



# SRRRMN Newsletter

Search Rescue and Recovery Resources of Minnesota

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## Search, Rescue and Recovery Community

Chet Wilberg  
President

We have made many great strides over the past year and I look forward to the progress we will make over the next year. I am humbled by the great work that all of you are doing to help improve the Search, Rescue and Recovery community.

We just finished up the first major multi-discipline exercise that we have held in the last few years. It was great to see so many people from different disciplines and different organizations enhancing their skills and learning to work together. We had air, ground, mounted, canine, mission base, medical and even caving resources there. Everything I heard and saw shows me that everyone had a great time and learned a lot. I want to thank Emily Boote and her planning committee for all their hard work in organizing the M.U.S.T.A.N.G. weekend (Multi-Agency Search Training and Network Gathering) Because of the positive feedback, we are looking at making this an annual training event.

We also had an opportunity in June where multiple agencies worked together to get resources to a search in a timely fashion. Several canine teams from different organizations were able to respond quickly to a search in Cook County by using Civil Air Patrol aircraft to transport them across the state to assist Law Enforcement. This was a great example of multiple different types of resources coming together to accomplish the mission at hand.

These have both been great opportunities to see everyone working together. That is what SRRRMN is all about; getting everyone working together so that when a real search happens, we already have those relationships and can work together seamlessly. Keep up the great work and I look forward to working with all of you throughout this upcoming year as we help improve the SAR Community in and around Minnesota.



# Minnesota Hitchhikers

By Sharolyn Sievert,  
SRRRMN PR Committee

Sitting at a restaurant recently with a group of searchers just out of the woods, someone suddenly stood up & said “excuse me, I think I have a hitchhiker,” and left the table. Conversation continued, as we all knew what they meant – an uninvited and unwanted SAR companion had been detected.

Wood ticks are things Minnesotans joke about, along with mosquitoes, our 10,000 lakes, sayings like “uff-da” and hot dish. We laugh them off, but Woody the Wood tick is not really a laughing matter.

Minnesota state officials report that the number of Minnesotans who became ill from tick-borne diseases jumped to record levels in 2010, including a dramatic increase in human anaplasmosis, which is now rivaling Lymes for number of cases.

Also, cases of other serious but less common diseases carried by ticks have increased in number. Diseases that include Powassan virus disease, a new form of Ehrlichiosis, Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever and Tularemia.

**“The best way to avoid tick bites is to avoid tick habitat... if you can’t avoid the area, use repellent to reduce the risks....”**

The best way to prevent tick bites is to avoid tick habitat during late spring through mid-summer, when ticks are most active. That of course is nearly impossible for people tasked with searching woods, fields and other tick hang-outs for missing people.

If you can’t avoid the area, use some precautions. These can include keeping as much of yourself covered as possible. Wear long sleeves, long pants, gaiters to help deflect the little buggers from crawling up your pant leg.



**Tick Check time!**

One of the best way however is repellent to reduce the risks. Look for DEET-based repellents (up to 30 percent DEET), which can be applied to clothing or skin for temporary protection. Permethrin-based repellents, which are used to pre-treat fabric, can protect against tick bites for at least two weeks. And when you get out of the area, completely check yourself for the little hitchhikers as soon as possible.

If you find an attached tick, remove it without damaging (squishing) the tick if you can, as literally it makes the tick upchuck the stuff that make you sick directly into your system. It is recommended to use a tool, not your fingers, pulling the tick straight out. Don’t use

Vaseline or soap covered cotton balls – it really doesn’t work. Burn the tick only after you remove it!

Keep in mind, not all ticks carry disease. The biggest culprit is the deer tick, or Ixodes Scapularis. Also known as the black-leg tick. These guys really are little and in-

credibly hard to see or feel, even when fully engorged. Do your research and learn what different ticks look like and what to watch for if you do find one attached.

Early detection of tick-borne illness is important to prevent severe complications, so seek medical care if you develop an illness suggestive of a tick-borne disease after spending time in tick habitat or finding one attached.

Signs and symptoms of the various tick-borne diseases can include, but are not limited to, rash, fever, headache, fatigue, muscle aches, joint pain or swelling, and facial droop. Because these symptoms can be related to other issues, it is important to let your medical provider know it is possibly related to a tick bite.



**Deer tick by a dime to show size**

Now that we have everyone feeling itchy and twitchy, we hope you’ll take precautions against the unwanted Minnesota hitchhiker!

