

Maine Association For Search And Rescue

Monthly Meeting Minutes

8 September 1996

Meeting is called to order by John McDonough at 1606 hours.

Present

Dave Martin, Al Martin, Keith Heavrin, Randy Armour, Steve Hudson, John McDonough, Rick Farris, Robin Graziano, Bruce Wilson.

Announcements

MASAR annual dues for 1996 are due as of July. Any members or units not having paid dues for 1996 are encouraged to mail \$10 for each individual membership and/or \$35 for a unit membership to:

**Peggy McLaughlin
85 Allison St.
Newton, MA 02158
617-244-1205**

Please do this at your earliest convenience and designate who each amount pays for.

Robin Graziano representing Lakes Region Rescue attended a meeting for the first time. The new unit has about ten core members currently getting training and working on skills to become a volunteer ground search resource. Welcome aboard Lakes Region Rescue.

Secretary's Report

There was no official meeting held for the month of August. Minutes from the meeting held 7/14/96 were read and approved as written. Moved by Steve, seconded by Dave - unanimous.

Treasurer's Report

John presented a treasurer's report sent to him by Peggy featuring an overall balance in the MASAR account of \$8009.37 consisting of: GPS fund - \$2190, Command Post Fund - \$5300, MASAR amount - \$519.37. Two payments were recently made to Page New England and a check for \$1000 as a deposit towards the command post was sent to Gary Anderson. Several donations have been received.

Committee Reports

Standards Committee

Steve reports that a registered notification was sent to Sue Webb concerning the results of her June 30th field test. She has not filed an appeal or requested a retest within the now expired allowable time.

Steve advances that the Standards Committee is considering having all future certification testing be done within the member units. As much as the first rounds of dog team testing by a MASAR designated field testing team were necessary, for a variety of reasons, the difficulty in getting the field tests set up, staffed and completed argue strongly for in house testing. Keith states that MASAR must hold a firm line on standards acceptability for any units submitting standards to MASAR for unit certification. John offers that the line has already been held concerning the physical fitness testing portion of the new requirements. It is also recognized that MASAR reserves the option to test any and all teams it may chose to. These testing provisions are already in the new standards.

ASTM

Steve reports ASTM had a meeting in May for which he received the minutes only a few weeks ago. There is another meeting in November. The Committee dealing with Carabiner Standards has produced a document that the committee approved but is likely to be rejected when scrutinized by the membership. A number of problems will be addressed where the document is deficient. Steve's dues to ASTM are up to date but he has been limited in his participation due to not

being able to travel to the often distant meetings. The only standards that have gotten entirely approved so far are ones relating to through ice rescue and some on water rescue. The ASTM dog standard is up in the air and they are having difficulty finding a chairperson for the committee. Keith says it seems unlikely that any of the MASAR certified K-9 group people would be willing to extend themselves to that level considering the commitment it takes to do what is required for work within the state of Maine.

September Training Exercise Committee

Rick Farris reports that W.S. overhead team will be there and Camden Hills Park arrangements are all made. Training exercise on Saturday will be conducted using the Bald Rock area. A gravel pit across from the parking area will be utilized for the CP and staging area. It will start at 0800 hours but it is expected that people will arrive at any hour, as with a real search, and they will be put to work as they come in. Supper Saturday night < as well as classes on Sunday will be held at the picnic area. There should be plenty of camp sites available. The search scenario will involve a medical emergency and rescue as well as two wandering victims. No alcoholic beverages are permitted in the park. Sunday classes will include GPS, map and compass, medical packaging, and radio procedures taught by Roger Wolverton, which should be a good one to attend.

Communications Committee

The license applications sent in for the use of numerous SAR channels, including 155.160, by MASAR has been acknowledged but approval is pending. John asks about the status of the CMP radios. Al says nothing has changed as yet.

Old Business

Al reports that BNAS aircraft have radios that will operate on any channel. Keith asks if they scan those Channels or do they have to program it to use one at a time. Can they scan a group of channels. John says, the most often heard complaint heard from ground units concerning working with aircraft is that communications isn't there. John asks Al to check on what policies might affect this communications. Keith offers that it would be smarter to seek a policy change that would have aircraft participating in searches be instructed to monitor statewide car-to-car, Warden Service, or other channels commonly in use at a search, rather than MASAR radioing up to close the gap. John asks that Al attend the radio procedures class and get all the information he can to report back to the group.

