

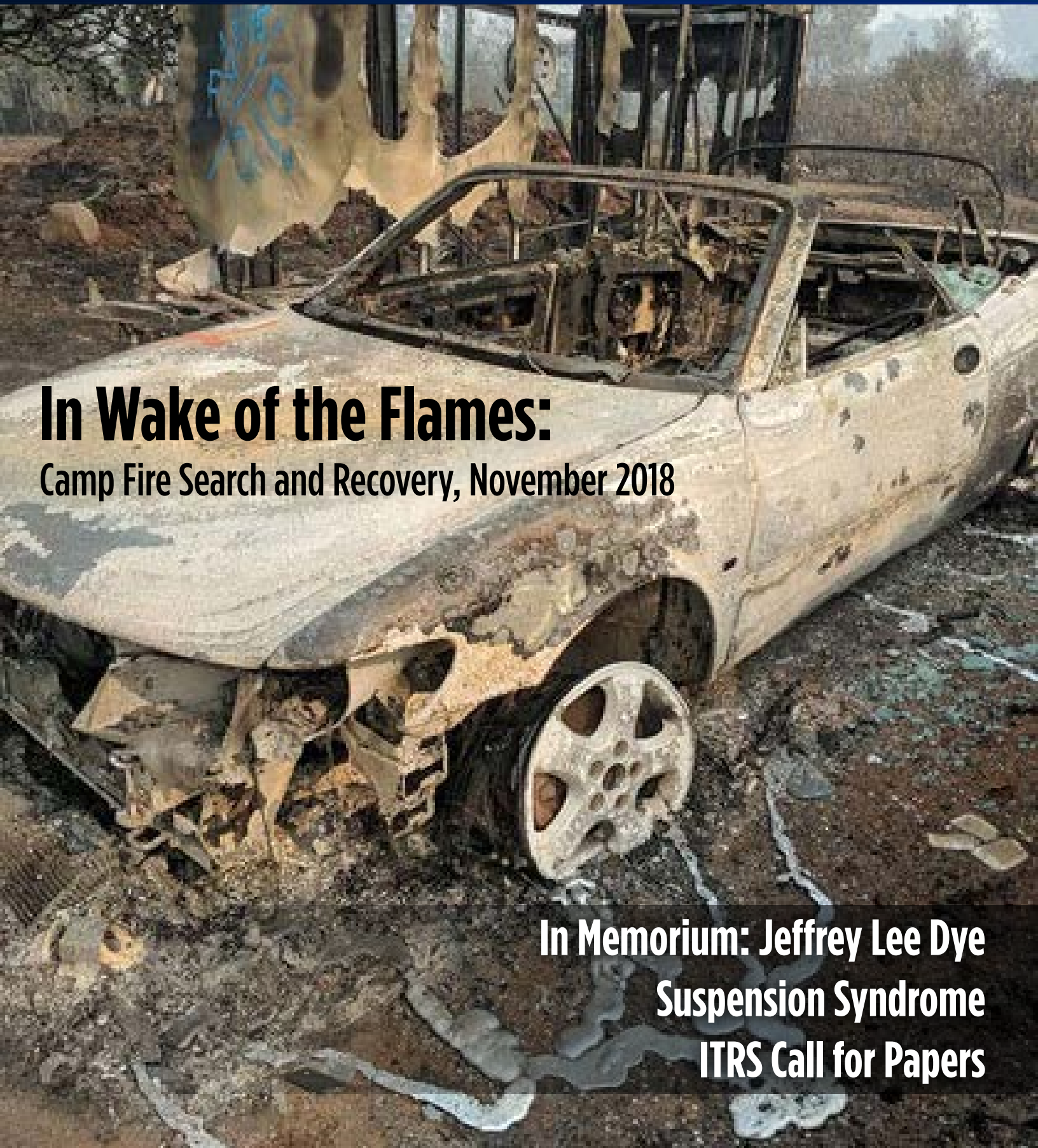
MERIDIAN

Spring 2019



The Quarterly Publication of the Mountain Rescue Association

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In Wake of the Flames:

Camp Fire Search and Recovery, November 2018

In Memorium: Jeffrey Lee Dye
Suspension Syndrome
ITRS Call for Papers



MOUNTAIN
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Spring 2019

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ON THE COVER: Car and melted aluminum wheels. *Aluminum melts at just over 1,200 degrees. Most of the cars that burned sat on pools of melted aluminum, which flowed downhill like rivers. Photo by RMRU Ray Weden

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President's Message Spring 2019

By Art Fortini, MRA President



MRA President Art Fortini

If you've been a member of an MRA team for more than a year or two, chances are that you've been through an accreditation or reaccreditation test. As you know, the MRA is the *only* organization in the United States that accredits mountain rescue teams, and though it might not be obvious, accreditation is one of the biggest benefits you receive as a member of the MRA.

There are over a thousand search and rescue organizations in the United States, most of which are comprised of dedicated volunteers who believe strongly in their mission. Yet only a small fraction of those teams have chosen to put themselves under the microscope and allowed themselves to be peer reviewed. Members of a search and rescue team may feel that they're good at what they do because they train hard, but MRA teams are required to take it a step further—they have to *demonstrate* that they're good, and they have to demonstrate it to their peers every five years. Your willingness to do that and your ability to pass muster when tested make you part of a very special group. I don't want to sound elitist or inflate anyone's ego, but I have heard people at the state level refer to the MRA teams as the SEAL teams of mountain rescue.

