

Maine Association For Search and Rescue

Meeting Minutes for 1 February 1998

Meeting is called to order at 1305 hours at Warden Service Headquarters in Sidney by MASAR President John McDonough.

Present- Keith R. Heavrin Jr., Ray Gieger, Steve Hudson, Randy Armour, John McDonough, Warden-Tim Peabody, Warden Safety Officer - Mike Sawyer, Andre Robidoux, David Braun, Paul Magoon, BSP Ranger Bob Howes, Pete Byrnes, Tonya Grant, Rick Grant, Dianna Boisvert, Warden Lt. Patrick Dorian.

Announcements None

Secretary's Report Minutes from the December meeting were briefly discussed. Andre Robidoux moves to accept them as written. Seconded by Rick.. Unanimous vote in favor.

Treasurer's Report Report is postponed as Pete Laveway is not able to attend this meeting.

Baxter State Park Ranger Bob Howes reports on a recent incident . A four member climbing party left to climb Mt. Katahdin at 0800 hours on 26 Jan 1998. By noon they had decided to turn back , shortly afterwards one of the party lost his belay using an ice ax and fell nearly 1000 feet. Serious head injuries and other injuries resulted. The other members of the party did what they could for the victim then several of them went for help. At 1600 hours Baxter Park Authorities were notified of the accident and proceeded to call out a number of volunteers as well as dispatching available people to the scene. Several rangers with some climbing experience were sent in with snow shoes with cleats on them and were able to reach the victim. If he had been any higher on the slope , at least crampons would have been required and probably more technical climbing gear to affect a safe extraction of the injured man. A Helicopter was called for at the outset of getting resources considered. That ship was grounded for two hours due to unavailability of fuel . Bob relates that it didn't slow the effort down at all because it took that long to get people in to the scene. The first of the volunteers from Lincoln Search and Rescue were approaching the scene when the helicopter arrived and lifted the injured man off the slope . Also lifted out were the victims brother and one of the Park Rangers. Lincoln then assisted with withdrawing the remaining people on the ground. Randy Armour reported some difficulty with phones during the call-out.

Lt. Pat Dorian announces that the Warden Service fixed wing aircraft would be available to lift technical climbers to the nearest airport to Baxter Park if needed in the future for incidents like this one. He also remarks that there are five new Warden's , each young and capable men, within 30 minutes of Baxter Park. They could be called in on short notice where getting teams all the way up from southern Me takes time.

John McDonough asks what medical people were on hand . Bob relates there were two Rangers with good medical experience, one EMT and the Paramedic from the copter.

Tim Peabody asks if MASAR or the Wilderness Rescue team have any plan in place to use aircraft to deploy to incidents in the Park where their special skills and gear would be required to affect rescue operations. John relates that he is not sure of what is required , officially, to set this up with Brunswick or what Warden Service requires to respond to this type request. It is suggested that this be looked into. Mike Sawyer says Brunswick has said they will not fly at night and they need Baxter Park to call them and request action. Brunswick will fly at first light.

Mahoosuc Notch Incident Ray Gieger reports that the Mahoosuc Mountain Rescue Team was involved in a search . On 15 December 1997, at 0300 hours one of the team members received a call from a distraught parent stating her daughter and two others were lost somewhere near the Maine New Hampshire border. This call was relayed to Robert Baribeau who attempted to contact a local Game Warden, Don Gray, as well as NH Fish and Game. The lost hiker scenario was confirmed but no request for assistance from The Maine Warden Service or NH Fish and Game was received. At approximately 0430 Mahoosuc Mt. Rescue Team leaders made the decision to mobilize . Eight members were assembled at the Newry Maine Outward Bound Base . At 0630 , after phone conversations with New Hampshire Fish and Game a request to assist was received and the team was advised to proceed to the Success Pond rd outside Berlin NH. Warden Don Gray met the team at the Notch Trail entrance where the hikers vehicle was found. the team was directed to follow the tracks into the Mahoosuc Notch . At about 0930 the team started into the notch following snow shoe tracks made the previous day. At 1135 the team met the three missing people coming down the Notch from the opposite direction. The two boys , each 18, and one girl , 16, appeared to be in good condition but were complaining of very cold feet. One subject was looked at for frostbite which included removing the boots and placing gauze pads between the toes. The three were given hot drinks and gorp to help warm them up then escorted out and to the Androscoggin Valley Hospital in Berlin.

