



British Columbia Tracking Association

Winter 2011 Newsletter

Happy New Year!

Executive 2011:

President: Win Koch

Vice President:

Tania Walter Gardiner

Secretary: Peggy Shelley

Treasurer: (Vacant)

Regional Directors:

SE: Jerome Liboiron

SW: Gerald Wolfe

Central: Dwaine Brooke

NE: Vacant

NW: Roger Meunier

VI: Peter Wilson

**Contact information is on the
new BCTA website:**

<http://www.bctracking.org>

Committees:

Training

Communications

Policy

BCTA Mailing Address:

1513 Juniper Place,

Comox, BC V9 M 1A2

NEW Web Site:

<http://www.bctracking.org>

President's Message

By Win Koch

This is the second issue of the BC Tracking Association Newsletter. It is our way of keeping Association members and Trackers generally, informed about what we are doing and what's happening with BCTA Tracking in British Columbia.

Firstly, I would like to introduce and welcome Peggy Shelley from Kamloops SAR. Although she is a novice to Tracking, Peggy has volunteered to become the Association's Acting Secretary. Welcome aboard, Peggy!

Sadly, Colleen Cody-Rupp has stepped down as Treasurer. Tony and Colleen are expanding their business and need to devote all their time and energy to that task. We wish both Colleen and Tony much success in their expanded business and thank them both for their outstanding contributions to Tracking in BC. So, we are in need of a volunteer to take over the job of Treasurer for the Association.

Needless to say, there is not much training going on over the winter months - so most of the work of the new Association Executive and Directors since September has been on initiatives and projects for implementation beginning in 2011.

Summaries of the minutes of three recent BCTA Board meetings are provided in a following article.

The new BCTA web site is officially open for business, thanks to Ram Sudama, our Web Master. Check it out at: <http://www.bctracking.org>

The big question is still: will we receive the NIF Grant? Things are looking positive because we have been asked to provide additional information and signed letters of support for the Merit Board. However, in the event we don't, a special committee is looking at alternative fee for service models.

2010/11 Board Meetings Highlights

There were three Board meetings: October, December 2010 and January 2011. A lot of ground was covered and this will summarize the decisions taken and describe some of the work that is still on going.

Correspondence: At the October meeting, Win Koch tabled a report on his visit with Trackers in Williams Lake. Although they declined to become BCTA members at this time, they have agreed to cooperate and work with BCTA on the development of tracker training standards and course development.

The BCTA has sent an e-mail to Jeff Haack at EMBC and to Colin Wiebe VP BC SARA introducing the new Executive and Regional Directors, and including a copy of the BCTA constitution, for their information. A request was also made for the Association to be able to make a 'sales pitch' to the SAR Training Steering Group, when they meet to plan 2011 SAR Training.

Financial Statement: The Treasurer provided the financial update as of September 2010.

Trainer Certification: A motion was made and passed to grandfather active, qualified trainers for up to two years, to permit them to continue to provide BCTA training until they can attend a BCTA- endorsed Instructor course. The Training Committee has the current list of trainers.

Membership: Motions were made and passed to have the membership fee year be in alignment with our fiscal year, which is May 1 to April 30; to increase the annual membership fee to \$15.00, effective 2011; and to offer a 3-year membership for \$40.00, a saving of \$5.00 plus two years of postage, cheques and envelopes! Membership fees will be non-refundable.

Membership cards will not show the member's Tracker certification, as that requires keeping track of different dates and would become too cumbersome to maintain. The policy will be that members should put their training and certifications in their GSAR log books.

Policy Committee: A committee has been formed to develop policy and guidelines for the spending of grants and training funds. This will be a guide for SAR groups planning to host tracking courses, as well as for the Regional Directors assisting with that planning, and for the Instructors who will be compensated for their out-of-pocket expenses on BCTA sponsored courses. There will also be guidelines for how instructors will be selected for the courses

SAR NIF Grant: The Association received notice from the National SAR Secretariat that our NIF grant proposal was being forwarded to the Merit Board. A few items needed to be cleared up – specifically, signed letters of support. Apparently the e-mails, which were provided in September, had to be signed. Thanks to everyone's quick responses, Tania was able to send a reply well before the deadline. Now we must await their decision!