Being accredited means your team has been tested in the various disciplines associated with mountain rescue. Demonstrating a high level of proficiency with your peers not only gives you and your teammates self-confidence, it also means the teams that did your review will have confidence in your team's abilities. They know that when they call you for mutual aid, your team will be up to the task. Likewise, when you need to call in mutual aid and an MRA team shows up, you will have confidence in their abilities because your team tested them. Mutual respect goes a long way, especially when solving a difficult problem in poor weather.

If your team is anything like mine, you probably put on additional trainings in preparation for your reaccreditation test. It's not just good enough to pass the test, you want to pass it with flying colors and make it look easy. The extra training time that you and your teammates put in makes the tip of the spear that much sharper. Furthermore, the fact that you go through this process every few years prevents erosion of those skills over time. The process ensures a high level of quality among the teams and that the level of quality is maintained.

We do all of this to ensure that MRA teams can provide the highest level of service. This not only benefits you, your team, and the people you serve, but also the authority having jurisdiction over your team—your AHJ. Because you have that blue-and-white patch on your uniform, your AHJ is assured of a top notch search and rescue team in the field.

The MRA's pursuit of quality applies not only to teams that are members of the MRA, but to non-member teams as well. Materials available through the [Training and Education](#) link on the MRA website and the [Online Education Basecamp](#) are available to everyone. In the end, it's all about providing the injured or lost person with high quality SAR resources that can handle the situation. As part of the MRA, that means you.

Yours in service,

Art Fortini

Art Fortini
President, Mountain Rescue Association
president@mra.org



MRA
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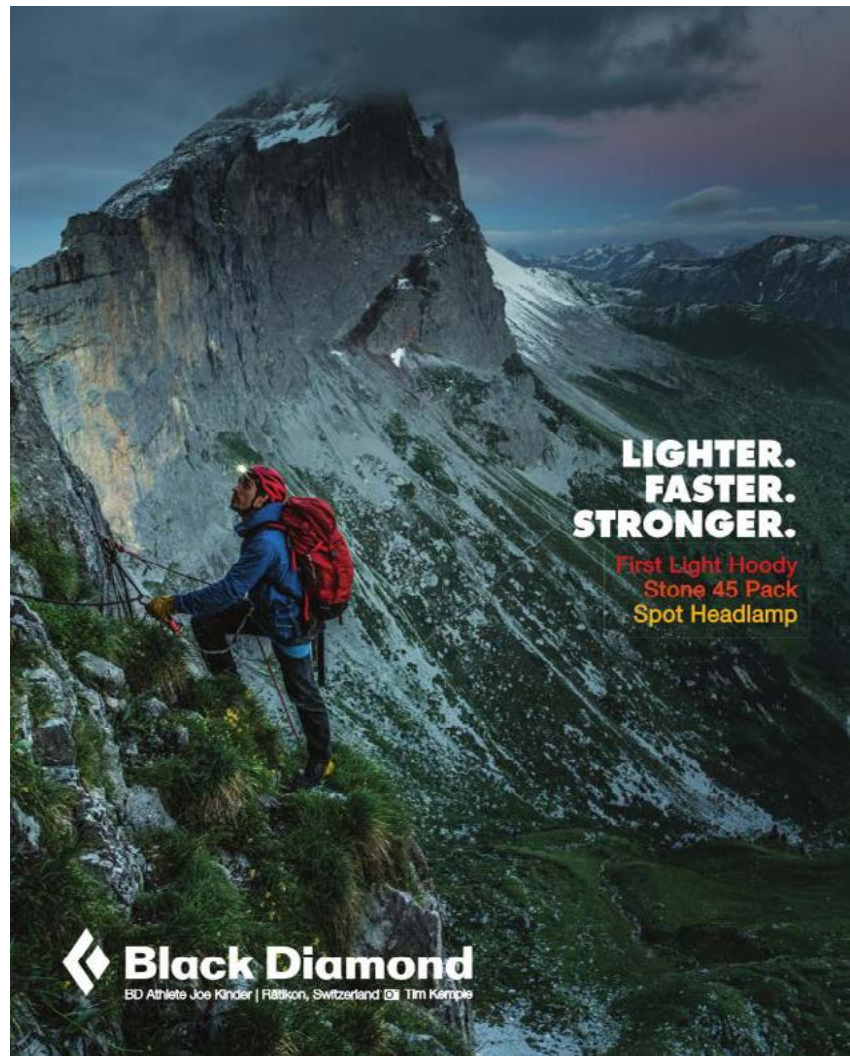
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MRA Spring Conference

Portland Mountain Rescue is delighted to host the 60th anniversary MRA conference, back where it all started at Timberline Lodge, Mt. Hood, Oregon. We have an exciting and robust array of speakers, presentations, and field sessions. Additionally, we have three different pre-conference seminars including 1) a WFR Recertification Course, 2) a Canyoneering Rescue Course, and 3) a SPAR (small party assist/rescue) course. Each of these pre-con sessions is offered at a substantially reduced rate from market value in order to increase accessibility for MRA members.