A general discussion of GPS units begins. Concern with the GPS units operating on true North and the ramifications that may arise because magnetic compass bearings have been taught, and generally used, for many years now, in relation to search work and volunteer training. Several people attending the Sunday GPS class will explore these issues.

Changes in Monthly meeting frequency and location are considered. The ensuing discussion culminates in Steve moving that we cut meeting frequency to every other month starting in October. Al seconds and the vote is unanimous in favor. It was agreed that we are in a lighter business load time and can call a special meeting if we need to. After further discussion Randy moves that we make all future MASAR meetings at Warden Service headquarters in Sidney. Seconded by Al and the vote is unanimous in favor. So we meet October 6th at 1600 hours, December 1st at 1300 hours and February 2nd at 1300 hours, all in Sidney.

New Business

John brings up the Cape Elizabeth search and mentions problems that resulted from how the search information was briefed. Discussion ensues about the effect characterizations like "psychotic victim" or "burned out drug user " is likely to have on the search effort. John says pre search assessment teams are being set up to do the investigative work needed to sort some searches like the Cape Elizabeth effort out before they become costly. It is now understood that W.S. probably should not have put an effort in on this one but it is recognized that the media had put a lot of pressure on both Warden Service and the Cape Elizabeth PD Keith offers a description of the search effort MESARD gave on this search and also states that we knew it sounded like a wild goose chase from the start. The concern was that not responding as requested might lead to not being

called at some point when it really did count. MESARD felt it was important from a PR standpoint, concerning how volunteers would be perceived by the people involved with this search, in the future.

Al asks if anyone is using the new DeLorme mapping program " Map Expert". Rick says he has and it works better with overlays and in professional applications. It isn't available to the public and doesn't have any topo features but is excellent for things like 911 routing. Al wonders if it couldn't be integrated with computers to produce maps with topo features on scene. Steve says they are probably working on that now and it will come in another year or so.

Keith starts a report on the East Andover Search where MESARD member Paul Magoon made what may have been a life saving find of a 90 year old man who had wandered from his home, possibly to pick berries, and was out for more than 36 hours. Paul finished the report, as he was present. The search effort was only an hour or two from going to a full blown overhead team effort, with many volunteer teams enroute, when Paul's air scent dog Sheba located the victim. All members present congratulated Paul on the excellent work.

A discussion of MASAR elections begins. The fiscal year starts in July and the elections have usually been in the fall. John states we'd like to see elections brought into sync with the fiscal year schedule, which was set up years ago to coincide with the states schedule. How by-laws reflects on the issue is discussed and it is decided the by-laws can stand as they are. We'll have the present office holders in office a little longer which seems not to be a problem. Steve proposes we hold all future annual elections in June, at the monthly meeting, and have the offices take effect in July to coincide with the fiscal year schedule, and makes that a motion. Al seconds and the vote is unanimous in favor.

John presents a Baxter State Park paper that seems to be requesting stationing of volunteers for use in emergencies in the Park. After some discussion it is agreed to place the issue on next meetings agenda. This will permit time for people to look the document over and for everyone to get a copy. John feels this is a pretty ambiguous request and would like to get some better definition of issues presented by the paper. He'll contact Buzz Caverly via e-mail with some questions for clarification.

Paul asks about fund-raising for the group and suggests we make contact with outfits like LL Bean to see if they will agree to extend a discount to MASAR members. It would be the sort of benefit that could raise participation and membership. John then Al relate problems Wilderness and Dirigo had with people "joining" but never contributing. They were only interested in the benefits.

Next monthly meeting will be held at 1600 hrs at Warden Service HQ in Sidney on October 6th.

AGENDA

1. Announcements
2. Secretary's Report
3. Treasurer's Report
4. Committee reports
5. Old Business
6. New Business
7. Correspondence
8. Set Next Meeting Agenda