

*that others  
may live*



Larimer County Search and Rescue  
1303 N Shields St.  
Fort Collins, CO 80524-1014  
Office: 970-498-5314  
E-Mail: [lcsar@co.larimer.co.us](mailto:lcsar@co.larimer.co.us)

**LCSTAR**

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Newsletter for Larimer County Search and Rescue, Inc.  
Spring 2004 edited by: Jim Powers

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***So you say you love to be in the know? You love to tell stories to family and friends of your grand adventures? Do you think that there is nothing like deepening the bond with your friends and team members? Well then, do yourself and the team a favor, join us April 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> as we show our stuff for the MRA Reaccreditation.***

***We need you and you need to be part of our exceptional team effort. Claim your bragging rights!!! Show up and be counted.***



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*We all take different paths in life, but no matter where we go, we take a little of each other everywhere.*

Tim McGraw (talking about friends)

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Wow...can you believe it's already time for reaccreditation? This is the moment we have all worked so hard for. We have spent a great deal of time together (maybe too much!) refreshing old skills, learning new ones, and putting it all together out in the field. Now it's time to collect your thoughts, put aside your nerves, and do what we do best...get the job done.

The year started off a busy one, with both the avalanche training and snow evacuation. There was much to cover and little time to do it

in, so you were given what seems like a massive amount of information all at once. The classroom sessions were long, and I know you were all anxious to get out in the field, but you hung in there and did an awesome job picking things up just as fast as I could throw them at you.

I would like to reiterate: for your reaccreditation, as well as any mission, **SAFETY is our main concern.** We don't need to make the scenario any worse by adding ourselves to the subject list. The following are a few reminders to keep in mind for safely completing an avalanche rescue:

1. Upon arriving at the scene, the rescue leader is to evaluate **scene safety**. During this time everyone else should **wait quietly** and **scan the slide path for obvious clues** as viewed from the safety zone. If the rescue leader decides the scene is safe enough to travel in the open, he/she will organize the group into sub teams with specific tasks (i.e. beacon searchers, probers, shovelers, avalanche guard, etc.). After tasks are assigned, it is imperative that everyone **turn their beacon to either receive or off** to avoid confusion.
2. While working an avalanche rescue, it is imperative to **keep quiet**. The rescue leader needs to be able to hear when a clue is found or a beacon signal is picked up. If you have pertinent information for



the rescue leader, you must call his/her name until he/she acknowledges the information you have. This may mean standing by your clue for a few seconds until you are acknowledged. Do not yell out a clue has been found and assume the rescue leader has heard you. Additionally, by remaining quiet you will be able to **hear if**

**any significant changes** occur such as a secondary slide. (In the case of such an event, you would be notified by a loud "**AVALANCHE**". If you hear someone yell avalanche, immediately stop what you are doing, **TURN YOUR BEACON TO TRANSMIT**, and **head for safety**. This may or may not be the safety zone designated by the rescue leader. If you are located on the opposite side of the slide path



from the safety zone, it may be a better choice to head the other direction.)

**At all times during an avalanche rescue, you need to be aware of your surroundings and where you would retreat to in the case of a secondary slide.**

3. Finally, to **avoid clustering in one area**, when a beacon signal is pinpointed, and a prober/shoveler has been called over to further investigate, the beacon searcher must move on to the next signal. It is very easy to fall into clusters, especially when something is found, but the probability for detection is significantly reduced when we cluster. The rescue leader will remind you if you are starting to cluster, and will probably ask you to move on to another task.

By following these simple rules, and simply doing what we are trained to do, we will succeed. I am very much honored to have had the opportunity to work with such a fine group of

people. I have thoroughly enjoyed passing on some of the things I have learned over the years, and I hope that you have benefited likewise.

I know we are all a little nervous about the reaccreditation, but really, there is no reason to be nervous. You have accomplished a great winter full of training, and we have really come together as a team. We have seen each other's strengths and weaknesses, and if we acknowledge these things and work together, we will do great things.

