

TSAR TIMES and TOPICS

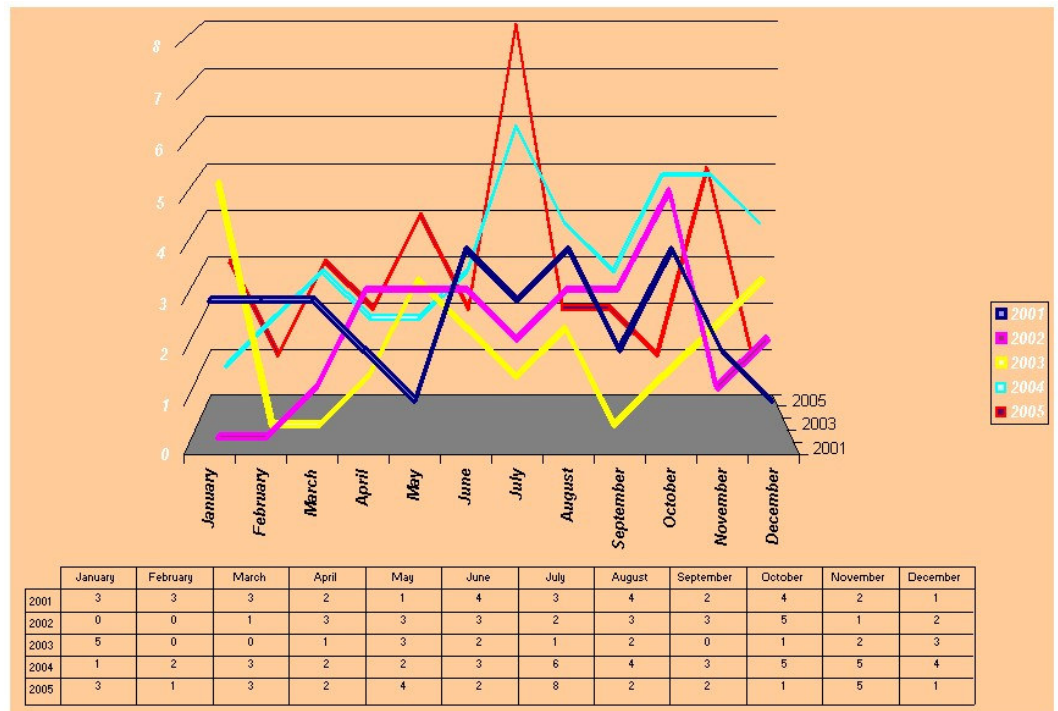
Tidewater Search & Rescue

www.TSAR.org

Monthly Search Totals—Kevin Brewer

Below is a graphic showing the cumulative monthly totals for searches that we've been alerted to as a group. As you can see, there is no real set pattern as to when we are going to get busy or have a lull. Suffice it to say we need to be prepared all the time. These are the only ones that we've been alerted to either directly or through the ASRC. To date there were over 65 lost person emergencies in the

state of Virginia alone. A number of those depicted in the graphic below included those that we were alerted to that were outside of the state. With that being said, now is the time that you should know the condition of your gear. If you haven't inspected it in a while DO IT NOW. Besides now's a good time to swap out the old, now inferior gear, with the new Christmas presents you got * -)



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This newsletter is an internal publication of the Tidewater Search and Rescue Group Incorporated for the use of it's members. The views expressed here reflect the views of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of TSAR, Inc.

JANUARY TRAINING CALENDAR

11 2000-2200 K9 Night Training @ Hickory HS Chesapeake
 12 1830-2100 TSAR BOD @TBA
 13-15 SARTI @ Winchester
 14 0900-1300 Pet FirstAid Class @ Hmpt Rds Obedience ctr
 15 1400-1615 K9 Training @TBA
 19 1900-2100 TSAR Gen. Mem. Mtg.
 21 SMRG SAR Sim Prince William Forrest Park
 21 Virginia SAR Council Mtg. @ Richmond, VA
 21 0900-1300 TSAR Training location TBA
 27-29 State GSAR at Camp Va Jaycees (1st Weekend)

People, if you intend on going to training, then please, please call Bill Swartz. We decide **IF** we will have training based on the phone calls. If we decide to cancel the training then we can call those who called and make sure they know it is cancelled. If you don't call but decide to go, you can find yourself the only person in the parking lot. You need to call Bill Swartz **forty-eight** hours before the scheduled training so we can decide whether or not it will be held. (757) 681-7482.

