



April—May 2001

NEWSLETTER

Colorado Search and Rescue Board

PMB 424, 7645 North Union Blvd., Colorado Springs, CO 80920

Special Points

Of Interest

- New MRA Team
- El Paso Blizzard Report
- Salvation Army Kettle Run
- Legislative Updates



The next CSRB meeting is May 10th at Camp George West in Golden

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The Colorado Governmental Immunity Act and SAR A Helpful Explanation

In Colorado, the Colorado Governmental Immunity Act brings teams and their members under the protection of the Act (and the requirement that the county or other responsible government provide a defense and pay any liability claims) if they are "authorized volunteers." Authorized SAR volunteers must be acting under the direction and control of the sheriff. Many sheriffs and some liability carriers interpret this requirement to mean that the sheriff or a deputy must be present and exercising actual direction and control, or at least supervising with ultimate authority, at the scene.

To meet this requirement without tying up a road deputy or supervisor, some sheriffs issue special commissions to the SAR managers. The expectation is that one or more of them is the sheriff's representative on the mission, particularly regarding decisions that might affect the county's liability. The assumption is also that the county's interests generally coincide with the SAR team's interests.

Another advantage is that the SAR team is now operating more like an employee of the sheriff, rather than an independent

contractor. When a road deputy is present and providing the "direction and control," the team is probably acting more like an agent of the sheriff, somewhere in between an employee and an independent contractor. (An employee is told what to do and how to do it, in this case by the SAR manager/special deputy; an agent is told what to do with perhaps some general direction as to how it is to be accomplished; an independent contractor is told simply what to do. Or to put it another way, an independent contractor is given a goal, an agent is given a goal and a strategy, and an employee is given a goal, a strategy and tactics.)

Because these special SAR deputies are not certified as peace officers by the state Police Officers Standards and Training Board (POST), they cannot possess any law enforcement authority beyond that of an ordinary citizen. (I'm ignoring the not uncommon situation where someone who is already a regular deputy develops an interest in or actually joins a SAR team.)

Dave Thorson

Since there is not a SARCON this year, there will be a MAY CSRB Meeting!! Please Attend!!

CSRB Listserver Instructions: The Colorado SAR Board hosts an e-mail listserver expressly for and about SAR in Colorado. Through it you can receive timely information about training, missions, meetings, legislative action pertaining to SAR or ask technical questions. General discussion about SAR is welcome, too.

To subscribe simply send an e-mail from the address to which you want the e-mail replies sent, to: ColoradoSAR-subscribe@yahoogroups.

If attending the SAR2001 NASAR Conference in Colorado Springs in May, be sure to write in "CSRB" where it asks for NASAR number (if you do not have one) on the registration form so that you may get the discounted NASAR member rate.



SAR 2001, Colorado Springs, Colorado, May 24-27, 2001

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE...

YOU ASKED... WE LISTENED!!!

NASAR's 29th Annual Conference and Exhibition, SAR 2000, has been rescheduled for May 24-27, 2001 and will hence be re-named SAR 2001. The conference will still be held at the Sheraton, Colorado Springs, and all scheduled events, room rates and registration fees remain the same.

<http://www.nasar.org/>

Registration Hours

Wednesday, May 23 4:00 pm - 8:00 pm

Thursday, May 24 7:00 am - 5:00 pm

Friday, May 25 8:00 am - 5:00 pm

Saturday, May 26 8:00 am - 5:00 pm

Conference Schedule

Thursday, May 24

9:00 am - Noon Opening Session & Awards

1:30 pm - 3:00 pm Workshop Session I

3:30 pm - 5:00 pm Workshop Session II

6:00 pm Presidents Reception

Evening Special Interest Groups

- Medical
- Swiftwater
- Instructors
- SAR Dogs
- Canadian
- State SAR Coordinators

Friday, May 25

9:00 am - 10:15 am General Session

10:30 am - Noon Workshop Session III

1:30 pm - 3:00 pm Workshop Session IV

3:30 pm - 5:00 pm Workshop Session V

Evening Friday Night at the Movies

Saturday, May 26

9:00 am - 10:15 am General Session

10:30 am - Noon Workshop Session VI

1:30 pm - 3:00 pm Workshop Session VII

3:30 pm - 5:00 pm Workshop Session VIII

4:00 pm - 6:00 pm Exhibitors Reception

Evening OPEN

Sunday, May 27

8:00 am - 9:00 am Continental Breakfast

9:00 am - 10:30 am Motivational Closing Session



Fosdick	Bruce	bfosdick@uswest.net	MC/D/President/ Treasurer
Fosdick	Rick	richard.fosdick@lmco.com	D
Wichmann	Ann	awlogan@netone.com	D/Secretary
Jansen	George	georgej@uvb.nrel.colostate.edu	MC/D
Hipsky	Skee	Istvan.Hipszky@wcom.com	MC/D
Nelson	Bill	nelsonwd@co.larimer.co.us	D
Mitchell	Barry		D
McDonald	Mike		D
Thorsen	Dave	dthorson@amigo.net	D
Conquest	Keith	Conqu@mindspring.com	D/Vice Pres/Senior Coord
Stevens	Joe	stevens@cmn.net	D
Warner	John	jwarner@yampa.com	D

They are Everywhere, But Do They Work? Those Darn Cell Phones!

Colleagues, here is some valuable information that originally appeared on the MRA listserv: technical information that you can use to emphasize to the public why they should not depend on land-based cell phones for safety; and to understand the limitations yourself.

From: William Laxson <wlaxson@corecom.net>
To: MRA Lister <mra@altadena.net>

...to dissuade you from relying too heavily on your cell phones in the mountains, I will share some technical shortcomings of the cellular system as related to mountain-top use.

1) Digital VS Analog Service

An analog cell site has superior range and is better able to pull in distant cell phones calling in from mountain top peaks. Unfortunately, the current trend is to eliminate analog channels (three times as many users fit onto the same amount of digital bandwidth). The day will come when analog is no longer available.

Digital cell sites measure the distance to the calling phone (an inherent byproduct of the technology). Digital cell sites have a programmable "cut-off" setting to eliminate calls originating beyond a certain distance. The cellular operator uses this feature to restrict the size of the service area so that it doesn't overlap adjacent cell sites. Mis-adjustment of this parameter restricts coverage to distant mountain top sites.

Do not assume the local cellular carrier knows about and sets this parameter correctly. I was stranded on a glacier here in Alaska during a downed aircraft mission when my helicopter had to make a precautionary landing (transmission chip detector warnings). We were looking 20 miles down glacier right at a major ATT Wireless cell site, full signal strength, but could not place a call to talk with the helicopter mechanic. Later discussions with the ATT Wireless technical director in our area led to the discovery that their cell sites in the area were unnecessarily limiting the range beyond the "road system limits".

2) Cell Phones Biased to Use Digital Coverage

Several dual mode cell phones (digital/analog) that I have looked at are biased toward forcing the user onto a digital service. This leads to a situation where a local analog cell site that might provide you with good service is blocked by a weaker distant digital cell site that will not provide you service.

When the SEND button is depressed to place a call, the cell phone scans for all control channel signals and selects the strongest one. It then attempts to place a call over that system.

However, in my Nokia phone a weaker digital carrier preempts the stronger analog one, leading to a case where a call from the mountain top down to a local analog system never makes it because the cell phone hears a weak digital control channel from a distant system.

I have learned to force my Nokia 2160 onto the analog channel

by placing the call, which fails, but which leaves the called number in the "last number dialed" buffer. I then turn the phone off, then on again. Just as the phone completes its self test, I hit the SEND button. The call goes out on the last number dialed and goes over the stronger analog channel instead of trying to go on the digital channel, perhaps because it takes longer for the digital channel to be acquired and synched up during the power up situation.

I offer these examples to make several basic points:

1) The cellular network and cell phones are designed, maintained, and optimized for high density use by local area subscribers, not for distant, weak signal subscribers. Be happy when your phone works in the distant mountains but don't expect it to (even if it did last week)!

2) The cellular network system standards are constantly changing, upgrading, moving to digital delivery of internet content, etc. In every market, subscriber density is rapidly climbing, leading to constant addition of new sites, relocation of old ones, constant fine tuning of the system channels and parameters. The frequency bands used for cellular service delivery are getting higher and higher (the 800 MHz original system is rapidly being supplanted by the 1900 MHz PCS system, and even higher frequencies are in the works). The higher frequencies do not work as well to distant mountain tops!

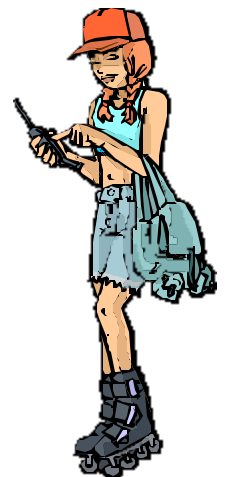
3) The cell phone designs are constantly changing, and their intrinsic operation is driven by the large nation wide carriers (ATT Wireless for example) who fine tune phone operation to meet system needs (put more people onto their systems).

Have you wondered why the carriers offer you a replacement phone for \$5.00 if you will just subscribe to their latest and greatest plan for a year? It's partially to slow down churn, but also to eliminate the older technology that uses their system less efficiently.

Your new phone may not work as well from the mountain top next year! Your existing one may not either.

William Laxson
Alaska Mountain Rescue Group
MRA Communications Committee Chair
wlaxson@corecom.net

Howard M. Paul, <hmpaul@ecentral.com>
Alpine Rescue Team, Colorado, USA



El Paso County Search & Rescue Report of Actions during Blizzard - 04/11/2001

Members of El Paso County Search & Rescue were paged and told to report to Search & Rescue's building at 5:28 am. Based on available information, blizzard conditions existed North and East of Colorado Springs. At that time, a deputy Sheriff was stranded in deep snow on County Line Road and needed assistance.

A total of 41 members of El Paso Search & Rescue responded to assist those in need. During the day, a total of 86 requests for assistance were received – all but one of them were North and East of Colorado Springs. Search and Rescue personnel completed all assignments by 8:00 p. m.

Responded: R9; R11 (ODC), R14, R16, R17, R18, R19, R20, R21, R22, R23, R24, R29, R30, R31, R32, R36, R45, R46, R47, R49, R50, R54, R56, R58, R59, R61, R62, R63, R65, R70, R71, R76, R77, R78, R79, R82, R85, R86, R87, R88 Note: R23 and R70 handled Ops and IC at base.

Total EPCSAR manhours: 574

Highlights:

A total of 365 stranded/stuck vehicles – autos, trucks, buses and semis – were checked by SAR personnel for persons in danger.



Fifty two (52) endangered persons were transported to safe locations – including one El Paso County deputy, one infant on a ventilator and several small children.

One of EPCSAR's new sno cats rescued a 1 year old infant on a ventilator from a home in Black Forest and transported the infant several miles to a waiting AMR ambulance closer to town. Due to a power outage in the area, the child was on a battery powered ventilator that would have stopped before power was restored. Other vehicles could not reach the home due to the snow conditions.

The second of two new EPCSAR sno cats rescued a deputy Sheriff from deep snow on County Line Road. A snow plow attempting to reach the deputy reported he

could not even see his plow and did not make it to the deputy due to the severe



weather conditions. The sno cat also picked up two other adults stranded in the area and transported them several miles to the nearest fire station.

Later, this same sno cat delivered fuel to a home in Black Forest where another child was on a ventilator. This child's ventilator was being maintained by an emergency generator. Sufficient fuel was delivered to maintain emergency power until normal power was restored later in the day.

One of the sno cats later delivered oxygen to a home in Falcon that could not be reached by four wheel drive vehicles.

A 60 year old, hypothermic male was located during the day, given emergency treatment and transported to the closest fire station.

SAR members located a stranded bus transporting 12 federal prisoners and 3 guards. SAR members helped to organize snow plow assistance to get them out.

Received assistance from 15 military humvees – 10 Army humvees from Ft. Carson and 5 from an Air Force unit at Ft. Carson. These units were used to clear some of the calls received by SAR and to transport an elderly man who had lost his power and was on oxygen therapy.

Several (10) ARES ham radio operators assisted with communications. Most of these personnel accompanied SAR personnel to provide longer range communications while SAR checked out stranded vehicles.



Routt County SAR, based in Steamboat Springs, successfully completed the Rocky Mountain Region Mountain Rescue Association (MRA) accreditation process on April 1 at Rabbit Ears Pass. They have been an associate member for a number of years. To be fully accredited as an MRA team they demonstrated their ex-

New MRA Team!

support. The Rocky Mountain Region is proud to welcome Routt County SAR as a fully accredited team. We are confident that you can rely on this team to be competent partners in any search and rescue incident.