Community Gaming Grant:

Unfortunately, the Association's 2010 application for a Community Gaming Grant has been denied. A number of reasons were given. In examining the letter from BC Lotteries, given the time and effort it would involve, and that there is no indication that an appeal would result in funding, the executive decided not to appeal the decision. The Association will re-apply next year and incorporate the changes indicated for rejection.

Societies Act: The BC Societies Act requires all Societies to file annual reports and update information with the Corporate Registry office. There is a \$25 fee for filing the Annual Report, \$50 for adoption of a Constitution, which was done at the AGM, and \$15 for a change of address. All the required documents were completed and submitted to the Corporate Registry office mid-December. The Form 10 with the Constitution was returned for some cosmetic editing to make it comply with Registry standards. The revised constitution will be tabled at the 2011 AGM, before being returned to the Registry.

Acting Secretary: Peggy Shelley from Kamloops SAR has volunteered to become the Association's Secretary, replacing Kelly Carnochan. Peggy was approved by the Board and appointed to be Acting Secretary until elections at the next AGM.

BCTA Official Website Thanks to Ram Sudama, the BCTA website is up and running at <http://www.bctracking.org>. Check it out!

The old web site bctracking.com is no longer maintained and will be expired soon. The new web site has a Yahoo members only section and all BCTA members will be invited by e-mail to obtain special access to that section.

TRAINING

The Chairman of the BCTA Training Committee is Mike Neeland (Cowichan Valley), assisted by Bart Bjorkman (Creston), with the recent addition of Peter Wilson (Cowichan Valley) and Gus Oliveria (Salt Spring Island). Their main task will be to review the draft BCTA tracker training standards and a new BCTA Co-coordinator/ Instructor course under development. A major effort will be in the works to re-certify Trainers under the UTS Train-The-Trainer Course and, in future, to train BCTA Instructors to the new BCTA Standards under development. Interested Trainers/Instructors should contact Mike at: mikeloretta@shaw.ca

COURSE ANNOUNCEMENTS

Princeton SAR will be hosting a Novice/Advanced course May 13-15, 2011 at Camp Tulahead.

As per Mike's Grapevine, Duncan SAR will host UTS TTT and TK1 courses April 22-24. Note that this is a UTS course, not BCTA.

Shuswap SAR is also planning a course – dates to be announced.

Any SAR Groups wishing to host a BCTA Tracking Course in 2011 are asked to contact their BCTA Regional Director to coordinate the course.

The new web site will soon include a menu item on how to plan a course (under construction).

MEMBERSHIP

2011 membership renewals are due by **1 May 2011**. Membership application forms are available for download and printing from the new Association web site.

The number of members is important for our status as a Society and for grant applications. It shows the commitment of the membership to the objectives of the Society. Please get out there and encourage the trackers you know to join our Association!

So, what do you get for your membership? Well, if you volunteer for one of the Executive or Director positions – a lot less spare time as you help the Association fulfil its objectives!

When (not if) we receive a National SAR NIF grant, we will be able to fund and/or subsidize in-house and contractor Tracker training throughout the Province. This will also mean discounts and savings for those that are BCTA members.

The Policy Committee is also working out plans in case we have to adopt a fee-for-service policy. The intent will be to cover instructor expenses while keeping tuition costs to a minimum for BCTA members.

Throughout 2011, the Association Executive and special committees will be very busy trying to secure funding for training, establishing standards and criteria, creating a training program and

ultimately, be able to provide support and training to Trackers all over BC.

Not bad for only \$15.00 per member!

BEST PRACTICES REVIEW

Tracker Call Out As a result of a SAR Best Practices review, the new BCTA membership form will ask if you wish to have your name and contact information provided for a Tracker Call Out list, a project similar to how B.C. Cave Rescue calls out specialists for SAR Mutual Aid. Details are still being worked out, but if you are willing to be available, tick off the response and we will add you to the Tracker callout list.

Tracker Advisors Another best practices review item was a recommendation to provide senior Tracker Advisors to support SAR Management where significant trackers are tasked. Again, the details have to be worked out, but selected Sign Cutters or TK2s with SAR Manager certification could be called upon as specialist advisors to the Operations Chief or SAR Managers on a task.

TRACKER SUCCESS STORIES

Do you have “Lessons Learned” or “Best Practices” you would like to pass on? Please write them up and send them in for future newsletters.

Watch Lake – Automobile Crash

In March 2005, 100 Mile SAR was called out at 0’dark thirty to assist the

RCMP in a motor vehicle accident on a back road. Police, Volunteer Firefighters and BC Ambulance had already responded to the scene and removed the driver from a badly wrecked vehicle. The injured driver spoke about someone else who had been with him.

Although the crash scene was badly trashed for sign by all the emergency response personnel, the SAR team began perimeter searches around the entire scene, looking for evidence of a second person or persons that may have wandered away from the vehicle. Even though this task involved night tracking, the ground was wet and muddy due to spring thaw and footprints were very easy to see by flashlight.

Outside of the crash scene, several sets of tracks were found on the road, and they were determined to be from the local rancher and his wife, who had initially responded to the scene.

There was no evidence that anyone had crossed the road from the crash site and continued into the forest and fields on that side. There was no sign that anyone, other than the rancher and his wife had travelled down the road.

The other side of the crash scene was a barbed wire fence before a marsh. The fence line was searched and no sign was found of anyone crossing or walking along the fence.

The findings indicated that there was no second crash victim that had wandered off in the dark.

Sometimes the lack of evidence or sign is a positive indication of where not to look further.

"The easiest way to find someone is to know where they aren't."

-PEP SAR Manager's Manual

Salt Spring Island – Lost Hiker

Tracking is a very useful tool in one's arsenal of search techniques. And it proved very useful in October 2008. Salt Spring SAR was called out in the early evening for a missing hiker in Peter Arnell Park. The first member to arrive was a Tracker who received a quick brief from the SAR Manager on duty as well as the RCMP Officer in charge. Having knowledge of the trail network that the hiker was missing in, the Tracker headed out with the RCMP Officer in the dark to do a rapid search of the area. The trail network was a maze of trails criss-crossing the terrain. At every junction the Tracker would stop and check the trails for sign. Sign was found on two different trails.

At this time the RCMP Officer received a call and needed to leave the field, so the Tracker led him out to a nearby road to be picked up by his partner. The Tracker then met up with the rest of the SAR Team that was showing up at the location. The Tracker briefed them as to his findings, broke the Team into two groups and led them to the two trails with sign.

The subject was located 16 minutes after returning to the field with the two teams. She was found in good spirits as she sat on a stump in the dark awaiting rescue.

There were three factors in finding the subject so quickly; having knowledge of the terrain, having knowledge of tracking, and the subject knowing to stay in one spot.

But without the skills of tracking, searchers could have wasted a lot of time searching the trails without sign. It was by eliminating all those trails and reducing the search area that the subject was found so quickly (allowing the searchers to make it home for a late dinner!).

"What is the best resource for finding a lost person?"

- Whoever finds them first"

- Greg Fuller

Help Wanted - Treasurer

The BC Tracking Association Society is looking for a volunteer to fill the position of Treasurer within the Association Executive. The duties include keeping the financial records necessary to comply with the Societies Act and to render financial statements when required.

For further information or to volunteer, contact Win Koch, President BCTA presidentr@bctracking.org

All volunteers must be BCTA members and will need to stand for election by the members. The term will be for a period of up to two years.

Help Wanted BCTAS Regional Director

The BC Tracking Association Society is looking for a volunteer to fill the position of NE Regional Director. The duties include: liaising with GSAR training officers and trackers within the region, providing tracking training materials and advice, facilitating tracking training, assisting other Regional Directors and providing reports, as required.

For further information or to volunteer, contact Win Koch, President BCTA president@bctracking.org

All volunteers must be BCTA members and will need to stand for election by the members. The term will be for a period of up to two years.

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If you have questions, comments, suggestions or ideas, please drop us a line and we'll make sure they get addressed or passed on to the appropriate Board member or Committee, or published in the newsletter!

Send to: President@bctracking.org

