

*that others  
may live*



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## LCSTAR

Newsletter for Larimer County Search and Rescue,  
Inc.

Winter 2005-06

edited by: Jim Powers



### Larimer County Search and Rescue 2005 Member of the Year, Scott Evans.

Past President Sarah Babbitt told an emotional story as the background for how Scott Evans was chosen this year's recipient of the prestigious Stubai ice axe. We all shivered as Sarah talked of following Scott through blinding snow, blowing horizontally, sometimes only being able to see his boots and gaiters driving in to the deep snow in front of her, and her feeling of security knowing that Scott was leading the way.

Another example came as recently as the Buckhorn Canyon search when, after three days on the mission, with diminishing daylight, Scott had to be coaxed and pried out of the field as he followed tracks thought to be the subject's. Experience, dedication, dogged determination, and an intelligent and analytical approach to

SAR are the attributes that Scott brings to our team. **Thanks Scott, well earned!**

When you think about the calls paged in 2005 and then you look at the statistics (see page 5), prepared by our Senior Mossback, George Jansen, you see that there may be a significant trend developing. In 2005 we had fewer pages however we had a number of pages for large and complex missions.

If you are at all like me, when you go in to the field you just want to work, not be bothered by all the bureaucratic stuff that we learned in our NIMS training. Yet, on some level, I think you must admit that the more complicated the mission the more we need clear and well established lines of authority and communication. Let's see, it's not Buckhorn base but Division B I call, right?

Right now we are in that interesting transition period where we must let go of old methods and embrace the new. Division B? Although it is difficult (at least different) it seems that we have made significant strides in learning and using our NIMS training. The latest example was our five operational period Buckhorn Canyon search. Here is what Dave Mosier, ES, had to say about what we did right and what we can do better.

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**Summary of After Action Review  
Buckhorn/Strain Search 2/2-9/06  
Larimer County Search and Rescue Team**

In review of the Bart Strain search we (Emergency Services and LCSAR) identified a number of items that we could do better in the future to insure a smooth running operation.

These items were: Team members would refrain from bringing problematic personal vehicles to missions. We will try to arrange carpooling for those with less than dependable vehicles. We will designate a team or team members to break down the SAR trailer after missions. We will provide training to experienced team members in truck and trailer operations as well as fueling the vehicles with the county Trax system. We recognized the need for additional training and familiarization in the operation of our radios, and the need to minimize our radio traffic while on missions.

We also identified that we need to do more ICS training so that team members have a better understanding of check in procedures on complex missions, the use of Divisions, and Groups, and training for experienced team members to function in these roles.

We also recognized that there were many things that were positive and helped us to have a successful mission.

These were: Team member's motivation, dedication and flexibility during a complex mission. The kind, courteous, and helpful interaction with the Strain family members by team members. This included keeping them informed of the operations that were being conducted, and keeping friends and family members safe while in the field.

Also included were good, positive communications between Operations (LCSAR) and IC (LCSO ES), great documentation of all events and plans, and attention to detail in preserving the crime scene (all unattended deaths are considered crime scenes until cleared by the Coroners office) by team members that located Mr. Strain's body on 2/9/06.

In closing, thanks to all of the LCSAR team members, for your dedication and hard work. It is greatly appreciated

Thank you,

Dave Mosier  
Emergency Services

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*Set your goals, stay focused and you will succeed.* Ted Williams, Marine Corps combat pilot and Baseball Hall of Famer

## Thank you to our donors, 2005

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Marcia and John Van Eden

Some of these generous donations were given specifically toward our truck replacement fund and some for our operating expenses.

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If you haven't been keeping track of former team member, James Mackler, here is a photo of him next to his Blackhawk helicopter. You will likely recognize the patch stuck to the back of his flight helmet. You can take the person out of LCSAR but apparently you can't take LCSAR out of the person. James' current duty station is Camp Speicher, Iraq.