Training, 2005 In Review—Bill Swartz

Wow! What a mix of lessons learned. My gray matter is still bogged down with all that I took in over the year. I learned something new every time. I say that with mixed emotions. Unfortunately, I learned very little with regards to search tactics. What I did learn was how much effort goes into conducting training and how much our old-timers had stored away in their gray matter that was not written down anywhere. I learned about the shortcomings of our training process and documentation of procedures. I hope everyone will take a few minutes to reflect over the past year and think about what you've learned and what you didn't but would have liked to. The review below is strictly TSAR's ground training.

January's training was a no-show at First Landing State Park.

February's training was setting up base, held at Northwest River Park. Everyone got to play with setting up the 40 foot antenna mast and the generator actually got used. We finished with some K9 training with smoke flares showing air movement in and out of the woods.

March's training was a cold search in Gloucester County. TSAR did it all. The trailer was used, base was set up and staffed, Ground and K9 teams were deployed.

April's training was in support of a SAR Simulation held in Newport News City Park by SART.

May's training was in support of a Wilderness First Aid class's practical exercise held in First Landing State Park.

June's training was a SAR Simulation held in Newport News City Park. It was a long, hot and ticky day. The folks there will

agree, when I say it rained ticks. We did a little of everything including the completion of a COQ class. Butch staffed base while the Ground and K9 teams got their exercise.

July's training was base set up and operations held in First Landing State Park. For those in attendance it was an eye opener to setting up and operating base. The trailer was emptied. The generated was load tested with all the lights, radio, battery chargers, computer and printer, just as if we were running a night search. Folks even got to play with the Map-Tech program and printed maps for our location. What we learned was that TSAR did not have any written procedures for the non-base folks to come in and establish base.

August's training was another cold search. This time it was in Nottoway County. The conditions were much harsher than in March. The temperatures, humidity and the density of the vegetation were to the maximum.

September's training was cancelled due to a pending storm. There was no training scheduled in October due to our two car-parking weekends.

November's training evolved around cold weather short-term survival. It was a mix of lecture and open discussion. Barbara Shortt gave an excellent lecture on Hypothermia. Everyone did a show and tell of their packs and equipment. We practiced starting fires with various sources of material.

There was no training scheduled in December, but TSAR was asked to support a FTM class night out in Newport News City Park. Those that participated got credit for doing so.

Training, 2006 Preview—Bill Swartz

A New Year and new ways, or changes to the old ways. It is only human nature to resist change as it causes work. We have to adjust our comfortable rut or routine for the change, “!@#\$. But, without change we become stagnant and stop the learning or development process. In order to continue our development or learning, changes are inevitable. Changes are in the works to the VDEM and ASRC training, certification, and recertification requirements. TSAR's training procedures, topics, schedule and locations are changing as well. I will be looking to you to pre-

sent topics or conduct portions of the training. The training is not for the benefit of the Training Officer but for you, your benefit. The training day will be the same every month, the Saturday following the monthly Membership meeting. Go mark your calendars now. The location for training will always be different. We need to get out and learn more of our immediate or rapid response area. Training will be discussed in-depth at the January Membership meeting. Attend the Monthly meeting and take part in the changes.

LEADERS VIEW—Kevin Brewer

Well, it's a brand new year with brand new resolutions. Foremost is that the officer and section heads reports will be available to members only through the TSAR website. This year is the year to shine that I mentioned last month, both in the field as well as behind meeting doors. One goal is to have the trailer done inside and out and operational by the end of May. Another is to have each and every operational member up to date with both medical qualifications as well as SAR certifications. You'll have to be actually if you still want to respond to a lost person search after December 31, 2006.

Another personal goal I have for the group in 2006 is to utilize more of the internal resources we already have as members while still bringing in some outside talent for educational and training purposes.

Another goal is to have a second training or meeting facility by the end of the first quarter. This would allow for trainings such as first aid or cpr or a COQ class to be held on short notice if needed in a place we know is available. We already have one in Newport News in the building where TSAR rents storage space, another on the South Side would be appropriate.



TSAR Canine Update—Kim Willis

Starting the new-year we have three certified K9 teams through North American Police Work Dog Association.

Kim Willis and Kobe, Area Search/Obedience for off lead work, and Man-Trailing.

Barbara Shortt and Tucker, Area Search/Obedience for off lead work, and Man-Trailing.

