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MRA Member Takes A Deep Dive for NASA

In This Issue:

MOUNTAIN RESCUE ASSOCIATION

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MRA Member Guides NASA On Undersea Exploration Analog Mission

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From May 10 - 24, 2010, two astronauts, a veteran undersea engineer and an experienced scientist embarked on the 14th NASA Extreme Environment Mission Operations (NEEMO) undersea analog mission at the Aquarius undersea laboratory. The experienced scientist was none other than Steve Chappell, current president of Rocky Mountain Rescue Group in Boulder, CO and a research scientist from Wyle Integrated Science and Engineering based in Houston,TX.

Aquarius, located in an environment like the abyssal planes encountered on a Martian or lunar surface, is an undersea laboratory used during the NASA Extreme Environment Mission Operations (NEEMO). For two weeks, it was home to astronauts Chris Hadfield and Thomas Marshburn, undersea engineer Andrew Abercromby, and scientist Steve Chappell. The base, located several miles off the coast of Key Largo, Fla., is owned by the National Oceanic and Atmosphere Administration (NOAA) and managed by the University of North Carolina. The goal of the mission was to experience and overcome challenges in an environment that parallels the reduced gravity environments experienced in space.

According to Bill Todd, NEEMO project lead, the mission proved challenging, and successful. "The timeline, the pace and the number of tasks were... our most complicated undersea mission by far," said Todd. "This crew (made up of astronauts, an engineer and a scientist) came together quickly to make it safe and successful which is really an interesting point if you think about the mix of people NASA would want to put together for a two year Martian mission."

The crew conducted a series of extravehicular activities (EVAs), simulating activities that astronauts would be likely to perform during missions in space.

Using near-scale mockup vehicles, EVA teams conducted off-loading, retrieval and survival missions, including the transfer of a simulated incapacitated astronaut from the ocean floor to the deck of a lander, all while weighing what suited astronauts may weigh while on the Moon or Mars.

Steve guides the EVA crew from inside Aquarius. Photo by NASA.

While inside the Aquarius laboratory, the crew performed life sciences experiments focused on human behavior, performance and physiology.

Steve outside Aquarius. Photo by NASA.

The mission also included a study of autonomous crew work, with periods of time when there was limited communication between the crew and the mission control center, much like what could happen during missions to Mars or other distant destinations.

Steve's role on the research team was to help define and execute the research needed to optimize human performance in the next-generation spacesuits and EVA systems. Thousands of data points were collected during the mission and are currently being analyzed to provide the evidence-based guidance needed to ensure the best equipment and technique designs for future space explorers.

Steve said of his involvement in the mission, "It was a tremendous opportunity to work together as a team to help NASA take the next steps to push forward the frontier of space exploration. I was proud to be able to contribute my engineering, science, and rescue skills. It was key to mission success to be able to mesh well together as a crew, leveraging each crewmember's diverse skills to achieve objectives as well as learning how to live and work together under extreme conditions. There is no doubt that my experience gained on mountain rescue missions as a member of a fully-accredited MRA team made me a more valuable NEEMO 14 teammate.

For more information about the NEEMO project, visit: **http://www.nasa.gov/neemo**

For more information about NASA analog field tests, visit: **http://www.nasa.gov/exploration/analogs**

Portrait of Steve Chappell, NEEMO 14 member, climbing Mt. Rainier. Photo by NASA.

About Steve Chappell

Dr. Steve Chappell grew up in Lake Orion, MI. As a kid, he dreamt of space travel and that dream continues to drive him today. After graduating high school, he attended the University of Michigan and earned a bachelors degree in Aerospace Engineering Sciences. After graduating, he used his newly gained expertise to help design and develop aircraft and missile simulations to assist pilots with real-time combat decision making, but his desire to be a part of human spaceflight was still strong. This drove Steve to move to Colorado to further his education… and be closer to the mountains to develop his growing passion for rock climbing and mountaineering.

Steve's intent upon returning to college was to become a medical doctor specializing in aerospace medicine and he began taking classes to make that possible, but being a climber led him to learn about Rocky Mountain Rescue based in Boulder, CO. He became a member of the all-volunteer team, which is one of the busiest in the country, and quickly became active performing technical rock, snow, and ice rescue missions. Over time, he found that his involvement on the mountain rescue team fed his interest in helping people while doing something he loved and he changed his educational course to pursue bioastronautics-related graduate degrees, studying how humans perform in the harsh environment of space. Steve earned masters and doctoral degrees from the University of Colorado, studying human performance in simulated Moon and Mars gravity. While he was performing his graduate research, he worked as one of the lead systems engineers developing and launching a satellite to study cloud formation in the upper atmosphere. Also during this time, his passion for rescue led him to become the operational leader of his mountain rescue team. He's taken part in more than 350 rescue missions and also climbed many high peaks in Colorado and on international expeditions. Along the way, he was introduced to the wonders beneath the waves of the ocean, attaining multiple SCUBA certifications and making dives in exotic locations around the world.

