



RESCUE BEACON

NEWSLETTER OF MONTEREY COUNTY SEARCH & RESCUE TEAM



RECENT EVENTS

- Jul. 17:** Knotty Hour (volunteer meeting)
- Jul. 20:** Applicant tests & interviews
- Jul. 31:** CHP Helicopter Rescue Technician (HRT) (ground school) training
- Aug. 1:** SAR missions (two)
- Aug. 3:** Monthly Training (Medical); applicant tests & interviews
- Aug. 6:** National Night Out
- Aug. 11:** CHP HRT (air ops) training

UPCOMING EVENTS

- Aug. 21:** Knotty Hour (monthly volunteer meeting); Swearing in of new volunteers
- Aug. 25:** CHP Helicopter Rescue Technician (HRT) (ground school) training for second group of volunteers.
- Sep. 6-8:** CA SAREX
- Sep. 13-15:** Monthly Training (overnight)

BOARD

- Commander:** Alain Claudel
- Secretary:** Vanessa Wennstrom
- Treasurer:** Scot Smythe
- Volunteer & Social Media Coordinator:** Sierra Rad
- Training Coordinators:** Wesley Hayward & Justin Kantor

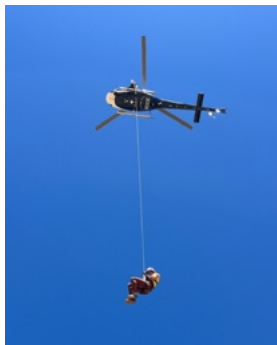
In This Issue: Training Update; Team Member Update; Community Event; Recruitment/onboarding; Team Member Spotlight

JULY 31ST TRAINING - HELICOPTER RESCUE TECHNICIAN GROUND SCHOOL

A number of volunteers and deputies attended the CHP Air Operations Helicopter Awareness and Operations Ground School. This 4-hour training session is a prerequisite for the air operations training (see below) and covers topics such as helicopter awareness, operations, and communications, an introduction to a new K-9 harness, safety practices for hot loading and unloading aircraft, an external load briefing and mission planning, and an overview of Helicopter Rescue Technician (HRT) roles and responsibilities.



AUGUST 11 TRAINING - HELICOPTER RESCUE TECHNICIAN AIR OPS



On August 11, seven volunteers from our team successfully completed the Air Operations component of the Helicopter Rescue Technician (HRT) training. Each member received hands-on experience with hoist operations, earning their certification as Helicopter Rescue Technicians. We extend our gratitude to the

California Highway Patrol (CHP) for their time, expertise, and for providing this invaluable training opportunity.

AUGUST 3 TRAINING - MEDICAL

On August 3rd, our Search and Rescue team members participated in their monthly training session, which was dedicated to medical skills. The training focused on patient assessment and packaging, with team members reviewing procedures and practicing hands-on techniques to ensure they are prepared for real-world emergencies.

ABOUT US

The Monterey County Sheriff's Office Search and Rescue (SAR) Team was established in 1963, with a volunteer unit formed in 1989 to assist the Sheriff's Office. Operating as a nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization in partnership with the Sheriff's Advisory Council (SAC), the SAR team provides trained personnel and specialized equipment to support the recovery of sick, injured, lost, or deceased individuals across Monterey County. The team is a full member of the Mountain Rescue Association and is recognized as a Type I elite rescue unit. Comprised of both sworn deputies and dedicated volunteers, the Monterey SAR Team operates on a limited budget, relying on grants and donations to maintain its critical operations.



TEAM MEMBER UPDATE: WELCOMING NEW LIFE!

Congratulations to Sgt. Casey Condon and Jen Alberti on the arrival of their beautiful daughter, Alice Mae Condon, weighing 8lbs 5oz on July 23, 2024! We are thrilled to share in your joy and wish your new family a future filled with love, happiness, and endless adventures. Welcome to the world, Alice Mae!



Radar (pictured left), who initially went through a phase of confusion after being the center of attention for years, has adjusted well and now lovingly greets his new human baby sister with gentle sniffs and sweet kisses.



COMMUNITY EVENT: NATIONAL NIGHT OUT



Monterey SAR team participates in various community events in the county to connect and engage with the community. On August 6, SAR team participated in National Night Out 2024 in Spreckels Memorial Park. Kids always enjoy getting a ride on our stoke!