Bobby Pennington and Quincy, Man-Trailing

The above three also have in training:

Kim Willis and Two-Way for Human Remains Detection "HRD"

Kim Willis and Keno for Article Search

Bobby Pennington and Quincy for Article Search

To add to that, we have Elena Golde and Sierra starting their

training, with several in the wings that are interested. Those that are interested need to contact me so you can start coming out to K9 training. This is a must if you wish to become part of the training program. Just learning the routine and paperwork is a challenge. We are also always in need of ground searchers to come and train to be professional flankers for the dog teams.

The flankers are crucial and are part of the overall team. If you would like to respond with a K9 team as a trained flanker please let me know and we can set you up for training. We are pretty flexible with days, and hours for training. We also always need searchers willing to run for us as lost subjects. We will use dogs and practice our man tracking skills to find you. This would be a good time to test your winter gear.

Preserve It-Scent is Evidence—Robert Pennington & Kim Willis

Scene preservation is a very important aspect of searches and every scene has scent that needs to be preserved. With K9's new to TSAR it will be important to discuss what scent is to the K9 Handler and develop scent awareness in first responders/ground search personnel.

Our bodies consist of approximately 60 trillion cells that are constantly dying and being shed at a rate of up to 50 million cells a second. The largest contributor to human scent is bacterium acting on the dead skin cells (Rafts), which then give off gasses. Once the cells are shed, that action can be affected by air and moisture. Each gaseous odor is slightly different, creating an odor unique to each person-individual scent picture. The variations in the scent picture for the K9 is affected by each person's environment: his or her culture, diet, bathing habits, toiletries they use, housing, and home odors.

Sweat is another basic contributor to the overall scent picture. Under normal conditions, we can produce approximately 31-50 ounces of fluid in a 25-hour period. The chemical makeup contains urea, chlorine, sodium, potassium, calcium, magnesium, phosphate, sulphate, iodine, nitrogen compounds, bicarbonate, lipids and several other chemical compounds.

Scent and the Environment

The surface of our skin has a current of air that provides a means for skin Rafts to start their scent trail away from the body. They

start from the feet, go up the body, and end about a foot above our heads. Depending on the environment, some bacteria laden rafts are sweep to the ground, and some go with the wind as the size and weight of the raft dictates. Clothing will not alter the scent release, but will sometimes increase by a billowing effect when clothing is removed, or loosened for cooling. The scent trail left behind is subject to our weather and the terrain, and some gasses will remain longer than others. In a hot, dry, sandy area, the gasses and vapors will burn off very fast, as opposed to a moist, cool climate.

Wind along with terrain can have a strong directional effect. The rafts can easily be caught up in bushes, trees, along side buildings, in ditches, water puddles, under objects, such as an overturned canoe, and so forth.

Temperature affects the speed of bacterial action. In extreme heat or cold, bacterial action will slow or stop, causing less scent to be available. As the temperature drops or rises, bacterial action will resume. The most ideal temperature for preservation of scent is around 50 degrees.

Rain can help or hinder the K9's job. A light rain will actually enhance scent on hot dry days. A heavy rain will wash scent away.

Time is our worst enemy. At the start, the scent picture will be (continued on page 4)

Preserve It-Scent is Evidence (continued from page 3)—Robert Pennington & Kim Willis

weak. It will then peak as bacterial action continues, but then declines as the cells are devoured by bacterium.

Scent Is Recognized in Court as Evidence

Scent is the invisible evidence that is overlooked at most crime/search scenes. Any type of scent article collection should follow “chain of Custody” rules. The searcher who guards, preserves, or collects a perishable article, should note name, date, time and location. Should the search turn into a crime scent the dog team may be called into court as evidence, along with the circumstances surrounding the scent article. SAR first responders should be aware of how to properly assist with scent evidence for possible responding K9 teams. K9 teams not only use scent evidence to locate the subject, but they can also find personal items dropped by the subject (which later may be considered evidence), detect the subjects direction of travel or tell you where the lost subject has not been.

When the first SAR personnel arrive at a search the normal interviews should take place with an emphasis on “place last seen”, and any objects the subject(s) might have touched, used, or wore, that can be preserved. Scent evidence is extremely delicate and perishable so should be properly preserved or collected before anything else is done. Insure there are no running vehicles in the area where the person was or may have gone. Vehicle exhaust does harm the scent picture for the dog, and tires destroy prints.