I have enclosed some photos of the accreditation process.



Photo by Greg Foley



perience in five different scenarios: vertical rock, scree evacuation, winter rescue, avalanche rescue and land search. The evaluation team, made up of members of regional MRA teams, also reviewed the group's membership, resources, funding and community

Greg Foley
Secretary/Treasurer
Rocky Mountain Region

Here is a SAR Website worth checking out. These are the guys who went after our jets that went down in Scotland. Click on "<http://www.cmrt.org.uk/Default.htm>".



The International Technical Rescue Symposium 2001 (ITRS) will be held in Denver from November 2-5, 2001 and will be sponsored by Pigeon Mountain Industries, Inc and CMC Rescue, Inc.

It is the only nationwide gathering in which persons from all spectrums of rescue can meet and share news of advances in equipment and techniques, solutions to technical problems, and other issues of mutual concerns.

ITRS is attended by a wide variety of people involved in rescue including persons from the field of mountain rescue, law enforcement, military, park service, water rescue, outdoor recreation, fire service, and rescue squads, along with equipment manufacturers and distributors. The presentations range from subjects that may be theoretical in nature to those that have immediate practical application.

More details will soon be available on the MRA website, www.mra.org

Ever been on a mountainside and returned to mission base to find a hot cheeseburger and green chili waiting for you courtesy of The Salvation Army? Maybe a cold bottle of Gatorade, hot cocoa or coffee. Have you ever told them, "if you guys ever need anything let me know"? Well, we're letting you know.

FIRE DEPARTMENTS, LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES, PUBLIC SAFETY DEPARTMENTS, AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT NEEDED TO SUPPORT SPECIAL SALVATION ARMY EVENT

(DENVER) May 19, Saturday, The Salvation Army, Emergency Disaster Services Program is sponsoring the 3rd Annual Kettle Run at Cherry Creek State Park.

There are three events associated with the Kettle Run:

- A 5 K Run for the die hard runners
- A Fun Walk for adults and children
- A children's run

There will be food, door prizes, and prizes for the adult and child who collects the most money in pledges, and, of course, the runners and walkers. (Contact for details) Displays and demonstrations from fire departments and law enforcement agencies, including antique fire engines,

clowns and other entertainment are needed. Any SAR group or other public safety agency that wants to provide a demonstration or have a booth can do so free of charge, regardless of whether anyone registers for the run or walk. *Oh yeah, guess who will be serving a hot breakfast to you that morning?*

The service area of the Metro Denver Emergency Disaster Services Team includes 10 counties. A lot of assistance is needed to make this a successful event. Representatives of The Salvation Army are available to answer questions, speak to your agency, group or association. Funds raised will allow us to replace some of our aging vehicles and equipment.

Michael Gelski
Program Director
Emergency Disaster Services
The Salvation Army
303 668 8531

THE SALVATION ARMY
Emergency Disaster Services
2136 Champa Street
Denver CO 80205



Request for Info

If any Colorado folks can assist this writer, please contact him directly (with a cc to me).

Howard M. Paul, Public Affairs Manager
Colorado Search and Rescue Board
Member, Emergency Service PIOs of Colorado

My name is Jeff Rennie. I am a writer for BACKPACKER. Currently I am working on a piece about backpackers who get "lost". Crag Rat John Harlin, also a BACKPACKER writer, suggested I contact you.

For the story I am looking for:

- 1) backpackers who have been lost in wilderness settings and who are willing to share their stories -- what happened, how they dealt with it, what emotions they experienced, what they learned, and
- 2) experts who can help our readers learn from the ordeals of others and, hopefully, avoid the same mistakes.

Would you be willing to be interviewed for such a piece? Could you help put me in contact with people who have been through the ordeal of being lost and

would be willing to speak to me about it?

I am doing the piece in the spirit of National Park Service Ranger Dwight McCarter who says in his own book- *Lost: A Ranger's Journal of Search and Rescue*, "By telling their stories, we hope to increase the chances of survival for anyone else who comes close to the edge or who faces the raw terror of being lost in the mountains."

