

Minutes of General Membership Meeting
12 November 1988

This meeting of the General Membership of the Appalachian Search and Rescue Conference, Inc., was called to order at 1100 in Peabody Hall, Charlottesville VA, by Cady Soukup, Chairman.

Those present were as follows:

VOTING:

-Cady Soukup, SMRG	Peter McCabe, SMRG
-Bob Koester, BRMRG	Neil Conner, SMRG
-Dorothy Antis, SWVMRG	Carl Solomon, SMRG
-Le Ligon, SWVMRG	John Greenaway, AMRG
-Gary Mechtel, SMRG	Bob Elron, SMRG
-Keith Conover, AMRG	Steven Ritter, BRMRG
-Lorick Fox, RSAR	Pam Platt, BRMRG
-Patsy Humphris, RSAR	Bruce Hemmer, BRMRG
-Vince Serio, RSAR	Anne Eckman, BRMRG
-Carl Mueller, RSAR	William Dixon, BRMRG
	Deming Herbert, BRMRG

NON-VOTING:

-Laura Bell, ESAR	Peter Verchinski, ESAR
-David Bucks, ESAR	Jon Marsh, ESAR
-Ryan Keefe, ESAR	Leslie Solomon, SMRG
-Suzanne Scott, ESAR	

PROXIES:

-To Keith Conover: Crist, Thomas, Lindell, Zimecki
-To Lorick Fox: Moore, Bradshaw, Pennington, Wilfong, L'Herrou
-To Vince Serio: Payne
-To Bob Koester: Pinkney, Coyne, Ingle, Verow
-To Deming Herbert: Baker

GROUP REPORTS

AMRG: AMRG currently has 12-15 Basics and 10-12 trainees. They are actively recruiting new members. They are working with local rescue groups such as Search I and Rescue 40. They are holding a certification test this weekend (11/13). Their tax-exempt status is still pending. Their training schedule is active and they are seeking to improve relations with local agencies. State parks in Pennsylvania have become interested in using AMRG as a rescue team.

BRMRG: BRMRG currently has a roster of 80, although 30 are still observers. The training class this year has twenty members. Almost all of the money from the Alton Grant has been expended. The mobile repeater will be demonstrated for this membership tomorrow, 11/13. In the area of Hug-A-Tree, BRMRG visited all of the Albemarle County elementary schools last spring.

RSAR: RSAR currently has 6 Basics, 9 Associates, 7 Trainee or Applicants, and 16 prospective members. Their training schedule is one classroom session per month and one field session per month. They are trying to incorporate Hanover SAR into the group or into the SAR world in general. Patsy Humphris is still working on publicity

and fundraising for the group. They received \$500 from Philip-Morris from these efforts and have purchased two pagers on the BRMRG digital system. Lorick Fox has a personal pager on the same system, so RSAR has 3 pagers. The group is not growing as fast as they would like at this time. They are working on building up enough group equipment to be a separate group.

SMRG: SMRG has had three searches in Maryland this year and one in WV, near the MD border. They attended training with Eastern Shore (Wycomaco Co.) and were invited back. Next week will be a mid-MD demo with the Parks and the police. SMRG is still sponsoring ESAR Post 616 and is interested in another ESAR group in the College Park area, one affiliated with REI. SMRG has new working relations with Montgomery Co. authorities and at Sugarloaf Mtn. They have also improved relations with PATC this year.

SWVMRG: SWVMRG currently has 38 people on the roster. They are still working on tax-exempt status. Matt Rhode and Sheila Armstrong have worked out a strong training schedule. They have 6 members of GSAR Level I and 2 of Level II. SWVMRG has 15 Hug-A-Tree instructors.

ESAR 616: There are currently 12 ESARs, 11 adults, 8 trainees, and 8 new members. The group is enrolling in Advanced 1st Aid. A new ESAR post is starting up in College Park and is sponsored by REI. SMRG and ESAR training has been held in College Park. For anyone interested, ESAR runs a store where helmets, carabiners, etc. are available.

TREASURER

The treasury stands at \$858.95. \$50.00 is owed to Gary Mechtel. All groups should send in their dues by January of 1989.

NEWSLETTER

BRMRG still needs to be reimbursed for the last issue. Documentation will be presented to Mechtel.

Discussion was raised about BITNET access. No one is entirely clear as to how to obtain this.