**Eric Foster, the Avi Guy**



**Is Lisa volunteering again, or is she asking permission?**

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## MARK'S CAMPFIRE

by George Janson, Senior Mossback; Keith Schafer, Member Emeritus; Mark Sheets, Field Coordinator  
January 2004



*"Something happens to a man when he sits before a fire. Strange stirrings take place within him, and a light comes into his eyes which was not there before. ... Before men ever dreamed of shelter, campfires were their homes. Here they gathered and made their first plans ... Here for centuries they dreamed vague dreams ... Once a man has known the warmth and companionship there, once he has tasted the thrill of stories of the chase with the firelight in his eyes, he has made contact with the past, recaptured some of the lost wonder of his early years and some of the sense of mystery of his forebears." (Sigurd Olson, "The Singing Wilderness", 1956)*

Mark ('Crash') Sheets has often referred to a certain incident during which he experienced 'pink polka-dot elephants'. In his report of the Sunday 31 August 2003 search for the bow hunter missing in the Rawah Wilderness, Mark closed with these comments: "I asked Grady if he heard this attraction and he replied "Yes, and I whistled a few times but figured that I was only hearing things, so I stopped whistling." He claimed to have been hearing music emanating from the creeks, too. Just a side note – I have personally experienced similar phenomena in the back country during fatigue, only I would hallucinate, seeing 'pink polka-dot elephants'. Just ask George Janson or Keith Schafer – they were with me. Or was George really the polka-dot elephant? :-)"

... thus, herewith, the rest of that story ...

**Angel Fire, New Mexico, 1-2 November 1986** – *"The Village of Angel Fire got its name from the Moache Utes. Seeing mysterious tongues of red and orange licking at the morning sky, one of the elders claimed it was the "fire of the gods". Later, Franciscan friars interpreted the Ute's "fire of the gods" as "the place of the fire of the angel". (Angel Fire Chamber of Commerce web site)*

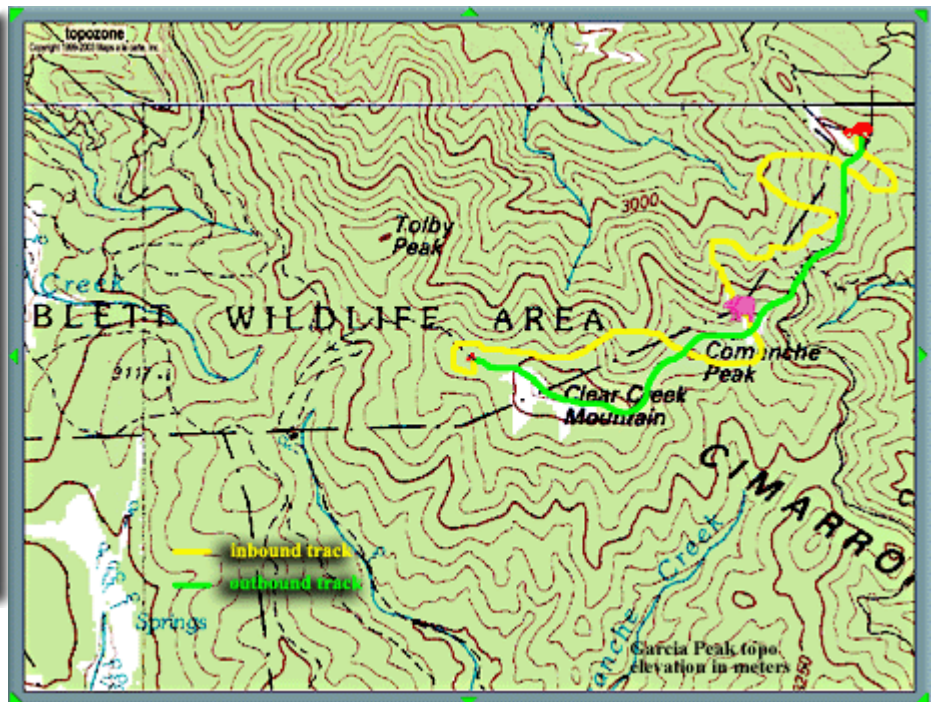


Mark, Keith and I are on a training exercise with the New Mexico ELT Location Team (NELT), a group we have worked with many times over the preceding seven years of our participation in Civil Air Patrol

(CAP), searching along our common border for missing aircraft, using electronic direction finding (DF) techniques. For many years, NELT has been developing highly sophisticated equipment to detect the emergency locator transmitter (ELT) that activates when a general aviation aircraft crashes. [It's also the same homing signal now used in the personal locator beacon (PLB).] NELT planned this exercise to recreate an actual (and memorable) crash with survivors that occurred in this area about 12 years prior. That incident spurred their interest in developing better DF equipment and techniques, and this exercise is another test of their new instruments.

