



# SPRING 2017

## **BCTA Annual General Meeting Princeton, BC – 29 April 2017**

The AGM was held in conjunction with the Princeton Tracking course and there was a great turn-out of 48 attendees. Here's the "Cole's Notes" version of the minutes...

### **BCTA Executive and Directors:**

President: Mike Neeland  
Vice-President – Jeni Christie  
Secretary/Treasurer – Darlene Berry  
Vancouver Island – Wayne Wilson  
Central Region – Randy Rorvik  
\*South West – Shanon Fischer  
South East – Meghan McKenzie  
\*North East – Jayme Sauvé  
\*North West – Ron Steinke  
Training – Win Koch  
Memberships – Dylan Baker  
**\*Newly Elected – Welcome!**

**Minutes and Financials:** All approved and are posted on the BCTA website under Members Only.

**Constitution:** The amended Constitution and Bylaws were approved in the new format and are also posted on the website.

**Membership:** Current membership is at 184. The BCTA Membership Database App was launched February 2017. The website records information on BCTA members, membership renewals, certification, and courses attended.

Win Koch was voted and named a Lifetime Member of BCTA.

**Training:** In 2016, the BCTA conducted nine Track Aware / Tracker / Advance Tracker courses and one Train the Trainer, for 111 Track Aware and 58 Tracker/Advance Tracker students, plus 10 Instructors.

**Training Plan 2017:** Posted on the BCTA Website.

10 courses planned, plus one Instructor Course.

**Updated BCTA PowerPoints:** New slide shows are on the website under Instructors Only. Thanks to Darlene Berry and Jeni Christie for their long hours working on and fine-tuning these new slide shows!

**BCTA Tracking Booklets:** Updated, copyrighted and now available on the website under Members Only, for pre-reading/study when signing up for courses. Printed copies will still be provided for students when attending a course.

## **Upcoming BCTA Courses**

For the most current course details, see the website: [www.bctracking.org](http://www.bctracking.org) > Courses > Course Calendar. The Course announcements are also posted on the BCSARA website Training Calendar.

In Planning:

Terrace 23-25 June

Port Alberni 15-17 Sep or 22-24 Sep

Kamloops ? – Fall dates TBA

# British Columbia Tracking Association

[www.bctracking.org](http://www.bctracking.org)

**BCTA Mobile Assessment App:** This is a software program designed to be used by Instructors to replace the paper evaluation forms used during a tracking course. A contract was approved for Great Hat Web Design to build BCTA Mobile Assessment App, Phase 1.

**Communications:** Many thanks to John Semenec for keeping the website up to date.

**New BCTA Tracking Cards:** Are available on the website and may be printed on-line or purchased in bulk.

**Newsletter:** We will continue to try and issue it quarterly. Always looking for good contributing articles and pictures. Anyone want to take over as editor?

## BCTA Official Status and Policies

**Manual:** (revised August 14, 2016) was approved – as posted to the BCTA Website (Members Only).

**Whew! – All this got done in just 35 Minutes!**

## Recent and Current Courses

### Salt Spring Island 7-9 April

Beaver Point Hall<sup>7</sup>



### Track Aware - Darlene Berry.

Once again a great group of students. The 20 students working towards Track Aware had a variety of terrain right outside their door. A playground with gravel, grass, and a roadway; then our ever famous Salal to climb through in the forest; and lastly a farmer's field. Students were reassigned teams for each line so they could mix and mingle with new people.

**Congratulations** to Catherine Franz, Oscar Reyes, and Jason Seward who became Track Aware.

**Tracker with Jeni Christie.** We went through the new Intro to Sign-cutting PowerPoint presentation on Friday night, and although we received positive feedback overall there were definitely some great input and suggestions in how to make it better. We had the use of two adjacent pieces of property, so our scenario included rocky bluffs, mossy trails, ponds and forest. At the debriefing, the most common take away from the weekend for the students was the skills they developed in mapping and situational awareness.

As the majority of the students were recent Track Aware graduates, there were no new Tracker graduates. Overall a great weekend with fantastic students.

### Princeton 28-30 May 2, 2017 Jeni Christie.

This was a certification course for Track Aware and Tracker, we had more than fifty students attend, more than I personally have ever seen on a course.

We went through both of the new PowerPoint presentations, the Novice and the Intro to Sign-cutting presentations. Students working towards their Track Aware on their third class attended the Friday evening Tracker presentation - just to give them a taste of what is to come at the next level. The feedback was very positive. Students are happy to see the instruction being

standardized and simplified, and we welcomed their input and suggestions.

There were 32 students working towards Track Aware - and many lines of sign done throughout the weekend. Overall the terrain was a typical southern interior mix of grasslands and forest. It's challenging tracking through thick carpets of Ponderosa Pine needles, but the students persevered. For such a large group of novices, everything went exceptionally well - mostly due to the fact that everyone worked well together, maintained a great attitude and were excited to learn.

**Congrats** to the students who received Track Aware certification: Erika Robinson, Jay Robinson, Clint Hawking, Jason Clevon, Paul Fyfe, Mitch Mathews, Randy Gulick.

**Comox 12-14 May.** Applications Closed.

**TTT Princeton 19-21 May.** Applications Closed.

## **Parks Canada - Prince Albert**

At the request of Parks Canada in Prince Albert, Saskatchewan, the BOD approved a contract to provide up to 20 Parks Rangers with an introduction to Track Aware and Tracker training. Jeni Christie and Darlene Berry will be presenting the course, once final details are approved by Parks Canada. This is similar to the Training BCTA provided to Global SAR in Ottawa in 2013. Expenses will be completely paid for by Parks Canada.

## **Canadian Rangers - Pouce Coupe**

The Rangers have requested a quote for the BCTA to present a Track Aware course for up to 36 Canadian Rangers at Pouce Coupe, BC 8-10 Sep. It is currently awaiting government approval. Instructor expenses will be covered by the Rangers. This is only for Canadian Rangers. We will need four  
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instructors to volunteer for this course, once it is confirmed.

## **Tracker Tales**



***As always, Tracker Tales and pictures from your SAR or tracking experiences are welcome. Please send them to the Editor at: [communications@bctracking.org](mailto:communications@bctracking.org)***

## **Footwear, the Missed Evidence**

*(Excerpts edited for GSAR – Ed.)*

Dwayne S. Hilderbrand, CLPE, Lead Latent Print Examiner, Scottsdale Police Crime Lab

Author of the book, [\*Footwear, The Missed Evidence\*](#)

"The scope of a complete examination consists of two main functions: first, the recovery process, which includes the discovery and preservation of the prints, and second, the identification process, which involves evaluations, comparisons, and findings related to the recovered impression." (Grieve 1988).

## **Introduction**

"Wherever he steps, whatever he touches, whatever he leaves, even unconsciously, will serve as silent witness against him. Not only his fingerprints or his footprints, but his hair, the fibers from his clothing, the glass he breaks, the tool mark he leaves, the paint he scratches, the blood or semen he deposits or collects. All of these and more bear mute witness against him. This is evidence that does not forget. It is not confused by the excitement of the moment. It is not absent because human witnesses are, it is factual evidence, physical evidence cannot be wrong, it cannot perjure itself; it cannot be wholly absent, only its interpretation can err. **Only human failure to find it, study and**

***understand it can diminish its value.***" (Paul L. Kirk 1974).

## Crime Scene Photographs

Footwear impressions can be located in and outside the crime scene. Remember, the suspect had to arrive and depart the scene. The location should be photographed showing the general scene and surrounding areas. When photographing the scene always remember to take overall, medium and close up shots before you begin your comparison photographs. Always use a relationship technique when relating footwear evidence to the crime scene or to other items of evidence. An easy way to do this is to place a numbered marker next to the evidence print and photograph. Make sure the crime scene photographs have been taken prior to altering the evidence with numbered markers. When making quality examination photographs of the evidence prints, be sure to use the same number you used when you were showing relationship.

After this has been done, quality examination photographs can then begin. In order for a footwear examiner to perform a quality examination, high-quality, close-up photographs are required.

This can be easily obtained with a little time and patience. The print, the scale and an information card should fill the frame of the film. When using a flash, the flash should be held at least at a 45 degree angle from the print and fired from three different positions with at least 100 degrees separation. By using this oblique lighting procedure a different amount of light can be reflected from the shadowed and non-shadowed areas providing greater contrast.

This oblique lighting will cause a greater amount of contrast, and detail can be obtained in the photograph. The best way to do that is to take the pictures from three different positions. The scale should always be placed parallel to the side of the shoe, never in the print itself.

When at all possible, photographs should be taken of prints made by each foot. When the impressions are photographed correctly, they often proved the footwear examiner with a more detailed impression that lifting or casting thus resulting in a more definite examination and comparison.

