

# APPALACHIAN ALERT

## THE APPALACHIAN SEARCH & RESCUE CONFERENCE

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CHARLOTTESVILLE, VIRGINIA 22903-0440

**AUGUST 1993**

**A Publication of the Appalachian Search & Rescue Conference, Inc.**

### GREETINGS

This is the inaugural issue of the new and revitalized Appalachian Alert, published monthly, except July, by the Appalachian Search & Rescue Conference, Inc. (ASRC).

Appalachian Alert collates information submitted by individual ASRC teams, develops and presents information of interest to the wilderness search and rescue community in the mid-Atlantic region, and reports activities of ASRC board of directors meetings, its committees, ASRC group and training events, and related business. The bulletin will be assembled and printed the third week of every month. Information for each issue should be received by the Editor -- at his address shown below -- in the first week of every month.

If individuals or ASRC groups wish to report SAR related research or present opinion pieces, Appalachian Alert may be the forum for that presentation. Beginning with this issue, Appalachian Alert will also be mailed to colleagues and programs in other states and regions involved in lost person SAR services and related emergency services.

The following article is the first of a "20 Year Anniversary" series which describes the origin of the Appalachian Search & Rescue Conference (ASRC), why it was needed, and how it grew to become a regional and successful ground SAR organization. So hop in and join us for an exciting tour through...

### JURASSIC SAR ! (Or, Did Dinosaurs Really Start the ASRC?)

By: Tyrannosaurus Colorcodus

This story starts in ancient times -- about six hundred and thirty million seconds ago (20 years)! Recent discoveries by search and rescue (SAR) paleontologists have revealed startling information concerning those ancestral ASRC years in the mid-Atlantic SAR jungles. Travel with us back in time to 1973 for the "Origin of the (ASRC) Species," with apologies to Darwin and Spielberg!

There were three dinosaurs who were the primary developers of the ASRC and the direct ancestors of the current species of DynaSARs: Triceratops Radiosquawkus (Ray Cole), Brontosaurus Bandidus (Keith Conover), and Tyrannosaurus Colorcodus (Gene Harrison).

All had much in common, they lived in the caves of the northern Virginia territories, they were all members of the same ancient outdoor sauroid herds; the National Speleo-saurus Society and the Potomac Appalachian Trail-saurus Club. Also, all three were (or later became) EMTs (Emergency Medical Technicians) and HAM radio-sauruses.

As experienced and responsible outdoor dinosaurs, they became concerned about many recent rescues and searches in the mid-Atlantic jungles which lacked the essential management skills and resources for success. There were even cases in which the rescue-sauruses were hurt or killed, evidently due to lack of training for, or understanding of, the hazards of the jungle environment.

One classic case was the search for a young dinosaur that had wandered away from his herd in Jurassic Jungle Park in 1972. Virtually hundreds of disorganized dinosaurs and mammoths, ranging from local residents to CB (cave band) clubs, responded to the extensive media attention and saturated the search area. Park ranger resources were overwhelmed, and fossils (clues) were obliterated. After several days of fruitless "searches" by these hordes, the little dinosaur had still not been found, and it was feared he had been kidnapped or eaten. Fortunately, a Marine Corps orienteer-saur Team also heard of the problem. They took the initiative, came to the park, and found the lost dinosaur in just a few hours. This was clearly a triumph for the use of proper SAR-type skills. (And nobody could claim that ALL the dinosaurs were dumb!)

It seemed senseless that such SAR operations had to end in hardship or tragedy, for either rescuers or rescuees. Even a dinosaur could see that the "system" (or the lack thereof) just wasn't working effectively. And, it was evident that many of the agencies "didn't have a clue" about what to do in search and rescue emergencies. So these three dinosaurs (who really weren't so dumb) decided to do something about it.

What did they do? How did they help turn a series of misfortunes into an effective SAR organization? Were the three dinosaurs successful, or did they become extinct? For the answers, tune to the next exciting episode of JURASSIC SAR, Part 2!!

### ASRC GROUPS

With this issue, basic contact information on each ASRC group is reported. Groups are responsible for updating this data.

There are 8 ASRC affiliated Groups located in Virginia, Maryland and Pennsylvania. ASRC groups provide coordinated services throughout the mid-Atlantic region under the Conference umbrella of established training standards and common operational protocols. Each Group is an independent program with its own organizational structure, officers and program. ASRC groups are recertified every 3 years.

- ◆ The following 7 groups are certified members of the ASRC. They are listed by the order of their original ASRC membership.

Blue Ridge Mountain Rescue Group. BRMRG, based at the University of Virginia at Charlottesville, was one of two original ASRC organizations. The ASRC corporate offices and central dispatching services are presently maintained in Charlottesville. Information about BRMRG is available by writing P.O. Box 440, Newcomb Station, Charlottesville, Virginia 22903-0440. The BRMRG administrative telephone is (804) 924-3472.

Shenandoah Mountain Rescue Group SMRG, is a unit of the Potomac Appalachian Trail Club, 118 Park Street, Vienna, Virginia 22180. The original Potomac Valley Search & Rescue Group, a predecessor to SMRG, was one of the two original ASRC units. The team's administrative phone is (703) 255-5034.

