



# The Rescue

SNOHOMISH COUNTY VOLUNTEER SEARCH AND RESCUE

FALL 2020

## Rescue from Lake Serene

*June 12, 2020 - Kathleen Nicole, posted on Washington Hikers and Climbers Facebook page, shared on Snohomish County Volunteer Search & Rescue Facebook page.*

Friends, yesterday was a difficult one. I've read about Search and Rescue stories online but never thought I'd be a part of one.

On our way down from Lake Serene our friend slipped on a wet rock and broke her ankle about 3 miles from the trailhead. I turned my phone on and luckily had full coverage and called 911 around 3 pm. About 2 hours later Snohomish County Fire and EMT met us on the trail along with a team of Snohomish Search and Rescue (SAR) volunteers. 16 people in total. They were literal heroes, selflessly putting their lives on the line to help our injured friend off the trail.

By 9:30 pm we were safely back to the trailhead and off to the Emergency Room. This was a true lesson in the importance

of carrying the 10 Essentials on EVERY. SINGLE. HIKE. After 4 years of hiking the trails here in Washington, I've learned many lessons, and the most important is even if you're going for a day hike, pack as if you may need to spend the night.

Friends, emergencies can happen to any one of us and anywhere. Please use this as a reminder of why each of us need to be overly prepared when we hit the trails. I cringe at all those times I have gone out on the trail much less prepared and am thankful I can pass this experience on to others. If I can help at least one person be more prepared on the trail by sharing this experience, this post is worth it.

We are SO incredibly grateful for the 16 Snohomish search and rescue volunteers and the fire department who assisted in the rescue. Each one of them are heroes and we are so incredibly appreciative.

You can find Kathleen's whole story on



the "Blog" page of the [www.scvsar.org](http://www.scvsar.org) website; also on our Facebook page (on June 12, 2020). For the most current SAR information, please "like" us on Facebook at [facebook.com/SCVSAR](https://facebook.com/SCVSAR) and on Instagram @snohomish\_county\_sar.

## What We Want You to Know

*Leah Hainey, "Snohomish County Volunteer Search & Rescue" Facebook Page Administrator*

Having a good hiking plan is one of the most important things you should do prior to heading outdoors. At the very least, include what trail you are going to be on and what time you should be back in cell service by. Additional pieces of information we like to have when deployed on a mission are: names and cell phone numbers of all members in your hiking party, the type of car you drove to the trailhead, a list of gear you have packed and the type of boots you were wearing. If you'd really like to go above and beyond, keep a roll of aluminum foil in your vehicle and before departing on the trail, step on it to provide your boot print. Our man trackers can do AMAZING things and this would give them a great head start!

Be sure the person you have shared your plan with understands that they will be

responsible to call 911 if you miss your check in. This would likely deploy search and rescue to come to your aid. And remember...the second most important part of your plan is sticking with it!

If you become lost, sit down and have both a snack and a drink of water. Once calm, try to remember where you were not lost. If you have any doubt, find a clear and quiet spot not too far away and stay there! This minimizes our search area to help find you faster, and this makes it easier for you to hear our voice checks as we call out your name during our search. If you can, signal for help by calling out, making noise, starting a fire, or using a radio if you have one. Lay out anything bright or reflective you have for our helicopter team to spot. And most importantly, keep a positive attitude; we are on our way!

Lastly, always pack the ten essentials:

1. Navigation: map and compass
2. Sun Protection: sunscreen, sunglasses, hat
3. Insulation: EXTRA clothes, space blanket, poncho
4. Illumination: headlamp/flashlight
5. Emergency Kit: first aid, signal items
6. Fire: spark source, tinder
7. Repair: knife, duct tape, paracord
8. Nutrition: EXTRA food
9. Hydration: EXTRA water or purification source
10. Shelter: can be a light emergency bivvy or tarp

A little planning ensures a safe trip, and it ensures your safety should you need to call on us!

# President's Letter

"Three Teens Rescued from Three Fingers Mountain" the headlines read back on August 26-27, 2008. Our son was one of the three teens whose lives were saved. The 20 hours we spent at the SAR Base Camp was our family's first introduction to these amazing volunteers of Search & Rescue. It was both the worst and best day of our lives. (You can find the whole story on the [www.scvsar.org](http://www.scvsar.org) "Home" page, near the bottom in the "Our Stories" Section.)



In the months following the Three Fingers rescue, my husband, my mother and I all joined SCVSAR as members of the Operations Support Unit (OSU). Much of my work on missions has been with Documentation in the Command Vehicle, as well as holding a leadership position within OSU for a number of years and eventually leadership positions with the County Board. As the first woman President of SCVSAR and the first President to come from the Operations Support Unit, my story simply highlights that anyone can meaningfully support this wonderful organization.

While we need field qualified personnel to go on missions and be trained for units and teams, such as Everett Mountain Rescue Unit, Swiftwater Rescue Team, the K-9, 4 x 4 and Tracking Teams, and the Helicopter Rescue Team, we also need support personnel for the Command Vehicle (documentation, mapping, communications & planning), and for the Food Truck. We are also looking for volunteers who may not ever want to go into the field, even in a supporting role, but who are willing to do work around Taylor's Landing (our headquarters), provide data entry, social media support, or help with fundraising, just to name a few needs.

2020 has been a unique year for Search & Rescue. I took over the reins of the organization just before the global pandemic hit. With the COVID-19 restrictions significantly affecting how we operate, our meetings have been done via Zoom, and our trainings were suspended until we received permission from the State SAR coordinator to resume small team trainings with COVID-19 protocols in place. Our mission tempo has been high through the summer with many folks escaping to the outdoors for relief. While we have been very busy with missions, donations to our organization (and to all 501c3s) have markedly decreased.