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*Human nature is not a machine to be built after a model, and set to do exactly the work prescribed for it, but a tree, which requires to grow and develop itself on all sides, according to the tendency of the inward forces which make it a living thing. John Stuart Mill*

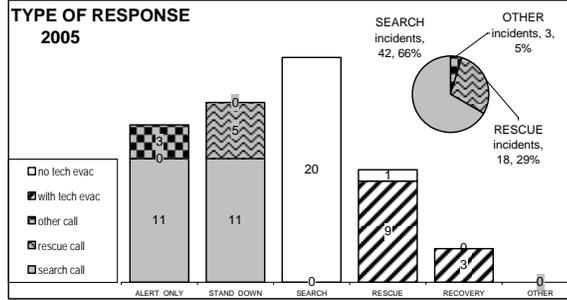
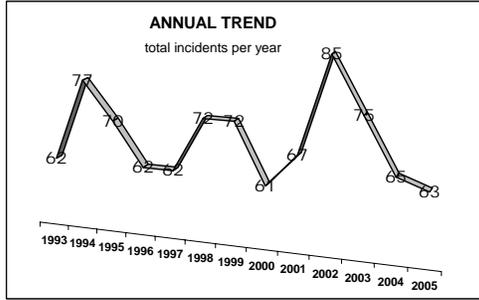
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Former Quartermaster now President, Dave Frank, celebrates the great job new (ish) Quartermaster, Brian Walch does for our team.



Chuck Akins receives the (in) famous Davis Brother Award  
Ya think???

## 2005 YEAR-END STATISTICS SUMMARY --- LARIMER COUNTY SEARCH AND RESCUE



ALERT = only leadership members are notified of a possible mission, and the general membership is not activated.

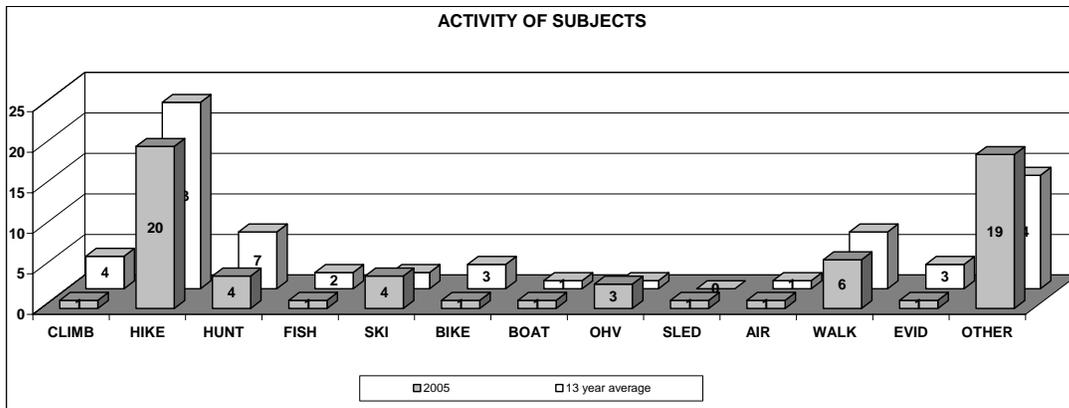
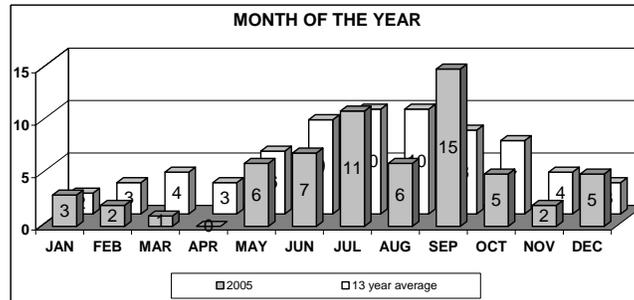
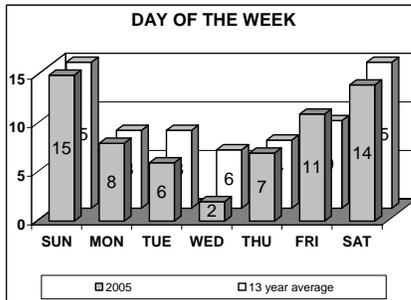
STAND-DOWN = general membership is alerted and is responding, but incident is resolved prior to Team's arrival at the trailhead.

SEARCH = known or suspected missing or overdue person; may or may not involve a technical evacuation once the person is found.

RESCUE = known injured or stranded person in a known area, usually involves a technical evacuation (using ropes, hardware and litter).

RECOVERY = known deceased in a known area, could be a mass casualty incident, and/or technical assistance to another agency.

OTHER = special events requiring the skills of an organized Team, or anything that does not fit into one of the above categories.



If you put the graphics in to perspective, that is in the context of more complicated, multi-day missions, such as Jeff Christensen, Mount Holy Cross (near Vail), Ben-Avi, Jeff Villano Long's Peak carry-out, and the recent Buckhorn Canyon search, you can see that we may be, at this time, moving away from as many shorter missions. Understanding and using ICS becomes more and more important!

