

LCSTAR



Newsletter for Larimer County Search and Rescue, Inc. Winter 2001 Edition

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<http://www.fortnet.org/LCSAR>

Field Coordinator Report

from George Janson

As you know, Bill Cotton has taken a six-month leave of absence, from mid-February to mid-August, and the Executive Board has selected me to step in as Field Coordinator during this interval.

We've been in the doldrums of our mission load for this first quarter of 2001, which is typical for us, and this allows us to concentrate our collective efforts on the BASART class. With the coming of May, our monthly mission response usually doubles, and come June, it nearly doubles again, just in time for participation by the graduates of the BASART class. Now is the time to take advantage of the BASART schedule, and assist with the technical rope classes to refresh those skills in anticipation of using them during the summer season. In addition, there is the yearly MRA reaccreditation schedule, which provides yet another opportunity to refresh your technical skills. El Paso County SAR's testing is scheduled for the weekend of 5-6 May, and Crested Butte SAR's test has yet to be scheduled, so you still have time to take advantage of these events. We encourage rescue rated members to participate as evaluators, and encourage those seeking the rescue rating to attend as observers. As an active member of the MRA, we are expected to participate as evaluators and observers on five reaccreditations every five years within our region.

The Dive Team and Emergency Services have requested special assistance from us to respond to dive calls this year. The LCDRT is in a rebuilding phase, and current membership is low enough that they are concerned about having sufficient resources on scene, especially for the upcoming snowmelt runoff months. Since most of their responses are to the rivers, the limited parking alongside the roads and the consequent safety issues are a serious concern. Paging LCSAR for a direct response brings an unknown, usually large, number of members, each with a vehicle, into a limited-space area. Thus, we have pre-selected a small group of seven members, all of whom have lights and siren response capability, as the primary Dive Support Group. When a page goes out specifying this Dive Support Group, *only* those seven are authorized to respond. If the entire Team is needed, the page will not specify Dive Support Group, and the normal free-for-all response is expected.

A reminder that CSRB's annual SARCON conference is being held in conjunction with NASAR's conference this year, which is in Colorado Springs, 24-27 May. This will be a great time to get to know other local and national SAR folks, in a leisurely and fun environment. Several of us are already registered to attend, so if you're interested, contact myself or Cheryl Kennedy for a registration form, or register on-line at <http://www.nasar.org/register.shtml>

LCSAR Mission Reports - 2000

Compiled by George Janson, Senior Mossback

Saturday 1 July 2000 - Lumpy Ridge, RMNP - Received request from RMNP at 21:50, for personnel to assist with scree evac and trail carryout of an injured climber from the Lumpy Ridge area. Their rangers were with the subject, and would soon start the vertical evac. The subject, 26 year old Mike, and his friend Adolf, were on the Osiris Route [5.7, 5 pitches] of The Book section. With Adolf belaying, Mike was near the top of the last pitch when he took a leader fall of approximately 50 feet, injuring his ankle. Mike called RMNP dispatch via his cell phone at 20:45 to notify them of his predicament. Both climbers were wearing helmets. Nine LCSAR personnel arrived to augment the 12 RMNP personnel for the all-night carryout. Of note is that during their hike in the dark to the scene, while negotiating a gnarly gulch as a possible evac route, a trio of rescuers was stalked by a mountain lion. Their radio traffic had a certain 'edge' to it.

Sunday 2 July 2000 - Bear Lake, RMNP - Request at 19:36 from RMNP for assistance with carryout of an injured hiker from above the Bear Lake area. 14 LCSAR members responded for this lengthy carryout. By 17:03 the next day, all members were back in Fort Collins. More information from the National Park Service's Moming Report:

Elizabeth Tolfa, 34, slid down a snowfield in Chaos Canyon below Otis Peak (12,486 feet) and broke her ankle. The area is appropriately named, as it is filled with large, unstable boulders. This made it impossible to land a helicopter, so a hazardous litter carryout was required. Because of darkness and safety concerns, the evacuation team spent the night in the field and carried Tolfa out at first light.

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Saturday 8 July 2000 – Lory State Park – Direct response page at 12:39 for carryout of a 29 year old female with an injured ankle, one mile up the Arthur's Rock trail. Two Emergency Services specialists and 27 LCSAR members arrived at the trailhead at 12:55. LCSAR used the stokes litter and wheel for the carryout, which was completed at 14:30. The subject refused transport by ambulance and was taken to PVH in a personal vehicle.

Saturday 8 July 2000 – Stratton Park, Rist Canyon – Direct response page at 19:49 for search for two missing young children. The 30 responding LCSAR members with two dogs were stood down at 20:16 when the parents reported that both children had returned home and were OK. Their young ages, impending darkness and approaching thunderstorms with lightning presented a high urgency for this incident.

Monday 17 July 2000 – Old Man Mountain, Estes Park – Direct response page at 12:38 to rescue a 16 year old male stuck in the 'cave' (déjà vu from 1977), a section of rocks on Old Man Mountain near Estes Park. 20 LCSAR members were assisted by 15 additional personnel from LCES, RMNP rangers, and Estes Park Fire Department. Rescue personnel were able to thread a harness around the individual and use a mechanical advantage to raise him out of the crevasse. He was slightly hypothermic and wet, but otherwise in very good condition, and was transported to Estes Park Medical Center by Paramedics.

Monday 17 July 2000 – Richmond Hill, Conifer, Jefferson County – Request at 14:34 from Alpine Rescue Team, via CSRB coordinator, for dogs and searchers to assist with search for 4 year old male, autistic, missing in the rural foothills Richmond Hill area of Jefferson County. The child had been missing for 4_ hours when dog teams were called to search. Many dog teams were sent due to rain and flash flooding conditions. LCSAR sent 10 members with five dogs, El Paso SAR sent two dog teams and Front Range Rescue Dogs sent three teams. The boy was found by an Alpine field team while these dog teams were enroute.

