

Black Diamond SAR Council

PO Box 22, Marion, VA 24354 • www.bdsarco.org

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The Coordinator's Desk

Well, it had been slow until the 27th and then we had two missions on the same day!!



Most of you only heard about the mission in Smyth County for the subject that walked away from the nursing home. He was eventually found in Radford. Once again, great response from everyone!! The other was assisting Rugby Rescue Squad with a rider that had been thrown from a horse. (See Rob's article this issue.)

Speaking of Grayson Highlands, this standby has already proved fruitful for us, Rugby Rescue, and the Grayson Highlands Park staff. One of the Rangers there stated that it could not have gone smoother! There are still weekends available if you want to go and camp at Grayson Highlands. Please let me know if you want to go as the calendar is filling up!

Backbone is going to prove fruitful for everyone attending. From those that are going to be there for the vertical training to the K9 folks completing their overnight bivouac, and Mike doing a First on Scene presentation. This is a big deal to anyone that may be first on scene, and being someone who's been on scene first, I highly recommend gaining a little comfort in this area. Mike is going to try and schedule this so some folks who are doing vertical training will also be able to take this too.

I am currently working with Rob Blevins, Michelle Blevins and Niki Chrimes to get the dispatch procedures in place. Once in place, this will highly improve communications, as we won't have to rely on Mike or I to handle this while we're on the scene. With that, I'd like for you to start using your numbers when responding. For instance, "BD-1 responding." I'd also like you to start texting when you arrive back at home, so we can start logging that.

Admittedly, we should have been doing this all along, and that's been a lapse on our part. If you're going to stop at a store, or to visit a friend on the way home,

let us know that, and we'll clear you from the response portion of the call. Remember, if you do not go straight home, then you may no longer be covered under the auspices of the mission for your trip home.

Thanks to everyone for your increased training and response. I look forward to a great summer with everyone!!

— Bryan

GRAYSON HIGHLANDS STATE PARK STANDBY Memorial Day Weekend

On Memorial Day weekend, myself, Greg, and Alex were camping at Grayson Highlands State Park for the Black Diamond SAR. Saturday was uneventful, but Sunday was a different story. That morning, the three of us set out to do a little hiking and learn our way around. After we had been out an hour or so, the park called us to locate and assist a horseback rider who had been thrown from his horse in the Rhododendron Gap area. We worked our way back to the campground and were met by Rugby Rescue Squad, GHSP police, and other park personnel.

Greg and I were placed on 4-wheelers and taken into the patient, with a host of Rugby Rescue with us, while Alex remained behind for communications in case we needed more supplies or personnel. Upon arrival to the patient, the flight nurse with Medflight II was already there and had initiated care. The patient was a male in

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Upcoming Events!

- 6/16-17 **Backbone Rock, TN** (third full weekend of June, July, August & September)
- 7/21-22 **Backbone Rock, TN**
- 8/18-19 **Backbone Rock, TN**
Membership Meeting and Cookout
- 8/25 **CPR/First Aid** by Chris Bryant
Glade Spring Rescue (\$5 each)
To register: cbryant@bdsarco.org

Blue Ridge Parkway Music Center SARx 2012

by Mike Maggard – Training Officer

The **14th annual, Blue Ridge SARx** was a huge success this year and had the best turnout from Black Diamond than any year in the past.

For new members that may not be familiar with the SARx: This is an annual event that is sponsored by the National Park Service, Blue Ridge Parkway. The SARx is a training exercise designed to help familiarize SAR personnel with the Parkway geography and regulations, park rangers, preplan for actual searches, and to build teamwork. In the past this has been held in the Rock Castle Gorge area, better known as Rocky Knob. This year the simulation was moved to the Fishers Peak area, at the Blue Ridge Music Center. The move allowed us to incorporate K-9 teams and equestrian. We didn't have any mounted teams participate, however we did have several K-9 teams from Virginia and North Carolina.

The simulation is run just as an actual mission would be. A scenario is put together, a missing person(s) are actually in the field and clues are left just as an actual missing person case would play out. The only people that know the scenario are the missing subjects and one of the rangers; this year that ranger was Pete Schula. The briefing is given to us and the mission begins.

THE SCENARIO: A call was placed to 911 from a woman stating that she had come to the park the night before with her two children and was lost on the trail. Also one of her children was injured. The cell phone went dead and there was no further contact with the subject.

We had no description of the subjects and no LKP, but we did have a description of the vehicle that she was driving with the license plate.

THE PLAN: Based on the subject profile and the fact the subject stated that she was on a trail, we immediately wrote tasks for hasty teams on the trails, roads, and for the parking lots to be searched for the vehicle.

We had several K-9 teams, trackers and signcutters that we decided to send out together on various tasks. No matter how long I am in SAR, I will continue to be amazed at the ability of our resources and especially in the K-9's and trackers. They were able to verify each other and they worked very well together, by pairing these two resources up they were amazing.