My white Jeep Cherokee (yes, the same one you now see gloriously rusting away before your very eyes!) transports the three of us to the meet coordinates, near the Agua Fria airport. The weather is our typical Colorado December, brown and warm and dry, which accompanies us all the way south. We arrive Saturday afternoon, right on schedule, which is the same time they began that search of years ago. Along the way, we stop a few times to take long-range bearings on the practice beacon. These, in conjunction with the long-range interferometry bearings of the arriving NELT teams, isolate the signal to the vicinity of Clear Creek Mountain. Locals know this peak as Mount Phillips (named for Waite Phillips, industrialist and banker who gave his adjoining 127,000 acre Philmont Ranch to the Boy Scouts of America), as do the NELT members, and their maps label it as such. On the newer topographic maps, however, the USGS has renamed it to a previous title of Clear Creek Mountain. And the USFS, experimenting with waterproof topographic editions of its National Forest maps, has adopted the new name. This new fangled 'plastic' map, purchased before we left Colorado, didn't need the usual map case to keep it dry. Or so we thought. Over the night, brushing the snow from the map wears off a lot of the topographic features, and in some places to just white.

There are enough NELT members participating that they can field four DF teams, with several people staying at base for communications and to plot bearings. We three will be the fifth team. Only a few of these NELT members participated in the original search, leaving the rest of us ignorant of the details, and specific location, of that crash site. They have already decided upon the starting zones for each team, and we get the long way around, an approach from the northeast quadrant. Mind you, this is their territory, and to us three, it's terra incognita.



Clouds are massing as each team departs base. Sunset is

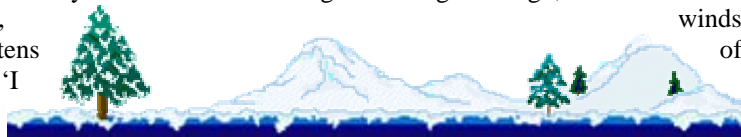
17:04. It's the night of the new moon. We drive along for a bit, triangulating on the signal, coordinating with the other teams, as one by one teams find a place to park vehicles and begin the hiking. We are the last to do so. The temperature has been dropping over these past few hours, and as Mark, Keith and I prepare for our trek, snow begins to fall. We lash snowshoes to our packs. Unanticipated, this weather will cooperate only too well, providing conditions very similar to those of the original search.

The Angel Fire area sits at the southern end of the narrow N-S oriented Moreno Valley. Clear Creek Mountain tops out at 11,711 feet, along the east façade, near the terminus of the Sangre de Cristo range. Valley elevation is about 8,200 feet, part of the Southern Rocky Mountain steppe biome. The mountain is similar to those here in Colorado, but dryer, averaging about 138 inches of snow annually, with only 12 inches falling during a typical November. By the time I park the Jeep we are at 9,000 feet elevation, about two straight-line miles from the peak.

Within an hour of beginning two NELT teams have to drop out due to gremlins in their prototype DF equipment. Three remaining teams continue on into the growing storm and deepening darkness. Snow is falling more thickly, with intermittent breezes, as we gain altitude, and has now accumulated on the formerly bare ground to about eight inches. Visibility is about 100 yards. We stop to build a fire, get some hot liquids, and re-warm our chilled selves. Rather than use a stove, we opt to build a fire, to practice that essential skill in the face of these rigorous conditions. Besides, the amount of heat given off by the stove wouldn't melt a snowflake an inch away, much less warm our souls!