Not everyone can put in the time to become a Search & Rescue Volunteer, but many people who love the outdoors can financially support the people who will drop everything that they are doing to help others in need. Someday, the mission could very well be for you or for someone that you love, as it was for our family. Please consider making a tax deductible donation to Snohomish County Volunteer Search & Rescue ([www.scvsar.org](http://www.scvsar.org)), a 501c3 organization, this year, and consider donating to SCVSAR every year. Know that your dollars are going to a great cause; know that your funds will be carefully and thoughtfully allocated to where they are most needed; and know that you're making a tremendous difference. Thank You Very Much.

**Heidi McKeon**  
Snohomish County Volunteer Search and Rescue President



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Printed by K&H Integrated Print Solutions

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**It is the mission of Snohomish County Volunteer Search and Rescue to search, rescue and/or recover those who become lost, missing, injured or killed while outdoors and to educate people on outdoor safety and wilderness recreation.**

# K9 Team

## Capabilities

The K9 Team is a “Specialty Team” within the SCVSAR organizational structure and part of the Special Operations Group. The K9 Team mission is to conduct K9 search operations to locate lost, injured and/or deceased persons whenever and wherever required. There are currently 28 members of the SCVSAR K9 Team from the following SCVSAR Units: EMRU, Alderwood, Snohomish, Marysville, OSU, ESAR. All members must be in good standing with their units and maintain their Core Competency Requirements at Field level as established by SCVSAR. Members of the K9 Team are either K9 Handlers or K9 Field Support and must complete additional training requirements, including the following:

- K9 Pet First Aid
- K9 Fitness Test (5 miles)
- Performing hider roles
- Radio reporting (start times, locations, status checks, etc.)
- Doing Subject Assessments
- K9 Search Plans
- Flagging
- Estimating and reporting location in UTM's

The K9 Team trains constantly (when not in quarantine); we train to tough standards; we certify our K9 Teams using 3rd party evaluators. The SCVSAR K9 Team has 3 primary K9 disciplines:

- Trailing K9 Teams (1 Certified team, 1 team in training):
  - Trailing K9s are trained to find a specific live human and need a scent sample of the subject.
  - Trailing dogs can work off trail in difficult terrain (not ideal) and inclement weather. They are better used in urban/rural areas.
  - Trailing K9s work on-leash along with their handler and a Field Support Person.
- Air Scent K9 Teams (5 certified team, 8



teams in training)

- Airscent K9s are trained to find any live human in a mountain, forest, park or urban setting, they do not need a scent sample
- Airscent K9s work off-leash along with their handler and a Field Support Person.
- Airscent K9s work off trail in difficult terrain and in inclement weather for several hours at a time and will often ignore distractions, such as wildlife and strange noises
- HRD K9 Teams (1 certified team, 4 teams in training):
  - Human Remains Detection (HRD) or

cadaver K9s are used to locate the remains of deceased persons.

- Depending on the nature of the search, these K9s may work off-lead (e.g., to search a large area for buried remains) or on-lead (to recover clues from a crime scene).
- Cadaver K9s can locate entire bodies (including those buried or submerged), decomposed bodies, body fragments (including blood, tissues, hair, and bones) up to 15-feet underground.

The K9 Team supported 56 missions in 2019; and as of August 30th, supported 22 missions so far in 2020.



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THE RESCUE | SNOHOMISH COUNTY VOLUNTEER SEARCH AND RESCUE

Fall 2020

## What is AmazonSmile?

AmazonSmile is a simple and automatic way for you to support Snohomish County Volunteer Search and Rescue every time you shop, at no cost to you. You'll find the exact same low prices, vast selection and convenient shopping experience, with the added bonus that Amazon will donate a portion of the purchase price to your SCVSAR.

On your first visit to AmazonSmile ([smile.amazon.com](https://smile.amazon.com)), you need to select Snohomish County Volunteer Search and Rescue to receive donations from eligible purchases before you begin shopping. Amazon will remember your selection, and then every eligible purchase you make at [smile.amazon.com](https://smile.amazon.com) will result in a donation.

To shop at AmazonSmile simply go to [smile.amazon.com](https://smile.amazon.com) from the web browser on your computer or mobile device and select SCVSAR. You may also want to add [smile.amazon.com](https://smile.amazon.com) as a bookmark to make it even easier to return and start your shopping at AmazonSmile.

\$705 was received by SCVSAR from AmazonSmile from 1/1/2020 to 8/26/2020. Thank You.

## Sign Up for Our Digital Edition

We are committed to reducing our carbon footprint wherever feasible. We would like to send out this newsletter via email to as many people as possible. You can help by signing up to receive the newsletter electronically – right to your inbox! Just go to the bottom of any page of our website, [www.scvsar.org](https://www.scvsar.org), and click “Sign up for our newsletter.”

## Consider Supporting SCVSAR through Facebook Fundraisers and Donations

We have all seen the birthday donations on Facebook, but did you know that you can do one for SCVSAR? These fundraisers are an amazing way to promote and raise money and awareness for SCVSAR. Ways to access this feature for a birthday fundraiser differs whether you're logged on a desktop or a smart phone. On Snohomish County Volunteer Search & Rescue's Facebook page itself, it's very easy to set up a fundraiser, and these are a wonderful means to generate interest and response when you make a contribution yourself and/or offer a matching donation.

\$1,480 was received by SCVSAR from Facebook Donations between 1/1/2020 and 8/26/2020.

## Support SCVSAR

**JOIN:** Become a search and rescue volunteer. You can find out more information on our website at [www.scvsar.org](https://www.scvsar.org).

**DONATE:** Your donation supports the work we do and helps assure that our volunteers are always “mission ready”! You can also provide support through your company giving or matching gift program. Donate online at [scvsar.org](https://scvsar.org).