Steve's diverse background and experience led him to work for Wyle Integrated Science & Engineering at NASA Johnson Space Center (JSC). He is helping to define and execute the research needed to optimize human performance in the next-generation spacesuits and EVA systems. As part of his job, he's led and taken part in studies in different exploration analog environments including the high arctic, parabolic flight aircraft, and partial gravity simulators at JSC. He was a major contributor to the design of the mockups and procedures to be used during NEEMO 14.

Although Steve works at JSC, much of his time is spent working remotely from near Boulder. He remains active with Rocky Mountain Rescue as the team's current president and gets into the mountains whenever he can. Steve also enjoys running, canyoneering, reading, and painting.

A Letter From Our New President

I consider it a great honor to have been elected as the MRA's next president, and I'm looking forward to the opportunity to serve over the next two years.

I've got some tough footsteps to follow; Charley Shimanski made great strides over the previous two years, particularly with regard to leading us through our strategic planning work. The priorities identified during that process will continue to be our guiding document, and with the changes to our re-accreditation policy that were approved in Juneau, we have successfully tackled the top priority on our list. In the coming months my fellow officers and I will be looking at what our next priorities should be.

We have lots to do! It's a little overwhelming at times, but that's a good thing. I look forward to hearing your thoughts as we move ahead on the strategic plan.

--Neil Van Dyke

Neil Van Dyke was one of the founding members of Stowe Mountain Rescue in 1980, a 15-year MRA member team. He has served as Appalachian Region chair, and at the national level as member-at-large and vice president. He is the owner and operator of the Golden Eagle Resort in Stowe, which has been in Neil's family since 1963 and was the host property for the 2008 MRA Spring Conference. Neil is also an active member of his local community; he serves as vice president of the local Chamber of Commerce, as the town's emergency management director, as a member of the board of the Green Mountain Club, and as a member of the local board of selectmen. He is married and has three children.

Suspension Syndrome

By Mike Vorachek, MS, EMT, EMT-W, TRT

In an article in the August 2009 issue of Journal of Emergency Medical Services, Messrs Raynovich, Tmaish Al Rwaili, and Bishop put out some good information regarding suspension syndrome. The authors note research involving the deaths of eight climbers in the early 1970's. Often climbers who were hanging free for between half an hour and eight hours, all of whom were alive when rescued, eight died in a period between one-half hour and eleven days.

Although the research is somewhat dated, and as is noted by Dr. Skeet Glatterer below, there is still significant controversy in the medical community regarding suspension syndrome.

Despite the controversy, the applicability to MRA teams may be significant. Not only may we encounter victims, such as a single climber pick-off; but what about our team member who is serving as the litter attendant on a vertical raise or lower?
When you are suspended motionless in a harness, blood pools in the lower extremities. There are a number of factors that influence outcome, and the body has a varying ability to compensate, but everyone who has been suspended for any length of time is at some degree of risk. According to the authors, *"It's important to realize that even an individual who is symptom-free is at risk of sudden death due to myocardial rupture and infarct when moved rapidly to a horizontal position after being released from suspension and especially if they were motionless."*

What happens to the body is that when the legs are confined in the harness, blood that has pooled in the lower extremities does not get sufficient oxygen and acid builds up. When the constriction imposed by the harness is removed and the victim typically becomes horizontal to rest or be placed on a stretcher, the oxygen-deficient, acidotic blood rapidly returns to the circulatory system. Results can include everything from fainting to severe heart damage, with collateral damage to the liver, kidneys, and brain. Medical literature refers to this as a form of reflow syndrome or orthostatic hypotension.

The recommended rescuer response to a potential suspension victim is to avoid placing them in a horizontal position, but rather to keep the patient upright to at least a 30-40° angle and slowly move the patient to a supine position over a period of 30-45 minutes. The authors go on to make a recommendation that *"every individual who has been suspended in a harness and* ***motionless*** *(my emphasis) for more than 10 minutes should be evaluated in a medical facility."* I think of my times in a harness, and as a general rule, I was never motionless for any significant length of time – and I have no recollection of adverse symptoms – but the authors do provide a number of references to support their recommendations.