MRA Officer Nominations

We are seeking nominations for two MRA officers: Member-at-Large and Secretary/Treasurer. Elections will be held at the business meeting in June. If you're interested in running, or if you know someone who is interested, please send a note to the nominations committee chair, Doug Wessen (dougwessen@gmail.com).



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Checking in
Photo by RMRU member

In Wake of the Flames: Camp Fire Search and Recovery

November, 2018: Paradise, California

PART I

by Dana Potts

On November 8, 2018 a small northern California town called Paradise became ground zero for what would become California's most destructive and deadly wild fire. This small mountain community sat quietly beneath a beautiful canopy of pine trees. If you had visited this town prior to the fire, you would have seen more pine needles on the ground than asphalt and concrete.

Unfortunately, on November 8, Paradise was hit by the perfect storm: Explosive conditions and reports of the Camp Fire spreading more than a football field per second meant that resources were unable to get into the town in time to save it.

Initial reports of more than 1,000 people missing or deceased presented the Sheriff with the monumental task of checking every property in the city. Overwhelmed and in

need of assistance, the Butte County Sheriff's Department reached out via the Office of Emergency Services for assistance. The search and rescue community of California responded with an overwhelming yes.

On November 13, Riverside Mountain Rescue Team members Glenn Henderson, Alex Rilloraza, Kirk Cloyd and I responded. Our first real sign of smoke in the air was 299 miles south of Paradise at Interstate 5 and State Highway 41. The presence of the fire north of us was impossible to ignore.

Before I get further into this story, I will say that as a police officer of 27 years, I have worked what I thought were some big deals, such as the Los Angeles riots and many large-scale warrant/task force search-warrant services. But nothing compared to this. As we arrived at the city of Paradise, the scale of the destruction and loss was overwhelming. One could not just say to the residents, "I understand your loss."



Searchers' quarters
Photo by RMRU member



Shani Pynn and Ray Weden by a team truck
Photo by RMRU member

We checked in with the command post at Butte Community College and proceeded to Durham High School, where we would be housed with hundreds of rescuers and soldiers from the California National Guard.

The next morning, we arrived at the Tall Pines Entertainment Center and Bowling Alley for our morning briefing. This location was one of the very few structures within Paradise that were still standing. We were advised that we would be donning full body suits and would need to utilize air filters to protect ourselves from the environmental hazards that we would face.

Our job was to respond to assigned locations and sift through what was left of the structures for human remains. When you take in the potential of the large number of missing people, it was, to say the least, very emotional and humbling.

For the next two days, we donned our protective suits and air filters. Our team found three remains at two different locations.

Before our three-day trip was over, the number of missing dropped as people reported in to the Sheriff's Department. However, the number of deceased also

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grew. On day two, the Butte County Sheriff Kory L. Honea spoke at our morning briefing. Sheriff Honea was candid and humble. He passed on his deepest gratitude to what had become the largest search and recovery in state history. Over 500 members, mostly volunteer search and rescue members from every county in the state were present.

After searching on day three was complete, we left behind our soiled suits and the town of Paradise. I'm sure I speak for all of us when I say that what we could not leave behind was the memory of the destruction, the loss of life, the family heirlooms we uncovered in the rubble, and our respect for the residents of Paradise, who continued to move forward, and promised to come back and rebuild.

I continue to love my job as a volunteer and love the work we do. I have nothing but the highest level of respect for the individuals I work with, and even more for the families of the volunteers, who allow us to be out there.

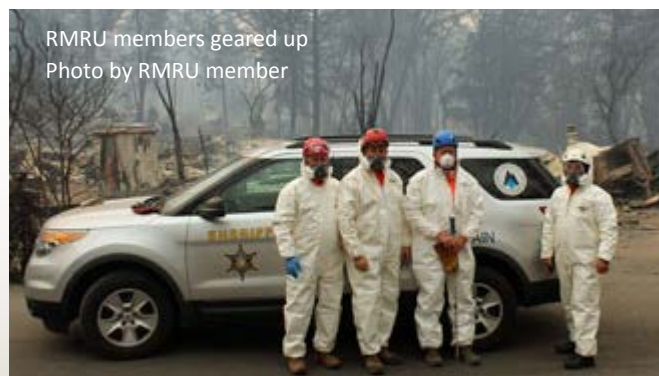
PART II

by Raymond Weden

Shani Pynn and I started driving to Paradise at 0600 on Thursday, November 15 to take over for Kirk, Glenn, Alex and Dana, who had been in Paradise since the previous Tuesday. The 10-hour drive gives you time talk, but most of this conversation is just idle chit-chat to help you take your mind off the gravity of the task you are about to take on.

We were called out to assist in searching for the remains of those who did not make it out. As we crested the Grapevine (the steep and winding portion of Interstate 5 as it goes north into Kern County) and headed toward the Central Valley, the air quality became very poor. With the Woolsey fire still not fully contained in Malibu, the smoke was pushing into the valley. The air quality would progressively get worse as we headed north, with visibility dropping to no more than a mile or so at times. Unbeknownst to us, this would be the last time we would see blue sky or even stars until our return home many days later.

We arrived in Paradise about 3:30 p.m. The drive up one of the two main roads in town left us speechless. There were more buildings destroyed than were standing along the main road.



RMRU members geared up
Photo by RMRU member



Searching and then marking the location
Photo by RMRU member



One of the search areas
Photo by RMRU member



Ray doing a safety check of a property
Photo by RMRU Shani Pynn

We met up with our fellow team members at the command post. This was the town's bowling alley, which was still standing due to its metal roof and block wall construction. From there we headed to Chico for dinner and then to the high school for our overnight accommodations.

Waking up at 5:30 a.m., we headed to breakfast and then back to the bowling alley. After checking in, we were given our personal protective equipment (PPE), which consisted of a protective cover suit, work gloves and an N100-rated respirator. The contents of a burned home and the items within it can be toxic, and the PPE would limit our exposure to both inhalation and surface contact on our skin. At the morning briefing, they stressed that to be safe, we should be situationally aware of our surroundings at all times. Gas leaks, falling tree branches, open septic lids, and nails sticking up through the debris were just a few of the hazards we would encounter while here.

We did not cover much ground on the first day. The maps we were given were not clear and, not being familiar with the area, we spent a lot of time trying to find our way

to the home sites we were given to search. It was our first day, and we were getting used to the process; we ended up clearing only four or five homes on day one. Day two was much more efficient as we were given better maps, which was a direct result of our previous day's request.

One of the first homes of the 15 we cleared that day was still standing. As we approached, we were greeted



Burned out car
Photo by RMRU member



Ray marks cars after clearing them
Photo by RMRU Shani Pynn

by the owner, who let us know he chose to stay and fight the fire on his own. He and his garden hose managed to save his house. He also let us know that he believed most of the neighborhood was evacuated in time, which was comforting. We still searched every home diligently, though, hoping he was right.

This fire burned most homes all the way to the ground, with nothing more than a chimney left standing tall. This meant we needed to sift through several feet of ash and debris in order to clear a home. In these conditions, searching for human remains was like searching for a needle in a hay stack, so we were told to focus on high priority areas and to spend more time searching around bathtubs, and by recliner chairs and mattresses, which were only identifiable by their metal frames.

The drive home was surreal as we tried to process the last few days of activity and prepare to go home to our friends, families and jobs. As we did on the drive up, we kept our conversation light to keep our minds from wandering. Our spirits lifted as we started back down the Grapevine and into the Los Angeles area. We were both amused by how grateful we were to see our smog-filled air.

I am writing this several weeks removed from our return. I have been asked many times, "So how was it?" But this is not a question that can be answered with "good" or "bad." It was both. The only simple way to answer this question is that this was an experience, one I will never, ever forget.

RMRU member Tony Hughes met up with Desert Sheriffs' Search and Rescue (DSSAR) members, which was the third group of Riverside County Sheriff's volunteers to help in the search. They were there for four days.

RMRU Members

Involved:

Kirk Cloyd
Glenn Henderson
Tony Hughes
Dana Potts
Shani Pynn
Alex Rilloraza
Raymond Weden

DSSAR Members

Involved:

Mike Smith
Mike Fogarty
Rick Feliciano
Sharon Ollenburger



Part 2 RMRU members and Part 3 DSSAR members
Photo by Unknown



Glenn Henderson, Ray Weden, Dana Potts, Kirk Cloyd, Shani Pynn, and Alex Rilloraza
Photo by RMRU member



Ray and Shani in PPE
Photo by Ray Weden

ITRS Call for papers

Deadline, August 20th 2019

October 31 – November 3, 2019
Albuquerque, NM

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ITRS 2019 Call for Papers

By Annelise Blair, CMC

It is time to submit your presenter proposals for the International Technical Rescue Symposium! This year's event is occurring Thursday, October 31 – Sunday, November 3, in Albuquerque, New Mexico. Details can be found at: <http://itrsonline.org>.

Please consider sharing your latest research, experiences, and testing with others just like you in the rescue field. If you know someone willing to present a topic that the ITRS community would enjoy, please share this information with them *now*. ITRS is a gathering of persons from across the spectrum of rescue disciplines to share theoretical and practical news and views on:

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ITRS PRESENTATION PROPOSALS

Anyone interested in presenting at ITRS can access the required Presenter Forms at: <http://itrsonline.org/presenter-info>. Please type in your information, save it to your computer, and send the completed form to:



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photo courtesy Ned Dawson

program@itrsonline.org. If you fill out the form and scan it, then we have to retype all of the information. The deadline for submitting a presentation proposal is August 12, 2019. Once the completed paperwork has been received, the ITRS Program Committee will review and respond to proposals by September 1. Final Proceedings Papers (2-8 pages total in length) will be due **by October 1, 2019**.

ITRS 2019 PRESENTATION AWARDS

To encourage and reward excellence in presentations, the Symposium offers a "Presenter Award" program. The program is intended to award and acknowledge presenters who give presentations which reflect experience in facts and data (rather than opinion or conclusion); choice of topic (applicable to field work); and state of the art technical rescue. After the final presentation, attendees will have opportunity to vote on the presentations based on six categories, with one award going to each category. Each winner will receive a \$200 honorarium.

ITRS POSTER SESSIONS

Posters are a great opportunity to share your technical rescue material in a more personal, conversational setting. Go to: <http://itrsonline.org/presenter-info> and click on "Poster Session Info" to get the guidelines for poster presentations.

LIMITED ENROLLMENT

In order to encourage an informal flow of information involving all participants, enrollment has been limited to 150 persons. If necessary, a waiting list will be available.



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ITRS is co-sponsored by the Mountain Rescue Association (MRA), National Association for Search and Rescue (NASAR), Society of Professional Rope Access Technicians (SPRAT), and the National Cave Rescue Commission (NCRC) of the National Speleological Society.

Thank you for your consideration in presenting your topic at the International Technical Rescue Symposium. We look forward to your participation and contributions to the ITRS community!

Suspension Syndrome: Separating Truth from Misinformation

By Seth Collings Hawkins, M.D., MFAWM
Skeet Glatterer, M.D., FAWM

Suspension syndrome has been discussed in rescue circles since at least 1972.

In that year, mountain medicine physicians at the second International Conference of Mountain Rescue Doctors in Innsbruck, Austria discussed a series of cases where patients died after being taken off rope following prolonged suspension. In particular, two cases concerned them. In these cases, individuals were suspended for about four hours but died within minutes of being taken off rope.

They speculated that these deaths were caused by blood returning too quickly to the core, or by blood in the periphery collecting toxic contents that proved lethal when recirculated back to the core after the patient was moved from a vertical to a supine (flat with face up) position. This theory evolved into a teaching common in the rescue community, that patients required gradual movement into a supine position

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if found suspended. The supposed condition this action prevented was variously called reperfusion syndrome, harness death, harness pathology, and suspension trauma.

The problem was that a number of steps in the scientific process had been skipped. The hypothesis was introduced in this 1972 meeting, but it was not tested. It was never definitively proven, and the subsequent testing that was done never supported the theory. Yet this teaching became entrenched in many rescue and climbing communities, as well as among industries such as arborists, silo workers, and others working in harnesses.

As an aside, this situation speaks to the importance of physician-led medical oversight of rescue operations, even those deemed to be Basic Life Support (BLS) or first aid, and the importance of implementing evidence-based medicine and medical science in developing rescue protocols.

Not only did subsequent studies fail to show a danger in laying patients immediately supine, but such a hypothesis was inconsistent with modern understanding

of physiology and defied current resuscitation teachings, where all patients requiring emergent resuscitation are usually put immediately into a supine or recovery position.

Medical publications (including EMS journals) were still teaching as recently as 2009 that patients should not be laid flat and that such action was invariably lethal. Industry publications have published this teaching even more recently. However, the medical community has definitively concluded that this is not the case. Some industry publications also promote a "W" (a non-supine) approach, which is also not medically endorsed.

The medical community does agree there is real risk here, just not the type that has been proposed. The real risk is that patients suspended, especially unconscious, are at risk

for death, and should be removed from the suspended state as soon as possible. For industries using climbing harnesses, the United States Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) requires "prompt" rescue "as quickly as possible," noting that death can occur within 30 minutes. (Of note, they have not specifically addressed the

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flat vs “W” approach yet.) Industrial harness manufacturers recommend rescue within 15 minutes, and the American National Standards Institute (ANSI) recommends patient contact within 4-6 minutes and “prompt” rescue to follow.

Conscious climbers are encouraged to use an etrier to periodically reposition themselves, a cordelette to suspend the lower extremities, or at the very least perform periodic movements of the legs to stimulate the venous pump system in the lower extremity and ensure adequate blood return to the core. Clearly, unconscious climbers are in more danger. The risk of sudden death from suspension syndrome is real, although the cause of this sudden collapse is still under investigation. It is possibly related to airway loss in the unconscious patient or vagal nerve stimulation, and is unpredictable. Perversely, one of the only interventions that can help prevent it is the rapid positioning of a patient into standard resuscitation position (typically supine) and

normal implementation of first aid, BLS, and Advanced Life Support (ALS) interventions as indicated.

A note about incorrect words should also be made here. Since it is now understood that a harness likely plays no role in this syndrome, the older terminology of “harness suspension syndrome” (or “trauma”)

should be retired. There is no evidence that trauma plays a specific role in this condition, which appears to be entirely medical. Therefore, the word “trauma” is probably not helpful in naming this condition. The current, preferred name is “suspension syndrome,” which reflects the reality that it is suspension that appears to cause the problem, and that it results in a medical syndrome, not a traumatic condition.

In contradiction to previous teaching, the best approach to managing a suspended patient in danger of unconsciousness or death from suspension syndrome is to remove them immediately from the suspended position and follow normal first aid, BLS, and ALS interventions.

