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RESCUE ME

"That others may learn"

Summer 2001

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Water Safety Expo 2001

Blue Marsh was a huge success for all involved this year. Each year it seems to run a little smoother and this one was no exception. This apparent "smoothness" is due to the long hours put in by the organizers of the festival who all deserve a pat on the back for a job well done.



GPSAR participated in the scavenger hunt as well as gave a Lost In The Woods Presentation (more info at www.gpsar.org/litw.html). All units of the team were represented and we ended up with over 21 members present.

We also had prospective members stop by to see us that had contacted us via

the internet. Our membership chair felt that this would be a good time for these members to see us as well as the other SAR teams present so they could have options and make an informed decision.

While the Mounted and Bike units keep visible around the park the Explorers helped out with the Lost In The Woods as well as the knot sessions that people came to us for so they could get their stickers to win their prizes.



GPSAR is proud to be an original participant in the Water Safety festival and hopes to see it grow to be even more in the future.

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Fire Safety on 422

Only Lt. Park could come so close to having an almost completely relaxing day only to be disturbed by smoke on the side of the road.

It seems that 6 of our members encountered and extinguished a brush fire while returning from Blue Marsh.

Good work to all involved and I am sure that the nice people from Oaks Fire Department appreciated the quick action on everyone's part.

Fire Safety Week



Requests for GPSAR to appear at events during fire safety week have already started coming in. With this in mind if you'd like to have us come and set up a display, do a Lost In The Woods, or more please let us know.

We can be reached at (215) 966-1888 or at gpsar@gpsar.org. We look forward to helping everywhere we can.

June 2001 Water Class



Seven Water Search and Rescue Unit members successfully completed the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission Water Rescue Phase

I training in April and June of this year. The course consisted of training in the classroom and in the water.

Classroom training included learning the proper response to medical emergencies such as hypothermia and drowning. Basic rules when administering to a hypothermic person include handling the victim gently, replacing wet clothes with dry clothes, and transporting the victim to a medical facility as soon as possible. For a drowning victim, team members were taught to remove the victim from the water, prevent further heat loss, and administer CPR if necessary. The course teaches

participants how to hopefully prevent hypothermia by dressing properly and that when in the water, swimming or struggling increases heat loss. The use of personal flotation devices (PFDs) is heavily emphasized as a way to possibly increase chances of survival.

The in-water training took place at Lorimer State Park in Montgomery County, PA. Members practiced throw bag techniques, rescuing an entrapped victim, and performing self-rescue among other skills. Members were instructed in the rescue sequence: Attempting to talk a victim out of the water before attempting a land-based rescue. The final option is for the rescuer to enter the water to save the victim.

This certification enhances the team's capabilities and, along with the ice rescue training members attended in the beginning of the year, allows Greater Philadelphia Search and Rescue to offer the community a well-trained group of responders.

Technology Helps Us Find The Way

GPS's were rare for the longest time. Like most technology we see things that were once costly and not reasonably priced for the working person now hanging on the shelf at the mall blister packed for \$119. They have come along way in the short lives. They have gone from cheap line graphs displayed in low resolution on a small screen to high resolution units with color screens that give street names, locations, points of interest, and even models that speak the directions to you.

GPS's are being used in many applications. They are used for many different things from guiding hikers in the woods to cities keeping track of street light locations for replacement of bulbs. You can find them in some of the luxury model rental cars. Ambulances, Police cars, and Fire trucks utilize them to get to you house to help you fast. The list is almost endless.

There are handheld self contained units, permanently mounted units, and handheld units that are powered by those small handheld computers that more and more people seem to be carrying. Brunton is on the cutting edge with their new models that have the added features of weather prediction and a plain old compass built into the unit. While Garmin makes a fine unit Brunton has clearly raised the bar for what we should expect from a GPS. Brunton's GPS can be seen at www.brunton.com.