*For more information about Minnesota’s tick-borne diseases, including signs, symptoms, and prevention, check out the Minnesota Department of Health website [www.health.state.mn.us/divs/idepc/dtopics/tickborne/index.html](http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/idepc/dtopics/tickborne/index.html) or by calling MDH at 651-201-5414.*

The first step is



recognizing you have a problem...

Do you:

- ◇ Train for Search and Rescue (SAR)?
- ◇ Think about SAR at work?
- ◇ Take time away from your family to train for SAR?
- ◇ Skip work for SAR?
- ◇ Spend your money on SAR equipment?
- ◇ Look at an area and think about how you would search it?
- ◇ Pour over catalogs for equipment that could be used for SAR?

You might be a:

## SAR-A-HOLIC

*If you might be a SAR-A-HOLIC, please seek help by joining Search, Rescue, and Recovery Resources of Minnesota. In SRRRMN you will find the understanding and support of fellow SAR-A-HOLICs. Your fellow SAR-A-HOLICs in SRRRMN can help you nurture and develop your Search and Rescue addiction in a positive way.*

*SRRRMN is a non-profit organization of groups and individuals who are dedicated to providing quality search, rescue, and recovery services to assist and support public, private, and/or governmental agencies. Our purposes are to promote and develop search, rescue, and recovery capabilities and resources in the State of Minnesota.*

If you are a SAR-a-holic, please seek help now before you find yourself in a gutter asking a passersby if they know about any missing people.

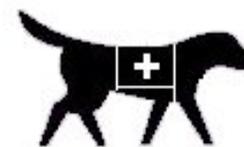
[www.srrrmn.org](http://www.srrrmn.org)

*Kevin Stokes,  
Washington County Mounted Posse*



# Horses, Dogs and Kids...

## SRRRMN Members Volunteer at Fridley Safety Camp



On June 14, 2011 several members of SRRRMN joined members of the City of Fridley's Emergency Services personnel at Common's Park in Fridley to help promote safety to nearly 150 kids, all ranging in age from seven to eight years old.

Members from Carver County

**Ranger and Chuck help kids learn how to correctly pet a dog**



Mounted Posse, Northstar Search and Rescue and Central Lakes Search and Rescue arrived with horse and dogs in tow, knowing that so many kids can be pretty hectic and even a little distracting for people and animals alike.

Providing safety tips for kids is rewarding because they love to hear new information, have great ideas of their own and of course are well behaved after they are promised an opportunity to pet the horse and dogs if they are good.

The kids learned basic wilderness safety tips, such as staying on paths, and when lost, to stop moving, plus



**Sky Bear with 50 eight year olds....**

learning to attract attention. Then the kids were split into smaller groups to meet the animal partners.

Events like this are great opportunities to meet the public and help keep others safe. Thanks to everyone who came out to help!



## Joining Forces....CAP and Canine

*By Deb Plumley,  
Central Lakes Search & Rescue*

**CAP** - I never heard of it until about a year ago. Civil Air Patrol hmmm...so must be some sort of citizen type organization that has something to do with flying. This past summer I was encouraged to attend a training weekend in Arden Hills, MN by the K-9 search unit I am a member of, Central Lakes SAR. I'm fairly new to search but "older" to life and I just wasn't getting the connection of learning to be a K-9 search and rescue handler and training with citizens flying planes.

I didn't immediately respond to their urging to train with CAP. I respect and admire my fellow team members, but I needed to find out a lot more about what CAP exactly does before I decide to

train with them. After learning that I'd receive training in survival skills, compass & map work plus navigation, I decided to go for it. These were all skills I needed to develop and how tough could it be? After all, Arden Hills is a suburb of the cities.

After going up and down several hilly, winding roads, I arrive at the training site in my mini van. Okay so maybe the terrain is a little hilly, but for Pete's sake, I can still hear the busy city traffic! How hard can this be?

There is a check in system the CAP cadets efficiently run as they keep an accurate account of all personnel. It made me feel down right young again when they asked if I'd like to turn

over the keys to my vehicle. As I walk to what looks like a military tent I notice several teens in uniforms setting up a large white canopy type tent that I later learn is the mess hall. This is cool, these guys seem like Scouts - and I know about Scouts. Right about now my fellow SAR team member Chris comes over to welcome me and tell me they are actually resetting the mess hall as a severe storm with high winds had taken it

**"...okay, so far so good with the whole survival thing."**

down last night with some cadets along with it! No injuries....okay, so far so good with the whole survival thing.