Saturday 22 July 2000 – Pennock Pass – Paged at 16:33 to search for a missing camper. Reported by Operations Section Chief Mark Sheets: The subject, Marcus, 50 year old male, left camp at 04:30 to take a short walk (15 yards) outside camp. Became disoriented and unable to locate camp. Fellow camper reported subject missing at 16:00. LCSAR members arrived at the camp site at about 19:00, as directions given by RP and existing road network didn't match. Both foot teams, air scent and trailing dog teams were used during the night. Additional response at 06:30 next day allowed for additional containment, hasty, thorough, air scent/trailing dog team, as well as short time frame of Fort Carson helicopter assistance followed by Civil Air Patrol assistance when helicopter developed mechanical problems. 16:00 on Sunday we found a glass that Marcus had left behind. Smoke spotted around 15:30 by air scent dog team east of subject. Dog team gave bearing on smoke. CAP plane also spotted smoke. Timing of both dog team locating smoke and fixed wing locating smoke was less than one minute apart. Trailing dog team from El Paso County roughly _ hour away from subject when smoke spotted. Air scent dog team moved down drainage towards smoke and discovered subject. Subject had located a lightning strike, gathered embers and stoked a small fire to attract air attention. Subject fanned flames when he thought plane was leaving, creating a small forest fire. Subject was able to walk out. Dog team walked subject to trail for 1_ mile trek to trailhead. Slurry bomber called in by Emergency Services to drop 800 lbs of slurry on 30x30 fire. Fire crews also dispatched by both county and Forest Service to the fire

site. Mission concluded towards end of second operational period, with third operational period personnel arriving on site shortly after subject returned to base. I was dreading a third operational period because as you know, the longer the search runs, the larger the area to search gets and LCSAR was getting thin on personnel. [Ultimately, 25 LCSAR members and 6 dogs, plus six personnel and two dogs from El Paso SAR and Alpine Rescue participated.] We did have 30 out of county searchers and 2 dogs lined up from CSRB for operational period 4 if needed, but was able to cancel them due to the find. The local Thompson Valley squadron (TVCS) provided the search plane, and the Denver area Black Sheep squadron provided the 'highbird' communications plane. [Note: Mark Sheets and George Janson are both members of CAP and TVCS.] The TVCS plane was piloted by mission pilot trainee Susan, with certified mission pilot John in the other front seat, and qualified observer Ken in the back. Herewith, some commentary from Susan: Ken spotted the signal fire the lost hiker made, and on the third pass over it we spotted a mirror flash. He did not have a mirror so what we saw was just the creekbed water, not a mirror flash. Ground crews were quickly on the scene. I hate to recommend starting a fire, but without it we wouldn't have found him for a while, we were searching a mile east (over a ridge) from where he was. He was way off trail down in the bottom of a draw. We never saw the lost person, even on the last pass over we saw the orange-shirted ground crews but never saw the hiker. He was wearing all grey/tan/khaki clothing (no wonder we never saw him). After the Sunday morning search chopper (which had flown right over him but hadn't seen him) had mechanical problems and had been gone from the area for a few hours he realized he hadn't been seen, and was on his own. He wandered down a draw looking for a way out, thinking he wouldn't survive another night out. About then our aircraft came on scene but was flying a mile east of him on the other side of a ridge. Then, he just happened on a smoldering tree root and added kindling and fanned it into flames so as to be found. He was trying to do Indian signals with his shirt over the smoke, and highbird did report it looked like the smoke doubled at one point. The aircrews found the smoke, the ground teams / dog teams found the person. Ken was the first one in our plane to see the smoke, and John gets credit for teaching Susan his wonderful flying techniques, and how to search for a person versus an airplane (much lower and slower for a person).

Monday 24 July 2000 – Creedmore Lakes – Direct response page at 11:50 for extrication and carryout of a 51 year old female who fell in among some rocks. 10 LCSAR members were assisted by personnel from LCES and Red Feather Lakes QRT to carry the patient 300 yards to the ambulance. Larimer County Dive Rescue and Poudre Valley Ambulance had also responded. The patient was ultimately flown from Crystal Lakes to Poudre Valley Hospital by Greeley Air Life helicopter.

Monday 24 July 2000 – Glendo Reservoir, WY – Paged at 14:26 with request from Platte County Sheriff for search dogs. Reported by Cheryl Kennedy. Two women on jet skis went back to check on something they thought they saw in the water at the mouth of the reservoir. Appeared to have been a male subject (drowned). Body was sinking at time of location by the women. Women returned to their campsite 15 miles away at the other end of the reservoir, reported the incident, packed and returned to Colorado. Sheriff requested dog team assistance based on women's detailed description and severely distraught manner. Two Larimer water search dogs responded that evening, working until 23:30. Both dogs worked

the shoreline and the water with strong indications from the dogs that the subject was on the inside curve of the Platte River as it rounds a tight bend and heads into the flood plain, east of I-25. Dogs unable to pinpoint exact location due to dropping water levels in the reservoir (dropping six feet a day) and significant currents and eddies in the immediate zone. One dog team returned to Fort Collins with the other team remaining and working a second day. This dog team returned to Fort Collins the following evening without the body being recovered. Additionally, dog teams returned the following Friday through Sunday, 28th to 30th, for further follow up. Glendo Reservoir was being emptied into downstream reservoirs, with water depth significantly lowering throughout the week, allowing for visual checks of flood plain not available on first weekend. Investigated animal carcass appearing in flood plain with no indications from dogs on carcass. Depth of water in channel during first weekend was approximately 24 feet. Depth during second weekend was 7-10 feet in the channel, with three feet of active sediment churning in the channel, and when water was disturbed in any way. Dog teams were able to more precisely pinpoint the likely area. Divers still unable to dive the area due to strong currents. Attempted to drag area. No missing persons reported in Platte County or surrounding counties. Sheriff suspended search until later in autumn, with divers having difficulty in searching the designated area as well as no missing persons report.

Tuesday 25 July 2000 – County Road 52E – Direct response page at 08:34 for roll-over MVA at 8801 West County Road 52E for possible carryout. Stood down enroute at 08:47 as there were no injuries to the occupants.