Scent Articles

Scent articles or items that a handler can collect scent from can be unusual. Some items such as non-shared bedding, personal sleepwear, and other non-shared clothing and personal items are traditional. However, a handler can collect scent from the lost person’s vehicle if it was determined that police or other LE officials did not contaminate it. A handler can pull scent off of gear shifters, car seats, the steering wheel, door handles, head rest, a soda can in the drink holder, keys, coins, and much more. From inside the house the handler can collect scent from a door-knob, windowsill, matchbook, cigarette pack or butt, drink glass, wallet, watch, and from the subject’s personal bathroom. Dogs can even work with scent collected from something as small as spent shell casings. A lot of factors have to be determined for the handler to decide the best item to take for a scent article or collect scent from.

Obtaining and Handling Scent Articles: How you can help

It is preferred that the handler collect all articles, but that cannot always happen. When that is the case the first responder works with the LE IC to insure LE has not and does not contaminate possible scent to be collected. The IC will need to put you in contact with the officer first on the scene so a determination can be made as to what if any contamination occurred. This information must be relayed to the first handler on the scene. Areas where the lost subject had been should be tapped off so the K9 handler who will then have a choice for collection. However, in an emergency situation the SAR first responder can collect a scent article.

1. Once you locate an item to collect, station someone by the article to prevent it from getting contaminated. If possible stop here and allow the handler to collect it.
2. Get an appropriate bag, zip lock is preferred, or an unused paper bag, which can be sealed by rolling the top down and sealing with tape. If latex type gloves are not available use some-

thing like a coat hanger, pencil, or pen to collect object.

3. Do not touch the article. Place it in a bag, seal it, and place it in another bag and seal it. Note your name, the item, date, time, and location taken from. Provide this to the handler with the article. If you have to turn the article over to another person, add their name, date, and time of exchange (chain of custody).
4. If a vehicle is running near the scene, disconnect it at the battery or coil wire. Do not enter the vehicle. Work with the IC to insure any vehicle involved is secured. By providing this crucial information it will help the handler determine what the officer touched when checking the vehicle for information. If officers or searchers get into the vehicle it will be impossible to collect uncontaminated scent.
5. Protect footprints from being walked on, driven over, and examined up close. Keep everyone out of that immediate area and protect the print(s) from the elements (direct sun, rain, etc.). If in an emergency situation the searcher can collect the scent for the handler. Use gloves, and place a large section of sterile gauze in the footprint. Let it sit for 15 to 20 minutes. This will not damage the footprint for man trackers. Keep the gauze pad away from your body, and handle carefully. Place it in the zip lock and seal, and repeat if possible.
6. With TSAR now having K9 teams, it would be good for all ground searchers to have a few scent collection items with them.
 - a. Two each of each size zip lock bags including the 2- gallon and the new giant size for larger items.
 - b. Protective gloves.
 - c. Six 4X4 sterile gauze pads.

When the SAR responder is doing the initial lost person questionnaire, attention needs to be given to questions that will assist the K9 teams, such as determining what might be used as a scent article. Remember man trackers can assist dog teams if they can positively identify the lost person’s footprint, but also, a K9 can alert on a footprint of the lost subject, giving the Man Trackers something to work with.

Working with K9 teams at local LE call outs will be somewhat different then wilderness call outs. SAR responders should never park at the house, or PLS of the subject. Work with the LE IC to keep vehicles and foot traffic well back to a necessary minimum so man trackers and K9 teams can do their jobs to the best advantage of the lost subject. All household and area loose pets should be contained so your K9 teams are not in danger of being attacked or have their work disrupted. If the K9 has to enter the house, explain to the homeowner what will occur when the dogs enter. Law enforcement don’t always know how to assist us, but with our help providing them with input, we can do our jobs better.

Credits

William (Bill) Tolhurst-Home of the Big T
 Lt T. Loughman-Cumberland County (NC) Sheriff’s Office
 SGT T. Campbell-Fayetteville (NC) Police Department
 Gerry and Nancy Loughman-Sentinel K9
 Williford L. Faile-Lancaster County (SC) Sheriff
 Lt W. Wood-Charles County (MD) Sheriff’s Office
 TRP A. Rebmman-Connecticut State Police
 Roger G. Titus- Sussex County (NJ) Prosecutors Office
 Charles F. Tappan Jr.-Maine State Police
 Scent and the Scenting Dog-William G. Syrotuck



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UNITED WAY TSAR

To contribute through payroll deduction:
TSAR Peninsula #9057
TSAR South Hampton Roads #1248

MISSION STATEMENT

Tidewater Search and Rescue Group, Inc. provides trained personnel who effectively manage, support and sustain search and rescue operations when requested. This is accomplished through specialized training, constancy of purpose and continuous improvement.