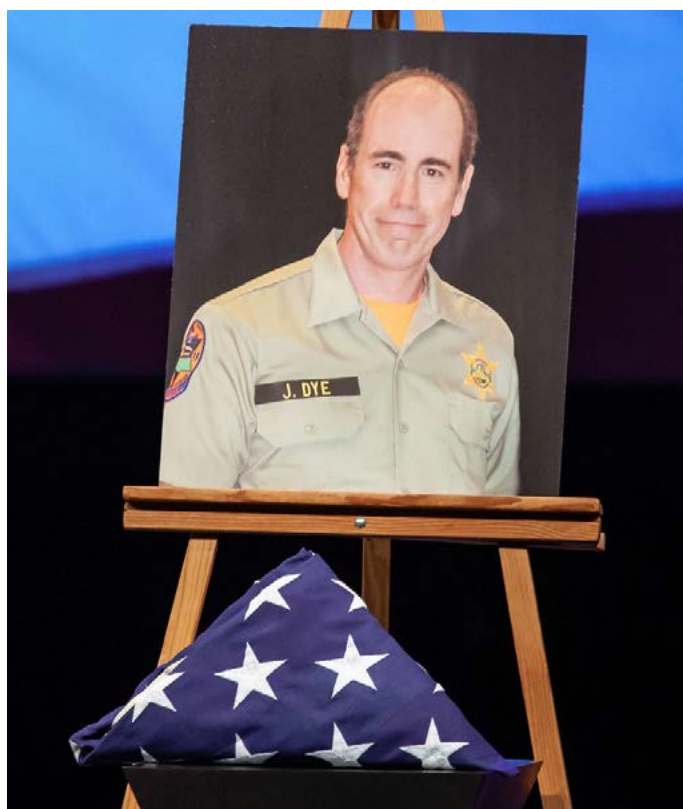
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In Memoriam: Jeffrey Lee Dye

FILMORE MOUNTAIN SEARCH AND RESCUE TEAM,
VENTURA COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE, CALIFORNIA

October 25, 1968-February 2, 2019

By Lois Pilant Grossman, *Meridian* Editor, San Dimas Mountain Rescue Team

Photography by Antonio M. Arizo, aarizo@vcsar3.org

The rain was coming down in sheets across Ventura and Los Angeles counties on the morning of February 2. The rainfall, which had been steady for several weeks, was unusual for the area. Skies were a cold, steely gray, and the normally cool and comfortable 66 degrees had plummeted well into the 30s.

The Filmore Mountain Search and Rescue Team was getting ready for its first Mountain Rescue Association (MRA) accreditation. They would be attending the California Region's annual reaccreditation exercise in Lake Tahoe, the first weekend in March. But first, they wanted more practice in snow-and-ice rescue.



Marshall Laminen, 28, Joe Martinez, 61, Brian Alcantar, 24, Jeffrey Dye, 50, and the rest of the team piled into team vehicles that morning and headed out. They would spend the day practicing their skills on Mt. Pinos, the highest point in Ventura County, on the edge of the Chumash Wilderness of the Los Padres National Forest.

At about 7:30 a.m., the group was traveling northbound on Interstate 5, when, right in front of them, a car hydroplaned, spun out of control and rolled over into the center divider between the northbound and southbound lanes of traffic.

The team went straight into response mode. The driver of the vehicle had significant injuries, including a deep laceration to his thigh. As the team was treating the driver's injuries and preparing him for transport, another vehicle, driving far too fast for the rainy conditions, hydroplaned in the same spot. It spun out of control and plowed straight into the previous accident scene, killing Dye and injuring his teammates, two critically.

"The only way this would have been preventable is if the drivers hadn't been driving too fast for the elements, faster than they should have been considering the weather

conditions," said Kevin Donoghue, of the Ventura County Sheriff's Office. "There is a raised hill in the center divider for most of the highway. It's twenty feet high and totally separates both sides of the freeway. There is a point where the raised center divider disappears, leaving a flat median that is nearly eighty feet wide. Where that first vehicle came to rest was in the middle of the median. There was thirty feet on either side of them, and the protection of the raised center divider behind them. Their vehicle was parked appropriately for their safety. They felt totally protected. You would never have thought that another vehicle could crash in exactly the same manner and land in exactly the same place."



Jef Dye was born October 25, 1968 to Duane and Linda Dye. He grew up on a ranch in Fillmore, California and graduated from Fillmore High School. He earned an Associate Degree in Criminology and a Bachelor of Science Degree in Computer Science. He started his career as an investigative assistant with the Ventura County District Attorney's Office. In later years, he moved into the private sector, and was Vice President of Global Information Security for Bank of America at the time of his death.

Dye's day job, which he loved, required long hours fighting cybercrime. Dye dedicated the rest of his time to his family – wife Sandy and stepsons Andrew and Alex. The couple had been together 17 years and married for the last seven. Their devotion to one another was evident, said Donoghue. "Sandy is a terribly strong woman, very resilient. There is no doubting the love that she had for him, and the love between them."

Andrew, speaking at Dye's memorial service, remembered his initial reaction to his future stepfather and his crime-fighting career. Instead of a superhero crimefighter with superpowers and maybe a cool car or a uniform kitted out with crime-fighting gadgets, "I got a receding hairline and a fanny pack." Andrew recalled with humor, warmth and fondness the time he spent with his stepfather and their many deep and often loud philosophical discussions.

Dye joined the Filmore team two years ago, when he realized something was missing from his life. He still felt a connection to the county, where he started his career, and the sheriff's department, and to the idea of being of service to his community.

Dye quickly became a valued team member, earning the respect of his teammates for his natural leadership and problem-solving abilities. He had the mechanical mind of a mountaineer—"I think he was born knowing how to tie



knots," said teammate Anthony Rodriguez, who met Dye when they were both probationary team members.

Added fellow teammate Mark Stec, "Jef was deep into learning. He was trying very hard to learn every aspect of search and rescue, and was studying for our alpine accreditation, learning as much as he could about snow anchors, about forces on the loads. He was a very analytical person, and when he put his mind to something, he went all in.