Thursday 27 July 2000 – Greyrock Trail – Direct response page at 11:22 at request of PVH ambulance Med3 for possible carryout of subject with heat exposure, as the actual location of the subject is unknown. Stood down enroute at 12:05, after Med3 paramedics determined subject was accessible with their equipment.

Monday 31 July 2000 – Browns Lake area – The duty SAR Manager was paged four times between 12:43 and 13:24 before second-on-call Bill Cotton responded. "As the information page sort of indicated, I picked up the call when Don Griffith radioed that no SAR Manager had responded to his first request. It was for an overdue person who was supposed to be back Sunday night from a trip to Brown's Lake. The individual supposedly did not meet with others for a different trip today. The subject's father had shown the subject on a map a "short cut" to Brown's Lake. The subject's father indicates the subject would have left from the Brown's Lake Trailhead on the Crown Point Road. Edward 14 went to the area to check for the vehicle, but as of 14:15 he arrived at the Brown's Lake Trailhead and the vehicle was not there. At this time he is continuing to the Zimmerman Trail at the end of the Crown Point Road. However, Don Griffith has turned around and headed back to town since it was pretty clear the individual would go from the Brown's Lake Trailhead. Griffith will recontact the reporting party to followup."

Tuesday 1 August 2000 – south of Kremmling – Request at 23:20 from CSRB duty coordinator for swift water / dive experts to assist Grand County SAR with search for a possible kayaker in the Colorado River, south of Kremmling. Referred him to ES and LCDR.

Sunday 20 August 2000 – Camp Lake, Rawah Wilderness – Paged at 12:29 for carryout of 16 year old male with an injured knee, eight miles into the Rawah Wilderness at Camp Lake. 17 LCSAR members, 1 LCSO ES, 3 Poudre Canyon QRT's, 2 Poudre

Canyon Fire, and 2 Poudre Wilderness Volunteers participated in the mission. The two Poudre Wilderness Volunteers happened upon the subject and made the call for help on their cell phone. Two LCSAR members, who were in the area at the time of the notification, hiked in with one Poudre Canyon QRT and two Poudre Canyon firefighters. Additional LCSAR members responded with a litter and wheel. Upon arrival with the patient it was determined that there was a good helispot and favorable weather conditions, so Flight For Life out of Denver responded, picked up the patient (just before sunset) and flew him to Poudre Valley Hospital. Finished at 21:52, and all personnel departing for home.

Saturday 26 August 2000 – Spectacle Lake, RMNP – Paged at 22:45 with pre-alert, then at 07:37 Sunday, to assist RMNP personnel with possible carryout of a female climber who fell 150 feet on a snow field above Spectacle Lakes. The subject suffered head lacerations as well as other various injuries. Initially it was thought that the subject's injuries were serious and a helicopter was requested for the morning to attempt a landing. A Flight For Life Helicopter approached the scene but was unable to land due to an inadequate helispot and adverse weather. Eleven LCSAR members responded to assist with a potential 1500 foot scree evacuation and 5 mile trail carry. Ultimately the subject felt better in the morning and was able to be assisted down the scree field under her own power and was able to walk to Lawn Lake where she was transported by horse. LCSAR resources were released at 15:00.

Friday 15 September 2000 – Pingree Park area – Paged at 21:18 with report of an overdue 18 year old male hunter, from Louisiana, who was bow hunting by himself. He was last seen at day break near Sky Ranch, the location where he was dropped off by the reporting party. Eight LCSAR members, with no dogs, and one ES specialist were stood down enroute, at 22:47, after the subject walked back into camp on his own.

Wednesday 20 September 2000 – Custer County – Paged at 13:38 by CSRB duty coordinator with request for dog teams to assist Custer County SAR with missing person search. This was a long-duration mission, and they were planning an intensive effort for the coming weekend. However, LCSAR resources were stood down later in the evening, after search teams had discovered the body of the missing person.

Monday 25 September 2000 – Mesa County – Paged at 12:24 with request for dog teams to assist Mesa County SAR on search for two missing persons. They had just discovered, about noon, the body of one the missing persons. LCSAR resources were stood down later in the evening, after search teams located the second person alive.

Wednesday 27 September 2000 – Johnny Park, Boulder County – Paged at 19:47 with request for searchers and dog teams to assist Boulder County and RMRG on search for a missing 82 year old female, who has a pacemaker, and who suffers from Alzheimers. 14 LCSAR members with four dogs were stood down enroute, at 21:45, after RMRG search teams located the person alive, but slightly hypothermic. They had sufficient personnel on scene to do an up-haul evac out of the drainage.

Monday 9 October 2000 – Breckenridge area – Request at 18:56 from Summit County Rescue Group [SCRG], via CSRB coordinator, for trained searchers to escort volunteer searchers from the general public on Tuesday, to canvass a large area near Breckenridge to find a woman who vanished on 27 September. This became a high-profile media event incident. 49 year old Sharon Garrison was reported missing on 2 October by her two sisters and

three daughters. Authorities said Sharon Garrison had filed complaints with police about her husband, and she may have told him she wanted a divorce from their 10 year marriage. SCRG and Sheriff's Office personnel and a Denver police helicopter equipped with an infrared camera, searched a 50-square-mile area Monday without finding any evidence of the woman or her vehicle. Later that evening, the subject's vehicle was found near a frontage road along Interstate 70, about thirty four miles east of the primary search area. Thus, the Sheriff's Office, via the news media, solicited volunteers to help with a ground search on Tuesday, which led to SCRG's request for trained SAR escorts. LCSAR sent six members to assist. About 150 volunteers and search team members hiked the rugged National Forest lands around Sharon Garrison's home Tuesday but were unable to locate the missing woman. They found what Summit County Sheriff Joe Morales called "several items," but no substantial clues to her disappearance. The ground search was scaled back to focus on areas closest to the woman's home, prior to the predicted heavy snowfalls. Later in the week, Sheriff's personnel obtained a search warrant for the Garrisons' home and 35-acre property. They located the subject's body near the house, under a landscaped area that had been recently renovated.

