



# Spring 2008 Newsletter

## From the Chair . . .

Hello all!

Well, it is already Spring (I'm glad!) and ESCAPE is not far off. The ESCAPE Co-Chairs, the rest of the Board, and the Track Leads are busy working to make it a great training event. Keep checking the NMESC website for class updates, the registration form, and other information about ESCAPE.

A SAR Bootcamp was held in Tijeras last December and was well attended. The classroom training was held on Saturday with field exercises on Sunday. Thanks to all involved in setting up the training, to the instructors, and to the participants. Job well done.

We are actively seeking nominations for the NMESC Board of Directors. More information on submitting nominations is located on <http://www.nmesc.org/>. I will be sending out another reminder soon about this (to the nmsar-forum@lyris.nmt.edu e-mail list). If you are not a member of this e-mail list, go to <http://www.nmesc.org/forum.htm> to subscribe.

I would also like to remind you to renew your team or individual membership on the NMESC. There are many benefits to being a member of the council (see [http://www.nmesc.org/membership\\_docs/2007Benefits.pdf](http://www.nmesc.org/membership_docs/2007Benefits.pdf) for a complete list). One great benefit is reduced registration for ESCAPE.

Membership applications were mailed to teams and is available at <http://www.nmesc.org/membership.htm> or from one of the Membership Co-Chairs (membership@nmesc.org). Keep checking the NMESC website for updates and training information. Checkout the calendar at <http://www.nmesc.org/calendar/month.php>.

Keep up the good work out there and be safe.

Gail Zimmerman  
NMESC Board Chair  
chair@nmesc.org

# ESCAPE 2008

ESCAPE 2008 (May 16-18, 2008) is rapidly approaching. The training schedule is quickly coming together and there is a "DRAFT" schedule under the "Miscellaneous Information" link on the NMESC "ESCAPE" webpage.

The following types of training will be available at ESCAPE: K-9, Medical, Radio, Management, Basic Skill, Advanced Skill, and Technical. The NMESC General Meeting will be held Saturday morning, May 17, in the Aspen Auditorium. Bruce Temper, Director of the Forest Service Utah Avalanche Center and author of **Staying Alive in Avalanche Terrain**, will be our guest speaker Saturday evening, May 17, 2008. A field certification session will be available Sunday morning, May 18, 2008. Please check the NMESC website frequently for updated ESCAPE information.

ESCAPE check-in and registration will be available starting at 8 a.m. Friday, May 16. The first training event starts at 9a.m. and training will end at 12 p.m. on Sunday May 18. The Glorieta Conference Center no longer has a block of Rooms/Tent Spaces/RV Spots set aside for us. Glorieta has three other events going on at the same time as ours. There is a potential that accommodations will be limited. Therefore, if you are planning to stay in Glorieta's facilities, please make your reservation as soon as possible. Glorieta's reservation phone number is 1-800-797-4222.

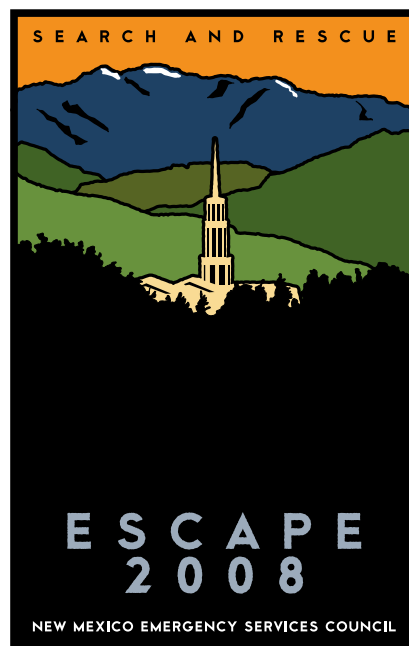
Please check your team's mailing address on the NMESC "Resource" webpage, if it is incorrect please send an email to me or one of the other Board members to have it updated. A final ESCAPE information mail out to teams was sent on April 15, 2008.

Individuals registering for ESCAPE before May 2, 2008, will be entered in a drawing for National Geographic Topo software. Early registrants will also receive some additional "bonus items" in their welcome package. Do not wait, register now!

If you have had the opportunity to attend an event at the Glorieta Conference Center, you know that it is well worth the expense. The Glorieta Conference Center offers many activities. So if you are worried about leaving your family or friends at home, don't, bring them along! While you are attending ESCAPE activities your family or friends can be enjoying one of the many activities available to them. Some of the available activities are Softball, Basketball, Tennis, Hiking, Fishing, Horseshoes, Frisbee Golf, and much more. Visit the Glorieta Conference Center website for more information.