Carrabassett Valley Search Keith relates that MESARD was called and worked a couple of hours on a search for missing 24 year old Kevin Zabrowski who was last seen new years night and Judson's Tavern near the entry to the Sugarloaf Ski area. The subject was very drunk and walked out of the bar at around 0130 leaving his coat. He was not seen again and no evidence has developed as to where he may have gone to. Tim Peabody relates that the Warden's and volunteers at the scene worked to look for tracks that might have been left going into any of the wooded areas within three miles or more of the last known place. The temperature was bitter cold the night the subject disappeared with a cutting 35 knot wind making for very bitter wind chill. It was not felt that an inebriated person dressed only in tennis shoes , slacks and a dress shirt would have been able to go very far. It was noted that cross country ski trails , snow mobile trails and the main road were also easily accessible from the parking lot where the subject was reported to have been last seen.

Blue Hill Mountain Search Keith relates that he was called out by Warden Calvin Hale at 0019 hours on 17 January 1998 to assist in looking for a Cell One Repairman who was missing on Blue Hill Mountain in Blue Hill Me. Keith Heavrin arrived at the scene at 0100 hours and was directed to climb about half way up the mountain and then traverse around the slope to the North and see if tracks could be found. The Wardens placed several patrol trucks along the road in an effort to have the subject hear the sirens. The recent ice storm had placed so much ice coating the branches of the trees that the wind moving those icy branches made it very hard to hear anything while walking. Shortly after starting to traverse the slope tracks were found descending the mountain. Warden Hale advised they were most likely the right tracks and to follow them. The subject had a six hour head start. It was apparent that he wasn't moving very fast or making much progress . Several times , the dogs were able to sort out the correct trail when wind and many double backs made the track confusing. In about an hour of walking the subject was located by voice contact and was shortly escorted from the woods. He had only gone about a mile and a half and was lost only about a half mile from the road his truck was on. He had a cell phone with him and tool kit containing a blow torch . The batteries on the phone were near dead and he'd been unable to light a fire. He was in good condition but had very cold feet.

Warden Lt. Pat Dorian relates that they had another search for the subject whose habit it has become to chain himself to a tree about 3 weeks ago. The subject had just gotten out of BMHI and apparently escaped and went into the woods again.

Warden Dorian also relates that some eight lost snowmobilers in the last few weeks has Warden Service enlisting the help of The Maine Snowmobile Association in searching for these folks. They would

like to organize and train club members to assist .

Mike Sawyer relates that they are compiling a list of snowmobile rescue sleds that are available . Any team with a sled suitable and available for rescue efforts should let MSA or WS know about the resource.

Standards Committee Steve relates that the revisions to the dog training standards have been completed and are being printed up. Steve also relates that ASTM is working on a dog standard . He also relates that NFPA has written a proposed technical rescue standard ,NFPA 1951, and it has caused some flap. The standard, if implemented, will cause problems for Wilderness searchers due to unreasonable requirements for gear and safety equipment. Steve suggests people ask for a copy of the standards and then comment on it. It would be best for all involved if they were encouraged to limit the application of their standards to exclude wilderness applications. Steve relates that all the MASAR standards currently approved are on the MDI web page.

May Statewide Training Exercise Some discussion about getting planning off the ground for this effort. Tim Peabody relates he wasn't aware he needed to initiate the effort. John says he will see that it gets going. All agree that a location towards southern Maine is to be planned.