Tuesday 10 October 2000 – Crown Point Road – Direct response page at 17:01 for searchers and dogs to respond 9 miles up Crown Point Road to search for a missing 33 year old female. The subject, Cindy, was described as poorly dressed for the outdoors, not an outdoors-type, with leg problems and questionable mental capacity. She had been missing for about 4-6 hours, and the weather was dry and sunny, but very cold. The subject and her roommate Pat, had gone up to the Crown Point area to look for rocks. The women pulled off the road at about 13:00 and became separated while they were away from their vehicle. Pat reported her friend Cindy was missing at about 14:30. Three Emergency Services specialists and 16 LCSAR members with two dogs responded to the area to search. When Cindy realized she was lost, she built a fire and a lean-to shelter, staying in one place until she was found, in good health, by the hasty team at 19:45, about 15 minutes after beginning their search. She was found about one mile from her original last seen point and it took about 30 minutes for her to hike out with searchers.

Saturday 21 October 2000 – Greyrock Trail – Direct response page at 09:00 to Greyrock Trail for carryout of a 19 year old male with dislocated shoulder who may be going into shock. Two Emergency Services specialists and 22 LCSAR members responded to Greyrock Mountain hiking trail, arriving at 09:20. The hasty team made contact with the subject about 1 hour later, while he was walking down the trail escorted by friends. The subject has previous experience with dislocating his shoulder, and had reduced the dislocation himself prior to walking down the trail. He refused any medical help, so the LCSAR members simply accompanied the group during the hike to the parking lot, while the other responding members waited there in case of a need for a litter carryout. The subject was transported by personal vehicle back to Fort Collins.

Sunday 22 October 2000 – Twin Lakes, Pingree Park area – Alerted at 20:13 with report of a missing 20 year old hunter in the Twin Lakes Reservoir area. The missing hunter, from Arvada, and four companions had been drinking at their camp during the afternoon. At about 14:00 that afternoon the subject left camp to use the bathroom and never returned. Two hunters from an unrelated hunting party went to the community building at Pingree Park to make the call for help. Two Emergency Services specialists and 15 LCSAR

members responded, arriving at 23:45, by which time the subject had been missing about 12 hours. It was wet and snowing during the afternoon so that there was 1-2 inches of snow on the ground in most areas during the search. Six field teams, including one dog team and one tracking team, began the search. At about 02:30, one of the field teams made contact with the missing hunter, finding him soaking wet and mildly hypothermic, but otherwise OK, in the bottom of a drainage. They gave him dry clothing and warm liquids, and walked him back to the hunting camp.

Tuesday 24 October 2000 – Mount Evans area – Request at 14:07 from Alpine Rescue Team, via CSRB coordinator, for dogs and searchers to assist with search for 38 year old male, overdue from a hike on Mt. Evans. The subject was a former marine, considered to be in good health, and had significant outdoor experience, having summited nine 14's this year. The subject had gone hiking solo on Sunday, after vehicle trouble prevented a friend from joining him. When he didn't return home on Monday, friends reported him overdue. His vehicle was located at Echo Lake parking lot. Alpine Rescue Team had been searching since Monday evening, and requested help via CSRB on Tuesday. LCSAR sent two members with one dog to assist on Wednesday. This was another mission with significant media exposure (even though they did not make the find, a photo of Miriah with her handler Jayne, talking with the family at base, was published by The Denver Post in the story of the find). The body was located by an Air National Guard helicopter crew, which was not solely the result of luck. The Chicago Lakes basin area had been designated as a priority area by Alpine Rescue Team's Incident Command Post [ICP]. That helicopter was devoted solely to searching that area, in support of several ground teams and one or two dog teams. Just prior to the helicopter having to depart to refuel, one dog handler was heard reporting to the ICP that the dog had been reacting to a scent, but possibly from high in the rocks. Rapid communications between the ICP and the dog team enabled the helicopter crew to make one last sweep higher on the eastern side. As they did so, they sighted the body, which was clad in an orange parka. Because it was recognized that the helicopter would not be able to stay on site long due to low fuel, the nearby teams had to move quickly to pin point the location. With the assistance of the helicopter pilot, they were able to do so, and confirmed that the subject was deceased. Trauma on the body indicated he had fallen on the rugged, rocky terrain.

Tuesday 24 October 2000 – Mount Evans area – At the same time as the above described mission was beginning, a second report of an unrelated overdue female hiker was reported to Alpine Rescue Team. They immediately requested dog team resources from SARDOC. One dog team from LCSAR was stood down enroute when the woman returned to her vehicle. Apparently there had been miscommunication between the reporting party and the subject as to her expected return time.

Friday 10 November 2000 – Crown Point road – Paged at 19:44 for dogs and searchers for an overdue hunter along Crown Point road area. Of note is that the weather was very inclement in town, with a layer of ice accumulation on the roads. Yet we still respond, albeit at a v-e-r-y s-l-o-w pace. Reported by Cheryl Kennedy, our friendly inquisitor that night, who did the post-mission discussion with the lost hunter. "You've got to be kidding? A missing hunter page in this weather! Maybe somebody else will go! Oh no, only six people and no dogs and severe weather moving in ... this is an emergency ... better load up. Sorry Apache! I know you aren't a snow bunny either but we don't get immediate hunter

