

**Code 1144** is always the last thing a rescue search party wants to hear (or say into a radio), but unfortunately it was the last thing for those searching for James Kim in Oregon's remote coastal mountains. In spite of the melodramatic media hype, this story really resonated with many of us. Maybe it was because we couldn't help getting caught up trying to solve the riddle. Why did he leave the car? Why didn't he stay on the road? After two days of wandering, why didn't he just go back to the car? Or maybe we were drawn into it because we couldn't help rooting for Mr. Kim. Because we all wanted him to succeed. We wanted him to find help and to save his stranded family, his wife and two young kids. We really wanted a happy ending. Maybe we were drawn into the story because we thought he was a fool. He shouldn't have left the main road. He should have turned the car around before he got stuck in the snow. He should have stayed put and waited for help. Maybe we were drawn into the story because it was just so damn tragic; A desperate man in a desperate situation giving his life in a heroic effort to save his family. They say there are always two sides to any given story. Unfortunately we'll never get to hear his side of it. The riddle probably does have a solution, it's just not ours to solve.

**Friday the 13<sup>th</sup>, 1972**, Uruguayan Air Force Flight 571 disappeared in the Andes somewhere between Argentina and Chile. Search parties from three countries combed the mountains looking for the plane wreck and the 45 rugby players on board. After eight days the search was cancelled because not one reconnaissance flight found any remains of the wreck. After more than two months, two survivors hiked for 10 days to find help. In the end, 16 passengers survived for 72 days at 14,000 feet in the Andes because those two survivors went for help.

**March 4<sup>th</sup>, 2000**, a young woman accidentally skied beyond the boundary lines at Sugarbowl. After realizing she was lost and had little hope of finding her way, she hunkered down in a snow cave for two days until TNSAR searchers were able to find her. She survived because she stayed put.

**December 10<sup>th</sup>, 2006**, three climbers go missing on Oregon's Mt. Hood. One victim is found deceased in a snow cave nine days later. His two partners died while trying to go for help.

**January 5<sup>th</sup>, 2007**, TNSAR volunteers will head out to local area elementary schools to teach fourth graders what to do and not do in case they are ever lost in the woods. The message is simple: STOP. Stay put if you ever get lost. Do not wander around and try to find your way to safety. In other words, it is easier for searchers to find lost victims if the lost victims stop wandering around trying to find

themselves. From our experience and from collective experience from search and rescue operations across the US, we have learned that it is better for lost victims to stay put when they get lost. Everyone teaches it, it is printed in all the books, all the experts sound off collectively, "Stay Put!" But is this really good advice? Is this really what we should be teaching our kids?

**What about those rugby players?** If the two rugby players didn't hike out of the Andes, then all 16 remaining survivors would have perished. What about Aron Ralston? Remember him? He was canyoneering in Utah and was trapped in a slot canyon and had to amputate his arm in order to survive. Of course he stayed put for six days before he was forced to cut off his own arm and walk back to safety. But he would certainly have perished if he stayed put. What about Joe Simpson, the British climber who was left for dead by his partner and then crawled back to life after six days face down in a glacier. No one really knows why Mr. Simpson survived, but he did so because he clawed his way out. And what about Beck Weathers? He was the climber who was left for dead near Camp IV on the south Col of Mt. Everest in 1996. He miraculously 'woke up' and walked back down to the other tents after the other climbers were positive he was expired. Like Simpson, Beck Weathers probably should have perished but he didn't because he got up and walked back to safety.

**Should I Stay or Should I Go Now?** Maybe the Clash were onto something bigger than a hit single. But it is not a question to be taken lightly. When lost in the woods, it is all too often a question whose answer is a matter of life and death. I don't know what the statisticians would say. I know about as much probability theory as I do about theoretical probabilistics. I do know that I love my daughter and I want her to know what to do in case she is ever lost in the woods. I want all kids (and most, but not all, adults) to do the right thing in order to survive if ever they become lost in the woods. I cannot say with 100% certainty that staying put is always the right thing to do. Likewise, I cannot advocate self serve amputation. I can, however, support TNSAR's winter survival program with all of my heart and soul: STOP. THINK. OBSERVE. and PLAN. Taken alone, no one element suffices. But collectively, these simple verbs can save one's life. No matter how you slice it, it's damn good advice.