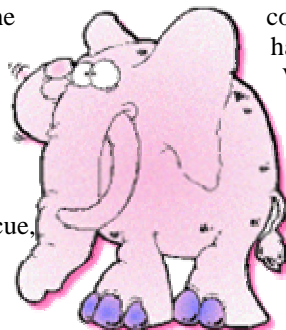


Break over, we don our snowshoes, and resume the hunt. Shortly after, the third NELT team abandons the effort, as they do not have snowshoes with them, and the snow is now too deep and heavy to slog through. The climb this night will be difficult, with the snow, wind and steep terrain absorbing most of our artificially induced adrenaline high. The higher we go, the worse the storm. When we top out on a ridgeline, winds are strong, and visibility is down to tens of feet. We decide to navigate IFR – 'Instrument Flight Rules'. [In aviation IFR means 'Instrument Rules', used when visibility is too low to see reference points on the ground.] We still have a strong signal, but not strong enough yet – we've come a circuitous two miles, and have maybe another two miles to go, depending upon the route we take. We are on the back side of the mountain, out of radio contact with base.



For the next few hours we plod onward, navigating in a whiteout atop an ever accumulating base of snow. Keith and I are constantly drinking water, and occasionally munching on gorp, as we snowshoe along. Mark, our young CAP cadet, is less diligent at such tasks; and in these conditions, neither Keith nor I notice this lapse in Mark's attention. We are slogging through a large meadow area, fully exposed to the elements, when Mark stumbles and collapses into the snow. He is shivering, and has a somewhat vacant stare. In this blizzard, we need to get him warm now!

Keith and I drag Mark to the shelter of this montane forest. Lacking the luxury of time to build a 'proper' fire (stamp out a base in the snow, put down a log foundation, gather tinder, kindling, larger firewood, put it together correctly and light the match), we break out the real hurricane match – a five minute fusee! Each of us carries one for just such an emergency. Strike the fusee, stick it in the snow, and pile thumb-size and larger wood in teepee fashion atop it – instant 'white-man' fire. It is during this time that Keith and I are building up the fire when Mark, who has been mumbling incoherently, loudly asks "I said, don't you see the pink polka-dot elephants?" Keith and I look up at each other, then turn to Mark and simultaneously say "No", after which he continues to describe these elephants, in great detail, to us. Moments later we have a roaring fire going, and slowly get Mark warmed up and rehydrated. Within an hour, he is coherent again – or at least as coherent as Mark ever is! We discuss our options – continue on, or



retreat to the vehicle. Signal strength indicates we're less than a mile (straight line) to the practice beacon, all uphill. It's at least three miles back to the vehicle, and we can't backtrack, as our tracks are filled over soon after we make them, so we'd have to route-find our way out. Yet, once we reach the beacon, there's a trail close by that we can follow back down. Collectively, we decide to press on. There is now over two feet of snow on the ground.

Shortly after midnight we locate the beacon, along the northeast ridge of Clear Creek Mountain, about ½ mile from the summit. We've not heard anyone on the radio for many hours, so we attempt to contact base – no success. We consult the map and return to the summit, which should give us a direct line of sight to base – success. Base is actually surprised to hear from us – when we passed out of radio contact they suspected we had retreated to our vehicle, and they were just awaiting our return to base. It is at this time that we learn we are the sole team on the mountain, the fourth NELT team having bailed out when they decided the conditions were too rough to continue on for just a practice. Turns out, they turned around at about the same time we were battling to save Mark's life. While talking with base, we surprisingly realize the storm has abated. Snowfall and wind cease within the next hour.

We discuss exit options. Base will send the rancher (who had placed and activated the practice beacon) back up on horseback, to retrieve the beacon later in the morning. We inform them of the snow depth, and tell them we'll take the beacon with us. We snowshoe down the trail back to the vehicle. We sleep in the Jeep for a few hours (right through sunrise at 06:25, and do not see those 'mysterious tongues of red and orange [and pink?] licking at the morning sky'), drop the beacon off at the rancher's house, then drive home. Mistake! We were zombies on the road, though we did make it back safely. Overall, this practice exercise is not much different from many of the actual missing aircraft missions we three have been on – except for those 'pink polka-dot elephants'!! Hmmm – maybe the original translation of the Moache Ute words was incorrect; could it have, perhaps, meant "the place of the fire of the elephants"?