Now if you want to be on the inside track of the cutting edge you can try the new improved Casio Wrist GPS. That's right it's worn like a watch and in fact is a watch. This unit does most anything that you can find out want in any GPS. This unit features a rechargeable battery and a cradle that charges the unit and allows you to communicate with software on a computer to track your movements during the course of the day. When you look at this device and think about the communication that is going on from your wrist to satellites in the sky you have to know that a functional "Dick Tracy" communicator is coming soon. Check it out at www.casio.com.

Now if you have a Palm Pilot, notebook PC or similar device you can more than likely find a connector from Delorme that will hook your machine up to a nice small handheld receiver that utilizes your computer for do the graphical part of the mapping. Delorme stands out in the sense that they have a long history of making fine mapping software. Check them out at www.delorme.com. This device is nice as it has been designed to work with several different types of computers and is houses in a well made bright yellow housing.

The last GPS that I tested was a unit that is made by Magellan (www.magellangps.com/) and plugged into a Visor. This unit was really outstanding in that it was easy to use, clear, and fast. I have to say that a lot of the credit can be given to the platform it resided on. The Visor (<http://www.handspring.com/>) works off of the Palm operating system with additional bells and speed. Plan on seeing this little PDA in an upcoming article.

They offer several types of maps that range from those oriented to business travelers to those containing topographical info for outdoor enthusiasts. Their maps allow you to get a view of the country on your computer at a more reasonable price than some of the competitors that just sell regionalized information. Even if you don't use the GPS interface the maps will be a valuable tool for anyone that needs accurate information on locations or directions.

With all of this technology you might think that the old fashioned compass is long gone. Not hardly. It is still the reliable field standard accepted equipment. They are not as much fun but they are cheaper and do not have batteries that seem to fail at the worst possible time. They start in price at \$9.99. Even if you do get a GPS you should definitely have a compass and you should definitely study it's operation. Brunton makes one of the widest varieties of compasses so there is something for everyone. Despite the harsh conditions I have used their compasses under my only problem was one that I crushed in a door (I have since glued it back together and it still works fine).



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GPSAR

Mailing
Address
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Here

From The Explorers

In the beginning, there was nothing...then God created the Explorer Post 2000. Well it wasn't actually God, it was the friendly folks here at GPSAR, and little did they know of the havoc that they were about to unleash. In the time since its inception, the GPSAR Explorer Post has seen many changes and has emerged as a valuable asset to the team as a whole. As the members have become more involved in various aspects of the team, we have gained more respect from our adult counterparts. We have formed bonds that have been beneficial to each of us individually and to the team as a whole.

The post has grown as we, its members, have. Since joining the team several years ago, I have been fortunate enough to watch it mature and develop. The latest step in its growth is the change in our uniform. Originally, post members wore an orange shirt, indicating that we were Explorers, a separate team. Recently, with the help of our advisor, Assistant Chief Hopkins, our shirts have been changed from the original orange to yellow, the color of the shirts worn by our adult teammates. The only difference being the unit designator on our shirts. This uniform update not only helps to unify the team but gives the Explorers a greater sense of belonging and acceptance.

Booker T. Washington once said that "few things can help an individual more than to place responsibility on him, and to let him know that you trust him." The Explorers have greatly benefited from the relationships that we have with our advisors and fellow teammates. As more responsibilities have been handed to us, we have risen to the occasion and have become more active members of the team. I, myself, serve as both the Explorer Post Captain and am the team's recording secretary. First Lt. Shawn Weir will also be involved with leading the newly reinstated mounted bike unit, and several explorers are planning to participate in the next water rescue certification. Assistant Chief Hopkins comments that the explorers have "served to motivate some units (i.e. bikes) when motivation got low."

I once read the following: "If you want happiness for an hour, take a nap. If you want happiness for a day, go fishing. If you want happiness for a month, get married. If you want happiness for a year, inherit a fortune. If you want happiness for a lifetime, help others." My experiences at GPSAR have helped me to understand how true that is. When I look back to my pre-SAR days, I realize how profoundly working with the team has changed my life, and I'm grateful for it.