RECRUITMENT - APPLICANT TESTS & INTERVIEWS

Last month, eight SAR volunteer applicants participated in and successfully completed interviews and tests, including pack and knot tests. The pack test is a physical challenge where applicants hike at least 3 miles in less than an hour while carrying a 25-pound pack, with an elevation gain of approximately 1,000 feet. Some applicants have completed background checks, while others are still in the process. Those who pass will be sworn in as probationary members of the team for one year. After successfully completing the probationary period, they will become regular members of the Monterey County Search and Rescue team.



SUPPORT US

*Give a little, help a lot
So That Others May Live*

The Monterey County SAR Team in partnership with SAC is a nonprofit, charitable organization that receives a limited allocation each year from the Sheriff's Office to help offset the cost of equipment, uniforms, and training. The great majority of our operational budget is funded directly by the volunteer unit from donations, grants, and fundraising efforts. Our volunteers are unpaid and must purchase the personal gear they need themselves. We have a substantial and ongoing need to replace team equipment and to seek professional training in the many disciplines needed to be a proficient SAR unit. You can support us by donating online at [MCOSAR.COM](https://www.mcosar.com).



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EIN: 77-0118273



Sierra as attendant during a rescue in Big Sur where five hikers were stranded due to a landslide (left) & canyoneering in Utah (right)

TEAM MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

IN THIS EDITION OF RESCUE BEACON, LET'S GET TO KNOW VOLUNTEER AND BOARD MEMBER SIERRA RAD.

Q: Please tell us a little about yourself and your family.

I'm an Associate Professor at the Defense Language Institute (DLI) in Monterey. I was born and raised in Iran and moved to the U.S. in 2000. My hobbies include canyoneering, backpacking, hiking, biking, and caving, among other activities. I have two beautiful Persian cats, Shahbanu and Pishi!

Q: Please tell us about your education and career.

I have a BA in Political Science from UC Berkeley and an MA in International Policy Studies from Middlebury Institute of International Studies at Monterey. I have been teaching at DLI since 2011.

Q: What inspired you to join MCSOSAR?

In 2017, I was hiking to Everest base camp in Nepal. I met a girl, Carly, in the airport on the way to Lukla. Carly was from Oakland and was doing a different trek. We kept in touch, and she later told me about being in SAR in the Bay Area and some of the exciting things she got to do. I thought it would be a perfect activity for me since I am already out there, and it could be a way for me to improve my skills and help others. I applied and joined the team in 2018.

Q: What is the best thing about being a SAR volunteer?

There are several benefits, such as improving the ability to better manage stressful and emergency situations, enhancing communication and leadership skills, and the satisfaction of saving someone or bringing closure to a family.

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Member spotlight continued:

On a personal level, helping others often feels like a way of helping myself. Having experienced limited support growing up, I know how valuable it is to have someone to rely on in times of trouble. I want to be there for others when I can.

What are the challenges you face as a volunteer in this role?

The biggest challenges are time and personal costs. If I respond to a callout on a weekday, I have to use my annual or unpaid leave. For example, one year, I used 54 hours of my annual leave for SAR. There are also costs for personal equipment that volunteers cover. Additionally, as a female, I sometimes encounter challenges related to being underestimated or facing outdated attitudes. While this isn't prevalent on our team, it does occur occasionally in this industry.

Anything else you would to share?

SAR is a unique experience, and the bonds and partnerships you develop are irreplaceable. If you are passionate about it, it becomes your second family.



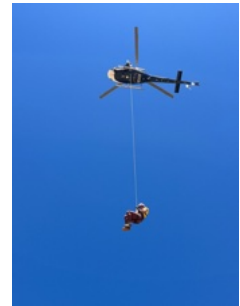
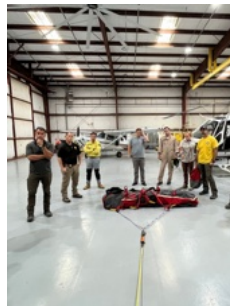
Sierra rappelling down a waterfall in Lower Jump Canyon, North Fork of Kings River. Photo by Max Janszen

JOIN US



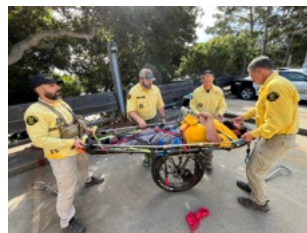
The Monterey County SAR Team is always looking for qualified new recruits. If you feel that you have what it takes to join the team, visit our website to for more information:
mcosar.com/apply

SAR IN ACTION



New Applicant Fitness Test
& Interviews

HRT Training, Ground School & Air Ops



August Training: Medical



CONTACT US:

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FOLLOW US:

FB: facebook.com/mocosar
IG: mcso_sar