**LCSAR Dog Team**

## The Search by Dave Hake

You've just turned into the driveway from one of the worst Mondays you've had in a long time. You have one thing on



your mind and that's fixing something to eat and getting in front of the TV with your feet up and becoming one with the chair for the rest of the night. You warm up some leftovers because it's simple; you walk into the room passing by the answering machine that says you have 12 messages. You plop in your favorite chair, remote in hand, the warmed up Chinese is smelling good and the TV is on... BEEP, BEEP, BEEP, BEEP. Your mind does a quick memory jog to see if today is Sunday hoping maybe it's a test page and of course it's not! You read it:

1830 SAR GRP RESPOND TO MT.  
MARGARET TRAIL HEAD FOR SEARCH  
FOR MISSING 10 YEAR OLD FEMALE.

"Damn! Just what I needed", you say to yourself contemplating on whether or not you will respond. First thought is, "I'm too tired", and then you read the page again the words "10 YEAR OLD FEMALE" stares back at you. "I have to go!"

You snarf down as much Chinese as you can, your blood is starting to flow as you remember the page saying to "RESPOND" so that means go now! You do a mental inventory of all the SAR gear you have in your car and what you took out after the 12-mile hike you did on Sunday. Your muscles start to ache remembering the hike but your adrenaline is flowing too much to tell yourself you're too tired. "This is what I trained for" and "This is why I keep in shape" thinking to yourself that you would make a great Hasty team member to run up the trail yelling the child's name and finding her cold, scared and tired but ok.

You jump into your car and take off. You are glad you filled up your car before you came home and you are really wishing you have applied for those damn lights and sirens because you want to go as fast as your adrenaline is running! By the time you hit the bypass you start to calm down a bit. The traffic is not as bad. You hear that Truck 10 is in route and the radio traffic is starting to come alive with others responding. You start to realize that L-1 and O-3 are the only ones ahead of you. You think to yourself that, this is your night! You will get the hasty team assignment and be the Hero for the night! Your blood starts pumping again as you wonder if you should stop at Ted's place to get some Gatorade since you drank the last of it on Sunday.... You opt not to because you don't want to loose position in the race to the trailhead.

The drive up to Mt. Margaret was filled with thoughts of what this girl is doing now and how she became lost in the first place. Where are her parents? Why would they leave her alone? The radio quiets down but you don't feel it's appropriate to ask these questions since you are not in the position to do that. It doesn't matter because you round the top of the hill and you see the flashing lights at the Trailhead. You're the first arrival besides L-1 and O-3.

You pull in and you don't even take the time to run up and ask the questions you've wanted to all the way up. Your focus is getting your pack ready, your map and scrounging for the water bottle you know is in your duffel bag somewhere. It's starting to get dark already so you make sure you have extra batteries for your headlamp. Everything's finally ready after you make several attempts to go up to the Incident Command (IC) then returning for something you've forgotten. Now you're ready!

You run up to L-1 thinking he's going to just send you up by yourself so we can get someone quickly up the Mt. Margaret trail since it's getting cold. L-1 tells you, that the parents left her in the car while they did a short ½ mile Jog up the trail to the north to see if they could find a water bottle they left on Sunday when they came up for a picnic with the family. When they came

back Lila was gone! They thought she might have tried to follow them and became lost. Your feet are almost in imaginary starting blocks ready to bolt down the trail when L-1 tells you to... "Secure the Car"..... your shoulders drop! What a let down! Secure the Car! "There's a 10 year old freezing out there" you think to yourself! But you tell yourself that I must do what I'm told even though it's a terrible assignment.

A second team member pulls up while you are flagging off the car and it's Doug Grimm and L-1 sends him over to the car to help you. You think, "Oh no, I'm going to be TRACKING ALL NIGHT LONG instead of running up and finding Lila! While following Doug's lead you see more and more members showing up and they are all running to the north down the trail calling Lila's name. You get frustrated because you wanted that job! Then the closer you get to the car; the more you can see tracks by the passenger's side back door. Could this be Lila's? You call L-1 which by now is Operations and he confirms with the parents that she was sitting in the back with the doors locked. You get a little blood flowing as you get close enough to make out shapes of the print, little flower shapes and butterflies. You pull out a tracking card that you have buried in your pack and both of you start drawing and taking some quick measurements. Ok, the blood stopped flowing, let's get out on the trail to find her! But noooo, Doug makes you work step by step and it's going slow. It's heading towards the trail head gate and again you ask, "should we jump up on the trail to see if we can find it on the trail?" but again, you're shot down and continue to work the sign. Meanwhile, more and more teams are fielded up the trail and your hopes of finding her are dwindling.

Just as you realize you are doomed to be on this line of sign the rest of the night and only getting a few hundred yards down the trail when 20 feet before the Gate the tracks start to turn. Not to the north and through the gate but to the South! Doug tells Operations this and they tell everyone to avoid walking in the area we are working. The sign continues going south and onto the highway. We decide to cut the other side of the pavement and sure enough her tracks are on the South side walking towards the gate to the

"Other" Trailhead! By now teams are calling in their locations all along the trail to the north. Some of them 3 miles out already! That's where you would have been. Operations starts calling some of the teams close to IC to come back. You start to realize just what you and Doug have done. You've just turned the search direction 180 degrees. You've cut the pie in the most unlikely place!

The tracks are becoming plain as day right down the middle of the trail because they are the only tracks on it. Doug and you are moving fairly quickly and your adrenaline is in high gear again. Team 7 comes up from behind and tells us that Operations wants them to be a hasty team for this trail. Doug tells them to go ahead but STAY OFF THE TRAIL! You want so much to change teams and go with them but again you know better. Another team, Team 8 shows up and it's an air scent dog team that showed up to the scene later. With the winds 5 MPH out of the North they also need to get south to be able to work their dog. Doug tells them the same thing and they disappear, yelling "Lila!" You feel like you've been cheated out of a good assignment twice! You continue to follow easy tracks then hard tracks then easy again. All of them staying on the trail until ¼ mile down the trail they disappear. Even in a likely track trap. You start back tracking to see where they go off and then you hear on the radio, "Operations – Dog team 8" --- "Operations" ---- "My dog is showing alerts to the North West and we're going with it".

Doug and you finally find the spot where the tracks take a turn to the West but it's slow going because of the terrain. More teams show up in the area and start working the area to the west of you. You hear Team 6 then team 9 all moving into the search area to the west of us. The temperature's dropped to 25 degrees. With the wind and the cold, if we don't find Lila soon, she's not going to make it! Then the radio traffic comes alive with "Operations this is Team 6 we have voice contact".... The radio goes quiet because you could hear that their voice was winded and they were running and everyone else is waiting patiently for that wonderful sound that we all like to hear. Shortly after that team 6 says, "They are with Lila and she's ok"-- "her foot is wedged in some rocks and she's cold but



ok". They get her foot out wrap her in warm clothes and she's able to walk with a slight limp and they walk her out to the IC. All teams are called back to IC and the parents are hugging Lila crying. They can't thank everyone enough.

Jim Powers asked me to write something for the newsletter on tracking. Instead of doing a piece on how to track or more tracking exercises, I thought I would write a story that showed just how important tracking could be on a mission. It seems slow and tedious and the chances of you actually finding the subject are slim but in my eyes if this mission had happened the way it did, I would say that you played a major role in finding Lila. If it wasn't for the trackers staying

on their line it could have been the next day before teams were sent to the South side and it might have been too late.

Keep looking at the sign. Dave



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***At the Executive Board meeting, March 10<sup>th</sup>, Kathy Shepherd generously agreed to be the go-to gal for Christmas awards again this year. So, be sure to watch for memorable stories about your teammates so that they can be properly recognized at the Christmas party. It is only 9 months away!***

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### **Reaccreditation Information Station:**

- ☛ If you haven't already done so, please mark you calendars—the big days are just around the corner: April 3 & 4!
- ☛ Now that we are finely-tuned training machines, it's time to strut our stuff! We've all put a lot of hours into this event, so let's show MRA what we are capable of! Remember, even if you feel that you are not up-to-snuff in technical or snow abilities, **YOU ARE STILL NEEDED AT ALL REACCREDITATION ACTIVITIES!** The training committee cannot say this enough times! People are needed to haul things, people are needed to man (or woman) things, people are needed to watch things—you are needed to just **EXPERIENCE A REACCREDITATION!!**
- ☛ We are not expecting everyone on the team to be able to show up both days, but we are looking for 60% of the team on **both** days. This way, we will be prepared for the *search* portion regardless of which day the evaluators decide to throw it.
- ☛ Remember, it is okay to say that you are not comfortable doing a task. If someone asks you to do something that is outside of your skill or comfort zone, just say so! There is no foul in that!
- ☛ Most importantly, best of luck to us! We should be proud of all we have accomplished thus far. Sometimes, after long months of training, we may tend to lose sight of the primary reason we are here. **Always bear in mind, we do this so that others may live.**