If you are looking for a free reference on this topic, OSHA has a publication entitled "Suspension Trauma/Orthostatic Intolerance" that is available at **www.osha.gov/dts/shib/shib032404.html**.

You might also want to have one of your medical personnel with a JEMS subscription obtain the article and some of the references for a more in-depth review of this topic. Dr. Glatterer has indicated that several of his contemporaries are also looking at this and may provide additional information in the future.

Stay safe!

Commentary from MRA Medical Committee Chair Skeet Glatterer, M.D.:

Harness Hang Syndrome (HHS), or Harness Suspension Trauma (HST) continues to be a controversial topic.

It was first formally investigated in the late 1970's by French caving groups, and multiple papers have appeared since then. Unfortunately, most have re-quoted data and piggybacked on earlier papers. Still, it is an important entity that we should all be aware of.

The main issue is physiologic effects of decreased venous return, subsequent decreased cardiac output, and decreased organ perfusion both from supposed harness constriction and from dependent and non-moving lower extremities. The real danger occurs with motionless/unconscious victims suspended vertically, as opposed to conscious participants who have lower extremity movement. The issue of reflow phenomenon and the need to slowly return victims to the horizontal position is less well understood.

For now, take a look at the August 2009 JEMS article, and especially the precipitating factors and patients at risk; although I would be hesitant to embrace all of it fully. You can Google HST for numerous articles.

There is a recent Scandinavian article by Dahlberg that questions much of the current thinking regarding HST.

Most importantly, stay tuned. There will be an IKAR Medical Committee paper out relatively soon that will address the latest concepts of HST. This paper will be spearheaded by Ken Zafren, MD, our long-time MRA delegate and IKAR Medical Committee vice chair and immediate past MRA Medical Committee chairman. We will have Dr. Zafren re-address this when the paper becomes available.

As always, if you have comments, questions, suggestions, or just want to argue, please contact us on the MRA medical blog.

Skeet Glatterer MD - Chairman, MRA Medical Committee

Five Colorado SAR teams Receive Prestigious NASAR Award

The National Association for Search and Rescue (NASAR) Valor Award was presented to five of Colorado's search and rescue teams at the association's national conference in Tunica, Mississippi, on May 13. The award, which has only been awarded twice in its history, was given to Alpine Rescue Team (Evergreen), Custer County Search and Rescue Team (Westcliffe), Douglas County Search and Rescue Team (Castle Rock), El Paso County Search and Rescue Team (Colorado Springs) and Rocky Mountain Rescue Group (Boulder).

On the night of July 27-28, 2009, 26 members of the five teams conducted a high altitude rescue that was "above and beyond the call of duty, exemplifying the selfless, perhaps risky commitment to others embodied in the NASAR motto, 'That Others May Live.'"

The rescue took place entirely at night on the traverse between two of Colorado's most dangerous 14,000-foot peaks, Crestone Peak and Crestone Needle, in a gully notorious for rock fall and surrounded by 70° rock faces of 1,500 feet. Rescuers had to climb nearly 4,500 vertical feet, ascending more than 3,000 vertical feet to the summit, then perform a technical lowering for 1,700 vertical feet and then climb back up 1,500 vertical feet to a pass before descending another 1,500 feet. Ten successive roped technical rescue lowering stations were required to lower the injured climber from 14,000 feet to a helicopter at 12,300 feet — all before severe summer thunderstorms developed over the peaks.

Photo by Wojtek Rychlik.

The rescue differed from typical high-mountain missions in several ways:

- To avoid dangerous, forecasted afternoon thunderstorms this entire mission was performed during the night on one of the most notorious and severe 14,000 foot peaks in Colorado.
- Rescuers from the five SAR teams had to work together in severe technical terrain with very difficult route finding, which was all done by headlamp.
- Command and coordination was entirely by radio, spread across two sides of a large mountain; the command post was 15 miles northeast of the accident site, ground access was from the southeast and the lowering to the helicopter was on the southwest flank.
- The technical evacuation involved creative and improvised anchors requiring expertise far above the norm.
- Rescuers' efforts were physically demanding, requiring rescuers to climb over 4000 vertical feet. Rescuers ascended more than 3000 vertical feet to the summit, performed a technical lowering for 1700 vertical feet, and then climbed back up 1000 vertical feet to a pass before descending another 1900 vertical feet to the trailhead.

Photo by Brian Stuebe of Alpine Rescue Team.