STATUS 2!! The vehicle was located, ironically not more than 20 yards from the command post. This area was secured, trackers were sent to try to determine the direction of travel and get a sketch of the tracks if possible. Tracy Orndorff, a K-9 handler, was still at base. She was asked to secure a scent article if possible and to work with her Bloodhound from the subject's vehicle. Immediately after tasking, her bloodhound struck a trail. By 1030 a find had been made. The mother was a status 1, one child was a status 2, with a simulated mid femur fracture, and the other child was a "Walking Wounded" status 2.

Teams were called back into base or vectored to staging and an EVAC team was put together. Fortunately we had many medics, both from Virginia and North Carolina, and they actually worked well together. With the EVAC team, I sent an investigator from the Grayson Co Sheriff's department and a Park Ranger. During their interview with the subject, it was learned that the mother and her children had come to the park the night before to look for her husband and had not found him.

THE TWIST: The subject's husband was suffering from some sort of mental breakdown and had come to the park for some alone time...

WITH HIS PIG!!!!

(continued next page)



...Zello?

As we improve our dispatching methods, we (as members) will improve how we communicate with those dispatchers.

As we let the dispatchers know that we're responding, or we're back home from a mission, they will be keeping these records.

Most EMS, Fire, or Police agencies can pick up the radio and communicate with their dispatch immediately. That would be a great solution if we could do that, but because of our regional dispersion, there's no way we can do that.

We can't do it with radios, but there is a solution out there for our smart phones. This application is called Zello Instant Talk. Check it out on the web at <http://zello.com>.



A group has already been created called **BDSARCO**, contact Bryan Saunders or Rob Blevins for the password. Please join with your radio number or name. We will try to be sure that we only let Black Diamond members and others that are specific in our mission onto this channel. As long as we have service, we can either talk person to person or we can broadcast across the whole channel.

When the call goes out, you will be given the dispatcher's name. With Zello, you will be able to use that application to key up the dispatcher's Zello app and say "BD1 is responding" Just like a radio dispatcher, they can answer "BD1 responding 0848 hrs" etc, etc.

Now, I know that not everyone has smart phones, let alone cell service in their specific home location. Much less when we're on scene and do not have cell service. However; I think that you can see how this application can be effective with our response to a mission.

REMINDER: Yearly dues support Black Diamond operations! Mail your checks to PO Box 22, Marion, VA 24354.

\$25 - 1 member

\$40 - family of 2

\$50 - family of 3

\$60 - family of 6

Contact Bryan for other group rates.

CONGRATS!

...go to Annie Clark and K9 Hawkeye on passing the Urban Trailing test!

Way to go!

Music Center SARx, continued

Yes, that's right his pig... Which turned out to be a stuffed, pink pig, named Smedley. We also learned that the subject likes to eat sunflower seeds, and when hiking would often build cairns (little rock structures).

THE NEW PLAN: The wife told the investigator that they had "Tracked" her husband to the point where they were found, by "tracks" and the cairns that they had found. Apparently her son is a talented artist and had drawn the outsole pattern of the boots that the husband was wearing. Ted Andrus, a very good tracker, was tasked to the area to attempt to locate the track and get a direction of travel. Other teams were tasked to continue hasty and sweep tasks. And K-9 tasks from the new LKP and his vehicle. Several clues were found, including tracks, and cairns. However it turned out that our subject had not built any of the rock structures. Finally around 1500 a team found the pig which had an arrow through his head and a note attached. The note read "Smedley has been shot! Going for Help!!" This team was able to follow the subject and at 1555 made a status 1 find.

SUMMARY: The exercise was a huge success, BDSAR was represented by: Greg Osborn, Alex Renfro, Marty Allen, Connie Allen, Anthony Holmes, Joe Cline, Mac DeBusk, Jeff Goodson, and Mike Maggard.

We had the opportunity to work with new teams, make new friends, and establish better relationships within the SAR community across multiple disciplines and state lines.

Next year the SARx will be back at Rocky Knob. It is my hopes that you will mark your calendar now to take advantage of this excellent training opportunity.

Memorial Day Response, continued

his mid to late 50's, had abrasions and blunt trauma to his left side with some crepitus in that area, which indicates broken ribs. He was stable and getting pain medicine from the flight nurse already. Along with Rugby Rescue, we assisted with patient care, packaging, and obtained coordinates via GPS so the helicopter could come to the scene. The patient was successfully and efficiently evacuated from the scene. After that, I can only speak for myself, but I got to enjoy the ride out and see areas I'd never seen before. We were actually on the other side of the park, out in the National Recreation Area where I had never been. The whole area is very beautiful and I can't wait to see it again.

As for the response, everything went very well. Rugby Rescue was very gracious and appreciative to have our help and supplied us with all of the equipment and personnel we needed for the rescue.



Several of the four wheelers were theirs and we couldn't have done it nearly as efficiently without their aid and equipment. The GHSP police were also very gracious and have been wonderful to work with.

In closing, if you haven't been able to stand by for the park, I definitely suggest that you pick a date and go. The park is absolutely breathtaking and the facilities and personnel are awesome. We have made some new friends, seen new places, and hopefully are building a lasting relationship with the park and surrounding EMS community that will last.

— Rob Blevins

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