Mike Fink and Doug Grimm being honored for twenty-five years of service to LCSAR. And they don't look a day over 29. It must be that great mountain air and supportive volunteer environment that keeps them young.

THANKS GUYS!



← And here we see Dave Hake demonstrating the proper way to pray to the god of lug. No wonder he is so successful in the field. (editor's note: I want to recognize and compliment Dave on his tenaciousness in going to the subject's home to find a footprint on a piece of cardboard, then using that to identify the subject's print in the field...I'm glad he's on our team!)

This is the actual presentation of the Stubai ice axe to the 2005 Member of the Year, Scott Evans. I have to admit there was a little moisture in your editor's eyes when Sarah talked about Scott's contribution to the team.



*The achievements of an organization are the results of the combined effort of each individual.* Vince Lombardi, Hall of Fame football coach. (emphasis added, ed.)

*Mission Synopsis – compiled by George Janson, Senior Mossback  
last quarter 2005*

**Friday 28 October 2005** – 18:09 – Report of lost hiker at **Greyrock** area – she had cell phone contact with dispatch, and the GPS feature of her phone plotted her location about half way between Greyrock and Seamans Reservoir. Teams were able to bushwack to her location and walked her out to the trailhead at Gateway Park just after midnight.

**Saturday 5 November 2005** – 18:58 – Report of two overdue hunters in **Creedmore Lakes** area – stood down at 22:07 just as team members were ready to leave the Cache, when ES reported the hunters had self-recovered to their camp.

**Sunday 27 November 2005** – 22:07 – Report of overdue cross-country skier in **Cameron Pass** area – he got disoriented in a white-out atop Diamond Peaks and inadvertently crossed over into Jackson County. At about 09:00 Monday morning, Jackson County SAR members encountered the subject as he was skiing out from Colorado State Forest. Diamond Peaks Ski Patrol (DPSP) assisted on this search.

**Tuesday 6 December 2005** – 21:53 – Request from Boulder County to assist with search for missing cross-country skier in **Allenspark** area. Stood down at 22:30 with report that RMRG had located the subject, who was OK.

**Thursday 8 December 2005** – 04:09 – Page to SAR Managers for possible search in **Red Feather Lakes**. An inebriated patron had left the Café at about 01:00 to walk home and had not arrived. Stood down at 04:34 with report from the local deputy that she was found and is OK.

**Thursday 22 December 2005** – 12:45 – Report of missing person whose vehicle was found at **Picnic Rock** parking lot. Team members were just beginning their search assignments when ES reported they had found the subject deceased (apparent suicide) on the opposite shore. At about 16:00, after the coroner completed the on-site investigation, team members assisted with the evac of the body.

**Friday 23 December 2005** – 22:28 – CSRB request for ‘confident backcountry skiers’ to assist Summit County with a search for missing snowboarder near **Keystone Ski Area**. LCSAR did not send any resources; however, DPSP did send a team to assist. Searchers located the subject at about 10:30 Saturday morning, cold and tired but otherwise OK.

**Friday 30 December 2005** – 11:27 – Request from Albany County, WY, for assist with search for a group of three overdue snowmobilers on top of the **Snowy Range Mountains**. One person was found OK, though cold and wet with mild frostbite, late on Friday. LCSAR and DPSP sent searchers up at 04:00 on Saturday for the weekend. The other two were found OK by Albany County SAR personnel early Saturday, though cold and wet with mild frostbite.



***Total of 63 missions this year – see statistics synopsis elsewhere in this newsletter.***

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Mike Erickson was one of the team members who received the Team Spirit Award. Others receiving this award were Russ Buckley and Jen Nolte. **CONGRATULATIONS!**

The Christmas party was, once again, the culmination of an interesting, challenging, and rewarding year. There were many awards and tokens of appreciation given that have not been mentioned. The hard work of Mike Fink and Russ Buckley in fund raising, recognition of who-knows-what-all-he-does Don Davis, the executive board, the ITCs, the SAR Managers, Tara Henderson our medical officer, Darrell Turman's efforts on the raffle, for attendance at missions—Dave Hake, and for overall team activity---Mike Ericson, always on the radio and ever helpful Mark Sheets, and everyone on the team for their efforts for the community, **great job and thank you!!!**

Of course it wouldn't be Christmas if it wasn't at Dave and Norma Govan's house. We appreciate them very much. *There are no secrets to success. It is the result of preparation, hard work, and learning from failure.*  
General Colin Powell, former Secretary of State and former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff



Another Christmas tradition, LCSAR working with the Santa Cops. Besides Santa and the folks in blue are: Anissa El Bialy, Janice Weixelman and Jim Kavalec.