--Mechtel motioned to appoint someone to coordinate/organize information and report to the ASRC BOD.

The motion passed with one (1) abstention.

Carl Solomon accepted the appointment.

Keith Conover reports that the ASRC textbook is behind in compilation.

The National Ski Patrol has published a book on Wilderness Emergency Care

(see p. 4 of the 6 August 1988 minutes): Mechtel motioned to have the ASRC BOD work in conjunction with the comco committee to review the agreement. After some discussion, the motion was withdrawn.

MEDICAL

The VA EMS license expires 31 Dec 1988. All groups should send Koester copies of EMT certifications. Some discussion arose as to whether the ASRC should try for ALS status instead of BLS. At the moment, our BLS status includes S.T. The consensus was to remain with BLS.

The wilderness protocols are printed. A second printing with the ASRC logo on the cover needs money. Conover motioned to accept existing protocols as ASRC standards and publish them accordingly. Discussion followed on our ability to endorse protocols state-wide. The motion was withdrawn. Conover then motioned to allocate funds for publishing in PA and VA and to change the frontispiece to reflect the ASRC title and the acknowledgment to claim acceptance in Pa and VA. After discussion, the motion was withdrawn. Mechtel then motioned to assign to Koester the task of investigating cost and production. The motion passed with one (1) abstention.

- OMD's ESTAB. STANDARDS

The PA EMT-W class in the spring does not yet have a definite date. It should run for five days.

Adjourned for lunch 1235 - reconvened 1425

Drafts of the training standards were passed around and everyone took five minutes to read over them.

Discussion ensued as to how much knowledge an FTL must have; should an FTL be a rescue specialist?

Cady Soukup volunteered to take over the responsibilities of the training standards from Chris Ingle, pending Ingle's consent. Thus, all comments should be addressed to her at: P.O. Box 430, Flint Hill VA 22627.

It was the consensus of the group to delete Rescue Standard 5.b. and correct 5.c.

EXTERNAL ORGANIZATIONS

ASTM: We have not sent any representatives to ASTM meetings lately. Their next meeting is 4-5 December in Phoenix. A motion was made that the Conference pay \$50.00 to join ASTM. The motion passed with two (2) abstentions.

MRA: Soukup attended their last meeting on 5 November 1988. The MRA would like to see the ASRC become a single team and a region. At this point, Conover motioned to change the section in the Ops Manual to say that a Rescue Specialist, not a Basic, may wear an MRA patch. The motion passed with one (1) abstention. Conover then motioned to allow FTLs and FTMs to wear an MRA support patch. The motion passed with one (1) abstention.

PA SAR CO: There is no report.

VA SAR CO: The last meeting was 5 November. Greg Stiles is the new Chairman. The SAR CO has agreed to incorporate and thus work for tax-exempt status. There will be a \$10.00 fee for each member organization. The SAR Co will be an advisory board to DES on SAR. Corrections were made in the SOP. Mechtel motioned to adopt this SOP as ASRC procedure. The motion passed with one (1) abstention.

OLD BUSINESS

A motion was made to accept RSAR as a full certified ASRC group pending a letter from the BRMRG BOD confirming RSAR's status.

The motion passed with one (1) abstention.

Soukup motioned to accept ESAR Post 616 as an affiliate ASRC group

pending a letter from SMRG confirming ESAR's eligibility.
The motion passed with one (1) abstention.

Fox made a motion to empower the ASRC BOD to accept the REI ESARs as a probationary affiliate group at the next BOD meeting with SMRG as the sponsoring group.

The motion passed with four (4) abstentions.

Solomon, C. motioned to accept ESAR 616 as a probationary certified group and allow the ASRC BOD to act at the next meeting.

The motion passed with one (1) abstention.

Fox motioned to accept changes to the ASRC by-laws as written by Keith Conover. After some discussion, the motion was withdrawn.

Mechtel made a request to ESAR 616 that they write up a paper outlining difficulties in being both an ESAR group and an ASRC certified group.

