



# ISARC Conference—It Takes An Army, So We Need Your Help

by Kimberly Gotte

The 2015 Illinois Search and Rescue Conference was a great success. The conference is a big undertaking and only works if you have plenty of help. That is where you, the membership, come in. The conference is for YOU, so this year we will make a change and ask for your help in planning and running the conference. Those that are on the Conference Committee will still have the knowledge, experience and backing of those that have done the planning/running of the conference in the past, but if the membership wants the conference, we need the membership to step up and take some ownership in this endeavor. At least one (1) board member will serve on the Committee as well, for oversight and also to have experienced knowledge at the committee's disposal.

### Location

For the last couple of years, as the request of the membership, we have had a more outdoor locations and hosted the conference at the Tapawingo Girl Scout Camp in Metamora, IL. This year the board went out to that same location and others. An alternate site had been proposed previously and this gave the Board an opportunity to go out and look at that location. Some Board members and Bryan Collett went out to the alternate location and were very pleased. This year's Illinois Search and Rescue Conference is slated to be held at Little Galilee Christian Camp in Clinton, IL. This new location is set on an even larger piece of property with a different variety of facilities. We will still have the great place to eat our meals in a separate dining hall. We have reserved the Activity Center. The Activity Center also has a basement with classroom capabilities. The cabins are bunks but with separate

rooms for beds and a meeting room in each cabin. Each cabin has their own bathrooms with showers.

### Date

Both the Girl Scout Camp and the Little Galilee Christian Camp were not available on the weekend that we normally host our conference (weekend prior to Columbus Day). Therefore, in keeping with what we have done several times in the past, we lobbied for the weekend after the CSAR (Canine Search and Recovery) Conference is over. This date has been historically chosen to attract our K9 handlers to be able to come to the conference as well, but on the way home from CSAR. This year that conference is being held in Wisconsin and hosted by our very own member agency, Illinois Wisconsin Search and Rescue Dogs. The 2016 Illinois Search and Rescue Conference will be held **September 23-25, 2016**, with Ham-In-A-Day and the Hospitality Event starting off the conference on Friday, September 23. The Keynote Speakers and Breakout Sessions will be on Saturday and Sunday, September 24-25.



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### Events of Interest:

- *Ground Search and Rescue Training, June 11-12, Silvis, IL*
- *Search and Rescue Initial Operations, June 11, Bolingbrook, IL*
- *Ground Search and Rescue Training, June 25-26, Plainfield, IL*
- *Illinois Search and Rescue Conference, September 23-25, Clinton, IL*

# Dues & Membership/Resource Form by Kimberly Gotte

On January 22, 2016, all 2016 ISARC members were invoiced for their 2016 membership dues and sent a new Membership/Resource form. Included was an explanation of what information is being asked for on the form, available as a fillable PDF document. If you have a computer program that saves/prints PDF documents, you can rename and save the completed form, sending it to ISARC as an email attachment. Alternatively, you can complete the fillable sections online, *then* print, scan, and email. Finally, you can still print it and mail it in with your 2016 dues payment via postal service. The Board extended the due date of the 2016 ISARC membership dues to April 1. There are many agencies that still have not renewed their membership. After April 1, membership goes up to \$62.50 (\$50 membership plus \$12.50 late fee).

It is important to have an updated form each year, as things within each agency change. Personnel numbers and their individual training levels change, equipment is purchased or retired, but keeping this information current helps the ISARC Hotline duty officer current with contact information in the case of a search or important notifications. Often times the Point of Contact for an agency is not the person that the duty officer needs to contact in the time of a search incident. The form also lets us know the voting member that is authorized to be voting at the annual membership meeting. As things change within your agency, ISARC will at least once a year have the current information for that member agency. Secondly, the resource guide portion gives the ISARC Hotline duty officer a snapshot of personnel and assets you may have available to assist during a mutual aid call.

The membership/resource form needs to be submitted to ISARC each year to ensure that we do have the current information for your agency. The Mutual Aid Committee will update your changes and add in new information. In the very near future, ISARC will be establishing a members only portal where you will be able to update your information yourself online. But until then, we would appreciate an updated form.

## Bylines

This quarter's contributing writers and editor are:

Kim Gotte, Chair of ISARC. When not overseeing the ISARC Board or stomping through a cold muddy thicket on a search, Kim can be found working as a Product Design Engineer.

Tom Foust, member Peru Rescue Station and Training Officer for LaSalle County EMA Ground Search and Rescue team. Tom works for a Fire Sprinkler/Fire Suppression company by day.

Michael Bowman, K9 Handler/Ground Searcher with Effingham County K9 Search and Rescue. Michael likes to spend time outdoors



## New Member Intro—Peru Rescue Station by Tom Foust

We would like to introduce ourselves. We are the Peru Rescue Station. We are one of ISARC's newest members.

We started in 1948 when an elected official of Peru drowned and a group of citizens got together to try and find him to give closure to the family. Since then, the group has been in several buildings until they built their present home on the Illinois River.

This is a privately funded group surviving on donations. We own all of our own equipment and support ourselves. The organization has 22 members.

Our newest addition is a tracked ARGO with a

stretcher rack. An ARGO is an ATV which can navigate on water as well as on land. We have several boats, rubber raft and various other pieces of water rescue equipment.

We have 8 members trained in water operations, 1 member in swift water rescue and two members trained in rope operations. Several of our members are also trained in Ice Rescue. To include some of our other training, we have members trained in CERT and 6 members have taken the Ground Search Operations class.

Some of our other activities include sponsors of the Pearl Harbor Day Parade. We

also help the Better Fishing Association with two Kids Fishing Derbies in May and June and collect toys for local children during the Christmas holiday.

We meet on the 1<sup>st</sup> Thursday of every month at 7:00 pm. And we can be contacted through the Peru Police Department at 815-223-2151 in the event of an emergency. If you need to contact us in a non-emergency, contact Larry Haupt 815-830-3082 or Tom Foust at 815-681-6333. Check out our website at [perurescuestation.wix/prs1](http://perurescuestation.wix/prs1).

We look forward to working with other members of the ISARC organization.

# My Reflection From Pontiac by Michael Bowman

Here it is December 26th and we have a ISARC call for ground searchers for a missing person, I really didn't want to go, its Christmas, its cold and rainy, and for me it was a three hour drive. Our team has a strict rule no team member goes to these alone, we must take another member along to help, so when I received the message I thought about it and sent it to my teammates. Nobody on my team wanted to go that far especially on Christmas weekend. I started calling my teammates and Josh finally agreed to go reluctantly, I told him I don't want to go that far either but it is a ISARC call, if we need help here hopefully these teams will remember and return the favor when we need help, so we both decided to go. On that morning I arose out of bed and grabbed my gear and headed to the rally spot to meet Josh, we loaded in the team's vehicle and went to Pontiac, Illinois. When we arrived to my surprise there were approximately 50 people standing in the parking lot getting briefed, I was overwhelmed with the amount of people that responded "on Christmas weekend". My heart was filled with pride. Never have I been more proud to be a part of search and rescue than that particular moment. It was cold that morning and rainy, when we embarked to search we were pulled back because of lightning, finally we redeployed and when we were about to our search area I saw another team deployed across the road from us, I made notice of a girl in a hi vis coat kneeling down to look under a trailer, when I saw that it passed through my mind "IN, ON and UNDER" it was a phrase from the GSAR class, I turned to Allen Matza our team leader said "look there's a trained searcher"! That day we searched in the rain, in the mud, in the rain filled ditches, in wooded areas, around lakes and in the

fields. When we finished I was tired, everybody on my team was tired, but never in my life have I been more proud to be part of ISARC and search and rescue. We had teams from Naperville, Will County, Pike County, Mclean County, Effingham County, Boone County, DeWitt County, Hanover Township, ILWIS Search Dogs, Kendall County, LaSalle County, New Lenox SAR, Peoria County Sheriff SAR, Woodford County, and Tazewell County. All these people braved the weather and the terrain for a missing person on "Christmas weekend". As I look at these teams individually we are all small but when we come together, and work together, we are a awesome family. I see a lot of heart in search and rescue. Three years ago at a training in Dixon Springs, IL. an instructor was flown in from California, during her speech she asked everybody "why did you join search and rescue"? That is a question that has stuck in my mind for a long time. I initially joined because I enjoyed the outdoors as a hunter, but two years later it became personal when a long time friend of mine went missing. We were the only team there but we had two certified trailing dogs on scene, and Incident command wouldn't let the dogs be used. After 8 hours of search my friend was found, he was airlifted to a hospital and later that week he passed away because of complications with diabetes. I started training a trailing dog after that. I firmly believe a dog could have found him in a few minutes. Why did I join, to help others, "MAKE A DIFFERENCE". To my Search and Rescue family I say I am so proud to be a part of this family, and I will see you all at the next search, training, or conference. God Bless us all.

## 2016 ISARC Conference, *continued*

### Keynotes / Breakout Sessions

We have offers from a Forensic group to be one of the Keynote Speakers. We will need at least one (1) more to round out our normal placement of Keynote Speakers. We have offers from the WMD Coordinator of the FBI Chicago Field Office to have a double breakout session. We also have an offer for an outdoor course called "Sting, Bite, Itch" and a K9 course on Herbs and Supplements. We will also need YOUR suggestions as to what breakout sessions you would like to see us have at the conference. The ever popular "Low Angle" Ropes course has been requested by many. If anyone knows of a great topic, inside type or outdoors type, we would like to hear from you. If you know someone that has a subject that could impact Search and Rescue in Illinois, we welcome those suggestions as well.

### Food

In the last couple of years we were blessed with the cooking talents of Chad Kunkel, a member of Brown County ESDA Search and

Rescue. Last conference he was joined in the kitchen by his lovely wife, Kim. Barring any scheduling conflicts, we hope to have Chad cooking the meals again. There will be plenty of opportunities for folks to help out in some capacity in the kitchen as well. There is always something to do...from cleaning, serving, helping prepare meals, under Chad's watchful eye.