In tracking, which is the process of following the footprints of an individual, photograph the scene as you found it and then place numbers next to each impression. Photograph the scene showing the impression numbers, this way you can come back later and relate where each impression was found. Then the quality examination photographs can be taken.





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## **Seasonal Safety Reminder**

During a number of recent SAR training events, BC GSAR Volunteers have reported finding ticks on their clothing and equipment. We would like to remind all GSAR members to check frequently for ticks and provide the latest techniques for tick removal that was included in the update Ground Search and Rescue Manual.

### **Ticks**

Ticks are tiny bugs, about the size of a sesame seed, which feed on blood. Adult ticks can be distinguished from insects by having eight legs rather than six. They cannot jump or fly and do not drop from trees. They wait for hosts on the top of grasses and shrubs and attach themselves to the host as it brushes by. While most tick bites do not result in disease some do. Ticks have been found in BC carrying the organisms that cause numerous diseases such as Lyme disease, Rocky Mountain spotted fever, Tularemia and Relapsing Fever. While the chances of getting these diseases are small, it is worth taking steps to avoid being bitten.

To protect yourself against tick bites:

- Walk on cleared trails wherever possible when walking in tall grass or woods.
- Wear light coloured clothing. Tuck your top into your pants and tuck your pants into your boots or socks and consider wearing gaiters.
- Put insect repellent (containing DEET) onto clothing and all uncovered skin.
- Check clothing and scalp (covered or not) when leaving an area where ticks may live. Make sure lighting is good so that you will not miss seeing the ticks.
- Regularly check household pets, which go into tall grass and wooded areas.

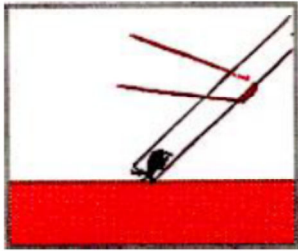
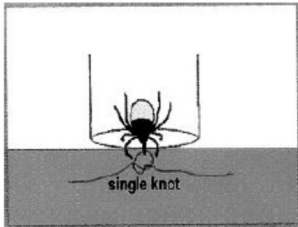
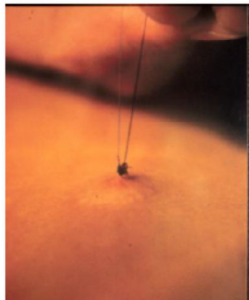
### **Tick Removal:**

Prompt removal of the tick is important, as the longer the tick remains on a person's body, the greater the chance of disease transmission.

Traditional removal methods such as tweezers (with or without twisting), fingers, petroleum jelly, fingernail polish, applying kerosene or use of a hot match head are not recommended as any one of these procedures can cause the tick to vomit, defecate or urinate. This can increase the likelihood of infection as the infectious agents are within the tick's bodily fluids.

Dr. E.K. Murakami (Clinical Associate Professor, Department of Family Practice, UBC) and Dr. S. Christie have developed a new field technique for removal of ticks. This new technique avoids any vomiting of the intestinal contents of the tick.

The equipment required for this technique is a piece of drinking straw and a piece of thread.

	<p><b>Step 1</b> The straw is placed over the wood tick and is held at a 45°. A piece of thread is placed around the straw and slid down to the skin.</p>
	<p><b>Step 2</b> The thread is brought down against the skin around the tick's jaw. A single knot is made and slowly tightened to close around the jaw of the tick.</p>
	<p><b>Step 3</b> Remove the straw and pull gently upwards on the string. It may take up to a couple minutes for the tick to release. This method avoids regurgitation of infectious agents and the tick remains alive and in one piece.</p>

*Figure #12: Tick Removal*

After the tick has been removed, place it in a container with a piece of damp gauze. Label container with date shipped, name of person bitten, what part of body bitten, what part of the province the tick came from.

This container should be taken to your local health unit as soon as possible for testing at the provincial laboratory.

Once the tick has been removed, clean the bite area with soap and water or rubbing alcohol. Wash hands with soap and water.

If you have the following symptoms within days or weeks after being bitten by a tick please report them to your physician immediately:

- General symptoms of headache, muscle and joint pains, fatigue or weakness of the muscles of the face.
- Skin rash, especially one that looks like a 'Bull's Eye'. It may or may not be where the bite was.

**For any GSAR health and safety related questions please contact the Joint Health and Safety Committee at, [ohs@bcsara.com](mailto:ohs@bcsara.com).**