VISION STATEMENT

For the search subject, the Tidewater Search and Rescue Group, Inc, will be recognized as the leader in training and management, providing the most professional and effective response to Ground Search and Rescue Incidents.

Quick Tip Corner—Dean Matty

1. **WATERPROOF MATCH CASE** – The following is a recipe for a match case that is waterproof and that floats. Get an expended 16 gauge shotgun shell and an expended 12 gauge shotgun shell. Put the matches in the 16 gauge shell and then slide it into the 12 gauge shell. This seal is tight enough that it will maintain the water tight integrity and nothing else is needed to seal it. The stamping on the brass part of the shotgun shells works as the striker for the matches.
 2. **PRUNING SHEARS** – It is our job is to go through the briars instead of around them to search for the subject. Having a pair of pruning shears makes getting through briars easier. Sometimes the briars are so thick that you do not have room to swing a machete so these come in handy for those situations and they are safer while working in groups.
 3. **OLD RUGS** – Sometimes when you get to a search you may have to work out of your vehicle as if it were a changing room. Bring along a small rug or welcome mat that you can use to stand on when changing your boots. Depending on where you are parked, this will keep the rocks or thorns or other debris off of your socks and out of your boots that would cause problems for your feet while out on task.
 4. **NIGHT VISION** - At night, if you close one eye when looking at white lights or when looking at maps, etc. will help you from losing your night vision. Using blue or red lights at night also help retain your night vision. There are some flashlights that have variable switches that have red LEDs for up close reading and white lights for searching.
 5. **FIRE STARTERS** – Dryer lint collected and placed in a cardboard egg carton with melted wax works wonders as a fire starter. It usually takes one egg section with the above ingredients to start a fire, but if it is wet it may take one or two more. Store them in a waterproof bag in your pack.
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| December 2005 | | | | | | | January 2006 | | | | | | | February 2006 | | | | | | |
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| 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 31 | 29 | 30 | 31 | | | | | 26 | 27 | 28 | | | | |

January 2006

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|---|-------------------------------|---------|--|---|--|---|
| 1 New Years Day | 2 Substitute Holiday (USA) | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 20:00 - 22:00 K9 Night Training -- Location: Hickory High School, Chesapeake | 12 18:30 - 21:00 TSAR BOD @ TBA | 13 State ICG class SARTI in Winchester | 14 SARTI in Winchester 09:00 - 13:00 Pet First Aid Class - \$35.00 fee -- Location: Hampton Roads Obedience Training Center |
| 15 SARTI in Winchester 14:00 - 16:15 K9 Training -- Location: TBA | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 19:00 - 21:00 TSAR General Membership -- Chair: Kevin M Brewer | 20 | 21 SMRG SAR Sim -- Location: Prince William Forrest Park 09:00 - 13:00 TSAR Training @ TBA 10:30 - 15:00 SAR Council meeting |
| 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 GSAR -- Location: Camp JayCee | 28 GSAR -- Location: Camp JayCee |
| 29 GSAR -- Location: Camp JayCee 09:00 K9 Training -- Location: Time and location TBA | 30 | 31 | 1 20:00 - 22:30 K9 Training -- Location: Greenbrar Farms | 2 Groundhog Day | 3 | 4 |

| January 2006 | | | | | | | February 2006 | | | | | | | March 2006 | | | | | | |
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| 29 | 30 | 31 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

February 2006

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|---|--------|-----------------------|--|---|---|---|
| 29 // GSAR -- Location: Camp JayCee 09:00 K9 Training -- Location: Time and location TBA | 30 | 31 | 1 20:00 - 22:30 K9 Training -- Location: Greenbriar Farms | 2 Groundhog Day | 3 | 4 |
| 5 12:00 - 18:00 K9 Training -- Location: Fort Story | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 18:30 - 21:00 BOD Meeting | 10 | 11 09:00 - 09:30 K9 Training -- Location: Time and Location TBA |
| 12 | 13 | 14 Valentine's Day | 15 | 16 19:00 - 21:00 General Membership Mtng | 17 | 18 08:00 - 11:00 NN Achievable Dreams 09:00 - 15:00 TSAR Training |
| 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 // GSAR -- Location: Camp Jay Cee | 25 Scouting University // GSAR -- Location: Camp Jay Cee |
| 26 // GSAR -- Location: Camp Jay Cee | 27 | 28 | 1 | 2 | 3 // Man Tracking w/Wilderness Discovery | 4 // Man Tracking w/Wilderness Discovery |