The NASAR Valor Award was established in 1977. Its criteria include:

- The action on the part of the nominee clearly must be shown to have been out of the ordinary, beyond the reasonably expected behavior in undertaking a search and rescue activity.
- The action must be shown to have alleviated a situation in which a "victim" was in substantial peril, with high potential for life-threatening injury or death.
- The action must be shown to have occurred in such a way that in successfully carrying out the action, the nominee was required to place himself or herself in a situation potentially resulting in serious injury or death. However, it must be shown that the behavior on the part of the nominee did not exceed the bounds of good judgment and did not constitute reckless endangerment of his or her own well being or that of others.

Photo by Jesse Adamy.

2010 MRA Spring Conference Report

by Dave Clarke

There are strange things done in the midnight sun
At the MRA spring conference meeting
The Juneau trails hold their secret tales
Still, JMR rose with a greeting
The hospitality room lights have seen queer sights
But the queerest they ever did see
Was with great trepidation we discussed accreditation
Who figured we all would agree.

With apologies to Robert Service

From June 17 through the 20th roughly 100 MRA members enjoyed Alaskan hospitality Juneau-style as Juneau Mountain Rescue (JMR) hosted our 2010 Spring Conference. And boy does JMR know how to host an event. From the clear dry weather they ordered especially for us to the fabulous food and the educational and challenging mountain rescue activities and classes, this was an excellent conference.

Thursday was classroom day and the schedule offered a wide variety of subjects for all skill levels. The only downside was that there wasn't enough time to attend all of the sessions so we had to pass on some excellent presentations. I attended presentations on the physics of hypothermia, crevasse travel and rescue, parallel plaquettes (a lightweight rope rescue system), and the physics of avalanche. All of these were taught by experts in their field. Other sessions offered included different means of survival in avalanche rescue, managing air resources in SAR search, tandem prussik testing, high resolution search imagery developments, hypothermia and frostbite, and accidents in helicopter rescue operations. In short there was plenty of great information for all. Also popular were the vendor tables set up in the lobby displaying the latest and greatest rescue gear.

Friday was the much anticipated glacier day. JMR arranged with NorthStar Trekking and Temsco Helicopters to fly us all to the Mendenhall Glacier for a day of ice climbing and rescue practice. After a short flight, we landed on the glacier and were grouped into random teams. This was a great opportunity to meet and work with fellow MRA members. Once again we had multiple offerings to choose from. My team began with a short "walkabout" followed by some time at the ice climbing station where several top ropes were set on climbs of varying difficulty. From there we went to a session on deep burial avalanche rescue where Manuel Genswein from Switzerland demonstrated a technique for pinpointing the location of a beacon buried more than two meters deep and a method of shoveling to allow the most efficient extraction of a deep burial. Our next station was a demonstration of the pike and pivot technique for getting a litter over a difficult edge transition. After a short briefing our team jumped in and completed the maneuver with enough time to spare that we got to switch roles and do it again. Then we started on the crevasse rescue station, but that got cut short as the aircraft were returning for the ride back to town. The final station that we didn't get to was a demonstration of the "Terradaptor" artificial high directional for crevasse rescue.

Photo by Dave Clarke.

Back in Juneau, the day's activities concluded with a ride up the Mt Roberts Tram to a fabulous mountain top buffet dinner followed by the MRA awards ceremony where we honored the achievements of our members. I mentioned earlier that JMR knows how to host an event and they really proved it on Friday. From the spectacular Mendenhall Glacier to the amazing feast, this was a day to remember.

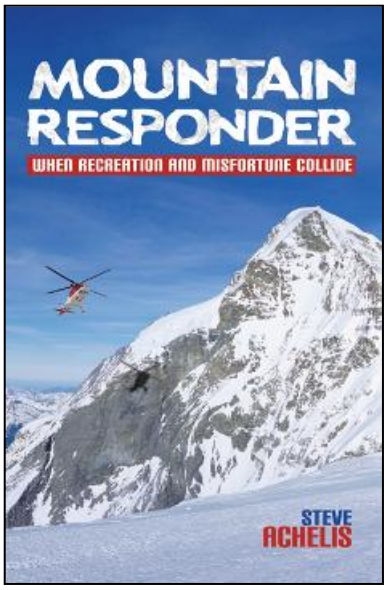
You might think that after Friday's success JMR could rest on their laurels for the rest of the conference. But that definitely wasn't the case. They had another fun and learning-filled day in store for us on Saturday as well. We boarded buses for a short drive to the Eaglecrest Ski Area, where a round robin event was set up with a variety of hands-on field stations. And again there were so many great offerings that there just wasn't time to attend all of them. From search dog demos to rigging practice to ziplines, there was something for everyone.

The Saturday evening banquet began with the Honor Guard followed by a wonderful performance by the Children of All Nations, Alaskan Native Dance Group. Our Honor Guard followed up with a memorial presentation and the ceremonial mounting of memorial streamers on our flag. The keynote speaker, John Svenson, presented a very entertaining slide show entitled the Life and Times of Climbing in South East Alaska.

The conference officially came to a close after the Sunday business meeting but apparently that wasn't enough to end the Alaskan hospitality--newly elected MRA Vice President, Doug Wessen, invited everyone who was still in town up to his place for an impromptu BBQ.

So what was the best part of this conference, you might ask? Was it the Alaskan scenery, the glacier day, the learning activities or perhaps the fantastic food and hospitality? Yes, those were all memorable and outstanding. But for me, the best part was spending four days in the company of dedicated volunteer professional rescuers from all over North America. Attending an MRA conference is the best way I've found to become a better rescuer and have a great time doing it. Start planning now to attend next year's conference in McCall, Idaho. I look forward to seeing you there.

Click here to see the meeting minutes from the Spring Business Meeting.



Book Review: Mountain Responder

By Jules Harrell, Ski patroller/firefighter/SAR professional

When I picked up *Mountain Responder* I was overjoyed to read, for the first time, a story that rescuers can fully identify with because the writing makes us feel like we are right there in the thick of it. *Mountain Responder* tells the first-person story of Steve Achelis, a regular dad-type adventure guy ski patroller who spends literally all his time, it seems, volunteering for Salt Lake County Search and Rescue. He'll be cooking dinner for his two daughters and have to drop everything to go on a 24-hour call. Or he'll be at their soccer game and have to leave suddenly for a helicopter ride into the mountains, where he's unhoisted for an overnight stay. Or maybe he's getting home after a long day of climbing multi-pitch when his pager goes off, sending him to scramble up fourth class mountain scree for many long hours.

Steve recreates each story starting with a pager message which is generally not a correct relay of information. Two missing hikers could morph into three Korean climbers who fell down a snow covered slide and are stuck in a snow cave, hoping for rescue while a blizzard rages outside. We follow him as he trudges through dangerous avalanche country, treats many fallen victims, uncovers seemingly innocuous injuries only to discover that they are life-threatening, and teaches us how to be better rescuers through his assumptions, successes and near mistakes. He collaborates, leads, follows, honors and shares everything with his rescue team, giving each of them a lot of personal credit throughout the book.

From the young guy who saved his friend's life by pushing her away as he took the full force brunt of a falling rock (he died), to the gentleman who fell rock climbing and nearly died from a hidden cut on his hip, Steve puts a face on each injured person and shares how in the mind of a rescuer, there's always a struggle to remain separate from the tragedy yet emotionally available to the victims and their families. By the way, he almost missed that hidden yet life threatening hip injury, a mistake many of us could make. *Mountain Responder* is filled with solid medical lessons learned.

Sometimes Steve collects dead body parts, and his rendition of what it was like to pick up a piece of brain for the first time truly strikes home. None of us are immune to the strangeness of retrieving a dead body from the river only to discover that perhaps the five weeks decay has finally decapitated the gentleman. There was a lot of hurried hand washing after that call and Steve tells us all about it. Great photos are scattered throughout the book and more are available on the *Mountain Responder* website, a very nice addition.

Technically, *Mountain Responder*, while a great adventure story, also reads like an *Outdoor Emergency Care* manual should. Each story describes exactly what Steve assumed when first getting paged to what the rescuers found and how the injuries were treated. SAR rope rigging and helicopter rescue discussions allow the reader a first hand view of useful information, and finally, Steve reviews his medical decisions, wondering sometimes if they were sound and why. I believe *Mountain Responder* should be required reading for all ski patrollers and emergency rescue personnel.

Plus it's just a damn good story.

ABOUT THE REVIEWER: JULES HARRELL

I'm a 50 year old ski patroller for two mountains on the East Coast, a search and rescue volunteer, and a former EMT/firefighter with the Bolinas Fire Department in Marin County, California. When it comes to good reading, I devour anything that includes search and rescue, ski patrol, mountains, danger, pain and suffering. Like many professional rescuers, I always hope that the victims will emerge safely and recover completely from their accidents. There are no "good calls" in my book, as in gory; only successful rescues. I have a huge library and own just about every rescue book published within the last 20 years, including 15 years of *Accidents in North American Mountaineering*.

Julie Harrell
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International Technical Rescue Symposium - 2010

Come join us on November 4-7th in Golden, CO for the 2010 International Technical Rescue Symposium (ITRS) event. The yearly symposium is the leading forum for up to date, state-of-the-art, technical rescue information. Rescuers representing mountain, cave, fire, industrial, and swiftwater gather to discuss ways to improve safety and performance, and answer questions. MRA members receive a special $45 discount.

Register Online Today!

Himalayan First: Standby Rescue Helicopters

By Menno Boermans
Reprinted with permission from Alpinist.com

This spring season, Air Zermatt of Switzerland and Fishtail Air of Nepal will join forces to provide the first Himalayan standby helicopter rescue service in history.

From April 24 until June 2, 2010, a Fishtail Air helicopter in the Khumbu area will be manned by a rescue pilot and mountain rescue specialist from Air Zermatt. A second helicopter, flying transport missions in the Dhaulagiri region, also will be on call if needed. In case of an emergency, the team will be able to initiate high-altitude rescue attempts up to 7000 meters within hours of receiving a call.

These professionals will be able to fly a so-called "human sling operation." Upon arriving at a rescue scene, one specialist will hang from the helicopter on a longline, a rope that can be extended up to 200 meters. After building an anchor and unclipping from the longline, the specialist will examine the patient. The rescuer will maintain contact with the pilot by headset, directing the longline back to his position, then will clip himself and the patient onto the line. Then the helicopter, still dangling the longline, will fly to a level area where a paramedic or doctor is waiting.

This kind of aerial maneuver originated in the Swiss Alps. In 1970, a mountain guide with Air Zermatt performed the first longline mountain rescue on north face of the Eiger. This mission forever changed mountain rescue operations.

But because of an absence of proper helicopters and skilled pilots in the Himalayas, local rescue missions generally do not use longlines. Instead, pilots must land or hover, a challenge for many high-altitude mountainside rescues. There have been only a handful of Himalayan longline rescue attempts, and most were performed by specialized teams from faraway locations.

In 2005, the Pakistan Army successfully plucked Slovenian alpinist Tomaz Humar off Nanga Parbat's Rupal Face by longline with help from a distance by Air Zermatt. But no rescuer was hanging on the longline to assist him. In his exhausted state, Humar forgot to unclip his ice screw, which nearly caused the helicopter to crash. The new program hopes to increase safety by ensuring that a longline rescue specialist is available at all times to support the pilot and patient(s).

After last year's failed attempts to rescue Spanish alpinist Oscar Perez on Latok in August (read ***Alpinist* 30**'s **Mountain Profile** for the full story) and Humar on Langtang Lirung in November (read the **November 14, 2009 NewsWire**), Air Zermatt discussed options for improving rescue systems and reaction times in the Himalayas.

Swiss rescuer Simon Anthamatten lifts off to recover the dead body of Tomaz Humar on Langtang Lirung in Nepal, November 2009. Longline rescues like this one are uncommon in the Himalayas, but this spring a new standby rescue partnership between Air Zermatt of Switzerland and Fishtail Air of Nepal will employ the technique up to 7000 meters. Photo by Fishtail Air.

A Lama helicopter with a longline rescues a climber on the Mattertal in the Swiss Alps. Photo by Menno Boermans.

They hope the new program not only improves these issues, but also supports education for Nepalese pilots who want to learn how to fly longline rescues.

"Last march we invited five members from Nepal to see our operation here in the European Alps," Swiss pilot Gerold Biner said. "The Nepalese pilots could fly real missions in the Matterhorn area, and at the end we did a rescue exercise with a longline."

Operations this spring will commence as a trial period. Climbers in need, or their insurance, will pay operating costs as usual. But because of training costs, Air Zermatt and Fishtail Air are searching for sponsors. If all goes well this year and enough money is raised, they will continue high-altitude, on-call rescue services in future seasons.

The team will pilot one AS 350 B3 helicopter, also known as a Squirrel, which can perform longline rescues up to 7000 meters.

*Learn more about Air Zermatt at **air-zermatt.ch** and Fishtail Air at **fishtailair.com**.*

DON'T JUST DO SOMETHING — STAND THERE!

By Howard M. Paul

You, our teammates and I joined a SAR team to accomplish important things — as did every member of every other team. Our personalities are drawn to the emergency service disciplines to see things get done and help that stranger who **really** needs help, frequently at oh-dark-thirty in miserable weather.

We're fortunate that some of our colleagues also see a tad bit further than the next mission and recognize the "bigger picture," taking on leadership positions within our own agency and at the international, national, regional and state levels. We recognize their skills and then nominate them for office or suggest that they apply or quickly appoint them. Without them our profession would be mired in the practices of decades ago.

Years ago I examined the schedule that resulted from my various commitments to SAR. I enjoyed every one of the several roles I had been asked to accept or been elected to, or for which I had happily volunteered.

But what? I was astounded; it could not be right. To meet the commitments I had made to friends and colleagues, teams, associations and boards I had 38 meetings a year on my schedule. These were not job-related meetings, and they were all on my dime and clock, both around the nation and local.

It was then that it dawned on me that I never read books anymore. I had no time to read — none. Yet reading is one of my favorite pastimes. I usually read two or three books a month. I decided to fix that, so I began an earnest process of peeling off some of those commitments and their attendant meetings.

The most useful tool was a shovel — to get through all the papers on my desk. I dug down and found, to my astonishment, several more layers of papers from projects I had accepted or created from years earlier — and had forgotten! I'd never realized that before I completed some of those projects, or terms of office, I had taken on more. My contribution to each suffered, dreadfully, and so did the project's organization because they depended upon me.

It took me more than a year to extricate myself from every "yes, I'll do it" I had uttered.

Aside from obviously hurting yourself by taking on too many commitments — a position on the unit's board of directors, serving on a county council, chairing a regional committee, managing an accreditation program, editing an organization's journal — can you do justice to the many organizations you ostensibly want to help?

Your peers expect you to contribute. They might count on you to research and draft a policy, chair a committee, or manage a critical project. Perhaps they expect you — because you agreed — to manage a major, keystone component of the organization such as the website, which interacts with every other department or committee in the agency. Your most valuable commitment may be as simple as recording and certifying the minutes of meetings.

Many changing outside factors have a bearing on your ability meet your commitments. Family needs may take more of your time or your job duties might change (for the better or worse). You hold back the work of others that count on you — and your organization —if your job becomes so busy that you can't return phone calls and e-mail or meet schedules.

Life is fluid; it's not wrong to admit, too, that your interest may have waned.

If you can no longer get the job done, you will earn the respect of your colleagues, your fellow directors or officers, or your supervisor if you just tell them. Don't let fear of incomplete work freeze you into remaining silent. To the contrary; I would rather have a colleague tell me, "Look, I just don't have the time I did when you appointed me. I wish I could, but I can't get xxx done" than to have to continually ask, "When can you report so we can complete the project?"

I recall one gent elected to a board of directors that attended not one of its meetings in two years — not one. It was obvious he didn't care about his constituents. To this day I have no idea why he ran for the position, other than perhaps to pad a résumé. And of another whose job function has to be regularly reassigned to others so the organization can continue its mission.

If you are a conscientious leader, one that does a job very well, you will still be invited or appointed to accept more of these positions. Can you do it? Does your current situation and its responsibility, necessary time and commitment to high quality **really** leave time for another responsibility? As much as you might want to accept another opportunity to help in another area, will the quality of your work everywhere suffer?

If you've been asked to contribute, it is because your peers value you and the quality of your results. They deserve to receive what your reputation leads them to expect from you. So does every person that our many organizations indirectly assist — people that are lost, injured, trapped, sick and scared (and their families).

You can be remembered as someone who "did a superb job, an excellent chairperson/officer/coordinator/advisor that we can count on" or you can be remembered as someone who "usually didn't finish what s/he took on and only did a half-assed job when they did."

To do your best at times you must say no. You will earn my respect if you say, "Thank you for asking me, but right now I'm committed to "xxxx." Your project deserves time I would have to take away from "xxxx" and both would suffer if I could not give each my best effort."

Some will ask, so let me tell you I had no particular person in mind when I wrote this. People I know from many years ago to today serve as an illustration of this syndrome. If you do think, however, that you see yourself in this article, it is time to reevaluate your ability to commit to "yes."

By the way, I now read three to four books a month again and love it. I'm thinking of other areas in which I might be able to help (if others wish) after my current responsibilities come to their end.

Howard M. Paul is a 25-year veteran of Alpine Rescue Team in Evergreen, Colorado. He has held at least 15 elected and appointed positions at the national, regional, state and local SAR level; has led eight major SAR projects; and has taught at 21 national and state emergency service conferences. He is glad that today he has limited himself to one local, one statewide and one national position..

National Search and Rescue Week Designated

Five years after Marty Lentsch, a longtime mountain climber and current chair of the Washington State Mountain Rescue Association, began working for national recognition for search and rescue personnel, the U.S. Senate has passed a resolution establishing May 16-22 as National Search and Rescue Week.

The Senate unanimously passed the resolution after it was sponsored by U.S. Senator Maria Cantwell (D-WA). The bipartisan resolution was also sponsored by Senators Patty Murray, Mike Crapo, Jeff Bingaman, Barbara Boxer, Mike Enzi, Lisa Murkowski, and Ron Wyden.

"As an avid hiker and mountaineer, I take steps to prepare myself and minimize my risk whenever I pack for a trip," Senator Cantwell said. **"But I understand that no amount of preparation can protect you from an accidental misstep or an unforeseen circumstance, and it is often the swift response of trained search and rescue personnel that makes the difference between tragedy and survival. Every day in Washington state and across our nation, these brave volunteers exemplify courage, commitment and compassion in performing their duties. Today, we have passed a small act of recognition for their heroic efforts."**

See the complete **SENATE RESOLUTION**

Designating May 16 through May 22, 2010, as ''National Search and Rescue Week."
Whereas the National Association for Search and Rescue and local search and rescue units across the United States have designated May 16 through May 22, 2010, as ''National Search and Rescue Week;"

Whereas the Senate recognizes the importance of search and rescue services that are provided by both salaried and volunteer citizens through county sheriff offices and military entities;

Whereas throughout the history of the United States, search and rescue personnel have served the people of this Nation by helping to save the lives of fellow citizens who are lost or injured;

Whereas search and rescue personnel continually offer educational services that provide individuals with the survival knowledge necessary to live safely in diverse environments, from mountains to deserts and across both the urban and remote areas of this Nation;

Whereas search and rescue personnel train continually in order to maintain mission readiness and to be able to address complex search and rescue situations with both knowledge and skill;

Whereas search and rescue personnel are instrumental during national emergencies or natural disasters, as they are willing and able to respond and remain on missions for many weeks;

Whereas search and rescue personnel are required to be focused and dedicated in order to carry out missions that involve personal sacrifice of time, finance, and property, and place their own lives in danger;

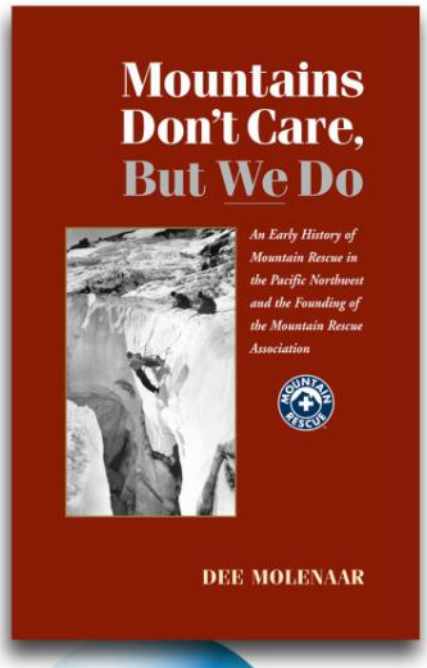
Whereas in the United States, more than 500 individuals have sacrificed their lives during search and rescue missions or training; and

Whereas search and rescue personnel shall always be recognized as essential to protecting the lives of the citizens of this Nation: Now, therefore, be it
Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates May 16 through May 22, 2010, as ''National Search and Rescue Week''; and
(2) encourages the people of the United States to observe this week with appropriate ceremonies and activities that promote awareness and appreciation of the role that search and rescue personnel perform in their communities ''so that others may live''.

Mountains Don't Care, But We Do

An Early History of Mountain Rescue in the Pacific Northwest and the Founding of the Mountain Rescue Association



50th Anniversary Tribute

By Dee Molenaar

Dee Molenaar, author of *The Challenge of Rainier*, has written fascinating accounts of the legendary mountain rescues and recoveries in the Pacific Northwest. In telling these tales of triumph and tragedy, he has also traced the formation and evolution of the mountain rescue groups that carried out these missions.

"The old master has done it again, pulling from personal experience and scholarly research, a vital and vibrant history of mountain rescue in the Pacific Northwest to celebrate the Mountain Rescue Association's 50th anniversary."
Tom Hornbein

"Mountains Don't Care, But We Do, *by Dee Molenaar, is a must read for those who enjoy high adventure and want to know the history of the Mountain Rescue Association.*
Jim Whittaker

"Mountains Don't Care, But We Do, *is a modest way of saying 'thank you' to the hundreds of mountain rescue volunteers who have come before us. We hope that they would be as proud of today's groups as we are of them."*
Charley Shimanski, President
Mountain Rescue Association

SPECIAL: MRA members receive a 20% discount when you order online at www.mountaineersbooks.org. **Use discount code RESCUE** at checkout.

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