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SAR

Search and Rescue *focus*

URGENT FOR MISSING PERSONS URGENT
FOR SEARCH DOGS CALL HEADWATERS – RESOURCES STATEWIDE
1-800-472-7290 (VILAS COUNTY SHERIFF DISPATCH)

This newsletter is brought to you by Headwaters SAR, your Wisconsin Chapter of the American Rescue Dog Association. Addressing the needs of Law Enforcement in the Upper Midwest for over 28 years.

Getting Results with SAR Volunteer Professionals!

An advantage SAR volunteers offer is that looking for lost people is their specialty. With the demands placed upon public service agencies there is very little time to fully prepare for an involved search for a missing person. These volunteers are professional and know how to help. Statewide, SAR teams respond to many searches yearly.

But you should prepare in advance for a missing person. Establish pre-planned procedures (SOG/SOPs) for a missing person search. You can consult other departments with experience, canine officers and SAR volunteers. Contact SAR groups serving your area and ask them to provide you with

information about their group and perhaps to come in for a short demonstration or meeting. Tell them what you expect of them. Call upon your choice in SAR teams as early as possible in the situation.

Using volunteer professionals:

1. Plan ahead to access qualified searchers in a time of need.
2. Set up ICS with clear lines of authority. A single command post and staging area will do a lot for coordination.
3. Set clear objectives starting at the last known point expanding outward. Use untrained line searchers as a last resort.
4. For a complex incident, have Branch Directors for both Air Ops and Canines.



No Fee for Service

Headwaters service is **free of charge**. In fact, few canine providers have a fee based service. We have a solid financial picture in spite of major expenses such as sending team members far and wide for training and credentialing over the last 12 months. But, we do appreciate the donations we get which support training, equipment, and operations. We are looking for newer-used radios, and we have a fundraising campaign underway to outfit our new trailer to operate as an Operations Center. Donations are ALWAYS welcome to our 501C tax-exempt charitable non-profit organization.



● Recent Search Operations

Headwaters had a busy 2007 in which we activated the search team on almost a monthly basis. Sometimes, thankfully we were called off before we were put in the field. Our search work took us to far Northern Wisconsin a number of times. Yet, we provided mutual aid for one search in the Southern part of the state and provided canine leadership and coordination on one large and complex search in Central Wisconsin. We deployed dogs in Vilas, Wood, Iron, Shawano Langlade and Waukesha Counties.

A report on 2007 team efforts and a forecast for 2008

While 2007 was busy, we forecast more missing persons in 2008, especially for persons with cognitive challenges.

No searches were conducted in Michigan or Minnesota in 2007 which is rare in our history. Yet we were very busy.

Review of the search reports we provide to a national database showed we had efforts for both the very young and very old. We searched for lost people “just out for a walk” as well as hunters (search missions are very common during deer season) and several people with cognitive disorders. While nearly all of our

cases in 2007 have closure, a number of people remain missing in the state. There are also open cases in the state where we have not yet deployed our dogs.

In 2008, we expect to continue to see a reduction in certain types of missing person cases. Cell phones and GPS units will help some people. But, searches for people with dementia and impairments will continue to increase. Also, in 2008 we expect to see ICS procedures used more frequently.

Contact us for more information at
HSARINFO@YAHOOGROUPS.COM

or call us at 920-851-0641

CHUCK – HANDLER / INSTRUCTOR, NEENAH WISCONSIN

MISSING PERSON TIPS

MORE INFORMATION?



I have a search, now what should I do... It's a SINCH

Size up – Build situational awareness. Also, secure areas with potential clues or evidence and establish ICS.

Investigate – Searches end when the information completes the picture ... Start gathering intelligence now.

Containment – Stop the problem from growing with patrols and/or observers.

Hasty/Reflexive Actions - Quickly search high priority areas. Respond reflexively. Prepare to expand the effort if necessary. Get qualified help coming.

New Capabilities - Incident Command / Mutual Aid (1 to 100 search dogs.)

The landscape of SAR has changed in Wisconsin. At one time there were only one or two groups offering search dogs. Now there are over ten groups. And we also network with teams from neighboring states. In a major 2007 search with over 50 dogs, we were asked to coordinate all the canine operations. We organized canine efforts for several days looking for a missing child. The responsible agencies were pleased with our support. And, we were proud to serve.

Building on over 28 years of wilderness canine search efforts, we have embarked on plans to add new capabilities to our group. But, we are committed to staying focused foremost on having trained and certified air scent search dogs ready when needed.

As a result we making changes to better position ourselves for future search missions:

1. We sent two members to Colorado to attend Search Planning Section Chief training at the SAR academy.
2. We have a number of team members who have completed basic and advanced ICS-300 and 400 level training.
3. We have reorganized our team to act as a Canine Branch or Group under the direction of the Operations Section.

Nine “easy-to-correct” common problems with a search gone bad.

1. Lack of advance preparations
2. Ambiguity of authority
3. Command staff fatigue
4. Insufficient intelligence sharing
5. Lack of a plan, strategy or IAP
6. Ineffective tactics
7. Inadequate record keeping
8. Loss of key information
9. Distraction from media/public.

“Managing the Lost Person Incident,”
 NASAR 2007, WWW.NASAR.ORG



In early 2008 we deployed our new trailer for a mutual aid search even before it was ready. We have set-up the new trailer with a generator, lighting, heating, work stations and new computer mapping software. We are now working on a GPS-computer display showing real-time information on searcher locations. We will also install radios to provide communication with other search teams improving mutual aid.

We activate our team at the request of a public service agency either directly or through another team who requests our mutual aid. We work under the direction of the responsible agency and can provide search dogs and an overhead team to help staff an incident command post. In 2007 most of our search activities required mutual aid.

In 2008 we will continue to work to improve our service. We know you look to us primarily for air scent search dogs. Along with our experienced dogs, we have six more dogs undergoing extensive training and national credentialing. And, our leadership and coordination procedures are always undergoing review and improvement. We promise to be the best we have ever been in 2008.

Idea: Establish and train your agency to a missing person policy/procedure. Link to a model policy at WWW.HSARK9.ORG