If you have any questions or concerns please call or email me.

-- Tony Gaier 505-331-0601  
<training@nmesc.org>



# 2007-2008 Board Members

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## Brian L Fuller Grant County SAR



Brian is a member of Grant County Search and Rescue, currently serving as secretary. He is also a field coordinator and planning section chief.

He is a registered professional mechanical and electrical engineer in the state of New Mexico. He is both president and principal of Brian Engineering, PC.

## Gary Cascio Santa Fe SAR



Gary Cascio has been a member and team leader for both St. John's and Santa Fe Search and Rescue. He is a licensed HAM operator, PACE evaluator and is a Field Coordinator for District One. Gary

owns Late Nite Grafix, an award-winning marketing, advertising, and graphic design company based in Santa Fe.

## Robert Valdez District 7 Field Coordinator



My name is Robert Valdez. I was born and raised in Northern New Mexico. I am a veteran of the Korean War. A retired educator, my education consists of a B.A. degree in

Education and an M.A. in Guidance, Counseling, and Psychology. I have been involved with SAR for the last 18 years, currently as a Field Coordinator for District 7. I have been involved in more than 75 missions as a Field Coordinator, Section Chief or ATV and Snowmobile searcher. I love what I do and hope to continue doing it as long as I am able to. If I can be of help please give me a call.

## Anthony Gaier Cibola SAR



I'm 45 years old. I grew up in Montana and Texas and I have lived in New Mexico for 17 years. I spent 23 years in the United States Air Force as a Combat Search and Rescue Flight Engineer on several types of Helicopters. During my career in

the Air Force I participated in multiple peacetime, civilian, search and rescue missions. I'm currently a member of Cibola Search and Rescue based in Albuquerque NM. I have been with Cibola for just over eight years. I have served as the team's Equipment Chairman, Vice President/Training Officer, and President. I'm also an instructor and evaluator for Cibola. While on Cibola I have participated in more than 100 missions for the state, became a licensed HAM radio operator, and completed field certification.

# 2007-2008 Board Members

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## Dave Baldrige Sandia Search Dogs



An air-scent dog handler for Sandia Search Dogs, Albuquerque resident Dave Baldrige is a former ski patroller and trails manager for Sun Valley (ID) Ski Resort.

With substantial experience in avalanche rescue and recovery missions, he was also a licensed backpacking and fly fishing guide in Idaho, and has hiked and mountain biked mountain ranges in the U.S. and Nepal. He is a Wilderness First Responder. He works as a Native diabetes education consultant for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

## Ross Holbrook Cibola County SAR



Photo  
Not Available

Ross Holbrook began search and rescue activities in 2001 with Sierra County SAR. He founded HSDC SAR Group in 2005 and is a ham radio operator as

well as an Operations Sections Chief. He and his wife have five married sons and eight grandchildren. He works as the Director of Physical Therapy Services at Sierra Vista Hospital.

## Colorado SAR Conference

SARCON 2008, Colorado's annual Search and Rescue Conference, is scheduled for July 18-20 at Gunnison. For information and registration, see: <<http://www.sarcon.org/>>



## Official NMESC ESCAPE 2008 t-shirt on sale now!

It comes in all cotton (at this address: <http://www.cafepress.com/latenitegrafix/5245444>), or in field-certified synthetic (at this location: <http://www.zazzle.com/garycascio>).

The image, which is of Glorieta Baldy with the conference center in the foreground, is also applied to a variety of products such as tote bags, sweatshirts, posters, coffee cups and mousepads.

There will be some all cotton shirts on sale at ESCAPE, but why wait?

**Get your official ESCAPE 2008 t shirt today!**

# NM SAR in the news

## SILVER CITY SUN-NEWS

### Visitors rescued after bridge collapse near Gila Cliff Dwellings

By Levi Hill/Sun-News Bureau Chief  
January 30, 2008 *(Printed with permission of the author).*

**SILVER CITY** — Three Michigan residents were rescued Tuesday morning after floodwaters caused by rains and warm temperatures Sunday night washed away an 18-foot section of the North Fork bridge near the Gila Cliff Dwellings on Monday. The three, a man and two women, were rescued by New Mexico Search and Rescue crews along with the Upper Mimbres Fire Department and Gila Regional EMS on Tuesday and are now in the care of the American Red Cross.