BYLAWS: (see revised version typed by Conover after this meeting)

I.2.5.e - adopted

2.8.c - adopted with one (1) opposed

II.1.3.b. - strike "and by whom," - adopted with one (1) abstention

1.3.c. - ditto

2.1 - adopted with three (3) abstentions

2.1.b. - adopted with two (2) abstentions

2.1.c. - amend to "except IC and IS" - adopted with one (1) abstention

2.1.d. - adopted with one (1) opposed

2.1.f. - adopted

2.4 - adopted

3.1.a. - add "and have been a trainee member for a minimum of 3 months"

b. - old text of a.

c. - old text of b.

d. - same wording as II.4.2.

adopted with one (1) abstention

4.1 - adopted with one (1) abstention

4.2 - ditto

4.3 - ditto

3.2 - ditto

3.3 - ditto

6.2 - change last "GTO" to "group"; adopted

6.4 - adopted

7 DELETED - adopted

8 DELETED - adopted

III.3.3.d. - adopted

3.4.b. - adopted

A motion was made to change "trainee" to "probationary" and "Certified" to "active" - the motion passed with twenty-two (22) in favor and eight (8) opposed.

The next BOD meeting will be on 10 December in Hancock, MD.

Bob Elron submitted a letter to the membership concerning his response to the letters written about the Commo Committee which named Gene Harrison and Bob Elron. A copy will be given to the secretary for the files.

Solomon, C. is looking into automation processes, e.g. TAF generation

A motion was made to accept the grammar changes in the section on Groups in the by-laws. The motion passed with one (1) abstention.

This meeting of the General Membership of the ASRC was adjourned at 1715.

Respectfully submitted,

Deming Herbert
Recording secretary

Robert S Elron
P.O. Box 2255
Falls Church, VA 22042
November 12, 1988

Appalachian Search & Rescue Conference
P.O. Box 400
Newcomb Station
Charlottesville, VA 22904

Dear ASRC member:

This open letter is in reference to the four letters (copies attached) sent to an unknown number of ASRC members. It has come to my attention that my position on relevant matters is not well known. Therefore, I am writing to publicly record the following positions.

My position on my replacing Gene Harrison as ASRC Communications Committee Chairman, has been and still is:

"I will accept the position of Communications Committee Chairman, but I will not be the one to push Gene out."

This is stated in quotes because, since the subject first came up, I have made a point of making this exact statement.

My concern with administration of Communications at the ASRC level has been primarily a concern for the lack of written documentation on how to do the job. As a new Group Communications Officer, in April 1987, I was unable to find anything in writing about: Board approved ASRC Communication Rules and Policies; what ASRC Unit numbers had been assigned my group; and what was expected of a Group Communications Officer from both the ASRC and my Group. I have responded to these concerns with questions to many people; researched the ASRC records; and finally, submitted motions to the ASRC Board, the Communications Committee, and my Group concerning internal administration and communications.

I consider Gene to be technically competent and use him as a source of information. However, on administrative matters, I consider him undependable.

Appalachian Search & Rescue Conference
P.O. Box 400
Newcomb Station
Charlottesville, VA 22904

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As for the attached letters...

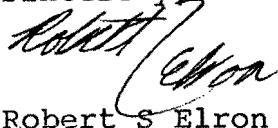
I have talked with Bru Randall, who is also an Eastern Region member, about his letter. He, unfortunately, was unable to remember the exact criticisms to which he made reference in his letter; so I am unable to evaluate what happened and thus avoid future problems.

Jackie Bannerman takes a page and a half to ask, "Why doesn't Elron ask Gene about the National Cave Rescue Commission's use of the ASRC license?" Before I asked anybody about this, I broached the subject with Gene; he declined to respond. I was also becoming aware, that while Eastern Region (NCRC) people were under the impression that they were part of the ASRC license, most of the Board knew nothing of any outside organizations having been given permission to use the ASRC license.

I will not bother to itimize Mr. Hempel's ruminations. As recognized by most, both of his letters are almost totally lies, most of them deliberate.

If any concerned member requires any further explanation on these matters, feel free to ask.

Sincerely,



Robert S Elron

cc. ASRC Board
cc. list, J. Bannerman letter
G. Harrison
J. Bannerman
J. Hempel
B. Randall



P.O. BOX 7565, PITTSBURGH, PA 15213

February 2, 1988

Greg Shea
3034 Remington Avenue
Baltimore, MD 21211

Dear Greg:

As Chairman of Pittsburgh Grotto and as a certified member of the Allegheny Mountain Rescue Group, I am writing concerning the change in membership status of Gene Harrison and the proposed attempt to remove him from the position of Communications Officer. I am also concerned with the possible attempt to install Rob Elron as Communications Officer.