**Every Day** we are faced with decisions. And every day we have to manage the consequences of those decisions. Some days are easy; Should I have two double big macs with bacon or just one? Some days our lives are on the line or someone else's life depends on the decisions that we as a search and rescue

team make during a search. We cannot always make the right decisions. But we can always strive to manage the consequences to the best of our abilities. It is not the decisions that matter the most, it is the consequences and how we deal with those consequences. TNSAR's primary goal is to conduct fast, safe rescues for victims lost in the wintertime wilderness. But the Team's secondary goal is to educate the public about wintertime safety. We cannot teach our kids to always make the right decisions. But we can teach them to think. We can teach them wintertime survival skills and we can teach them to practice those skills on the playground, in the back yard, on the back side of a mountain, or in bounds at a ski resort. Thanks in advance to all those TNSAR volunteers who help with the fourth grade (and high school) wilderness survival programs. Choosing to participate is a GREAT decision.



I don't know about you, but I'm hugging my loved ones just a little tighter and a little bit longer these days.  
----B. Wright

## Team Officers

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Treasurer	Scott Schroeffer	546-2809
Secretary	Pam LeFrancois	546-7393
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	Gerald Rockwell	583-5376
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## Committee Chairs

Cuisine	Debra Schroeffer	546-2809
Dispatch	Jackie Thomas	587-2687
Education	Jim Coffey	583-1276
Equipment	Brian York	583-0465
Great Ski Race	Doug Read	583-6381
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Newsletter	Bob Wright	546-7273
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Snowmobiles	Ray O'Brien	581-4358
Technology	Gerald Rockwell	583-5376
Training	Bernie Mellor	546-2238
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*Happy Holidayze!*

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Don't Forget! Next Team Meeting is Monday, January 1, 2007!



January 2007



Established 1976

# SnowLine

The Official Newsletter of the  
**TAHOE NORDIC SEARCH & RESCUE TEAM, INC.**  
Lake Tahoe • Truckee • Donner Summit

### Upcoming January Trainings

**January 8<sup>th</sup> --- Monday**

Where: Squaw Valley and Beyond

When: 7:45am garage or 8:15am Cable Car

Contact: Peter York 583-0465. Pete will lead an

extensive tour in and out of Squaw's property line.

Do not be late or you will miss the ONLY car reserved.

**January 10<sup>th</sup> --- Wednesday**

Where: Team Garage

When: 6:30pm

Contact: Scott Shane 775-240-7370. Scott will

continue beacon and GPS field training for those who

missed out last month.

**January 16<sup>th</sup> --- Tuesday**

Where: Team Garage

When: 6:30pm

Contact: David Hopp 546-7767. David is leading a two

part high angle training. This first part is an intro and

is a pre-requisite for the second part. PLEASE call

David to RSVP in advance.

**January 18<sup>th</sup> --- Thursday**

Where: Burton Creek substation

When: 6:30pm

Contact: Jimmy Smith 582-4448. Jimmy continues

critical communications training with COM Van 101

**January 21<sup>st</sup> --- Sunday**

Where: Cold Stream Canyon

When: 8:15am garage or 9:00am at the entrance to

Cold Stream canyon.

Contact: David Hopp 546-7767. This is high angle

rescue training part II. This is the nitty gritty with

ropes, ice axes, titanium screws, and dangling

victims. All are welcome but participation is reserved

for those who attended part I.

**January 24<sup>th</sup> --- Wednesday**

Where: Kings Beach fire station

When: 6:30pm

Contact: Scott Baumgardner 546-2544. Scott will be

showing a water rescue 101 video and demonstrating

the latest in wetsuit fashion.

**January 28<sup>th</sup> --- Sunday**

Where: Alpine Meadows

When: 7:30am garage or 8:00am patrol shack.

Contact: Sarah Barrett 546-7777. Sarah has reserved 20

lift tickets which are first come first served.

**January 30<sup>th</sup> --- Tuesday**

Where: Team Garage

When: 6:30pm

Contact: Jimmy Smith 582-4448. Continuing com van

excellence with COM Van 201.