The three have been identified as Georgene Fritz, 47, Tasha Burnham, 21, and Darryl Carter, 56, all of Gladwin, Mich. More than an inch of rain at higher elevations Sunday night into Monday morning caused snow pack at higher elevations to melt, and flash flood waters tore through Gila River drainage areas, destroying the North Fork bridge and flooding surrounding areas. The National Weather Service Colorado Basin River Forecast Center Web site — [www.cbrfc.noaa.gov](http://www.cbrfc.noaa.gov) — measured flows on the Gila River at 2,800 cubic feet per second at 5:45 a.m. Monday — a sharp jump from 9 p.m. Sunday, when flows were around 177 cubic feet per second.

Brian Fuller, incident commander with New Mexico Search and Rescue, said the three individuals were trapped after an 18-foot section of bridge was washed away by the heavy floodwaters. He said rescue crews rigged a litter on guide wires across the collapsed bridge and brought the three across.

“They were all healthy and fine,” he said. Fuller said the steep river bank and other factors made it unsafe to bring the three across any other way and one, a double amputee, could not have been rescued without the litter system. New Mexico Search and Rescue crews and local



***New Mexico Search and Rescue crews and local fire crews whisk Georgene Fritz across the 18-foot gap of the North Fork Bridge near the Gila Cliff Dwellings Tuesday. The bridge was washed out by flash flood waters caused by rains and warm temperatures Sunday night. (Photo for the Sun-News by Fred Potter)***

fire crews whisk Georgene Fritz across the 18-foot gap of the North Fork Bridge near the Gila Cliff Dwellings Tuesday. Tim Heidrick, firefighter with the Silver City Fire Department, aided in the Tuesday morning rescue. Heidrick said the three were not in a dire emergency, but were low on food and water and rescue crews had no idea when the roadway may be repaired to allow them to cross.

“It wasn’t a dire emergency so we were able to take our time and do it right,” he said. “The rescue was good experience for all these entities to work together as a team.”

Molly Glazewski, Red Cross volunteer, said the Southwestern Chapter of the



***From left, Michigan residents Tasha Burnham, Darryl Carter and Fritz talk with New Mexico Search and Rescue Incident Commander Brian Fuller after being rescued Tuesday. Flood waters destroyed the North Fork Bridge on Monday trapping the trio on the north side of the Gila River near the Gila Cliff Dwellings. (Photo for the Sun-News by Fred Potter)***

American Red Cross is helping the three individuals with lodging for the next couple of nights. Fritz said Tuesday that she, her daughter and Carter, a family friend, are all in good health and happy to be saved, but are concerned about their vehicle and living conditions until their vehicle is returned.

“All we got out with is a change of clothes,” she said. “Our car is sitting at the Upper Scorpion Campground and they don’t know if it will be a week or three months before we get it back. We all feel fine, we are just worried about our stuff and where we are going to stay in the meantime.” Fritz, a Michigan native and 15-year retired firefighter, said the rescue crews that brought her and her daughter and friend to safety did an amazing job.

She said the three were on vacation, traveling across the state and exploring possible places to live. She said the trio had planned to leave the area Sunday, but were unable to because of rain. On Monday, Parks Service officials advised them to evacuate, but before they could not cross because the bridge was washed away.

“We had a ranger on that side with us,” she said. “He had come over to give us a jump start. Our battery had died. Before we could get out they radioed back and said the bridge had washed away.”

Fritz said the trio was told to evacuate at 9 a.m. Monday, but by around 9:30 a.m. the bridge had collapsed, trapping the three and a ranger on the north side of the river.

She said they were not afraid, knowing they would be rescued and Parks Service officials had managed to get water and some meals ready to eat across the river to the three later Monday when flood waters subsided.

“When the bridge went it took out the water lines as well,” she said. “We only had a gallon and a canteen of water.” Fritz said the Red Cross is putting the family up for two nights, but after that they have no place to stay. “After that we have nothing. We are hoping to find a place to rent or a camp trailer someone can loan us until we get our car back,” she said.

Bridget M. Spedalieri, public information officer with the New Mexico Department of Transportation, said the DOT already has crews on site and heavy equipment was already being moved out to the area Tuesday. She said it is hopeful the bridge could be partially open by Friday.

“Right now we are assessing the situation,” she said. “If all goes well we may have a single lane open as soon as Friday.” She said it is unclear when the bridge will be fully repaired and open. In the meantime, the Cliff Dwellings remain closed to visitors. She added that a meeting between the DOT and local government officials is slated for sometime Wednesday to discuss the situation.

“It is premature now to determine what this is going to cost,” she said. “Once we get into the project we’ll know more.” Fritz said, aside from housing, her only concern is getting home to Michigan by spring — in time to pick mushrooms.

Anyone wishing to aid the trio may call the local chapter of the American Red Cross at (575) 534-4621.

Levi Hill can be reached at [lhill@scsun-news.com](mailto:lhill@scsun-news.com)

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