Southwest Virginia Mountain Rescue Group. SWVMRG is based at Virginia Tech University in Blacksburg, Virginia. Their address is 203 Progress Street, Blacksburg VA 24060. The team's administrative phone is (703) 951-2914.

Allegheny Mountain Rescue Group. AMRG is based in Pittsburgh in western Pennsylvania. AMRG is also certified for mountain rescue services by the Mountain Rescue Association (MRA). Administrative information may be obtained by calling (412) 869-3747. AMRG's address is: c/o Dept Emergency Medicine, Mercy Hospital of Pittsburgh, 1400 Locust Street, Pittsburgh PA 15219-5166.

Richmond Search & Rescue Group. RSAR, based in Richmond, Virginia, may be contacted at P O Box 9025, Richmond VA 23228. The team's administrative telephone number is (804) 266-2355.

Tidewater Search & Rescue Group. Serving Virginia's Tidewater region, TSAR may be contacted at 803 Townsend Court, Norfolk VA 23502. The team's administrative telephone number is (804) 466-8094.

Maryland Search & Rescue Group. M/SAR is based at Howard Community College in Columbia, Maryland. M/SAR is also certified for mountain rescue services by the Mountain Rescue Association (MRA). Administrative information may be obtained by calling (301) 596-5554. M/SAR's address is 11034 Berrypick Lane, Columbia MD 21044.

- ◆ The eighth ASRC team is an affiliate member working towards full ASRC accreditation.

Potomac Valley Rescue Group. PVRG is based at the University of Maryland at College Park. The team's address is Box 10, Stamp Union Building, University of Maryland, College Park MD 20742. Their training/operations and message center phone number is (301) 314-7444.

## PRESIDENT'S CORNER

**Perceptions:** "What good is having X group? they are almost never at a mission." This was a recent comment to me, during a mission about a specific Group, but I have heard it before regarding other Groups. It's not a fair statement for anyone to make.

**Why?** How often do you respond to a search mission? If the three you went on in 1993 were all in northern Virginia you might not have seen folks

from SWVMRG or TSAR. Does that mean they were not active? No. It means, quite simply that the three missions you were on had few if any folks from these groups.

Now, if you go to almost all missions, regardless of day of the week, location, et cetera, then you can make such observations for the shifts you worked. Even then, just for those shifts on those days.

I am asking all ASRC Incident Commanders and Incident Staff personnel at the end of a mission to forward copies of the SAR personnel sign in sheets to Peter McCabe. It is Peter's and my hope that by actually tracking who goes to missions we can get a handle on the above issue and many others.

**Virginia Department of Emergency Services Incident Command Standards for Ground Operations:** This effort has been going on for some time. ASRC contributed heavily to the design of the standards. The standards are in the final draft and it is hoped that they will be signed by Mr. Slayton (VA/DES Director) by the end of the year. A date for a "finishing class" for VA/DES IC's is tentatively set for April 1994. If you are already an ASRC IC, you will have to pass the same process as new IC's.

The ICS standards also come with an SOP which each IC and VA/DES will sign as an agreement between them regarding such things as mission paper work, employee standards, etc., etc.

**VA/DES Training:** The calendar for early 1994 and the remainder of 1993 is still being settled. But, the planned institute for October 29-31 and November 12-14 1993 at Camp Virginia Jaycees near Roanoke is a go! FTM, FTL and MSO will be offered. Dates are being developed in the February/March time frame for another institute at Roanoke for FTM, FTL, and Practical Search Operations (PSO). It is hoped that VA/DES funds will come through for this second institute.

## AGREEMENT SIGNED WITH MARYLAND STATE POLICE

In June the ASRC signed a Memorandum of Agreement with the Maryland State Police defining operational relationships between the State Police and the ASRC whenever the ASRC provides volunteer ground search and rescue services in Maryland with the Maryland State Police. In Maryland, the State Police is the designated search and rescue services coordinator and responsible agent.

**Note:** The ASRC has existing Memoranda of Agreement with the Virginia Department of Emergency Services, and the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Resources.

## ASRC GROUP TRAINING SIMULATIONS

**SWVMRG:** September 10-12, 1993. Training and search/rescue simulation activities operating from the CAP squadron building at the Roanoke (VA) airport from 1800 on 10 September. Training area described as relatively rough with some vertical or near vertical sections, and heavy underbrush in some areas. Participants should be prepared to camp/bivouac Saturday night and provide all rations. Further information from John Panches evenings at (703) 552-6957.

**RSAR:** October 9-10, 1993. Training and SAR simulation activities from 0900 Saturday at Powhatan Wild Life Refuge at Powhatan, VA. Mission base at Rescue Squad. Full simulation during Saturday day with Saturday evening socializing. On Sunday, training stations are scheduled. Friday night camping available. Saturday dinner will be a community chili pot. For further information call Kevin Dawe at (804) 750-1623.