pages unless it is critical." Our subject was a 45 year old hunter who had gone out at 16:30 with his son and friend. The son and friend went one direction from the vehicle and the subject went another way. When the subject had not returned, the son and friend notified dispatch. After the one hour slither across town to the subject's home, I took some time to do an interview with the wife and other friends there. Her descriptions of what he carried in his fanny pack, his clothing, and general attitude were very close to actual. Now began the 1_ hour drive up the canyon, which was better driving conditions than in town. SAR Manager Bill Young and the Team arrived at base before me. Bill had dispersed two teams following two separate drainages to cut for sign (and boy was there sign ... hunters had been EVERYWHERE!). It was very cold and mostly clear in the search area until around 04:00, when the fog started dropping in, along with snow and damp conditions. Apache and I were assigned to run the road heading west to see if we could pick up anything from the downslope winds. About half way through our area, Apache began pulling us uphill. We continued working uphill until he strongly acknowledged a single set of tracks (the subject advised later that this is where he had hunted earlier in the day). From vantage points high on the area hills, teams could get a look at the other mountainsides to check for fires, etc. We were seeing and hearing nothing. Apache then pulled us up farther to a set of dual tracks surrounded by obvious signs of people following those tracks and cutting the tracks. Apache had strongly pulled us to the subject's tracks and then acknowledged (totally different behaviors between the two sets of tracks) the subject's son and friend's sets of tracks higher on the mountain. Thank goodness I spent the extra drive time to get the scent article! The other two teams were still cutting for sign, running the ridges and following the powerline to the Poudre. Apache did seem to off and on want to pull to the NE, but not with a strong pull. The area being searched is notorious for people getting turned around due to fingers/drainages/dense timber and lots of downed timber, which doesn't show on the maps. The going was slow on the timbered hillsides, amidst four inches of snow on the ground. It was imperative that we move slowly and do heavy attraction, due to the conditions and that the subject could be down, either due to hypothermia or in trying to get out of the weather. It became critical to check nooks and crannies, behind logs, around heavy brush. This subject was wearing all cotton and had only his rifle with him. His well-supplied survival pack, with most of his ammunition, was faithfully waiting on the seat of his vehicle. However, he was a scout leader and knowledgeable in survival. That meant he might be tucked in somewhere and unable to hear us until we were right on top of him. Around 05:30, Dan and I returned to base to warm up, after quite an interesting trek when the fog settled in (thank goodness for compass, map and GPS skills!). The other two teams returned to base between 06:00 and 06:30. Around 07:15, Ocean 3 advised that the subject had been picked up by another hunter three miles east and was being brought to base. When the subject arrived at base he was in good spirits, somewhat cold, and VERY glad to have gotten out. On the drive down the mountain he gave his description of what happened. They went out around 16:30, intending to be out for an hour. By 17:30 he realized he was 'a mite confused' about his location. By 18:00 he had found a rock for a wind break, and layered pine boughs below and heavily over himself. He had three rifle shells with him. He tried taking one apart to get a small fire started. After two hours, he gave up. He heard numerous shots during the time around dark, yet held off on shooting the rifle as he

knew that he might need the shots later. He finally burrowed under the pine boughs, and pulled his hands inside his Carhart bib overalls to keep them as warm as possible next to his body. At some point during the night he heard the rumble of the sidepipes on my jeep, and thought he heard vehicles being started and turned off, but he couldn't tell what direction they were in. This seems to indicate he was relatively close to base. By 04:00 he was totally miserable and wasn't sure he was going to make it out. He mulled over all the things he had done to survive to see if he had missed anything. At 06:00 he decided he couldn't take it anymore and began moving. He had spent the night high on the slopes, and so stayed up high while walking until he could see a road (Pingree Park road) and a hunter's vehicle. He was being driven back to his vehicle by this other hunter when they encountered an Emergency Services vehicle along the Pingree Park Road. He didn't explain why he didn't fire his rifle during the night when other hunters were finished shooting for the night. Although embarrassed, he readily acknowledged his mistakes, and figured that he would have quite a list of "honey do's" next hunting season instead of hunting! His story does clarify several elements of the search. Immersed between the pine boughs, his hearing was muffled. Attraction signals would need to be loud and proximal to arouse him. These pine bough layers also confine the air scent that the dogs work with, forcing it to float close to the ground as it migrates with the diurnal breezes. This explains Apache's gradual pull to the NE, as well as his seeming to trail when there was not a trail scent to follow. Pay attention to changes in normal dog behaviors to figure out what the subject might be doing at that point that would cause such a change.

Saturday 11 November 2000 – Paged at 20:01 Duty SAR Manager call Ocean 2 – Paged at 20:04 Duty SAR Manager disregard; the overdue party has been found.

Sunday 26 November 2000 – **Montgomery Pass area** – Paged at 19:51 for snow-skilled members to search for a missing snowshoer on Montgomery Pass. The subject, a 30 year old male, had gone to the area at 10:00 Sunday morning with two friends to snowshoe and ski. The subject separated from his companions because he wanted to go to the top of Montgomery Pass, a scenic area at about 11,000 feet elevation. The three were supposed to rendezvous at a designated place at 14:00 Sunday afternoon. When the subject failed to show up, his friends searched for about 5 hours without success and called the Larimer County Sheriff's Office for help at 19:30 Sunday night. The subject was dressed fairly well for conditions and had some food and water with him. Three ES specialists and 18 LCSAR members with one dog arrived at Zimmerman Lake parking lot at 21:30, and established the Incident Command Post (ICP) there. Weather conditions were extremely difficult, with temperatures in the teens, strong winds up to 50 mph and heavy snowfall. Five field teams, on skis or snowshoes, searched until 05:30 Monday. Blowing and accumulating snow was quickly erasing tracks, however some tracks were located by trailing dog during the night, moving north just below the ridgeline. This trailing team returned to base to warm up at 05:30. Later that morning 19 additional personnel from LCSAR, Routt County Search and Rescue, Alpine Rescue Team, and Diamond Peaks Nordic Ski Patrol were sent back into the maelstrom. In addition, five people with Colorado State Forest Service and Jackson County Sheriff's Office, using snowshoes and snowmobiles, searched on the west side of Montgomery Pass. At about 10:30, a search team on skis found additional snowshoe tracks approximately one mile north of the last seen point, just below ridgeline. No other visual clues were located. A Larimer

County Sheriff's deputy drove Hwy 14 with lights and sirens to try and attract the subject. Weather conditions continued to be unfavorable, with strong winds and heavy snow throughout the day. At 14:10, a search team on skis located the subject along the Sawmill Creek Trail, about 2 miles north of Montgomery Pass. He deliberately stayed high on the slopes, near treeline, as he knew that's where he was supposed to rejoin his friends. However, once he realized he was lost, he walked in a large figure-8 pattern all night and the next day, to stay warm and avoid getting further lost. He heard sirens around noon on Monday, and realized searchers were out looking for him. The search team escorted him down to a waiting snowmobile and then vehicle back to the ICP. He was checked by an EMT and had some minor frostbite on his knuckles that did not require any medical treatment on scene, though he was advised to go to the hospital when he returned to Fort Collins. He was transported home by private vehicle. All units had departed the ICP by 16:30.