*(Continued on page 5)*

(Continued from page 4)

Within the next hour the cadets had the camp ship shape and breakfast consumed. Lt. Colonel Chet Wilberg personally greeted me and asked if I ever needed anything or had any problems to just come talk to him. I was immediately impressed with his friendliness and professionalism. He assigned me to the squad I'd be training with the next three days when suddenly all the cadets rushed into formation with their squads ..... uummmm so where was my squad? Oh, there they are waving to me .....these cadets move quick!

In a very short time the squad leaders were named, job descriptions given and the equipment necessary for the weekend listed. A very young Lieutenant asked where my canine was; in his crate Sir (I seriously said Sir because that's just the respect that seemed appropriate!) "Go get him. He is now part of this squad and I want your K-9 with us at all times." How cool is that! I like this CAP stuff. I love to have my dog along and the cadets are enjoying his company too.

Our first assignment is to build a shelter in a small grove of trees just outside of

the camp area. Fortunately I actually have practiced this twice in the past year so I did alright. Having a dog proved to be an added challenge as his leash frequently became wrapped around

- ✓ the tree I was using
- ✓ my legs or my partner's legs
- ✓ tangled in my para-cord
- ✓ all of the above

When all was said and done however, a cadet, myself and Scout (my K-9) actually all fit in our shelter! We did it and I was proud of my dog as he was obedient



Author with her Squad & K-9 partner

and calm through the entire exercise.

Over the next two days Scout and I walked with our squad of cadets many miles, up and down some pretty rough terrain. We ran several navigation courses using a compass. We studied maps and learned how to use the infor-

mation to get to our destination. We did some night navigation work and performed pace counts so we understood the difference the dark with varied terrain can make. We worked one entire afternoon in very hot and humid conditions searching for a "simulated down aircraft" and they shared their water supply when I was running short for my dog. The cadets helped me often when there was a particular aspect I didn't understand. They were always respectful and if one of them didn't know something they worked as a team and solved the problem.

At the end of the weekend this is what I learned: CAP is an organization that teaches our youth to be skilled, community minded citizens ready to help others who have suffered some sort of loss.

These kids and their adult leaders are the ones we don't hear about in the news. They are good people, doing good for others. The cadets advance in their skills levels and know much more than just basic survival training.

Honestly, I still don't know a lot about the technical part of CAP, but I do know I'd trust my life with the kids and adults I trained with that weekend.

## Search Rescue and Recovery Resources of Minnesota / [www.srrrmn.org](http://www.srrrmn.org)

### Organizational and affiliate Members:

- ◇ Lake County Rescue / Finland Unit
- ◇ Washington County Sheriff's Posse
- ◇ Emergency Food Support Services
- ◇ Canine Search Solutions



**NORTHSTAR  
SEARCH & RESCUE**



SRRRMN is a non-profit confederation of autonomous groups and individuals who are dedicated to providing quality search, rescue, and recovery services to assist and support public, private, and/or governmental agencies. The purposes of this organization are to promote and develop search, rescue, and recovery capabilities and resources in the State of Minnesota with the underlying principle of saving lives and reducing suffering.



## Meet a Member:



By Therese Naber  
SRRRMN PR Committee

Even if you already know Northstar Search and Rescue, you may notice some new things about them these days. The all-volunteer organization, established in 1989 and a member of SRRRMN since its inception, recently voted on a name change and a new look.

Originally named Northstar Search and Rescue Dog Association, they voted to shorten their name and drop the last two words. They also adopted a new logo, as well as new uniforms. Look for the team's new colors of gray and white at searches and trainings in the future. In addition, they've added a team motto:

*"Never quit, never give up, always believe in your canine partner."*

They're also working on redoing their standards to make them stronger, more achievable and easier for new members to follow.

Currently, the team has two certified field support members, who are also both K-9 handlers. At this time, they have one certified dog, but they expect to have two more certified by the fall. They will then have dogs nationally certified in Area Search (also known as Air Scent), Trailing, Cadaver (including water recovery) and Evidence searches.

President Diane Stefanick describes the team as a "close-knit

group dedicated to providing professional search and rescue services, at any time, in any weather, for as long as it takes, for free." She says the team primarily works in Minnesota, but also offers service to the five-state region. They have experi-



Members Rhonda & Diane

ence in different types of missions, including searching in all types of terrain and weather, as well as water recovery. They also hope to work on ice rescues in the coming winter.

The organization strives to be an educational resource for the community, too, having recently participated in safety demonstrations for children.

Stefanick emphasizes that her team enjoys working and networking with other groups in the SAR community. She says this helps them learn and expand their knowledge and skills, and they can also back one another up with resources as needed.