### Needs From Membership

Like we said in the beginning, it takes an army to put on a conference. The conference is for the benefit of all members of membership agencies and also outside folks. We need a strong Conference Committee to make the conference a success. There are things to do, like contact vendors, contact keynote speakers, arrange breakout sessions with instructors, set schedules, help with the brochures, design t-shirts, setup, tear down, help man the registration table, monitor/help with breakout sessions. There is no reason to re-invent the

wheel, as at your disposal are all the documents, brochures, signs, tracking documentation, registration setup and vast amount of experience in those that have helped put previous conferences together.

We need someone to act as Chair of the Conference Committee, or a few people can Co-Chair, if that is more desirable. We will also need members of the committee (we already have a few volunteers). If we cannot get help with the Conference from the membership, we will be forced to abandon the conference this year. The conference is a great opportunity for all search and rescue professionals to come together, learn and network for a weekend of great fun. The Conference is for the benefit of our membership.

***"Many hands make light work"***

## What I Learned by Rusty O'Knifee

Well boys and girls, I got to go on my first search. And after being with a team for a year, it was about time. Right after joining, bunches of articles were read on what equipment a good searcher should have with them. So having read the articles and observing what other searchers had, things were starting to come together. Things were purchased so I did not look like a rookie, things that were needed or thought to be needed. My advice is for the new searchers, DON'T BUY ANYTHING! I purchased all sorts of equipment. Equipment like flashlights, head lights, pen lights, lights with red lenses, metal ones, plastic ones, big ones and little ones. A pack was issued to me and it was good enough, but I wanted my very own pack, a bigger and better one. So I bought one. But then more reading and another article with a great review from another team getting a new pack. THIS was

the optimum rescue pack. So it was purchased. And it was more expensive, bigger and with more pockets. But then more stuff was needed to carry in it. So I bought more stuff like carabiners, prussic cords, more gloves, a better rain suit (that is another story). But not to digress, the pack begged for more equipment. Wanting to do a good job and have the equipment that the articles mentioned a good searcher should have, I thought I was ready. I found that the pack was actually not big enough, so a tote was purchased to carry the extra stuff. That was a good idea. You do not have to have everything in the pack, you can store it in a tote and only use what you need. On with the search, it was rainy and cold. In the beginning the weather was not all that bad so I did not put on a rain suit, and through the mist, I got wet. I discovered that if you think you're going to need the rain suit, put it on. With the mission completed, I was wet and cold and tired. Safely back home and after a hot shower, I dumped the pack all over my floor and cleared things

out that were not used or needed. These things went into the tote, so I still have access to the extra stuff, but it is not all in my pack and on my back. So my lesson was that you do not have to have everything you read or see someone else have. Take your time and slow down, it will make for a more productive outcome. You will have time to get things together while you are waiting for your search assignment. Talk to other experienced search team members and ask them what they use and why. Talk to your team leaders, they are a good resource. They will be able to help you. So what was learned? First you don't need all the equipment in the beginning, you can get it as you go. And second, trust your search friends, and with this group I have learned there are a lot of them willing to help. Ok, there you go. I am sure I will be back with more wonderful tidbits and thoughtful items later. TTFN (Ta Ta for Now)

## ISARC Quarterly Newsletter: Call for Submissions by Kim Gotte

Our Goal: to make this publication for you, *about* you, and *by* you! Is there a person and/or organization that you would like to see highlighted? Send in those suggestions! Learn something new during a search? Submit an article about it! Have SAR-related original-content photos and captions? We would love to share them with our ISARC family.

We are currently requesting ARTICLES on the following:

⇒ Lessons Learned from a recent search (2013 or newer)

⇒ Living Legends: focus on a member or a team

Accepting ANNOUNCEMENTS for:

⇒ Upcoming classes or trainings

⇒ Fund Raisers

⇒ And other SAR activities

Remember: this newsletter is yours, we will tailor it to your interests.

Publication months are: November, February, May and August.

Supplemental issues are a possibility.

Articles accepted year-round; please submit electronically in Word Format to [board@illinoissar.org](mailto:board@illinoissar.org) with "Newsletter Submission" as a subject line. Although there is no guarantee that all articles will be printed, all articles will be reviewed and you will receive a response within 40 days of submission.

Submit to: [board@illinoissar.org](mailto:board@illinoissar.org)



## Illinois Search and Rescue Council

### NEWSLETTER

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***So that others may live***

The Illinois Search and Rescue Council is a charitable, professional, and educational organization which supports, coordinates, develops, promotes, and implements search and rescue resources with the underlying principles of saving lives and preserving property through its support of the National Search and Rescue Plan, the National Response Framework, and Illinois Emergency Operations Plan.

Our membership is comprised of SAR teams from all across the State of Illinois, and some surrounding areas, that have come together to further the professionalism of the SAR discipline. Our teams include organizations from public safety organizations as well as non-governmental organizations providing search and rescue services for missing persons within the State of Illinois.

We are on the web at [www.illinoissar.org](http://www.illinoissar.org)

Check for event and training updates often

We are also on Facebook!