



# OSAR NEWS

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Olds Search and Rescue, P O Box 4283, Olds, AB Canada T4H 1P8

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## Contact Information

Our office is located in the basement at  
4911 - 51 Avenue ( old town office )

Office phone (403)556-5994 ( answering machine )  
Access Dial (403)556-7500 ( 24 hr paging service )

Web site <http://www.telusplanet.net/public/osar/>

Email [osar@telusplanet.net](mailto:osar@telusplanet.net)

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welcomes members of the public at all regular meetings and is always looking for more volunteers.

## New Executive

Chairman	Shelley Maschke
Vice Chair	Darwin Schatz
Secretary	Anne Tuggle
Treasurer	Dana Pochapsky
Past Chair	Jack Humphries

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We also have five new directors on our board

Ralph Wade, Jim Fagan, Pat Radford, Becky Atkin and Brent Boutwell

## Member Training

Members of Olds Search and Rescue participated in several training and practice events during the past few months.

## Welcome

With this, our second, edition of OSAR NEWS we welcome a new executive team and start a new regular meeting night and time. Olds Search and Rescue will now meet on the second Tuesday of each month at 19:30 hours (7:30 pm) at the teams office. Olds Search and Rescue

Schizophrenia Workshop - July 23, 2002 at 19:00 hrs ( 7:00 pm ) at Town of Olds council chambers. This workshop helped members and the public better understand some of the behaviours of sufferers.

Crane safety review was presented to members prior to the start of a regular meeting in the parking lot. Jim Findlay of Findlay Crane Service presented the safety review for us.

Radio Communications protocol was presented to members by Ralph Wade as a program to familiarize members with the proper use of radio equipment on SAR searches and activities.

Probability of Detection and Map and Compass activity was held October 19, 2002 at the Weekend Warriors Paint ball range south west of Olds. This training event was designed to provide practical use of map and compass and practice in searching for and reporting clues which would lead to the successful conclusion of a search for a lost person. This training exercise also provided our first practical experience with our new GPS units. Many of the protocols in using our radio equipment were also put to the test.

## Public Relations

Nitchi Nicker Endurance Ride - August 31, 2002 in the Bergen area south of Sundre. This is an all day event which brings international level competitors riding in support of area programs for handicapped individuals. Olds Search and Rescue members have provided radio communications and first aid services to this event for the past two years as a public service. The event this year involved a 100 mile ride and required our members for the better part of 24 hours until all participants had completed the course.

## Upcoming Events

Check our web site for updates on these and other events as they are planned. You can also email our training co-ordinator at

[osar@telusplanet.net](mailto:osar@telusplanet.net)

Regional SAR meeting in Didsbury at 19:30 (7:30 pm) Hrs on November 13, 2002.

Hug a Tree instructors course at Olds SAR office November 20, 2002 at 19:30 Hrs.

SAR Fundamentals Red Deer County Fire Hall November 23,24 and November 30, December 1 Contact Red Deer SAR for more info

Provincial Conference 2003 will be held near Medicine Hat March 7<sup>th</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup> & 9<sup>th</sup>, 2003. More details will be provide by SAR Alberta.

## Membership Information

Olds Search and Rescue currently has 27 members as follows:

- 17 regular members
- 3 new members
- 1 RCMP liaison
- 4 affiliate Olds Fire Department members
- 2 affiliate EMS member

Membership applications are available at our office during regular meetings at 19:30 hours on the second Tuesday of each month or by asking a current member for one.

## SAR Fundamentals

As part of each newsletter we will try to include a review of some part of SAR Fundamentals. It is our hope these small discussions will reinforce present knowledge or inspire newcomers to learn more.

### Briefing, Debriefing & Documentation

In this issue we will look at three very important parts of the search management process and how it affects the outcome of a search. We will look at who is responsible for what and how you as a SAR worker can protect yourself in a search situation.

**Briefing** - Briefing provides situation status, objectives, strategy and tactical assignments. Briefing can make or break an operation. Everyone must be briefed. This leads to what information needs to be presented. The search action plan, if properly prepared, serves as a ready made briefing statement (We will discuss the search action plan in another issue) the search manager will give to team leaders.

The following information should be conveyed: situation status, objectives, strategies and predictions. Subject information should include all information about the subject which will help the searcher in his job. This information will include a description of subject, clothing worn, physical condition, mental condition, behavioural characteristics and what has caused the search.

We should be given vital medical information and clue consideration as well as trip plans, local hazards and current as well as predicted weather conditions in the search area. Communication details such as codes to use, numbers to call and frequencies to use for

reporting should also be given. Time the team will be out and its tactical assignment must be detailed.

All searchers will be briefed by team leaders with respect to subject, relatives, media contact and who the liaison is. They will also be informed about conditions in the search area and about equipment and supplies needed while out.

The more detail that can be given about the search in the briefing session will improve the probability of success. Failure to give some details could cause failures and gaps in search plan implementation. It is critical that all searchers be prepared to listen and take notes during briefings.

**Documentation** - Team leaders are required to document the activities of their team with respect to area covered, clues found and where located and how they are marked. This information is vital for accurate and timely debriefings.

**Debriefing** - Team leaders will in writing report back to the search manager explicit coverage of what the team actually carried out, estimate the probability of detection (POD) and location of any clues. Team leaders will also report any search difficulties or gaps, problems found in the area together with any suggestions, ideas and recommendations for future search efforts.

The debriefing is a tool to measure success and forms a foundation on which further search plans can be built.

**Conclusion** - Since search is an emergency the thoroughness, accuracy and timely reporting of information by search managers, team leaders and searchers is vital to the positive conclusion of the search.

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## History of Olds Search and Rescue

The idea of forming a volunteer agency within the Town of Olds that would be trained and ready to assist in the case of an emergency began in 1989. After much work and consultation the essence of the group was given form and support from the Town provided the initial funding to give life in January 1990 to 'The Olds Emergency Response Team.

The team was given the mandate to assist police, fire and ambulance as required. Training in first aid, emergency evacuation and reception procedures was undertaken and over the next ten years the group demonstrated its value on many occasions.

As with all volunteer groups membership has its ups and downs and in the spring of 2001 members began the process of expanding its mandate by taking training in SAR Fundamentals and in January 2002 the group officially changed its name to Olds Search and Rescue. At the March annual meeting of Search and Rescue Alberta the Olds group was given full membership in SAR Alberta and added to the vast search and rescue resource located in the province.

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Thank you to all who have helped by providing input for OSAR NEWS.

Have a great fall filled with fun and as few searches as possible.

OSAR NEWS Editor: Rick Astle