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**From the President:**

Team Members:

Time is quickly approaching for yet another BASART program to begin. It doesn't seem possible that it's been a year since the 2005 BASART Program. There has been a lot of energy devoted to this year's program and it should be a great class. Bruce Boevers, and Thomas Shandely have successfully implemented new interview ideas with assistance from Thomas'



father and additional input from Drew Davis.

I want to thank all members who took time away from family and friends to participate in the interview process. There will plenty of opportunities for all of us to contribute to the success of this years BASART team.

A reminder that the MRA Spring Conference is June 15-18. Sponsors of the Conference will be the Marin County SAR team. I believe Scott Evans was a member of this team when he resided in California. The conference will be at The Headlands Institute across the bay from San Francisco. For all conference information and registration forms, check out their web site at [www.MARINSAR.org](http://www.MARINSAR.org).

The 2007 MRA Spring Conference will be in Ogden, Utah. There will be more on that at a later date.

LCSAR is still in need of a PSAR coordinator. Jamie Baker has graciously accepted the position as interim coordinator. If you have a desire to take this position or if you have questions about the PSAR Coordinator job, contact Jamie for information. If you are contacted with a request do a PSAR or information about PSARs, refer the requesting party to Jamie.

The Policies and Procedures as well as the Bylaws for LCSAR are being revised, with many needed changes. Mike Fink is the lead for this task and is being assisted by Mark Sheets, Jim Powers, Dan Fanning, and George Janson.

I know this has been e-mailed to the entire team but I want to emphasize the importance of maintaining our truck fleet. After practices, PSAR, or missions it is vital to check the fluid levels, (engine oil, power steering, etc.) for which ever truck you have driven. If you are not sure how to do this, contact Brian Walsh. If the fluids are low, top them off. Let Brian know ASAP if there are none available or purchase some, save the receipt, and you will get reimbursed by contacting Dan Fanning.

LCSAR is hosting a Regional Training seminar July 15. Teams from around the Rocky Mountain Region will be participating in this multi agency training. The Glen Haven Picnic area has been selected as the site for the event as there is an open rock face there and room for simultaneous raising and lowering scenarios. Help will be needed for various aspects for this day.

LCSAR will be testing to become fully accredited with the MRA, September 16 in Vertical Rock and Scree and possibly Search. A date for Avalanche and Snow has to be determined. More information will be sent to the team in the near future concerning that event.

So with BASART Training, Regional Training, and the Accreditation, in addition to inevitable missions we have a heavy calendar and will need all members to step up and assist with all the events for this year.

Lets make it a safe and successful year.

Dave Frank

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*If your actions inspire others to dream more, learn more, do more and become more, you are a leader.*  
John Quincy Adam, 6<sup>th</sup> President of the United States

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### **From the Training Coordinator:**

The BASART '06 class selection was a smooth process, and many, many, many thanks to Tom Shandley and Drew Davis for putting together a process that simplified the applicant review. A total of 23 applicants were selected to the class, and 22 accepted this offer. Bruce Boevers deserves a pat on the back for his hard work in getting BASART organized. He has done a great job with lining up the schedule, topics and instructors.

For the other SAR members, this is the Year of the Rock, and our summer focus will be primarily Rock Rescue. Several good trainings are being set up, and some will be repeated so that more members will have the opportunity to get the class they want at least once if not more than that. Of course we will be offering other courses as well, with one of the more important of those being the Swift Water Rescue Course.

Members, please be sure to check the Training Calendar for the courses you need for your upgrade. Most of the newer members – BASARTs '03 and '05 are only a few classes from moving up in the ranks. Check out your status, set your goal and GO FOR IT!

Janice Weixelman  
Training Coordinator

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This past year we have found ourselves working along with crime scene investigators more than once. The Buckhorn Canyon mission was another example of preserving the area around the “find”. I asked Allen Weaver if he would remind us of what we need to be thinking of in situations like this. Thanks Allen.

## **WHEN CSI COLLIDES WITH SAR**

By  
Allen Weaver

(Disclaimer: It may be a common perception that all attorneys have a criminal mind...which may be the reason Jim Powers asked me to write this article. However, clearly the following is not intended as an all encompassing treatise on crime scene preservation. Rather, it is a simple overview, from my perspective based upon a few years of SAR experience and several years of legal experience).

