAN SEARCH & RESCUE CONFERENCE, INC.

Chair (TSAR)	David Carter (804) 466-8094
Vice Chair (SMRG)	Jenny Burmester (703) 978-7819
Secretary & Treasurer (BRMRG)	Camile Birmingham (804) 979-7254
Operations Officer (TSAR)	David Carter (804) 466-8094
Training Officer (SWVMRG)	John Panches (703) 552-6957
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ASRC GROUPS

<u>Allegheny Mountain Rescue Group (AMRG)</u>	(412) 869-3747
c/o Dept Emerg Medicine	Mercy Hospital of Pittsburgh
1400 Locust Street	Pittsburgh PA 15219-5166
President	Owen Gormley (412) 776-1081
Training Off	Dave Knorr (412) 843-9484
Ops Off	Mike Kuga (412) 869-2567
<u>Blue Ridge Mountain Rescue Group (BRMRG)</u>	(804) 924-3472
PO Box 440	Newcomb Station C'ville VA 22904
President	Marc Buursink (804) 293-4069
Training Off	Allison Mabe (804) 977-9780
Ops Off	Brian Laury (804) 295-2108
<u>Maryland Search & Rescue Group (M/SAR)</u>	(301) 596-5554
11034 Berrypick	Columbia MD 21044
President	Doug Baker (410) 551-2929
Training Off	Kurt Hornicek (410) 992-0709
Ops Off	Matt Bolin (410) 997-5316
<u>Potomac Valley Rescue Group (PVRG)</u>	(301) 314-7444
Box 10	Stamp Union Bldg Univ Maryland
	College Park MD 20742
President	Michael Vatalaro (301) 314-3637
Training Off	Meg Galia (410) 730-2736
Ops Off	Dome Poon (301) 590-9424
<u>Richmond Search & Rescue Group (RSAR)</u>	(804) 768-5555
P O Box 9025	Richmond VA 23225
President	Kevin Dawe (804) 750-1623
Training Off	Tony Felts (804) 271-7307
Ops Off	Bill Fisher (804) 748-6214
<u>Shenandoah Mountain Rescue Group (SMRG)</u>	(703) 255-5034
118 Park St	Vienna VA 22180
Chair	Jenny Burmester (703) 978-7819
Training Off	William Dixon (703) 524-1984
Ops Off	Paul DeHaven (703) 354-2957
<u>Southwest Virginia Mountain Rescue Group (SWVMRG)</u>	
203 Progress St	Blacksburg VA 24060
President	Dave Zader (703) 951-2914
Training Off	John Panches (703) 951-3161
Ops Off	Greg Sasonov (703) 552-6957
	(703) 232-1528
<u>Tidewater Search & Rescue Group (TSAR)</u>	(804) 466-8094
803 Townsend Ct	Norfolk VA 23502
President	David Carter (804) 466-8094
Training Off	Earle Evans (804) 693-4391
Ops Off	Ruth Carter (804) 466-8094