Ongoing training and skill development is obviously a priority for

the organization. They attended Vermillion Community College's Search Management course, which Stefanick describes as "exciting and challenging." They are committed to continuing to participate in the course's annual mock searches.

Other recent trainings they took part in are the Scent Theory class held at Camp Ripley this past spring, and the weekend multi-agency mock search SRRRMN hosted called MUSTANG held at Arden Hills Army Training Site in June.

When asked about membership eligibility, Stefanick says two of the most important requirements are dedication and a willingness to learn because their training is about the necessary skills for SAR. In addition, the organization looks for characteristics such as motivation, maturity, tenacity, and the ability to work well with other people under stressful conditions. She adds that it also helps to have a sense of humor!

Stefanick describes membership as totally fulfilling, fascinating, exciting and always fun. She views it as "a life-saving commitment in community service."

This type of commitment can only add to the overall strength of the SRRRMN resource pool.

To learn more about Northstar, contact Diane by email at:

[dstefani357@aol.com](mailto:dstefani357@aol.com)



## New Minnesota Law Protects Our Posse Horses And Riders While On Duty Assisting Law Enforcement

*This article is a condensed version of the full article which was written for and will be published by the Minnesota Horse Council*

*By Ken Levinson  
Carver County Mounted Posse  
and Counsel to SRRRMN*

Effective August 1, 2011, Minnesota's laws will be changed in a way that will provide comfort and protection to a relatively small, unpublicized group of volunteers who give up their personal time, and their own resources, to assist Minnesota law enforcement officers and agencies in a variety of supportive ways.

The Posse Tradition. These unsung people and horses are the sheriff's office mounted patrols or "posses". It used to be, way back when Minnesota was a frontier territory starting in 1849, that laws were enforced by sheriffs on horseback. That tradition still continues today, but the rules have changed. Over the years, law enforcement (LE) here and elsewhere has become more technologically advanced, structured, and additionally more constrained by budgetary realities.

Many county sheriffs now take advantage of volunteers, such as their mounted patrol or posse members to help LE provide security patrols at county fairs, events such as Winstock and Pres. Bush's campaign speech in Chanhassen in 2004, search and rescue assistance, crowd control, city and park patrols, parking direction at various events, levee patrols to check on possible flooding exposures, etc. They also participate in a number of parades and outreach programs at schools.

The McLeod County Incident. Last summer, an incident occurred with the McLeod County Sheriffs Mounted Posse while conducting normal parking duties. A guest declined initially, and then complied angrily, with a request by a mounted posse member in uniform to park in a different spot to free up a handicapped spot for an entitled patron. The guest backed out and contacted one of the posse horses, though fortunately without serious injury to the posse horse or rider. The County Attorney considered various charges, but ultimately concluded that he was only able to charge disorderly conduct and cruelty to animals. His analysis determined that a variety of other Minnesota laws that he, and we in the posse community, had assumed protected members and their horses while on duty, did not apply since the posse member was not a licensed police officer (i.e., not a "peace officer") and the horse was not considered a "police horse" under the then-current statutory definitions.

An Ad Hoc Committee formed to address and rectify the situation legislatively. The committee proposed to amend certain definitions already in Minnesota law to make it clear that volunteers (and their horses) who are part of Sheriffs Office mounted patrols/posses and similar LE functions, who are act-

ing in an official capacity for or on behalf of LE, and who are subject to attack or injury while on duty are entitled to the same types of protections and respect from the general public as other LE members.



Summary. In general, the revised laws now provide for criminal sanctions chargeable for injury or harm to reserve officers or posse horses, or both. In the end, this process really represented democracy in action. Citizens saw a gap in the law that should be rectified, legislators agreed to support the effort, members of the two chambers agreed on what the corrections and sanctions should be to provide the missing protections, and the Legislature and Governor enacted a bill that will help protect the volunteers who serve law enforcement, on their own time and utilizing their own resources, while exposing themselves and their horses to potential danger, attack or injury in the course of their official duties.

View the amended law at:

<https://www.revisor.mn.gov/bin/bldbill.php?bill=S0301.2.html&session=ls87>

## Check out our upcoming events:

### SRRRMN Events

August 12-15, 2011

Group III SAREX

August 18-21, 2011

Ground Team Academy

September 27—Oct 1 2011

MN SAR NAPWDA Workshop

October 15, 2011

General Membership Meeting

January 6-8 2012

CAP Winter Survival Weekend



SRRRMN  
341 Perch Lane  
Winsted, MN 55395

TO: