

# SARSCENE - Summer 1998



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## Are You Prepared?

If you are trained in search and rescue you are aware of the preparations needed to ensure a safe wilderness trip. Be sure to pass along these helpful reminders from Manitoba SAR to your friends and family so they may also enjoy

safe wilderness outings.

Before you leave on a wilderness trip:

- Be prepared for anything! Bad weather, darkness or injury can turn a trip into a crisis.
- Always travel with a friend and stay together.
- Complete a trip plan and leave it with a friend.
- Get a compass and a map of the area. Know how to use them!
- Use reference and guide books to plan a safe route.
- Be physically and mentally prepared for your activity.
- Check weather forecasts for your destination.
- Carry essentials: extra food and water, flashlight and extra batteries, clothes for a variety of weather, waterproof matches, first-aid kit, proper foot wear, pocket knife, large orange garbage bag, whistle, sun protection, signaling device (mirror, flares).
- Make a checklist!

***If you do become lost STOP***

### **Sit - Think - Observe - Plan**

1. Remain calm. Maintaining a positive attitude will let you think more clearly.
2. Stay where you are and make a shelter. Wandering takes you farther away from searchers.
3. Assess your situation, take stock of supplies and your surroundings, make a plan. Action is an excellent antidote to fear.
4. Use a signaling device. Blowing a whistle, lighting a fire and staying visible will help searchers find you. Three of anything (whistle blasts, fires, gunshots) is an internationally recognized distress signal.
5. Build or seek shelter. Protect yourself from wind, water and excessive sun. Build your shelter and collect wood early while you have energy and daylight. Insulate yourself from the ground and make sure you are visible from the air for searchers who may be in helicopters during daylight hours.

*Information courtesy of SAR Manitoba:*

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*Winnipeg, Manitoba, R3G 1R3*

*Tel: (204) 945-4345, Fax: (204) 945-4620*

*Webpage: <http://www.gatewest.net/sarman>*

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## Discover Banff National Park During SARSCENE '98

Canada's first national park and the world's third, Banff National Park is home to a variety of distinctive natural features and cultural and historical sites. Rugged mountains, glaciers, icefields, alpine meadows, beautiful blue cold-water lakes, mineral hot springs, deep canyons and hoodoos compose the natural landscape and habitat for a great variety of mammals such as elk, and black bears and grizzly bears.

Spanning 6641 square kilometres (2564 square miles) of valleys, mountains, glaciers, forests, meadows and rivers, Banff is one of the world's premier destination spots. Visitors can tour historic sites, soak in hot springs, stroll along the shores of Lake Louise or spend a night in the historic Banff Springs Hotel.

Banff National Park is a hiking wonderland, containing over 1600 kilometres (1000 miles) of trails, more than any other mountain park. Hikers can find anything from a two-hour jaunt up a mountain to a month long backcountry excursion into the remote wild regions of the park.

Moreover, Banff is home to a number of outstanding geological and ecological features. In addition to the hot springs, the Castleguard Caves in the remote northwest corner of the park are Canada's longest cave system. The park also contains Alberta's southernmost herd of the endangered woodland caribou.

The park is in the Rocky Mountain natural life zone, with terrain divided into three separate eco-regions: the montane, the sub-alpine and the alpine. Each eco-region is characterized by a different plant and animal regime, as well as a different climate and elevation.

The Trans-Canada Highway, the Banff-Radium Highway, the scenic Bow Valley Parkway and the awe-inspiring Icefields Parkway are all major travel routes that pass through the park, enhancing visitors' chances of seeing the abundant wildlife inhabiting the mountain regions. Lucky travellers may see elk, deer, bighorn sheep, mountain goats, moose, black bears, grizzly bears, wolves and a host of other large and small mammals.

Banff National Park has become a much bigger entity than it was in 1885, both in size and in vision. Beginning as a resort spa catering to the whims of the privileged – an "island of civilization" in the midst of wilderness – the park evolved as the world around it changed. Now, like other national parks, it has become more like an "island of wilderness" in the midst of encroaching civilization. Banff is also a component of the UNESCO Rocky Mountain Parks World Heritage Site.

You can help protect our heritage by learning about and respecting park habitats, inhabitants and regulations while attending SARSCENE '98 . Along with memories and photographs, we hope you will take home some insights into living in better harmony with the natural world that sustains us all.

*For more information please contact the park:*

*Banff National Park, P.O. Box 900*

*Banff, Alberta, Canada T0L 0C0*

*Phone: (403) 762-1550, Fax: (403) 762-1551*

*E-mail: [banff\\_vrc@pch.gc.ca](mailto:banff_vrc@pch.gc.ca)*

*Internet: <http://www.worldweb.com/parkscanada-banff/>*

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## **Elk in Banff National Park: Knowing The Risks**

Banff National Park is renowned for its natural beauty and has the distinction of being the most visited park in the Canadian national park system. During SARSCENE '98, you will have the opportunity to view wildlife in a natural setting, one of the many attractions of the park. However, it should always be remembered that these are wild animals and they can be very unpredictable. The most common large animal is elk, and every year, a number of visitors and locals are injured by elk. Nevertheless, with some foreknowledge and common sense, viewing elk, as well as other wildlife, can be an enjoyable and safe experience.

### ***How will elk behave towards people?***

Elk may attack without warning. Watch for aggressive signs, such as raised ears, stamping feet and glaring looks. During the fall mating season (August to September), males are particularly belligerent. During the spring (May to June), female elk will aggressively defend their young. Townsite elk, in particular, are becoming increasingly habituated to people and are showing more aggressive behaviour toward humans.

### ***What can be done to minimize the risks?***

Visitors can be seriously injured by an aggressive elk. Elks are large, strong animals, which are quite capable of defending themselves. Furthermore, in a park setting which permits motor vehicles, there is the risk of motor vehicle/elk collisions occurring. However, some common sense and following some basic guidelines will help to minimize the risks.

- Report all aggressive elk incidents to the Banff Park Dispatch (403-762-4506).
- Avoid following an animal; this includes following fresh tracks.
- Never block an animal's line of travel or escape.
- Keep a safe distance of at least 50 metres (150 feet) between you and the animal.
- Avoid direct eye contact, even through a camera lens.
- Keep your children away from elk.
- Do not feed or approach elk.
- Pack out your garbage.
- Respect the posted 90 km/hr speed limit.
- Warn visitors that get too close to elk.

*For more information, consult park staff and/or visit Banff's Web site:*

<http://www.worldweb.com/ParksCanada-Banff/index.html>

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## **Sarscene '98**

### **Working Together to Bring Them Home**

Pack your bags and head for the mountains! SARSCENE is heading west for 1998, to the Banff Centre for Management in Banff National Park. As usual, SARSCENE will feature a host of plenary sessions on topics ranging from canine search and rescue, to lost person behaviour to ground, air and marine SAR.

Don't miss this year's trade show featuring the latest in SAR technology, equipment as well as lots of outdoor gear. The workshops will run from 24 to 26 September, with the 2nd Annual SAR Games being held on the 23rd and a Technical Rescue Day scheduled for the 27th. The Technical Rescue Day will feature offsite demonstrations of equipment and techniques.

Dr. Robert Conn of the SMARTRISK Foundation, back by popular demand, will deliver the keynote address and will host a presentation of "HEROES" an exciting laser and sound show hosted by Parks Canada and the Eric Harvey Theatre.

Topic areas for this year are:

- victim focus
- volunteer focus
- professionalism in SAR
- canine SAR
- practical SAR
- SAR prevention.

Participants may also attend the Lost Person Behaviour Symposium and the Wilderness Recreation Risk Management Conference which will run during Sarscene '98.

So how do you register? Just fill out the registration form in this issue of SARSCENE and pay the \$75 fee by VISA or Mastercard or by cheque made payable to SARSCENE '98. To book hotel rooms, call the Banff Centre at (403) 762-6100 or fax at (403) 571-1832. You may also visit the Web site at <http://www.banffcentre.ab.ca>

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## **Second Annual SARSCENE Games, 23 September 1998**

*To be held in conjunction with SARSCENE '98 , Banff, AB, 24-27 September*

The NSS is holding the 1998 SARSCENE Games to challenge some of the best SAR teams from across the country, and possibly around the world.

The first Games proved both challenging and enjoyable for all who participated. Over a five kilometre course, participants were tested on SAR skills such as land navigation, field craft, first response medical treatment, communications and others. Fitness was also a factor, as teams had to travel on foot and were judged on time.

The tested skills and scoring have changed for the 1998 SARSCENE Games. The actual extent of the contest will depend on the amount of support received to mount it, and the limitations imposed by the NSS in the interests of safety of participants. There is considerable interest in the competition this year, however, and the number of teams entered may need to be limited.

Teams must register for the Games. Registration is open to everyone, and there is no cost to participate. Teams must register in groups of four people, with a fifth alternate team member if desired. Time and space permitting, it may be possible to form an impromptu team at the site. The only equipment permitted will be compass and small field tools such as Swiss Army knife or Gerber multi-tool. All other equipment and supplies will be available at each skill site.

You can register any time, in fact, you are encouraged to register your team early to avoid missing this opportunity, but official participation can be approved only when insurance arrangements are put in place. Teams must provide their own accidental injury insurance, but the NSS will provide general liability insurance for the promoters, the sponsors and the site owners.

For further information on the Games, check the NSS Web site at <http://www.nss.gc.ca>

Good luck to all, and most important: have fun.

*John Chaffey, Chief, Non-Federal SAR Program  
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E-mail: [jchaffey@nss.gc.ca](mailto:jchaffey@nss.gc.ca).*

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## Light Urban Search and Rescue

At the last two SARSCENE conferences, Carol Namur has encouraged people involved in ground search and rescue (GSAR) to understand that, whether they plan to or not, they will be involved in light urban rescue when catastrophic events overwhelm municipal response capabilities. The window of opportunity for saving lives in a disaster is very small: 85 to 95 per cent are saved in the first 72 hours by people on location, 95 per cent of whom are spontaneous volunteers with few or no skills. Volunteers trained in basic first aid possess skills that can save lives. GSAR volunteers, through their structure and training, provide their community with the possibility of saving more lives faster.

In Canada, the first level of response is the municipality. If the municipality is overwhelmed, the province assists, then the federal government. As the recent winter storm in British Columbia, floods in Manitoba and ice storms in Eastern Canada have proven, the community alone must be able to handle the critical 72 hours following a disaster.