First, I would like to state that this grotto has had many years of association with Gene in the area of cave rescue and that we hold him in the highest regard. Gene has put in countless hours locating and refurbishing communications equipment and other rescue gear. He located and assisted with the purchase and distribution of mobile radios. He has given countless more hours to teaching cave rescue classes and participating in rescues. As a member of both the cave rescue and mountain rescue communities, Gene has made major contributions to developing techniques and fostering the interchange of ideas between the two disciplines. From our experiences with Gene we believe you have made an error in changing his status within your organization and feel very strongly that he should be retained as your Communications Officer.

Still speaking as Grotto Chairman, I must state that several members of this grotto, including myself, have had difficulty dealing with Rob Elron at cave rescue classes. We believe that it would cause unnecessary problems in communications if you were to make Rob the ASRC Communications Officer.

Now to change hats to ASRC member. I find it incredible that you would change Gene's status, apparently with out due process. I also find it incredible that you would find it necessary to change it at all. I understand that one problem is that Gene and the training officer of SMRG were unable to come up with a time for a Certification test. I would like to point out that the Training guide does not require an

annual certification test but rather that "the training officer conducts an annual review". It would seem to me that that review could be fairly brief in the case of someone like Gene who developed many of the standards being reviewed.

I would also like to state that through my observations, during both field operations and in training, I have come to the opinion that Rob Elron has neither the technical knowledge nor the leadership abilities necessary to be the ASRC Communications Officer.

In all I find this whole affair preposterous. I believe that it is either personally or politically motivated and that it can do nothing but hurt the Conference in the eyes of the rescue community to say nothing about the disservice being done to future patients or lost persons. I believe that it would be a prudent move to reinstate Gene to certified member and retain him as ASRC Communications Officer.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Bruce A. Randall".

Bruce A. Randall



EASTERN REGION
NATIONAL CAVE RESCUE COMMISSION

Box 784
Culloden, WV 25510-0784

February 1, 1988
NATIONAL SPELEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Greg Shea
Appalachian Search and Rescue Conference Vice Chairman
3034 Remington Avenue
Baltimore, MD 21211

Dear Sir:

On November 14, 1987, the Eastern Region of the National Cave Rescue Commission conducted one of its classes in Basic Cave Rescue Orientation in Holidaysburg, Pennsylvania.

On this same date, one of your members, Robert S. Elron, asked me if I was still using my radio. (This radio is operating on the frequency 155.160.) I replied in the affirmative. He then proceeded to ask me if I was aware that my radio was unlicensed. I replied that it was my understanding that my radio (like other Eastern Region radios) had been licensed under the Appalachian Search and Rescue Conference for special emergency situations involving cave rescue. He wanted to know how it got licensed. With some exasperation I reminded him that Gene Harrison had included Eastern Region in the Appalachian Search and Rescue Conference radio license. (The exasperation was due to his being present at other Eastern Region meetings during which, at one time or another, regarding this same license, Gene Harrison had talked with the group at large explaining how he had acquired the license as well as how to properly use the radios, both in terms of phraseology to be used and situations warranting the use thereof. Also, at a Virginia Region meeting of the National Speleological Society's grottoes and members in 1986, Mr. Elron and I had had almost this same question and answer session!) Mr. Elron then proceeded to tell me that he had checked the license and that nowhere on it was anything to indicate that Eastern Region was included. I then told him (again) to ask Gene Harrison about it as Gene is our expert in communications as well as the use of same radios.

Quite frankly, Mr. Shea, from the standpoint of an individual, as well as that of the Director of Curriculum and Instruction in the Eastern Region, I am more than a little disgusted with Mr. Elron. Mr. Elron lives closer to Mr. Harrison than I do; he belongs to other organizations that

 EASTERN REGION
NATIONAL CAVE RESCUE COMMISSION

NATIONAL SPELEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Mr. Harrison does; yet, since November, I have talked with Mr. Harrison at least three times and Mr. Elron has still not asked Mr. Harrison about it. He, as a member of ASRC and Eastern Region, is supposed to be working with his fellow members. If he cannot talk with his fellow members, how can he interface with other rescue groups? Indeed, will he be able to talk with others on SAR missions?