Old Business Report on the Baxter State Park summer volunteer program going forward again. Baxter Park has a very positive attitude about this program and the considerable help it has meant to them. The volunteers who took part in the program last year had very high praise for the experience they had last season. They encourage any interested EMTs and WFR or SAR experienced people to sign up for the summer of 98. Some discussion ensues about who should handle the scheduling of the volunteers for the summer. Several people express that BSP should handle that again this year . It is also suggested that MASAR handle this scheduling. Dianna Boisvert volunteers to handle this scheduling for the coming season. Anyone interested in taking part should contact her at PO Box 205, Monmouth Me. 04259 933-4437. See application sheet attached to these minutes.

New Business Keith asks if any of the units of MASAR have been contacted by or heard of Rescue Dogs Incorporated out of Massachusetts. None has. Keith describes the new group and announces that they will be holding a regional conference in May. Information on them is that they are a new dog group with one experienced handler . The majority of the group has no SAR experience or record of work done in SAR.

Mike Sawyer announces that L. L. Bean has requested help with their Maine Guide program. Mike would like to enlist the help of some experienced MASAR personnel to help them teach their program. Topics like: What should a guide do with people they are responsible for in the event of a search . What is expected and where do they send people.

Mike Sawyer also brings up the flagging issue that emerged at the Ashland search again. Keith had offered that dark blue flagging is very hard to see at night and should not be chosen for a base line. Anyone interested in input on setting up a standard for what colors to use where on searches should contact Mike Sawyer.

Steve suggests he'd like to have MASAR buy a copy of Adobe Acrobat to be used to format the MASAR standards so that everyone can print them out. It is voted unanimously to approve this expenditure of MASAR funds.

John asks David Braun of The Civil Air Patrol if anything can be done to transport SAR personnel and equipment using CAP resources in the event of search incidents in remote locations. David answers that he thinks that may be possible but they would have to work out the authorizations and protocols. He will check this out and report back to MASAR on it.

Someone suggests that we return to the monthly meeting format. The idea is soundly rejected.

Lakes Region asks if we can get someone from the State EMS to come to a meeting to address some protocol issues. John suggests he'd prefer we research the information first.

It is moved that when ever the MASAR BASAR course is given , a course certificate will be issued and a record kept of the individuals who complete the course The instructor of the course shall be responsible for sending a record of those completing the course to Randy Armour who shall keep a record of it and issue the certificates. Vote is unanimous to accept.

It is requested that all units and individual members who want to receive copies of the MASAR meeting minutes by e-mail, please send an appropriate e-mail address to: krheavrin@acadia.net. Please note that this would simplify sending and receiving the minutes and save postage.

Next MASAR meeting will be held on 1 April 1998 at the Sidney Warden Service Headquarters at 1300 hours.

Meeting is adjourned at 1535 hours.

Baxter State Park summer volunteer program sign-up sheet

Baxter State Park working with MASAR has established a summer volunteer program to assist the Park and the public in responding to medical incidents in the Park during the Peak summer weeks. Teams of qualified volunteers are stationed in the park free of charge and with many courtesy benefits, including a radio, some gear and the gratitude of Park personnel. During your stay you agree to be available to respond to any medical emergencies that may occur. Commonly these may include serious injuries to hikers or medical emergencies that can be life threatening. The Park would like to have priority attention for the parks busy weeks. If you are a Paramedic, EMT, WEMT, FR, WFR or an experienced SAR volunteer and would like to take part in this program please give Dianne Boisvert a call to check on dates available or fill out this form and send it to :

Dianne Boisvert

PO. Box 205

Monmouth, Me. 04259

933-4437

(please feel free to make copies of this form)

Name _____

Address _____ Phone number _____

MASAR unit affiliation _____

Medical training level _____ Years experience _____

SAR experience _____

Dates you would like to be in the park. Please note that the scheduling needs of the Park are a primary consideration and flexibility is requested.

Dates _____

Alternative dates _____

Comments: