



RESCUE BEACON

NEWSLETTER OF MONTEREY COUNTY SHERIFF'S SEARCH & RESCUE TEAM



RECENT EVENTS

- Sep. 18:** Knotty Hour (monthly volunteer meeting)
- Sep. 21/22:** Search in Burned Environments Training
- Oct. 5:** Community Event - Hiking Safety Discussion with CA Mission Walkers
- Oct. 12:** Monthly Training (ropes)

UPCOMING EVENTS

- Oct. 20:** CHP HRT Training Part II
- Oct. 26:** Community Event - Cal Fire Annual Zombie Run
- Nov. 9:** Monthly Training (Tracking & ICM)

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; Community Event; Team Member Spotlight; SAR in Action

OCTOBER 12 TRAINING - TECHNICAL ROPES

On October 12, our team conducted a crucial training session at the Big Sur Gorge. This location presents significant challenges, as we often receive calls for rescues involving individuals who have either jumped into the gorge or accidentally fallen, resulting in injuries or worse. The steep terrain and riverbed make extractions particularly difficult, requiring the use of specialized techniques, including a guideline system. We practice here annually to ensure our team is fully prepared for these complex and high-risk rescues when the need arises.



OCTOBER 5 COMMUNITY EVENT

Monterey County SAR attended the California Mission Walkers Conference, a group dedicated to walking the historic El Camino Real, covering approximately 800 miles from Baja California to Sonoma. A SAR team member gave a presentation on trail safety, the use of satellite communication devices, and emphasized the importance of leaving a detailed travel plan with loved ones before embarking on any journey.

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

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.



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).



501(C)(3)
EIN: 77-0118273

remembering the training I had with Marin, and limited as a general volunteer during this disaster, I found it was time to pursue SAR again.

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

Being of service to our community, challenging myself physically, mentally, and emotionally, and bringing relief or closure to families worried about loved ones.

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

Saying goodbye to my kids when we receive a call-out. Voluntarily diving into poison oak in search zones.

Q: Anything else you would like to share?

Go because you can.

TEAM MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

IN THIS EDITION OF RESCUE BEACON, LET'S GET TO KNOW VOLUNTEER AND BOARD MEMBER VANESSA WENNSTROM

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

I'm a mother of three children and we live on a small family farm. My recreational passions include prone paddling and ice climbing. Paddling from Santa Cruz to Monterey with the Bay for Breath crossing was one of the most epic experiences of my life.

Q: Please tell us about your education and career.

Certified birth doula with Twin Lakes College of the Healing Arts in 2010 and as a lactation counselor with ALPP since 2016. I've assisted approximately 300 families with birth, postpartum, and lactation. I'm finishing my psychology degree and participate in a couple of honor societies.

Q: What inspired you to join MCSOSAR?

I was on the Marin SAR team in high school, which made a big impact on my life. I took a break to pursue my career and raise children. After assisting in Texas with Hurricane Harvey,



Vanessa doing her favorite activities: prone paddling, search & rescue, ice climbing

SAR IN ACTION



October Advanced Ropes Training

OUR LIFESAVING PARTNERS: DONORS AND SUPPORTERS

We extend our deepest gratitude to all our generous donors and supporters. Your contributions enable the Monterey County Search and Rescue team to continue our vital work, ensuring the safety and well-being of our community. Your support is a lifeline to those in need, and we couldn't do it without you.



Union Pacific Community Ties
Giving Program



The Rocky Talkie
Search & Rescue Awards



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