Thank you for any advice or help you can provide.

Sincerely,

Jeff Rennie
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(715)779-5595 (office/fax/
msg)
(715)779-3355 (home)
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Legislative Updates

This section is designed to keep you, the SAR volunteer, informed of legislation in the works that affects the way you do business in the SAR community. These two Bills are the most current ones under review and process.

Howard M. Paul, Public Affairs Manager, Colorado SAR Board

Senate Bill 57, concerning the SAR Fund, finally passed Senate Appropriations April 12 and passed third reading in the Senate on April 17. The bill would do several things:

1. Replaces the \$1 or \$5 "Hikers Certificate" with a \$3 "Colorado Outdoor Recreation Search and Rescue Card;"
2. Removes the card from the current Division of Wildlife license sales system and creates a separate system for sales; and
3. Increases to \$1 the amount of money a retailer would keep on each sale.

All are designed in concert to increase the sales of the device that hikers, skiers and the like could buy to enter the SARF Fund system.

The bill also changes the current tier structure of the SAR Fund. It eliminates tier four, for "uncompensated searches," and merges it with tier three, training and equipment grants. It instructs DOLA to establish proce-

dures for distributing money at this new last tier.

Several amendments were made along the way. At the suggestion of CSRB President Bruce Fosdick, at the bill's first committee hearing, the Ag and Natural Resources Committee struck the statute's current language that prevents reimbursement of expenses for "vehicles designed for use on public highways" (non-off-road vehicles).

The Senate Committee on Appropriations then amended the "fee split," decreasing retailers' share to 50 cents of the \$3 and dedicating \$2.50 to the SARF Fund.

At the February the Ag and Natural Resources Committee hearing, this author testified to the SAR community's great distress over the term "Colorado Outdoor Recreation Search and Rescue Card." Since then, we took a great many suggestions for a better title, on the CSRB listserver. The CSRB wrote to bill sponsor Sen. Gigi Dennis and offered three alternatives:

1. Colorado Search and Rescue Reimbursement Fund Contributor Card;
2. Colorado Search and Rescue Reimbursement Fund Participant Card; and
3. Colorado Search and Rescue Reimbursement Fund Supporter Card.

However between that letter and third reading, Sen. Dennis resigned her office to take a position with the federal government. Former Colorado Representative Lew Entz, R-Hooper (in the San Luis Valley) was appointed to fill her term. As a House Rep. Entz sponsored the legislation that created the SAR Fund. Sen. Entz now concentrated on moving the bill through appropriations and past third reading.

We will assess the value of seeking an amendment in the House for the alternative card name. At time of writing, there are but three weeks left in this year's session; an amendment in the House would require a conference committee address the different Senate and amended House versions.

Senate Bill 1237, to clarify the liability of drivers of government's emergency vehicles, was "killed" in the House. The bill would have eliminated the intertwined language of the Governmental Immunity Act and the EV exemptions in the traffic code, upon

which the Colorado Supreme Court based last year's "Corsentino decision." The supporters of the bill seem to agree that testimony by members of the Colorado Trial Lawyers Association effectively sealed the fate of the bill. The issue will likely be discussed this

summer and fall by the proponents, which included city and county governments, the Colorado Attorney general and associations of several emergency service disciplines that operate government-owned EVs.



To those interested in CSRB hat pins:

There are only a few (yuk, yuk) of the CSRB hat pins, which are available from CSRB (\$5 each) - the bag is currently in the custody of the CSRB President - Bruce Fosdick. It is easiest to let Bruce know to bring them to a meeting because it probably costs more to ship them than the pin is worth.

Bruce Fosdick

The CSRB web page is up and running. The URL address is: "www.csrb.org"

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Software Engineer - ECDS
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Portland Mountain Rescue on a crevasse rescue training mission.

Recently Portland Mountain Rescue has been experimenting with new, improved methods of safely transporting a rescue litter over the edge of a crevasse. Older methods of doing this were less efficient and required a fair amount of brute force.

<http://www.pmru.org/>

Remember to send newsletter articles to: "remsburg@bigfoot.com" or fax to 719-687-5457. Mail to: Dan Remsburg, 1913 County Road 782, Woodland Park, CO 80863. Do you have a great SAR photo? Any photos submitted can be scanned and returned.