The first thing to do to help others is to ensure the safety of your own environment so that you don't become a victim. Establish a family plan for communication. Know how to protect yourself, who to call in an emergency, how to use a family survival kit and how to purify or filter water. Acquire

the skills you need to take care of yourself first, then get involved in your community's emergency measures planning.

How do volunteer search and rescue (SAR) organizations get involved? Invite your city manager or secretary treasurer to one of your meetings to talk about emergency planning. Ask questions and offer your help. Even a small step toward an emergency plan will tremendously improve your community's ability to respond. Make sure the people in your community know about any emergency

co-ordination centres established in their area. People have to be taught to alert the municipal authorities immediately in a disaster and to provide information about the extent of damages and need for rescue in their area. Any delay lengthens the response time.

Emergency plans need to be tested. They also need to be revised. GSAR volunteers can get involved in that process.

GSAR workers can further prepare for light urban rescue by including gloves, a hard hat, safety boots and glasses in their gear. They can become familiar with Emergency Preparedness Canada's "Basic Rescue Skills," practising their skills and keeping safety as the first rule.

Light urban rescue involves:

- Gathering relevant information to locate people and things (such as how many people live in the damaged house in your search area, which roads are unusable and whether there are downed wires or busted water mains).
- Marking the spot and leaving a trail back to victims.
- Documenting searched areas to reduce duplication.
- Ensuring that hazards are universally identifiable.
- Controlling or neutralizing dangers and securing the area using careful search methods.
- Assessing the best way to reach the victims and covering the disaster area effectively using available resources.
- Using safe methods when transporting victims and supplies.
- Planning ways to provide and restore a sanitary environment.
- Communicating with authorities to provide information and offer help.

Where to go to get more information: Emergency Preparedness Canada (booklets, e.g., "Basic Rescue Skills," video library), Health Canada (information on sanitation), your local library and the Internet.

Remember, the window of opportunity for saving lives is very small. How would you feel if a disaster in your community threatened your family and neighbours? Get involved if you have skills that can make a significant difference. Why wait? Be part of your municipal emergency measures plan. Remember... it is your plan.

*Based on the lecture given by Carol Namur at SARSCENE 97.*

*Sauvetage Canada Rescue (SCR)*

*The Volunteer Group*

*Carol A. Namur, President*

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## **Irish Medics Graduate and Put Their Skills to the Test**

It all started with a few pints of Guinness. In 1995, Dr Keith Conover, a founder and director of the Wilderness Emergency Medical Services Institute (WEMSI), met with members of the Irish Mountain Rescue Association and the Dublin-Wicklow Mountain Rescue Team to discuss the value of advanced wilderness medicine training.

One year later, in the Wicklow mountains of Southern Ireland, a group of 29 mountain rescue personnel from Ireland, Wales and Scotland gathered for a week-long Wilderness Emergency Medical Technician program taught by physicians and paramedics from the Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania-based WEMSI.

At the same time, 57-year-old Michael Kennedy, an avid hiker from the town of Greystones, started off for a hill-walk into the Wicklow mountains. He had planned a hike through the Glendalough Valley, following a horseshoe-shaped route which would bring him back to his car. The hike was to take six hours.

The students of that first training class reviewed basic physiology, the pathophysiology of wilderness injuries and illnesses, and pharmacology. They learned advanced assessment skills and techniques for C-Spine clearance, dislocation reduction, suturing and casting. None of the students knew how soon their skills would be needed.

At day's end, the students received their graduation certificates and headed to the local pub to celebrate. The instructors and several of the staff packed their gear and headed north to Dublin, where they would participate in the first joint mountain rescue conference between the Mountain Rescue Conference of England & Wales and the Irish Mountain Rescue Association.

Out on the hillside, Michael tripped. The pain was so sharp and intense, he could walk no further. To complicate the situation, on a weekday afternoon, there were no other walkers in the area. With darkness closing in, Michael considered his options. They weren't good.

While the students celebrated, and the conference delegates gathered, Michael started crawling, hoping to reach a spot where he could at least signal for help. Darkness fell and Glendalough was deserted. His walk had taken him several miles from the nearest track and he was out of view from the valley below. Exhaustion ended

his attempts to crawl out. He would have to wait. Lacking a flashlight, food or proper clothing to ward off the night chill, he knew that his painful, swollen ankle was just the beginning of his troubles.

As evening set in, Michael's family grew concerned. His son began a search for his father's car and found it in a parking lot around midnight. The police were alerted.

Just after 1 a.m., the students ended their celebration and returned home. Thirty minutes later, their pagers went off and announced Michael's plight. The Dublin-Wicklow and the Glen Imaal mountain rescue teams activated their call-out plans, gathered on site and commenced search operations. Their strategy was to blanket the known tourist routes with quick-moving teams covering the valley and the flanking hillsides. The temperature had dropped to 5° C.

At 4 a.m. Michael finally saw the lights of a rescue party but it was more than a mile away and was passing above him on the hillside. Fighting despair, pain and cold, Michael wished for a way to signal.

The searchers were alarmed by the sight of lightning. A cold rain would hamper their search and Michael's chances of survival. But the sky was cloudless and there was no thunder... the flashes were coming from the valley! Michael was using the flash from his camera to signal the searchers.

Using their radios, the teams triangulated a more precise fix on his position and soon vectored in. As the teams arrived at his side, Michael was assessed and treated for his hypothermia. Using a skill they had just learned on their course, the team members used fibreglass casting material to splint Michael's fracture. (Casting material allows for a comfortable conforming splint which is particularly useful in wilderness settings since it is so light and takes little space in a pack.)

Michael was evacuated and greeted at the parking lot by his son and taken to a local hospital. The emergency room physician was quite surprised to see a patient brought in with a fibreglass cast, and the teams had to convince him that Michael had not been taken to another hospital first.

At the conference, Ireland's then President, Mary Robinson, commended the team in her opening remarks and mentioned the new procedure. This training course introduced a new level of medical care to Ireland's victims of wilderness incidents. Since Ireland has no paramedics, out-of-hospital care is provided by dedicated and capable EMT-Bs. Mountain rescue teams, driven by the necessity of their environment, are fast becoming leaders in the delivery of out-of-hospital care.

Michael Treacy, Deputy Team Leader of the Dublin-Wicklow Mountain Rescue Team, a nationally registered EMT and WEMT Instructor, teaches first aid programs to various groups and leads wilderness trips.

Jack Grandey is Director of Applied Informatics at the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center and a flight paramedic for the STAT MedEvac System. He is a founder and Operations Director of WEMSI, a founder of the Allegheny Mountain Rescue Group, and a supervisory instructor for the Eastern Region of the National Cave

Rescue Commission.

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## **CASARA Ontario Receives Transport Canada Award and Celebrates 15 Years of Service**

The hard-working and dedicated volunteers of the Civil Aviation Search and Rescue Association of Ontario (CASARA) have been awarded the 1998 Transport Canada Aviation Safety Award. This annual award is presented to the individual, group or corporation in recognition of outstanding contribution, leadership and dedication to aviation safety in Canada.

The award was presented to CASARA Ontario by the Honourable David Collenette, Minister of Transport, on 21 April 1998 at a banquet held in conjunction with the 1998 Canadian Aviation Safety Seminar in Toronto.

The celebrations will continue in August as CASARA Ontario marks its 15th anniversary. With more than 400 members and 36 aircraft from London to Thunder Bay, these volunteers are well positioned to assist the Trenton Rescue Co-ordination Centre (RCC) and 424 Transport and Rescue Squadron in their SAR mandate. CASARA members also actively participate in SAR prevention by promoting aviation safety and "leading by example."

In 1996, the CASARA Ontario volunteers helped the RCC in 49 SAR missions, flying 58.4 operational hours in their light aircraft or as spotters on military aircraft. Combined, the members of CASARA Ontario volunteered 1003.9 person hours in 1996.

*For more information about CASARA please contact:*

*Ron Rap, Managing Director*

*CASARA Ontario*

*6874 Kendale Court*

*Niagara Falls ON L2H 1Z2*

*Tel: (905) 354-5345*

*Fax: (905) 356-1486*

*E-mail: [casaraon@vaxxine.com](mailto:casaraon@vaxxine.com)*

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## **National Search and Rescue Secretariat's Awards Program**

The National Search and Rescue Secretariat's (NSS) Awards Program was introduced in 1995 to acknowledge outstanding work by search and rescue volunteers, professionals and organizations and to raise awareness of search and rescue efforts across the country. The Outstanding SAR Achievement Award recognizes the most exceptional contribution to SAR in Canada by an individual or organization. The Certificates of Achievement recognize

individuals or groups who have made significant contributions to search and rescue efforts in their respective regions.

In 1995, the Outstanding SAR Achievement Award went to Kevin George of Edmonton, Alberta, for his achievements in raising the profile of search and rescue dogs throughout Canada. Kevin pioneered SAR dog handling and established the Search and Rescue Dog Association of Alberta.

In 1996, Michael Daniels of the Civil Air Search and Rescue Association (CASARA) was recognized with the Award for his 25 years of commitment to improving air SAR in Ontario and Canada. Thanks to Daniels' hard work, not only does Ontario have province-wide air SAR services and an association but, in conjunction with the Department of National Defence (DND), a national association has been established.

In 1997, LCol (ret'd) Keith Gathercole, a former Canadian Forces SAR helicopter pilot, was the Outstanding SAR Achievement Award winner. Gathercole was a dedicated SAR officer with more than 7000 hours of flying behind him. Keith served in nearly every SAR squadron in Canada, and was the Commanding Officer of both the 103 Rescue Unit and 424 Transport and Rescue Squadron.

Award recipients are chosen for their courage, determination and extraordinary contributions to SAR. If someone you know has made an outstanding contribution to SAR, you can nominate him or her for the Achievement Award and Certificate of Achievement. Nominations will be received up to 1 August 1998 and should be forwarded to the Editor of SARSCENE by mail, fax [(613) 996-3746] or e-mail ([carole@nss.gc.ca](mailto:carole@nss.gc.ca)). The Award and certificates will be presented during the Awards Banquet at SARSCENE '98 in Banff, Alberta on 25 September 1998.

*For additional information, contact Carol O'Rourke-Elliott, Editor of SARSCENE, at 1 800 727-9414 or e-mail [carole@nss.gc.ca](mailto:carole@nss.gc.ca)*

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## **Introduction to North Shore**

The North Shore Rescue (NSR) team is a volunteer group from Vancouver, British Columbia which assists the police, fire and ambulance service in community-based search and rescue. NSR consists of approximately 40 members from all walks of life who share a common interest in providing an important life-saving service to the public, 24 hours a day, every day of the year.

Team members continuously sharpen important skills since the mountains and canyons of the North Shore present potential hazards to the unwary. NSR provides search and rescue, communications, first aid and other assistance to the community to alleviate the distress that can be caused by floods, earthquakes and other emergencies. They also volunteer their time to provide talks to schools, hiking clubs, church and other community groups, staff booths at outdoor shows and so forth.

The team has existed for over 30 years, making it one of the oldest SAR teams in Canada. During this time the number of calls each year has steadily increased. Over the past 30 years the team has been involved in more than

700 mountain search and rescue operations and volunteered over 45 000 hours of effort. These calls have involved over 900 subjects, and approximately 25 per cent of the calls have involved subject injuries or death.

*For more information:*

*147 East 14th Street*

*North Vancouver, BC V7L 2N4*

*Tel.: (604) 983-7441, Fax: (604) 985 3733*

*E-mail: Frank Van Hooft@Spectrumsignal.com*

## **The North Shore Rescue Team**

The 30-foot (nine metre) cliff, located in a quiet suburban neighbourhood in North Vancouver, British Columbia, was festooned with ropes and people suspended at varying heights. The North Shore Rescue Team (NSRT) was practising rope rescue systems. On this night, warm and clear for mid-March, more than 40 team members were learning techniques and manoeuvres that may help save lives.

Formed in 1965 under the Provincial Defence Program, the NSRT originally provided assistance according to the concerns of the times: nuclear attack, riots and the occasional missing person. Now, with rising numbers of people becoming interested in outdoor pursuits, greater emphasis has been put on rescues in the back country or uncontrolled areas.

With the beautiful West Coast Mountains rising over the city of Vancouver, including the two municipalities of North and West Vancouver, it is no wonder the mountains are constantly besieged by people. Three ski resorts and numerous trails into the mountainous back country are all part of the team's 480 square kilometre (185 square mile) area of responsibility. The team also provides mutual aid to other parts of British Columbia and the adjacent American states.

While lost or injured people are the most frequent problem, the NSRT must be prepared for any eventuality. Team members are trained in rope rescue systems, avalanche awareness, swift water rescue, map and compass work, tracking and helicopter flight rescue training. Individual members also maintain their technical skills by pursuing their own interests such as kayaking, skiing and mountain climbing.

Public education is another important part of the team's mandate. NSRT members visit local schools and community groups to talk about safety in the outdoors. They also provide assistance to the Provincial Parks Department and local ski operators by building trails, marking routes and helping with the publication of trail guides. As part of the Provincial Emergency Program, the NSRT is expected to help in civil emergencies: floods, earthquakes and man-made disasters. Team members also become volunteers for the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) to assist in urban searches for lost children or elderly people who wander from care facilities.

The team relies on donations and some municipal and provincial support. The men and women of the team put in an average of more than 16 000 volunteer hours per year and are on call every day of the year.

*Amy Pirie Ford*

*147 East 14th Street*

*North Vancouver BC V7L 2N4*

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## Searching for SAR Information?

The NSS Resource Centre Comes to the Rescue!

Have you ever wondered how dogs can detect human scent in water? Or how the human body reacts to arctic temperatures? Maybe you're more interested in the psychology behind finding a lost child. The Resource Centre of the National Search and Rescue Secretariat (NSS) is a unique library of Canadian and international search and rescue information, and it's also the place where answers to some very obscure questions can be found.

SAR is an interdisciplinary subject. The Resource Centre holds information on a wide variety of topics including safety measures, training, first aid, wilderness medicine and outdoor activities such as kayaking, skiing and rock climbing. The collection also includes general reference tools, specialized SAR reference titles, SAR-related magazines, parliamentary papers, the Secretariat's own publications and publications produced as part of projects funded by the NSS.

"There are so many dedicated people out there who work to help others, and a vast majority of these are volunteers who live in remote areas without access to libraries," says Jayanti Roy, NSS librarian. "I find that these are the people who need the Centre the most. It's a real challenge and pleasure for me to find information for them."

Jayanti recalls one confused person who thought the NSS was a social services agency and called her to help find a long-lost relative. "That was one research question I couldn't solve!" said Jayanti.

The most common inquiries are how to establish a SAR group, where to find a canine SAR group and where to find training. Jayanti Roy has prepared information packages on these topics as well as on water and dive rescue which are frequently sent to clients all across Canada. The Resource Centre also fields reference questions from around the world and has access to materials found in other libraries.

### Library Statistics

- Holdings: 3500 items, including publications, videos, CD-ROMs, photographs, slides.
- SAR bibliographies.
- Lists of videos and periodicals.
- Materials may be borrowed for one month or two weeks for clients in the National Capital Region.
- Charges are applied for lost or damaged articles.
- Visitors are welcome during business hours (9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday to Friday).

*For more information on the NSS Resource Centre or to submit a reference question please contact:*  
*Jayanti Roy, Librarian*  
*Standard Life Building*  
*275 Slater Street, 4th Floor*  
*Ottawa ON K1A 0K2*  
*Tel. (613) 992-0063 or 1-800-727-9414*  
*Fax: (613) 996-3746*  
*E-mail: [jroy@nss.gc.ca](mailto:jroy@nss.gc.ca)*

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## **SARVAC News**

### *1998 Canadian Federal Budget Assists SAR Volunteers*

Don Blakely, the British Columbia Director for SARVAC, was reviewing the 1998 proposed Canadian federal budget and came across some interesting news for SAR volunteers: the \$500 deduction which previously existed for volunteer fire fighters has been extended to SAR volunteers.

The general information released by Revenue Canada now refers to a \$1,000 deduction which can be claimed by "Emergency Service Volunteers." An internal department memo includes SAR volunteers in the definition of "Emergency Service Volunteers."

The \$1,000 deduction can be applied only against income received from a governmental authority for SAR or emergency service work (the deduction also applies to other areas such as volunteer ambulance personnel, etc.). Any amount received from that governmental authority in excess of \$3,000 per year will reduce that \$1,000 deduction. (For example, if you collect \$3,250, then only \$750 remains in your deduction).

While this is an indication of progress on the federal level, it only affects those who receive income for these services. Very few SAR volunteers receive any such income. But it is a start and can perhaps be used as a springboard for further gains in future years.

Remember that while the budget has been announced it is not yet passed into law. The odds are very high that these particular changes will make it. The changes only apply to the 1998 fiscal year and cannot be used for your 1997 income tax return. For further information contact your local Revenue Canada office.

### *Insurance Update*

One of the major concerns of search and rescue volunteers and organizations is the issue of insurance – liability as well as personal injury. The SARVAC team is currently negotiating with three major insurance companies to make this coverage available to teams who wish to participate in the insurance.

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## New SAR Initiatives Fund Update

The New SAR Initiatives Fund (NIF) was established by the federal government in 1988 to improve search and rescue capabilities in Canada. With an annual budget of \$8.1 million, NIF is managed by the National Search and Rescue Secretariat (NSS) on behalf of the Lead Minister for Search and Rescue (LMSAR) who is also the Minister of National Defence.

The NSS manages the NIF in partnership with departments and organizations with search and rescue responsibilities at the federal, provincial or territorial level. The federal departments are: Department of Canadian Heritage (Parks Canada), Environment Canada (Atmospheric Environment Service), Department of Fisheries and Oceans (Canadian Coast Guard), Department of National Defence, Solicitor General (Royal Canadian Mounted Police) and Transport Canada. The provincial/territorial authorities are the Emergency Measures Organizations, in most cases. The names and addresses of authorized NIF sponsors are contained in the NIF Guide.

Proposals submitted through a provincial/territorial sponsor must confirm that at least 25 per cent of the total funding is available from sources other than the NIF.

Funds are used to create new initiatives which will enhance the effectiveness, efficiency and economy of search and rescue activities in Canada. This year, a new NIF Guide has been created which clearly explains the various aspects and new elements of the program and is user-friendly. Some of the new elements include:

- an explanation of the six NIF priority funding areas, NIF program structure, amendment procedure, final summary reports
- a revised NIF proposal form
- a glossary.

All proposals must be approved by an authorized federal/provincial/territorial NIF sponsor prior to being submitted to the NSS by 1 August. More information is available from any of the program sponsors, or from the NSS, and is also available on the NSS Web site at <http://www.nss.gc.ca>.

*For more information, or a copy of the revised NIF Guide, please contact:*

*Mary E. Thomas, Federal Co-ordination Officer  
National Search and Rescue Secretariat  
275 Slater Street, 4th floor, Ottawa, ON K1A 0K2  
Tel.: (613) 996-2782 /1 800 727-9414*

## New Initiatives Fund List 1998-1999

PRIORITY	SPONSOR	PROJECT TITLE
1	Fisheries and Oceans	Canadian Coast Guard Auxiliary SAR Equipment Initiative
2	National Defence	Self-Locating Datum Marker Buoy - Phase 2
3	Saskatchewan	Enhancement of the Saskatchewan SAR Program
4	National Defence	SAR Night Vision Goggles Upgrade
5	Transport Canada	Study to Reduce the Cost of 406 MHz ELTs

6	New Brunswick	Red Cross First Responder Program for GSAR in NB
7	National Defence	Tundra Engine Heaters for SAR Helicopters
8	Ontario	York Regional Police SAR
9	Fisheries and Oceans	Public Boating Safety Education NF GSAR Association
10	Transport Canada	Weather to Fly Safety Aircraft System
11	Ontario	Formation of SAR Organization James Bay/Hudson Bay
12	Ontario	Ontario SAR Council Baseline Study
13	Fisheries and Oceans	In-Water Rescue Equipment - Harbour Grace Fire Brigade
14	Nova Scotia	Hand-Held Infrared Research
15	Ontario	Start-up of Ontario SAR Volunteer Association
16	Ontario	Missing Patient Incidents: Guidebook for Health-Care Facilities
17	Manitoba	Rebuilding and Development of The Pas SAR Centre
18	Canadian Heritage	Self-Reliance / Safety Video for Wilderness Canoeists
19	National Defence	LAPDESKS for CASARA
20	Fisheries and Oceans	Cellular Direction Finding Equipment
21	British Columbia	Wilderness Recreation Risk Management Education
22	Fisheries and Oceans	School Campaign on Boating Accident Prevention
23	Canadian Heritage	Water Rescue Training for First Responders
24	Environment Canada	Lake Diefenbaker WeatheRadio
25	Fisheries and Oceans	Operational Guidelines for Volunteer SAR Units and the Inshore Rescue Boat Program
26	Canadian Heritage	Avalanche Risk Management in Eastern and Atlantic Canada
27	Northwest Territories	NWT SAR Training Program
28	National Defence	SAR Data Warehouse
29	National Defence	RCC High Resolution Picture Transmission Visualization
30	Fisheries and Oceans	Capsized Vessel - Aid for Victims
31	Fisheries and Oceans	Prevention of Boating-Related Drowning Deaths and Injuries
32	Fisheries and Oceans	SAR Transponders (SART) Radar Trials
33	Environment Canada	Marine Weather for B.C. Coast - CD ROM
34	National Defence	Image Generator for SAR Helicopters
35	Canadian Heritage	Rediscovery International Foundation Risk Management
36	Environment Canada	Replacement of Visibility Sensors - Miscou Island/ East Point
37	Fisheries and Oceans	Coherent Ultra High Frequency (UHF) Radar
38	Northwest Territories	SAR Prevention Program - N.W.T.
39	National Defence	Noise Cancellation in SAR Communication
40	Fisheries and Oceans	Plan for Integrated Drowning Information System
41	Environment Canada	Plastic/Composite Hull Buoy Development and Deployment
42	National Defence	Infrared Eye - Airborne Prototype
43	Fisheries and Oceans	Creation of an International SAR Society
44	National Defence	Auto Tracking Capability for SAR Active Imaging Systems

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## The Mounties Get Their Meals!

You've been out on a search since daylight. Your breakfast is a distant memory and your stomach is complaining loudly. What you'd really love is a hot meal, but you're in the middle of the bush and there are no kitchens, or campfires, in sight.

This is a very familiar scenario to search and rescue volunteers and to members of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) who tested and recommended a new self-heating food product.

These meals in a pouch have a shelf life of five years, and need no water for rehydration as they are pre-cooked. The heater sleeve heats the meal to 80° Celsius (178° Fahrenheit) degrees in 12 minutes without matches, fire or a stove. The current menus include: Spanish Breakfast, Chicken and Vegetable Casserole and Rotini Bolognese, all portion sizes have been increased since the RCMP evaluation.

The RCMP Contract Policing Branch tested the taste, portion size and heating of the meals and now recommends them for officers in the field. SAR RCMP personnel and volunteers can obtain more information on Hot Pack meals by contacting the manufacturer, Canland in Mont-Tremblant Quebec at (819) 425-7241.

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## The Ontario SAR Volunteer Association

Formed in 1997, the Ontario SAR Volunteer Association, OSARVA, is working diligently to represent the numerous volunteer groups which exist in Ontario. To find out more about OSARVA contact the director in your area:

<b>Northwest Region:</b> Pete Garvey P.O. Box 1210 Kenora ON P9N 3X7  Tel: (807) 468-3203	<b>Northeast Region:</b> Mike Scoyne 479 Old Webbwood Road Espanola ON P5E 1P2  Tel: (705) 869-1223
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**Central Region:**

Jim Chatterton  
P.O. Box 402  
Haliburton ON K0M 1S0

Tel: (705) 754-2127

**Eastern Region:**

Kim Cooper  
6-3809 St. Joseph Boulevard  
Orleans ON K1C 1T1

Tel: (613) 834-0980

**Greater Toronto Area:**

John Ryan  
4660 Innis Lake Road RR#5  
Caledon East, ON L0N 1E0

Tel: (905) 584-0891

**Western Region:**

Leslie Jones  
3929 Canborro Road RR #1  
Fenwick ON L0S 1C0

Tel: (905) 386-0029

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## Co-ordination Requires Communications

Experienced searchers recognize that as a search escalates in scope communications becomes increasingly critical to response co-ordination and successful results. Case studies from Cowichan to Saskatchewan and from Gander to Whistler show that search operations can quickly attract and involve hundreds of untrained volunteers who come forward to assist in life-saving operations.

Search Managers must allow in their plans and procedures for this escalation and ensure that every searcher is fully aware of the mission status and purpose. In theory, this can be achieved by the SAR Manager communicating to team leaders using expensive hand held radios. In reality, this vital communications link can be less than adequate due to terrain, weather, operator inexperience or equipment failure. Without the ability to communicate with team members and volunteers, the SAR Manager becomes ineffective in co-ordinating this lifesaving effort.

With this communication requirement in mind, an innovative Yukon company has developed a fully portable, completely self-contained, emergency FM transmitter that runs off any 12 volt power supply. The Safety Radio will broadcast messages to all involved in the search over any FM radio.

Using the Safety Radio a Search Manager can:

- relay real-time instructions to all team members and volunteers
- continuously broadcast an emergency message or search directive of up to 3.5 minutes in duration
- standardize night-time sound-sweep searches with timed, digitally recorded, audible tones.
- Team members are motivated, and co-ordinated as part of a team effort:
- Each searcher can be assigned an inexpensive pocket radio and monitor the VHF or UHF radio traffic concerning the search.
- All members of the operation can hear the exact search directives straight from the SAR Manager.

The Safety Radio will broadcast at 1 or 5 watts, is Industry Canada type-certified and does not require a broadcast licence when used for emergency purposes. It is enclosed in a weatherproof pelican case, weighs only 22 kg. and can be set up and operating in less than 10 minutes. With a broadcast range of up to 20 km, the Safety Radio will permit a very wide area search, while maintaining constant communication.

Although the InfoPoint 2000SAR is ideal for wilderness and urban SAR operations, it is also well suited for a variety of other emergency applications.