Tuesday 28 November 2000 – Big Elk Meadows – Paged at 16:20 to assist Boulder County ES and RMRG with search for a lost hunter along the Boulder/Larimer county line. Subject was found in good health by RMRG personnel shortly after LCSAR was alerted, and we were stood down at 16:34.

Wednesday 6 December 2000 – Horsetooth Reservoir – Emergency Services was paged at 17:00 about an overdue party in Dixon Dam area. The informant was in a vehicle at the south end of the dam. While ES was enroute, PFA Engine 7 advised they were enroute to a report of a fire on the west side of Horsetooth Dam. ES met with the informant and then planned to drive the roads around the reservoir. The on-duty SAR Manager was paged, and just as the manager called in, the lost person was located by LCSAR team member Steve Carr, who was the informant on the fire report. No other resources were needed, and LCSAR was stood down. Steve had seen the fire as he was driving home that night, reported it, and then hiked to the scene, carrying his packset radio. The lost party had started the fire for attraction and to stay warm. Steve and a Lory State Park Officer walked the lost party out to a parking lot in Lory State Park. He had a swollen ankle from a slip on the rocks while lost, but refused medical treatment on scene. He was transported by private vehicle back home. All units were clear by 19:00. The lost party was found to have an outstanding warrant and was later contacted by Sheriff's deputies about that.

Sunday 10 December 2000 – Buckhorn Canyon – Paged at 22:39 with report of overdue hunter somewhere up the Buckhorn Canyon road. Two hunters were hunting earlier in the day. The lost subject went back later to hunt by himself and didn't return home. The reporting party drove back up, located the subject's vehicle and returned to a phone to report the subject missing. The RP then returned to the scene and discovered the subject at his vehicle. LCSAR response was stood down at 23:11. Twelve members, with two dogs, had called in as available prior to the stand down page.

Wednesday 27 December 2000 – Longs Peak – Paged at 18:56 to provide dogs and searchers to assist RMNP with search for a Park volunteer overdue on a hike to Longs Peak. LCSAR sent four members with two dogs. 77 year old Walter was hiking alone to Longs Peak and last was seen above timberline, about 10,500 feet elevation, around 11:30 Wednesday morning. This volunteer frequently hikes alone on Longs Peak and is an experienced hiker who was dressed warmly and had snowshoes with him. The snow base on Longs Peak was 30 inches, although drifts of deeper snow had formed above timberline. It wasn't windy and the skies were

clear on Longs Peak during the day. However, after nightfall, the winds picked up substantially as the temperature dropped, producing severe wind chill and near-zero visibility. Search teams found his pack and snowshoes off the trail to the east, south of Alpine Brook, and located a fresh set of prints in a snowbank nearby. Shortly thereafter, at about 23:30, RMNP rangers found the subject cold, exhausted and disoriented, near timberline. RMNP Chief Ranger Joe Evans said "He was hiking for his own enjoyment and to look at some of the conditions on the trails, to report to us so we can share that information with visitors. He is generally familiar with the area and is known to take some shortcuts to get down off the mountain, and had done that, and with diminishing light, became disoriented. He was in the very early stages of hypothermia. He lost a glove and had a little frost nip on one hand when he was found", Evans said. Rescuers walked him back to the trail, then carried him out in a litter. LCSAR's dog teams were hiking in to the search area when the find was made, but did continue on to assist with the carryout. Walter is a longtime volunteer at the Longs Peak ranger station. During the summer of 1996, at the age of 72, he made his 100th ascent of the 14,225-foot peak. He is well-known for his knowledge of the mountain and keeps a journal of every climb of Longs Peak.

Thursday 28 December 2000 – Glen Haven area – And another media event: paged at 13:18 by Emergency Services, with a request to assist LCSO Investigations and the Denver Police Department on Thursday, with a search in the Glen Haven area for two alleged homicide victims. Eight LCSAR members with two dogs joined members of the Posse and numerous law enforcement personnel to scour a 6- to 10-square-mile area between Glen Haven Road and Dunraven Glade Road. No bodies were found. An alleged jail escapee, who is in Denver police custody for an unrelated crime, told Denver police officers that he dumped two bodies in the Drake area, but did not say when he allegedly dumped the bodies. "We do not know if it is a hoax, or if he actually did this," a Denver police spokeswoman said. "We are up there following what he said he had done. We just had to follow up on this. Nothing seems to be panning out. His confession is unsubstantiated." Denver authorities said they doubt there ever were bodies, and they didn't continue the search on Friday.

Friday 29 December 2000 – Cameron Pass – Direct response page at 13:06 with report of an avalanche on Diamond Peaks, and possibly a snowboarder trapped in it. At 13:00 LCSO dispatch received a teletype from Craig dispatch that an avalanche had occurred at the top of Cameron Pass and that a snowboarder was missing in it. Two Emergency Services specialists and 16 LCSAR members responded direct, though in non-emergency mode, as per the Avalanche Preplan. Meanwhile, the LCSO mountain deputy and Jackson County Sheriff personnel were enroute. An avalanche dog team from Routt County was requested (and stood down before having traveled very far). Poudre Canyon and Glacier View QRT's were alerted, but as they had no one available, a Jackson County ambulance responded. Information was received that 6 to 8 people were on scene searching as rescue units responded. Vehicles in the parking lot were being flagged as the owners were accounted for. Citizens in the parking lot were in contact with those searching via FRS radios. At 14:45, just as LCSAR members began arriving at the staging area, word came from the scene that the victim's body was found. LCSAR members retrieved the body, and turned it over to Jackson County officials, as a GPS reading of UTM 0423876E 4485135N determined the recovery to be their jurisdiction. (There

was initial confusion that the subject's dog was also involved, and it was learned the next day that this pet was at home and OK.) All LCSAR and ES personnel departed the area by 18:00 and headed back to Fort Collins. The following report is from the Colorado Avalanche Information Center's investigation. Appended after it are pertinent extracts from the three "snowpack condition and avalanche danger" broadcasts issued the morning and afternoon of the accident, and the next morning.