**M/SAR:** November 20-21, 1993. Training and simulation at Sugarloaf Mountain reservation in Frederick County, Maryland. Coordinated training sessions planned Saturday night with Maryland State Police aviation units on air/ground operations in night operations using Forward Looking Infrared (FLIR) techniques. Training during daylight Saturday and Sunday will focus on search strategies and semi-tech evacuation procedures. For further information call Gary Schlueter at (410) 880-3004.

### WEST VIRGINIA SAR RESOURCES

The West Virginia SAR Network, representing ground search and rescue units in West Virginia, is dispatched through the Huntington, West Virginia Regional Medical Command Center. The SAR Network may be reached in West Virginia by calling (800) 654-5767. Callers from other states may call the Network at (800) 233-9159.

**Editor's Note:** From time to time we will report base line information regarding other lost person SAR organizations and programs.

### NEW ADDRESS FOR ASRC TEAM

Allegheny Mountain Rescue Group  
c/o Dept. Emergency Medicine  
Mercy Hospital of Pittsburgh  
1400 Locust Street  
Pittsburgh PA 15219-5166

AMRG is dispatched by the ASRC through STATCOM at (412) 647-7828.

### UPCOMING ASRC BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETINGS

October 23    December 18    February 26    April 23

Meetings through April 1994 are scheduled to be held in Charlottesville, Virginia adjacent to the ASRC dispatch office.

### SEARCH OPERATIONS MANAGEMENT COURSE PLANNED IN MARYLAND

The Maryland Search & Rescue Group (M/SAR) plans to conduct a 40 hour Managing the Search Operations course on two weekends: January 14-16 and January 28-30, 1994. The course will be coordinated through the Disaster Services program of the American Red Cross in Columbia, Maryland. Further information on registration, fees, and housing will be available in the next issues of Appalachian Alert.

### APPALACHIAN SEARCH & RESCUE CONFERENCE, INC.

President (TSAR)	David Carter (804) 466-8094
Vice President (SMRG)	Jenny Burmester (703) 978-7819
Secretary & Treasurer (BRMRG)	Camile Birmingham (804) 979-7254
Operations Officer (TSAR)	David Carter (804) 466-8094
Training Officer (SWVMRG)	John Punches (703) 552-6957
Medical Officer (TSAR)	Scott Shuffield (804) 460-1849
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ASTM Representative (SWVMRG)	John Punches (703) 552-6957
<b>Appalachian Alert</b> Editor	Peter McCabe (301) 596-5554
11034 Berrypick Lane Columbia MD 21044	

### ASRC GROUPS

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c/o Dept Emerg Medicine	Mercy Hospital of Pittsburgh
1400 Locust Street	Pittsburgh PA 15219-5166
President	Owen Gormley (412) 776-1081
Training Off	Dave Knorr (412) 843-9484
Ops Off	Mike Kuga (412) 869-2567
<u>Blue Ridge Mountain Rescue Group</u> (BRMRG)	(804) 924-3472
PO Box 440	Newcomb Station C'ville VA 22903
President	● Charles Chopin (804) 979-3228
Training Off	● Bruce Hemmer (804) 296-6172
Ops Off	● Bruce Hemmer (804) 296-6172
<u>Maryland Search &amp; Rescue Group</u> (M/SAR)	(301) 596-5554
11034 Berrypick	Columbia MD 21044
President	Kelly Naylor (410) 750-5850
Training Off	Gary Schlueter (410) 880-3004
Ops Off	Edward Marsh (410) 381-2679
<u>Potomac Valley Rescue Group</u> (PVRG)	(301) 314-7444
Box 10	Stamp Union Bldg College Park MD 20742
President	Brian Whalen (410) 744-6674
Training Off	Scott McCabe (301) 596-5554
Ops Off	Dome Poon (301) 590-9424
<u>Richmond Search &amp; Rescue Group</u> (RSAR)	(804) 768-5555
P O Box 9025	Richmond VA 23225
President	Kevin Dawe (804) 750-1623
Training Off	Tony Felts (804) 271-7307
Ops Off	Bill Fisher (804) 748-6214
<u>Shenandoah Mountain Rescue Group</u> (SMRG)	(703) 255-5034
118 Park St	Vienna VA 22180
President	Gary Mechtel (410) 381-2593
Training Off	Jim Fishenden (703) 538-6568
Ops Off	Paul DeHaven (703) 354-2957
<u>Southwest Virginia Mountain Rescue Group</u> (SWVMRG)	(703) 951-2914
203 Progress St	Blacksburg VA 24060
President	Dave Zader (703) 951-2914
Training Off	John Punches (703) 552-6957
Ops Off	PJ Fleener (703) 951-9137
<u>Tidewater Search &amp; Rescue Group</u> (TSAR)	(804) 466-8094
803 Townsend Ct	Norfolk VA 23502
President	David Carter (804) 466-8094
Training Off	Earle Evans (804) 693-4391
Ops Off	Ruth Carter (804) 466-8094

Note: Entries marked with  indicate listing was taken from most recently available group roster. It is understood this information is dynamic and subject to change.