Law enforcement often refers to “crime scene” preservation. And yet there are many situations, which may arise in the SAR community, when the scene is not “criminal” in nature, but the scene should be preserved for a number of reasons. Therefore, although I may refer to a “crime scene”, it has a much broader application, and the following principals may apply to a number of situations where IC or Operations has instructed you to preserve the scene.

### **Reasons to preserve the scene**

Several reasons may exist for wanting to preserve a crime scene. These may include:

- Preservation for a crime scene investigation. Specifically, there are circumstances where you may encounter a situation (such as a deceased subject or finding certain clues including footprints and physical evidence), which are related to a crime. In these situations, it is likely that, just like on TV, the “team from CSI” will want to come out to the actual scene and do their investigation.
- Preserving the scene for possible civil litigation. Although this is less likely in SAR situations, there are instances when death, injury, or property damage has occurred and someone is going to get sued (those darn lawyers). An automobile accident is the most obvious example, wherein the location of the vehicles, the nature of the skid marks, and how glass was splattered around the road, will be important evidence to reconstruct the accident.
- Preserve the scene for a coroner’s investigation. In some situations, such as our recent search in the Buckhorn Canyon, the physical evidence found at the scene may significantly help the coroner in determining the cause of death. For instance, the position of the body, location of a firearm, the location of footprints or body fluids, possible damage to surrounding trees or rocks, disturbed soil, etc., may provide evidence to the coroner as to what happened.

### **Priorities**

Even when it comes to the issue of crime scene preservation, the priorities that we learn in SAR are still applicable.

The first priority you should have is for your own safety, the safety of your teammates, and then concerns for your subject and/or crime scene preservation. Therefore, the very initial issue is: is the scene safe? As you approach a subject, you can often determine the mechanism of injury from a distance. In other words, is it apparent the subject was injured by a falling rock, electrocution from downed power lines, or a fall from a cliff?

In other instances, you will not be able to determine the mechanism of injury until you get much closer. For instance, was the subject bitten by a rattlesnake, poisoned by an inhaled or absorbed substance (such as chemicals from a meth lab) or did the subject suffer from a gunshot wound? In these situations, you will have to carefully approach the subject to determine whether the scene is safe or still a danger for you and your teammates.

### **Approaching the Subject**

Before approaching the subject, it would be advisable to put on your latex gloves. From your medical training, you know you should avoid any contact with body fluids.

Also, before approaching the subject, it would be advisable to contact IC or Operations, to inform them of your location. If, by misfortune, you become a victim to the same mechanism of injury (such as toxic fumes or a snakebite) it would be helpful for Operations to know your location so they can send additional help to you.

#### **Once you are ready to approach the subject:**

1. Select one team member to approach the subject. The purpose of this is to disturb the crime scene as little as possible. For dog handlers, it may be necessary to secure your dog, since it is probable the dog has been searching for the subject for quite some time now and is very excited to be around the subject (and thus obliterating the crime scene).
2. Select a specific route to approach the subject. Preferably mark the route with flagging tape, or in the alternative, have one of the other teammates watch your specific route.
3. Checking vital signs. Check the vital signs of the subject only if necessary. In many instances, the subject is going to be obviously alive, or obviously deceased.
4. Treating the subject. If the subject is obviously alive, the priorities should shift towards saving the viable subject, with less emphasis on crime scene preservation. At this point, you would treat the subject as needed. However, to the extent possible, don't disturb anything else in the area if there is any criminal activity suspected. For instance, if you have a viable subject who has inhaled toxic fumes from a meth lab, treat the subject and do not disturb any of the chemicals or other items that may be laying around related to the meth lab. If you have a viable subject from a gunshot wound, do not touch or move the firearm (unless it is necessary to preserve your own safety).
5. Deceased Subject. If you have determined that you do not have a viable subject, you should retrace your steps away from the crime scene, using the same path that you used to approach the subject. Do not move the subject, do not touch anything in the area, and try to disturb the ground as little as possible. Only in rare circumstances, such as a body floating down the river, will you need to move the body or take extraordinary steps to preserve and secure it.
6. Securing the area. Finally, to the extent necessary, secure the area. Deep in the woods, this may mean just a little bit of flagging, to indicate the crime scene area and to mark the specific place where you approached the subject. However, if the crime scene is near a trailhead, where you have the potential for heavy foot traffic or onlookers, it may be necessary to flag off the entire area and maybe even post a team member in the area as a "guard" until the investigators can arrive.

