



Triple Bay Eagles looking for new recruits

KIRK SQUIRES The Packet

It's a problem facing a growing number of volunteer groups in this province — the search for members.

Various groups like volunteer fire departments and community and service groups have lost members due to out migration. What's worse is there are few people coming forward to fill the v a c a n c i e s .

"That's one of the big things," says Ed Osmond of the Triple Bay Eagles Ground Search and Rescue Team. "It is not so bad in the Clarendville area because we have the population. But in places like Marystown (on the Burin Peninsula) their search team was down to four or five members."

The Discovery Trail Ground Search and Rescue Team on the Bonavista Peninsula is also having trouble finding new members.

The rescue of a 14-year old boy from a cliff in Shoal Harbour Aug. 25 demonstrates the importance of groups like the Triple Bay Eagles. "It seems to be a small pool of people that do a lot of things," says RCMP Cst. Doug Brannen. He points to many of the members of the Triple Bay Eagles who also volunteer their time with various other community organizations.

The lack of people willing to make the commitment to groups like the Eagles and volunteer fire departments is putting the future of a vital, and potentially life-saving, service at risk.

"That search and rescue team

is a real asset to this area," says Brannen. "I don't think people realize the extent of what these members do. They get involved in a lot of stuff in the community from an official basis." The Eagles regularly participate in various community events providing traffic assistance, security and other support services.

But it's during a search and rescue that the group really shows their skill and experience. RCMP Cpl. Rupert Baker says the need for ground search and rescue seems to exist more and more every day. "They have been involved in searches for missing persons but also in evidence searches in some major cases. They have also been involved with marine search and rescue conducting shoreline searches when people have been lost at sea.

"It's good to know you have trained personnel in place to do this for you. You know they can be called on at a moment's notice. I look at the Triple Bay Eagles as an excellent team, probably one of the better teams in the province," says Baker.

Brannen also notes the Triple Bay Eagles are unique to a rural area of the province because they have so many members trained in high angle rescue. "We are part of the provincial pool and we can get called out at any time to go anywhere in the province depending on the need," he explains. Volunteer fire departments and groups like the Triple Bay Eagles provide a service most areas simply can not afford to pay for. "They provide essential services in areas that are too small to have full time fire departments or a full time

search and rescue group; you rely on them and you don't realize what you have until it's gone."

Brannen admits for many people daily life has become a balancing act. "There are so many demands on everyone's time. We all understand it and we are all in the same boat. It seems free time becomes less and less. "I think what we have moved away from in our communities for some reason is the appreciation of camaraderie that comes with these volunteer groups. When I grew up in rural Nova Scotia the volunteer fire department was a central location. It was a meeting place, something that people wanted to join," explains Brannen. "The work is at times exciting and the training is fun as well. "But there are so many stresses on people's time, and the need to meet financial obligations, that people sometimes put camaraderie, fellowship and friendship on the back-burner, just for a while. You may hear, 'I can't join right now, maybe later.' Life is too short to put that kind of stuff off," he says. "Volunteer organizations; we can't do without them"

For Osmond being a member of the Triple Bay Eagles has been a rewarding experience. "When you go out on a search you don't know what to expect. You plan for the worst, but when you have a good outcome there is no better feeling." While being a member of the Eagles does require some commitment the training provides members with top notch survival and safety training. "Of the groups that I have been involved in by far it is

the best organized." But there are challenges says Osmond. Aside from finding members willing to make the commitment the team is not getting a lot of support, financially, from towns in the area.

"They help us out to some degree but our insurance costs a fortune every year. If we don't fundraise for that and get some funding from the provincial government we are pretty well shut down. "They (towns) don't realize what we do until something happens, then reality hits," he says

The Triple Bay eagles are currently looking for new volunteers. Anyone who would like an application can contact Ground Search and Rescue Incident Commander RCMP Cpl. Rupert Baker at 709-466-3211. The deadline for applications is Sept. 15.

SARSCENE 2006 Gatineau, Quebec.

The fifteenth annual search and rescue workshop was held in Gatineau, Quebec October 4 -7/06.

Organized by the National Search and Rescue Secretariat (NSS), and co-hosted by the Quebec Provincial Police, SARSCENE 2006 attracted more than 600 delegates from Canada, the US and beyond. The four-day event included training courses, meetings, games, demonstrations and exhibits and about 50 presentations. The event closed with the presentation of the 2006 Outstanding Search and Rescue Achievement Award and Certificates of Merit.

Approximately 16 delegates from across Newfoundland and Labrador traveled to Gatineau, Quebec for SARSCENE 2006.

The delegates took in a variety of SAR presentations and demonstrations. One of the highlights was the 2006 SARGAMES. The Avalon North Wolverines for the second year, fielded a team in these games and put in an excellent effort.

Many delegates were also impressed with the trade show in which many companies were showcasing the latest equipment and technology for use in the SAR field.



Rovers Say Good-Bye To Valued member

Tara Businski, from Michigan (USA) joined the Rovers SAR team three years ago while attending Memorial University, completing her PhD. Since that time, she's has showed up to every function, and every search. She's a workhorse, and always puts on a smile. Tara has finished her PhD, and is leaving the Rovers to join the United States Marines, as an officer. She is going to become a helicopter pilot. At her last meeting, the Rovers executive presented her with a print from Newfoundland, a few framed pictures of herself, but most of all, an Honorary Lifetime Membership to the Rovers SAR team. The St. John's Rovers would like to wish Tara all the best in her future endeavors.



Helicopter Rescue Team Training Nears Completion

The Provincial Government approved \$35,600.00 in order for the Association to purchase equipment and provide training. Teams were introduced to the basics starting with knots and ropes. This was followed by a full day session of cliff or tower training. After members became comfortable with this aspect they were introduced to the actual helicopter session. Members learned how to rig the helicopter and set up the safety lines. This was followed by actual rappel work which members really enjoyed. With the upcoming purchase of the proper stretchers, Teams will be briefed on the proper techniques in order to rig a stretcher for hoisting. These Teams will provide a valuable resource when the need arises to extract a casualty from a remote area.

Exploits Team Complete New Building

On October 10, 2005 the Exploits Search and Rescue started its new building. The building is 40 ft x 70 ft x 14 ft high. It has a 2 bay garage, 2 washrooms, 3 storage rooms, a meeting room and a kitchen. The building was able to be completed through the help of the town, and grants from HRDC. The building is located on Bailey St. and is valued at about \$150,000 and when completed by October of 2006, no money will be owed on it. A big feat for a volunteer organization.



Message from the President

This has been a fairly busy year for the Association in terms of search and training related activity. Most teams in the province have been involved in either searches for lost hunters and missing persons or evidence searches.

The Association is pleased to state that all missions have been successful.

This only further proves the strength, dedication and knowledge of the SAR volunteers in this province.

NLSARA Web Page

It appears as though we have made some headway with the Team Lists on our web page. We can now access Team Lists and edit them on the page. You can add delete members as well as search for members names using different criteria as well as print a copy of all your current members. Coordinators are urged to keep an accurate list of there current members as we require this information for insurance and statistical purposes. We will be forwarding information on how to access this shortly and if you are having any problems, don't hesitate to contact me.

Harry Blackmore—President	682-4834
Barry Nash—Treasurer	649-0404
Roger Goobie—Secretary	486-5069
Perry Bowering—Eastern Director	786-0046
Dave Jenkins—Central Director	673-7318
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