"We all anticipated him being a future leader on the team. So it was a loss in many ways, that being one of them. He had not been on the team that long, but for the amount of time he was on the team, he made a huge impact."

SAR takes a special kind of person, someone who believes that rolling out of bed at 2 a.m. to strap on a pack and hike into the wilderness to find someone who's lost is a noble calling, a grand adventure, and the best fun you will ever have. Dye fit the mold perfectly.



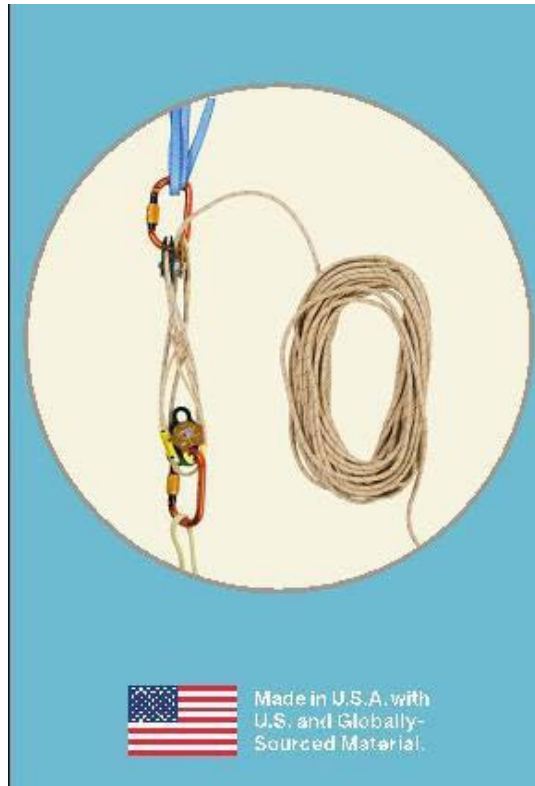
The Filmore team has made use of every available resource to help them as individuals and as a team deal with the loss of their friend and teammate. Individual and group counseling, and casual but intentional group get togethers have helped to get everyone talking and sharing their personal stories. It has strengthened their sense of community and mitigated the possibility of losing members who now find SAR work too painful.

"They told us that might happen," Stec said, "The counselors warned us. They told us

to be realistic that we could lose people from this. So we're being really strong as a team and reaching out to each other. If we sense that someone isn't quite with us or like they might be drifting away, we are immediately reaching out to them. We're really trying to support each other. And it's not just the leaders reaching out. It's everyone on the team."

Counselors have encouraged everyone, either one-on-one or in groups, to talk about their experiences during and after the accident, and how they've reacted to it. They also advised them to identify triggers, those seemingly innocuous events that spark a response related in one way or another to the incident. "A few days after this happened, my wife and I were walking our dog in the rain, on the sidewalk, on a busy street, and I found myself locked on to every car that drove by us, watching to see if it was going to jump the curb or veer into us. I realized that I would not normally have done that," Stec said.

"It wasn't disconcerting because we were told that all these reactions are normal reactions. But they also told us that when the normal becomes abnormal, when it affects your sleep, your behavior, your relationships, you should get help."



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Continuing operations have helped the team regain their footing, as does the team's "Top Gun" attitude. "It sounds dorky, but it has come up in some of our discussions," Stec said. "The movie Top Gun, in the scene where Maverick loses Goose, and knows he has to get back in the air and get flying again. That's how we feel. That we have to stay engaged."

The experience of losing a team member appears to have deepened the team members connection to one another and sharpened their awareness of each other and of their surroundings. According to Stec, this has been true among those in the field and those in the command post who watch over them.

The reaction of the SAR community has been most gratifying. Hundreds of SAR members attended Dye's memorial service, and messages of solace and support have come in from SAR teams around the country.

"The support from Ventura County, the MRA, and all of the SAR teams that helped us has been amazing," Stec said. "We really want to say thank you for all that they've done for us."



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Update: International Commission for Alpine Rescue

By John Chang, MRA ICAR Committee Chair, Bay Area Mountain Rescue Unit

Editor's note: The following letter from John Chang was shared with MRA members on January 21, 2019. Some of the material is out-of-date, but we wanted to share it here for any who may have missed it, as it contains many important updates and some deserving accolades.

This is an update regarding our MRA's International Commission for Alpine Rescue (ICAR) Committee's efforts. Last year was a very busy and engaging year for the ICAR committee members and stakeholders. The ICAR committee of delegates and stakeholders benefited from the very generous donations by three major sponsors, which when combined with financial contributions from the MRA membership as approved by the 2018 MRA budget, enabled our elected ICAR committee delegates to attend the annual ICAR Convention held on Oct 17-20 in Chamonix, France.

The three major financial donors to the MRA ICAR committee directed support were 1) the Raintree Foundation that generously donated \$10K again in January 2018, dedicated to ICAR activities, 2) PMI, which generously donated funding to offset the cost of our delegates' travel expenses, and 3) Breeze-Eastern, providing their first-ever MRA sponsorship by donating \$5K in August toward the MRA ICAR Committee's Air Rescue Commission's efforts.

The annual ICAR Convention is the highlight of ICAR delegate activities every year. Last year was no exception. A summary of the convention can be found via the following link: <http://www.alpine-rescue.org/xCMS5/WebObjects/nexus5.woa/wa/icar?menuid=1062&rubricid=411&articleid=15896>.

Our delegates generated very informative reports, which are posted through our MRA website and can be found directly via the following link: <http://mra.org/training-education/icar-reports/>.

It is also my great pleasure to announce the MRA's very own Charley Shimanski on being elected to serve as the ICAR's President of the Air Rescue Commission: <http://www.alpine-rescue.org/xCMS5/WebObjects/nexus5.woa/wa/icar?menuid=1076&rubricid=267&articlid=649>. Please join me in extending our hearty

congratulations to Charley on taking on this very prestigious and important position.

The MRA continues to benefit from the efforts of Rick Lorenz and Topograph Media in providing two videos highlighting the convention.

From Rick Lorenz:

"It was great to work with a very strong MRA contingent at ICAR, and to watch the election of Charley Shimanski as the President of the Air Rescue Commission. For my son and I, this was our 12th year filming and producing the video as Topograph Media, and the first year we are working directly for ICAR. Chris Van Tilburg did a very good job in Part One of the video (<https://vimeo.com/303429488>) and Allison Sheets will be in Part Two. Take a look when you have a spare 24 minutes. And you can watch any individual part by choosing from the menu in the attached note. Part Two of the ICAR video for 2018 is online. Please go to: <https://vimeo>.



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com/305177326. We are using a new feature on our Vimeo account for the first time this year. The "release notes" that include the timeline and additional resources is included just below the video. And the timeline allows the viewer to go directly to each chapter of the video."

I think you will agree with me that the MRA is having tremendous involvement and impact in the international alpine rescue community. It is my hope that you also agree with me that our delegates are making strong contributions in informing the MRA and the U.S. community of cutting edge and emergent alpine rescue activities so that we can continue to advance our capabilities and effectiveness as rescuers.

In looking into 2019, we will continue to seek directed sponsorship of ICAR committee activities. We will also continue to solicit MRA membership feedback regarding items that you'd like to see in areas to sustain and improve.

Please don't hesitate to contact any of our delegates should you have any questions or ideas.

MRA ICAR delegates are:

Air Rescue: Charley Shimanski (primary), Casey Ping (alternate). Terms to end June 2020.

Avalanche: Oyvind Henningsen (primary), Mike Finger (alternate). Terms to end June 2021.

Medical: Dr. Alison Sheets (primary), Dr. Chris Van Tilburg (alternate). Terms to end June 2021.

Terrestrial: Tom Wood (primary), Dr. Dale Wang (alternate). Terms to end June 2020.

MRA members in ICAR Executive Board roles:

Dan Hourihan, ICAR Assessor

Charley Shimanski, ICAR Air Rescue Commission President

Finally, please join me in expressing our gratitude to the following delegates who completed their terms in 2018 and served the MRA and ICAR with distinguished service to our community: Dave Clark and Dr. Ken Zafren. While they are no longer the elected delegates, they continue to provide deep subject matter expertise to our communities.

Thank you very much for your support of MRA's ICAR Committee and efforts.

Photo Contest!

Due to insufficient submissions with the last Photo Contest attempt, we haven't voted on a winner this time around—but Meridian editors and MRA officers would like to keep this friendly competition going! We will vote on a winner and honorable mentions, which will be featured in the Summer edition of the Meridian and on MRA social media. The only requirement is that the photo must follow HIPAA restrictions where patients are concerned: subjects must not be personally identifiable by their faces or any other feature in the photo. Please submit your photos for consideration, including a caption and photographer name and team to MeridianEditor@mra.org by July 1.



Editor's Note

Whew – Spring is here! And this Spring 2019 Meridian edition a little later... but we are excited to say we are finally moving back toward being on schedule. Lois and I (your humble editors) have been learning to coordinate editing, writing, and story solicitations, as well as welcome a new graphic designer to our Meridian team.

FAREWELL, CAROLANNE!

All things evolve and change. So, it is a bittersweet farewell to Carolanne Powers who has done a marvelous job as the graphic designer for the Meridian since 2010!

Some words from former Meridian editor Laurie Clarke:

"In my time as the Meridian editor (2012-2016), Carolanne's dedication was an inspiration to me. Through one thousand last minute corrections, additions, and deletions, she always responded with a smile, a quick turn-around, and the patience of a saint. It's hard to imagine having a better person to work with. Her job was very much in the background, unheralded and invisible – but her product was something we all can be proud of. Thank you, Carolanne, for your years of service."

I'd like to second everything Laurie has said: Carolanne's patience and professionalism has been nothing but gratifying and inspirational.

Still, the newsletter must go on....

WELCOME, TAMARA!

Please join me in welcoming Tamara Cribley, our new graphic designer! A fellow MRA member, Tamara spent many years working in a corporate environment as a graphic designer and creative manager, before the opportunity to start her own business gave her the freedom and flexibility to volunteer with her local SAR team. In 2015, she joined Douglas County Search and Rescue in Colorado, and joined the K9 Unit in 2017. She is now working towards a NASAR Trailing certification with Sammy Sue, a Shepherd/Malinois mix.

Many thanks to all contributors for their submissions and ideas! As always, your feedback, story ideas, and topic requests are more than welcome. Please email MeridianEditor@mra.org.

Safe trekking,

Shelley Littin
Meridian Editor



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