A 40-year-old snowboarder was climbing the east face of Diamond Peak at Cameron Pass. He was wearing snowshoes with his board in his backpack. Once he reached the bench at timberline, he began climbing up the main gully. Two other snowshoers (from Minnesota) were standing on the bench and filming the lone climber with their camcorder. They stopped filming when they thought he had reached the ridge, which happened to be 2 minutes before the avalanche, and they began walking away from the slope. At 11:55, the climber triggered a large avalanche when he was about 200 feet below the ridge, and about 100 feet below the fracture line.

The avalanche came down with a large powder cloud and debris filled the bench and flowed over the bench (which is about 400 feet across and slopes gently) into the timber. The debris overran the spot the two snowshoers had been standing on two minutes earlier and stopped a few feet short of where they were standing. Meanwhile, a Fort Collins resident was driving toward the pass and saw the avalanche. He parked and began climbing up the lower track toward the bench and avalanche debris area. He met the two snowshoers, learned someone was in the avalanche, and began a beacon search. He searched for 45 minutes without success. Someone stopped a CDOT truck and the Jackson and Larimer County Sheriffs were notified. Sometime near 15:00, rescuers saw the tip of a snowboard sticking from the snow and located the victim, who had died. He had been carried about 600 vertical feet down a sustained 37-degree slope, and was buried about 1 foot deep. The body was just inside the Jackson County line.

The avalanche was classified as HS-AF-3-G (hard slab, triggered by a person on foot, medium size relative to the path, and ran to the ground). The fracture line was 250 yards wide, averaged 2-3 feet deep, and was 5 feet at the deepest point (not 10 feet deep as previously reported and not 500 yards wide). The high point of the fracture was 11,620 feet and the toe of the debris was at 10,860 feet. A

smaller avalanche had released, probably on Tuesday 26 December, just to the south of this one. The east face of Diamond Peak is an active avalanche area, and this is the third avalanche fatality on this slope. The previous ones were on 9 January 1993 and 14 December 1999.

At the fracture the slab was very hard (1 finger to pencil hardness), 2-3 feet thick, and resting on 6 inches of depth hoar. However, it is very likely that at the point the victim triggered the avalanche, the slab was less hard and the depth hoar layer was deeper. The avalanche scoured the snowpack back to the ground over most of the starting zone and brought a lot of dirt down the track.

"Snowpack condition and avalanche danger" sections extracted from the avalanche information reports for Friday morning, Friday afternoon and Saturday morning, respectively.

This is Dale at the Colorado Avalanche Information Center with current information on avalanche conditions at 06:45 Friday 29 December 2000. SNOWPACK Explosive-control work by ski areas continues to produce a few slab releases. On Thursday Winter Park and Aspen Highlands reported small slabs. In the past few days the lack of snow and blowing snow along with mild temperatures has eased the threat of avalanches. This is not from an overall strengthening of the pack, but from a relaxing of stress. Slabs are losing cohesion from the faceting (sugar snow)/temperature gradient process. In most mountain areas the snow cover is continuing to lose strength. Where snow cover a week or two ago supported a skier, now skiers are finding they break through. Reports of collapsing and whumping continue from all mountain areas. On Thursday a little south and west of Red Mountain Pass observers reported extensive collapsing with cracks propagating 50 yards. The snowpack is very weak, and though the potential for triggered releases has eased extra caution is needed on steeper terrain. Also be alert for remote triggering of slab avalanches from the bottom of steep slopes. The backcountry danger ratings for today: N&C Mtns: overall MODERATE all elevations and aspects, the most suspect slopes are those 35 degrees and steeper. The snow pack's weak layers will persist long into the future. The avalanche danger will increase with every load of new snow. To be safe backcountry travelers will have to pay close attention to the snow pack and be patient enough to avoid steep slopes.

12-Jan-01

**DONOR NEWSLETTER TOTALS, Year-To-Date,
From Grants and Fund-Raising Events, LCSAR**

Name	Donation\$\$	Donation Date
D O L A	\$5,000.00	8/8/00
Fort Collins Cycling and Racing Club	\$2,000.00	9/21/00
Kodak Colorado Division, Dollars For Doers	\$500.00	12/18/00
Larimer County Fair & Rodeo	\$2,500.00	8/15/00
Larimer County Sheriff's Office	\$2,000.00	2/1/00
Longs Peak Scottish Irish Highland Festival	\$1,250.00	9/10/00
Microsoft Matching Gift Program	\$50.00	2/1/00
Poudre Valley Hospital Foundation	\$13,600.00	6/14/00
United Way of Loveland-Berthoud-Estes Park	\$226.20	6/1/00
Wilderness Institute Of Survival Education	\$1,162.50	4/10/00
	\$28,288.70	