**From your Training Committee**

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*We are what we repeatedly do. Excellence, then, is not an act, but a habit. Aristotle*

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This next article is being placed as a review for those of us that heard it originally and for those of us who didn't so that you know what to expect when you participate on the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> of April.

### **Re-accreditation Weekend – what to expect**

*by George Janson, LCSAR liaison to the MRA evaluation team*

For those of you who missed the Wednesday night training where this topic was presented, here is a condensed (extracted and edited from the PowerPoint program) version of what to expect on our re-accreditation test weekend.

Lead Evaluator is 'god' – wears orange vest – has final say in all aspects of re-accreditation test. Our LE is Joe Ben Slivka of Summit County Rescue Group, mentored by Jeff Sparhawk of Rocky Mountain Rescue Group. Scenario Lead (a different evaluator for each of 5 scenarios) is 'demi-god' – wears lime green vest – is responsible for all aspects of a specific scenario, and is the only one who can make any changes to their scenario. Evaluators (voting) and Observers (non-voting) are 'angel' or 'vulture?' – wear orange vests or pink flagging – are each of you at some future MRA event. They are also the subjects for the scenarios. We need at least 5 evaluators from 3 of 11 (12 including us) accredited teams for each scenario, so there could be up to 30 evaluators/leads and observers present.

Prior to the re-accreditation exercise, the Lead Evaluator will meet with the Host Team Liaison to determine the areas / sites that will be used for the scenarios. Once the areas / sites have been determined and agreed upon, they may not be changed, unless it is agreed upon by both the Host Team Liaison and the Lead Evaluator. Joe Ben and I have reviewed some sites at Cameron Pass, and the Sylvan Dale hogback where we did the BASART rope 1 training (which is the same place the 20 March pre-test for vertical and scree will take place). We're still exploring site options in RMNP and the Big Thompson Canyon, so final sites are not yet determined. I'll let you know via e-mail when the sites and day for each scenario are finalized. You should expect v-e-r-y l-o-n-g days, starting each morning with a page to gather at the pre-arranged staging site. Unless weather conditions force a change, the following schedule has been preliminarily agreed to by Joe Ben, Jeff and myself.

Friday 2 April – testing team members begin to arrive. ~18:00 'Meet and Greet' pot-luck party – location TBD (needs plenty of parking available) – scenario leads will be recruiting evaluators and observers for various roles in their scenarios.

Saturday 3 April ~07:00 – Evaluation Team breakfast at local café – final assignments for various roles in the scenarios – LCSAR will be alerted ~08:00-08:30 via our paging system, prearranged with one of the ITC's. This will be the Avalanche and Tech Snow tests, location TBD (we're investigating RMNP sites), and depending upon how quickly we resolve these, the search would be thrown in somewhere down the canyon – though if they need more set-up time, the search could come first as we're driving up the canyon, with a portion of LCSAR finishing the search as the rest head to the avalanche scenario. Afterward, the critique and vote – location TBD, possibly at the cache? We could do a pot-luck or BBQ or order in a bunch of pizzas and continue with meet and greet, as there will be some of the E-Team who come up just for the day.

Sunday 4 April ~07:00 – Evaluation Team breakfast at local café – final assignments for various roles in the scenarios – LCSAR will be alerted ~08:00-08:30 via our paging system, prearranged with one of the ITC's. This will be the vertical and scree tests, at the Sylvan Dale hogback, and if it wasn't done on

Saturday, the search would be thrown in somewhere nearby. Afterward, the critique and vote – location TBD. We could do a pot-luck or BBQ or order in a bunch of pizzas and continue with meet and greet, as there will be some of the E-Team who come up just for the day. Hopefully, this day ends before dark, as many of the E-Team members will have a long drive back home, though some with longer drives may stay over and depart on Monday morning.