- May 1997 Safety Radio used to broadcast flood warnings to residents of Dawson City, due to an ice jam on the mighty Yukon River. The "Safety Advisory" broadcast was regularly updated by local officials for a number of days.
- September 1997 Yukon Conservation Officers used the Safety Radio to alert residents of grizzly bear threats and update them on recent sightings.
- December 1997 Ontario Provincial Police used InfoPoint technology to inform the traveling public of accident scenes, detours and delays.
- January 1998 low power FM transmitter technology helped highway officials in Manitoba and Yukon broadcast road and weather conditions, warning travelers of potentially dangerous situations.

For the first time, emergency officials have the ability to transmit both live or recorded broadcasts to the public ensuring the information is timely and unedited by the media. This technology is a major advancement in the communications field and is useful to Emergency Managers in many disaster situations.

*For more information on the InfoPoint 2000SAR contact Total Point Inc. at:*

*Total Point Inc., 311 Black Street  
Whitehorse, Yukon Y1A 2N1, Canada  
867-667-4823, 867-668-4710 (fax)*

*Website: [www.totalnorth.ca](http://www.totalnorth.ca)*

*E-mail: [totalpoint@totalnorth.ca](mailto:totalpoint@totalnorth.ca)*

*Submitted by Paul D. Albertson, Director (retired), Yukon EMO. Mr. Albertson has over 15 years experience in Emergency Management. He is currently working as an emergency program consultant to industry and government.*

*867-399-4214, E-mail: [palbertson@marshlake.ca](mailto:palbertson@marshlake.ca)*

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## How to Stay Warm, Dry and Alive

The right flotation devices save lives

On the evening of 4 September 1994, Kirby Lowe stepped into a standard 4.9 metre (16 foot) aluminum fishing boat equipped with a 25 hp motor and set off by himself across Carswell Lake in northern Saskatchewan. "The incident happened so fast, I'm still not certain of the mechanics involved" says Mr. Lowe. What is certain is that the boat heaved suddenly, plunging him into the water.

Kirby spent 30 minutes bobbing up and down in the icy water before struggling to the distant shore. But he survived, thanks to his Buoy-O-Boy® personal flotation device. Unfortunately, every year, hundreds of water enthusiasts across Canada don't fare as well in similar water accidents because they don't recognize the importance of wearing protective gear while engaging in water activities.

"While Mr. Lowe made the right choice in selecting a personal flotation device (PFD), consumers should also be aware that there is another category of protection gear called lifejackets," says Terry Ackerman of Protexion Products Inc. "A lifejacket is designed to turn an unconscious person into a face upwards position within a few seconds. A personal flotation device (PFD) keeps a conscious person's head out of water in calm conditions and assists them in rough water. A PFD is not designed to turn an unconscious person from a face down position to a face upward position," adds Mr. Ackerman "Knowing the difference between a PFD and a lifejacket helps the consumer make the right choice as to which is best suited to them and the activities they choose to engage in."

Commercial/industrial activities require a PFD or lifejacket that provides safety, quality and comfort. Waterproof features and warmth are mandatory for workers who must endure various weather conditions. The Buoy-O-Boy commercial/industrial products include thermal worksuits, anti-exposure worksuits, bomber jackets, coats and PFDs. These products have special features like retroreflective tape, waterproof construction and frontal cordura nylon lining for durability. The Canadian Coast Guard Auxiliary, R.C.M.P., fire departments and whale watching companies are just a few of the commercial users who benefit from Buoy-O-Boy® flotation products.

Regarding quality, Mr. Ackerman says how the device is constructed is a big factor in keeping people "warm, dry and alive". "We [Buoy-O-Boy®] produce an extensive line of Coast Guard approved flotation products dedicated to water safety. We use the highest grade of flotation materials, Underwriters Laboratories approved nylon, superior quality webbing and non-corrosive plastic buckles and zippers." Mr. Ackerman adds, "Our anti-exposure suits and coats are constructed using an exclusive heat-sealing technique – SEAMWELD™ – to virtually eliminate wet shoulders, wet necks and wet seats. We keep you warm and dry in all weather conditions."

Weight is also an important consideration when choosing appropriate safety gear. Many users don't realize that there are specific guidelines to follow for selecting the right size of suit, coat or vest. Under 41 kg (90 lbs), there are three sizes to choose from based on body weight. For users over 41 kg, devices are selected by chest size. "Again, choosing the wrong size can result in a poor or loose fit. The individual may be wearing the right type of device, but the wrong size. Fit is an important factor when purchasing a PFD or lifejacket. Try it on before buying or using it and make sure the vest is a snug fit" says Mr. Ackerman.

Choosing the right type of protective gear can be the difference between a safe and memorable water experience and one that is unforgettable for the wrong reasons. "You can stay "warm, dry and alive"... and that's what we are dedicated to at Buoy-O-Boy®," says Mr. Ackerman.

*Buoy-O-Boy® is an ISO 9002 Registered Canadian Manufacturer of Canadian Coast Guard approved water protection devices. For more information on Buoy-O-Boy® write:  
Buoy-O-Boy®, Protexion Products Inc.  
643 Speedvale Avenue West  
Guelph, ON, Canada N1K 1E6.*

*Telephone 1 800 268-3112 Ext. 244.  
Fax: 1 800 433-3764.*

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