In accordance with his usual attention to detail, Gene Harrison has issued to those individuals in the Eastern Region group who have a radio a number (I am Unit 93). As I mentioned previously, he has also given us specific directions for the usage and implementation thereof. Having used the 155.160 radios during several emergency situations, both in Virginia and West Virginia, I greatly appreciate and commend the work of Mr. Harrison in facilitating communications amongst rescue groups. I feel that he has done this in the best interest of fulfilling "That Others May Live".

Sincerely yours,
Jacqueline S. D. Bannerman
Jacqueline S. D. Bannerman
Director of Curriculum
and Instruction

cc: Albert Baker
Gary Mechtel
Paul Torrence
Brian Wheeler
Kevin Parks
John Charles Hempel
Gene Harrison



EASTERN REGION
NATIONAL CAVE RESCUE COMMISSION

NATIONAL SPELEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

FEBRUARY 1, 1988

ASRC BOARD
PO BOX 440
NEWCOMB STATION
CHARLOTTESVILLE, VA. 22903

DEAR SIRs

I am writing you in my official capacity as Eastern Region Coordinator of the National Cave Rescue Commission. I feel obligated to express my concern over the infighting going on within ASRC. I refer to the communication committiee fight between Mr. Elron and Mr. Harrison.

For the last year many of my rescue units have been communicating to the ERNCRC that Mr. Bob Elron had been "threatning" (perhaps to strong a word) them with what he was going to do , inregard to ASRC/NCRC communications when he took over the chair of the communication committiee. Mr Elron at best has created a lot of anguish within the regional SAR community by his ideas/plans.

I have to this point disregarded his activities as being "shit stiring". Bob had done much the same sort of power grabbing while he worked with NCRC. However, I fear that his actions have progressed to the point that his disruptive activities are about to jeopradize the effectiveness of all search and rescue communications in our operational area. As you are aware all SAR groups working in this area have enjoyed the convience of being able to communicate on a single unified set of frequencies. This standardization of channels and the realitive ease of communication , through which groups like Dogs East, NCRC,SEARCH,and ASRC have be able to work, has been possible because of the work of one man in ASRC.

I am of course speaking of Gene Harrison. Gene and I have worked to geather for more than ten years and during that time I have heard all the good and bad discussions about how he does various rescue related activities. I know of the personality problems some SMRG people have with Gene and I realize that his work has reduced his activity with ASRC but he is still the best ambassador of good will that youe have.

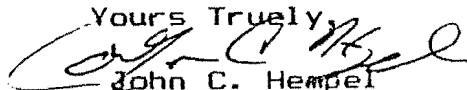
Gene has almost single handedly been able to overcome the problems of communications between the different groups in our area .He has dedicated many hours each year to assisting ASRC and other groups in aquireing and dispersing como equipment and in training of personel in the use of the latest equipment. By holding the communication chair in both

ASRC and NCRCEr he has done more to promote the goals of ASRC than most of your members.

I was therefore shocked to hear that you were considering replacing him with Bob Elron. Bob is in my opinion the worst person that you could place in a position where he could represent your group in public. I feel that it would be impossible for our groups to maintain the good relationship that we have if this were the case.

I am not telling you to keep Gene, for that is your decision, but I am urging that you not appoint Elron for the good of regional SAR.

Yours Truly,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "John C. Hempel".

John C. Hempel

National Cave Rescue Commission
Eastern Region Coordinator

February 1, 1988

ASRC BOARD
BOX 440
NEWCOMB STATION
CHARLOTTESVILLE, VA.


As a member of AMRG and a long time SAR person I am forced to protest the way some members have been attacking Gene Harrison. Bob Elron has, since being appointed to the SMRG communication chair, been using this position to launch attacks at Gene Harrison. Bob and Gene have had a personality conflict for many years dating back to when the both were work teaching for the NCRC. Gene was in Bobs eyes the reason that he was demoted to assistant level from full instructor. He has stated to many people that he was going to get even with Gene and I feel this attempt to replace Gene is such an attempt.

I have worked with Bob for over ten years and know his abilities about as well as anyone. When I first heard him say he was ASRC communication committiee chairman I about died. He is at best ignorant in the commo field and at worst he is a large detrament to the communication committiee. He is unable for the most part to work with people and he has been called " the most universaly disliked person in rescue".

If ASRC would appoint him to this important comittiee I feel that he would cause a wide spread loss of respect for the conference.

Simply put the man is not the image we need in a power position and he will in my opinion undo ten years of good work Gene has done.

Sincerely,


John C. Hempel
AMRG member