12-Jan-01 DONOR NEWSLETTER TOTALS, Year-To-Date, From Mailings, LCSAR

Donor	Amount	Date		
Advanced Energy	\$250.00	6/3/00	Gates - McPheeters	\$50.00 4/9/00
Agilent Technologies, Inc.	\$250.00	9/1/00	Gehring, Lyle & Ginny	\$10.00 2/25/00
Alex Oberle & Brandon Vogt	\$40.00	9/13/00	Geo-Seis Helicopters Inc	\$250.00 6/9/00
Alfalfas Market	\$42.38	6/1/00	Gessler, Johannes and Seraina*	\$50.00 6/14/00
Allen Plumbing And Heating	\$100.00	5/10/00	Ghasvarian, Hamid & Cyndi**	\$100.00 9/20/00
American Baptist Church	\$20.00	4/27/00	Govan, Dave & Norma**	\$50.00 8/17/00
Anderson, Richard L. and Eleanor P.*	\$25.00	6/13/00	Govan, Norma and Dave*	\$50.00 6/19/00
Arduino, Will & Cindee	\$25.00	10/11/00	Gray, S. Lee & Karlin A.	\$20.00 6/14/00
Artz, Richard S. and Cheryl H.*	\$25.00	6/17/00	Grimes, Anne	\$50.00 4/10/00
Berthoud Elementary PTA.	\$500.00	4/11/00	Heska Corporation	\$100.00 10/11/00
Bigelow, Margaret E. and James R.*	\$50.00	6/12/00	Hisco	\$100.00 9/10/00
Bishop, C. Hugh	\$100.00	1/22/00	Hoffman, Klaus or Wanda*	\$50.00 6/14/00
Borrego, Eloy, Rose, Jackie	\$20.00	2/25/00	Humphrey, Guy and Deborah	\$25.00 3/1/00
Boston, Marianne M. & William I.*	\$50.00	6/30/00	Humpston, Paige	\$20.00 1/1/00
Bradley, Karen*	\$170.00	6/14/00	Husar, Evelyn*	\$15.00 6/23/00
Brodkorb, Verne & Lillie	\$50.00	10/18/00	Johnson, Donald E. or Sharon M.*	\$30.00 6/13/00
Burke, Virginia	\$100.00	6/22/00	Johnson, M. Douglas and Corinne*	\$5.00 6/25/00
Burkett, Joseph P. or Ann B.*	\$10.00	6/14/00	Johnson, Stephen L. or Ardith J.*	\$25.00 6/17/00
Busig, Bill & Jean**	\$20.00	8/17/00	Ken's Muffler Shop	\$50.00 5/2/00
Cameron, Curtis R. or Patsy R.*	\$10.00	6/13/00	Killen, Al & Rogene**	\$25.00 8/25/00
Cameron, Dr Stephen M.	\$25.00	5/9/00	King Soopers	\$50.00 6/15/00
Capra, Loretta A.*	\$50.00	6/14/00	Krupa, Sagar or Nancy*	\$30.00 6/12/00
Carol Seemueller & David Fanning	\$50.00	12/29/00	Lake, Minie Lee*	\$10.00 6/14/00
Cash	\$20.00	12/31/00	Lilyblade, David K. and Sue E.*	\$25.00 6/14/00
Cash*	\$195.00	6/30/00	Lilyblade, Murdene*	\$50.00 6/14/00
Chapter AL P.E.O., c/o Bev Patterson	\$20.00	5/2/00	Lipp, Daniel & Ronnie	\$25.00 7/5/00
Cockroft, Andrew M. & Tammy L.	\$100.00	10/4/00	Loveland Mountain Club	\$50.00 4/25/00
Collier, Guy	\$100.00	9/29/00	McKenney, Lucille	\$50.00 2/25/00
Comstock, Eleanor J.**	\$20.00	8/17/00	McKeon, John J. & Janet A.	\$100.00 6/26/00
Corwin, Ken & Kay	\$25.00	9/16/00	Morgan, Deborah A.*	\$50.00 7/12/00
Cotton, William R. & Waltraud D.	\$500.00	12/15/00	Morgan, Jack A. and Teresa*	\$25.00 6/14/00
Craig, Barbara & Thomas*	\$100.00	8/24/00	Mosnik, David V. or Louise Z.*	\$25.00 6/14/00
Cue, Rex & Pamela**	\$10.00	8/17/00	Myers, James M. & Ginny M.	\$50.00 4/9/00
Curtis, Lee & Cathy*	\$50.00	6/14/00	Neal, Janet	\$100.00 6/19/00
Cyboron, Benny A.*	\$100.00	6/17/00	New Belgium Brewing Co	\$2,000.00 7/20/00
Dahms, Steven E. & Diane J.	\$50.00	8/5/00	Odell Brewing Company	\$250.00 7/5/00
Danielson, Merton E. or Jean E.*	\$50.00	6/20/00	Ogg, James E.*	\$30.00 6/14/00
Dellenbach Motors Inc.	\$2,847.78	6/28/00	Olson, Elizabeth and Kenneth*	\$30.00 6/12/00
Deluisi, John and Prudy M.*	\$10.00	6/14/00	Pigeon Mountain Industries, Inc.	\$805.00 3/20/00
Dooley, Mary K.*	\$10.00	6/14/00	Pigeon Mountain Industries, Inc.*	\$50.00 6/30/00
Doyle, James H. or Ruth H. (JTWROS)	\$50.00	6/13/00	Poudre Pre Mix Inc	\$35.00 4/3/00
Drage, Robert L. & Susan P	\$100.00	4/22/00	Poudre School District	\$20.00 8/2/00
Duncan, Betty	\$50.00	2/25/00	Poudre Valley Hospital	\$100.00 5/12/00
Durham, William S. or Rachel C.*	\$25.00	6/14/00	Poudre Valley Lions Club	\$200.00 6/9/00
Elizabeth Ann Seton Parish	\$300.00	3/6/00	Poudre Valley Lions Club	\$150.00 6/9/00
Elks Lodge Of Loveland, B P O E #10	\$100.00	6/30/00	Preceptor Alpha Kappa	\$100.00 12/7/00
Felix, Jim & Diane	\$1,000.00	12/30/00	Purcell Jr., Rosemarie & Robert*	\$50.00 6/18/00
Fetsch, Robert or Benke, Louise F.*	\$50.00	6/13/00	Roark, Len	\$25.00 12/7/00
Fink, Al & Judy**	\$50.00	8/18/00	Romett, J. Lewis & Jolene	\$25.00 1/2/00
First State Bank of Fort Collins	\$1,000.00	9/16/00	Rotherth, Jane*	\$20.00 6/12/00
Forbes, Jeni L.*	\$25.00	6/14/00	Rust, Doris*	\$20.00 6/14/00
Fort Collins Auto Dealer's Association	\$250.00	4/3/00	Schleiger Families	\$80.00 2/25/00
Fort Collins Women's Clinic**	\$200.00	9/17/00	Schleiger, Harriet	\$35.00 2/25/00
Gaines, Tim & Sherry	\$400.00	4/5/00	Schrader Oil	\$50.00 4/20/00
Gannett, Ruth	\$25.00	4/20/00	Scott, Howard, Arlene, & Jon	\$100.00 9/1/00

* = Bigelow Memorial **Fink Memorial

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