Highly recommended reading, to learn more about what the evaluators will critique and vote on, is to study the re-accreditation packet, available as a .pdf document at:

[http://www.mra.org/rockymtn/Reaccreditation\\_Packet.pdf](http://www.mra.org/rockymtn/Reaccreditation_Packet.pdf)

One thing I hope you realize from the 6 March avalanche pre-test and the upcoming 20 March rock pre-test, is that each evaluator has been where we are now – and there were some whose re-accreditation evaluations that didn't go well for their team – which is why they travel the distances to help other teams learn how better to handle this re-accreditation stress. Bill Young, Mark Sheets and I had more opportunity to talk with the evaluator group while we visited sites for the rock pre-test, and they emphasized that LCSAR has the requisite skill to pass the re-accreditation, we just need to polish some of our individual skills – so keep on practicing, and have fun at the 20 March rock pre-test. ☺

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## From the President

OK, what follows is stolen directly from an email I received quite a while ago. But I've kept it around all this time because I like the message, and it seems that it could be applicable to our team at the moment.

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A philosophy professor stood before his class with some odd items in front of him. Wordlessly he picked up a very large and empty jar and proceeded to fill it with rocks about 2" in diameter. He then asked the class if the jar was full. They agreed that it was. The professor then picked up a box of pebbles and poured them into the jar, shaking the jar gently. The pebbles, of course, rolled into the open areas between the rocks. He again asked the students if the jar was full and they agreed that now it was. The professor then picked up a box of sand and poured it into the jar. Of course, the sand filled up everything else. He then asked the students once more if the jar was full, and they responded with a unanimous "Yes." Then the teacher produced two cans of beer from under the table and proceeded to pour the contents into the jar, effectively filling the empty spaces between the particles of sand. There was much laughter from the students.

"Now," said the professor as the laughter subsided, "I want you to recognize that this jar represents your life. The rocks are the important things: your family, your faith, your partner, your health, the things that, if everything else were lost and only they remained your life would still be full."

"The pebbles are the other things that matter, like your job, your house, your car. The sand is everything else----the little stuff. If you put the sand into the jar first, there is no room for the pebbles or the rocks. The same goes for your life. If you spend all your time and energy on the small stuff, you will never have room for the things that are far more important to you. Pay attention to the things that are critical to your happiness. Play with your kids. Take time to get medical checkups. Take your partner out dancing. There will always be time to go to work, clean the house, give a dinner party or fix the disposal. Put the big rocks in first----take care of the things that really matter. The rest is just sand."

One of the students raised her hand and inquired what the beer represented. The professor smiled. "I'm glad you asked. It just goes to show you that no matter how full your life may seem, there's always room for a couple of beers."

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I like this image (and I almost never drink beer!) I try to ask myself regularly, "Is this a big rock?" when confronted with any task or with an interaction which may drain my energy.

We all have to decide what our big rocks are as individuals. But we, as a team, have a big rock in front of us right now. We're certified as a full member of the Mountain Rescue Association, and in April we'll show the MRA that we are still qualified to be just that. (I prefer to think of it that way, rather than as a 'test.' We're just showing them that we're what we say we are.)

LCSAR is a big rock for some of us, a pebble for others, and for most of us it probably changes 'size' from one week to the next. It is my hope that in the weeks to come many of you will choose to make it a big rock (or even just a larger pebble!) I've been very pleased and humbled by the dedication and energy of the folks at recent trainings. We all hope that more of you will be able and willing to join us on April 3 and 4. After that, for a while it can be a small pebble for most of us, hopefully!

Thank you all for your efforts.

Sarah



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**Ken Klein did such a fantastic job overseeing and teaching the Rescue part of our reaccreditation preparation, but his biggest contribution maybe:**



**Knowing Norm Knot**  
(also know as Fraid Knot)



**Knotty Nellie**

**If memory serves me right Ken had even cuter names (even better pictures). So, does LCSAR have new mascots? If so can you come up with better names?**

**Thank you to Ken, Dave H., Eric, George and everyone who has worked so hard to get us ready!**



**Larimer County  
Search and Rescue**  
1303 N. Shields St.  
Fort Collins, CO 80524

That others  
may live