

The background of the cover is a low-angle, upward-looking photograph of a large metal lattice structure, likely a Ferris wheel. Two people in climbing gear are visible on a platform within the structure. A white rescue basket is suspended from the structure, featuring a yellow sunburst logo. The sky is overcast and grey.

# 2023 Annual Newsletter



DEAR RESCUERS, ALUMNI, AND SUPPORTERS

2023 was an exciting year for Albuquerque Mountain Rescue Council.

In spring 2023 AMRC successfully passed re-accreditation testing with the Mountain Rescue Association. To remain accredited by MRA, each regular member team must pass five different tests based on guidelines drawn up by the Association. These tests are conducted on appropriate terrain by at least three current MRA teams working together to evaluate the applicant group being tested. The tests involve high-angle rescue (rock rescue), ice and snow technical rescue, avalanche rescue, and wilderness search. Preparing for this testing was a grueling multi-year process and took thousands of volunteer hours from AMRC members. We are very grateful to the evaluators who came from across the Rocky Mountain Region and the nation to certify our team's performance, especially for those who returned for re-re-accreditation after a grapple/lightning/blizzard interrupted our first winter technical test.

With a talented team of field members, board members, and technical leaders, we remain focused on growing our excellence in rescue. We continue to improve medical response in close partnership with our Medical Director at the University of New Mexico (UNM) Emergency Medical Service Consortium ("the Consortium"). AMRC renewed focus on medical training this year bringing guests from the Consortium to provide instruction during field training and classroom lectures. We added new medical kits to both our vehicles ("rigs") and have had several members take Wilderness First Aid and Wilderness First Responder Trainings. Our technicians and rescue leaders continue to explore new options and test new gear, to ensure we have the safest, strongest, and lightest equipment to make our missions more successful. Over the summer, we shifted training focus toward technician-level topics, including highlines, litter management, and single rope systems. We continue to expand our technical knowledge, and every year we have more members pursuing external rescue courses to grow our team's knowledge base.

In addition to our technical rescue skills, we continue to develop a more inclusive and diverse culture. We have started internally by adopting a team Core Values statement. We are excited to introduce scholarships for the incoming 2024 Operational Core Curriculum (OCC) class, bringing a broader range of economic diversity to our team. We are bouncing back from COVID and were able to re-engage in outreach events including providing wilderness education and promoting mountain safety. We continue to look for new ways to engage with our community to promote accident prevention.

Our team members provided many life-saving services this year, from hauling hypothermic patients off of the Sandias to working alongside Albuquerque Fire Rescue to save a 13-year-old girl wedged between two boulders in the foothills. Over 38 times last year, the pager called the team to action. Our volunteer rescuers put their lives on hold and their skills into practice to help bring people home to their families and friends. Thank you for all your support.

Sincerely,

Gregory Bunting  
President | Albuquerque Mountain Rescue Council

# MISSION

Incorporated in 1959, Albuquerque Mountain Rescue Council is a volunteer organization of seasoned alpinists dedicated to saving lives through search, rescue, and mountain safety education. It specializes in mountainous terrain searches and high-angle rescues and offers services throughout New Mexico. It is a fully accredited member of the Mountain Rescue Association. AMRC is a chartered New Mexico non-profit corporation, a 501-C (3), headed by a five-person Board of Directors elected from and by the membership.

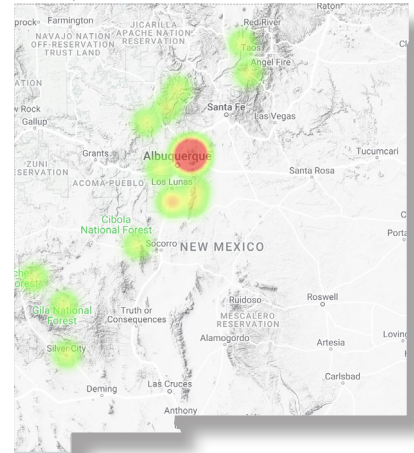
# 2023 NUMBERS

**6,484 volunteer hours** by 44 members

38 missions to help **53 subjects**

longest mission 18.5 hours

Scan for an interactive map of all our 2023 missions:



## OUR TEAM

### BOARD MEMBERS

- Greg Bunting  
President
- Carter Grotbeck  
Vice President
- Karen Son  
Treasurer
- Pete Coffin  
Secretary
- Jesse Olson  
Member at Large

### COMMITTEE CHAIRS

- Chris Muldoon  
Medical Chair
- Zak Kline  
MRA Representative
- Shane Ruzinsky  
Interagency Liaison
- Ben Warren  
Stores Chair
- Carter Grotbeck  
Quartermaster
- Steve Larese  
Public Relations,  
Fundraising

Peter Coffin  
Communications

Will Zortman  
Social Chair

### RESCUE LEADERS

Craig Tenney  
Zachary Kline

### OPERATIONAL MEMBERS

- Allie Almanzar
- Andreas Schmitt-Sody
- Angela Martz
- Anj Ferrara
- Aspen Wilks
- Ben Warren
- Bonnie Nuttall
- Callie Brayan
- Carter Grotbeck
- Cassandra Aguirre
- Chris Muldoon
- Contessa Morrison
- Cristina Sandoval
- Emily Bigler

Gregory Bunting

Hazel Shirley

Ian Richardson

James Dilts

Jay Johnson

Jeffery Birkey

Jerry Inman

Jesse Olson

Joseph Sheets

Justin Spain

Karen Son

Kyle Miller

Laura Douglas

Mark Thompson

Patricia Padrino

Peter Coffin

Richard Borders

Ryan Flanagan

Sean Phillips

Shane Ruzinsky

Shasta Birkey

Steve Larese

Teal Harbin

Tom Baker

Vanessa Murray

Walter Fazio

William Zortman

Zak Wilson

### SUPPORT MEMBERS

- Christopher Wendel  
Vehicle Maintenance
- Jenna White  
Medical Director
- Tony Gaier  
Incident Command

# CORE VALUES

We added the following core values to our team's standard operating guidelines in November 2023.

## **SAFETY FIRST**

The safety of our team members, volunteers, and those we rescue is our utmost priority. We shall adhere to best practices and safety guidelines during all rescue operations and training exercises.

## **PROFESSIONALISM**

We shall conduct ourselves in a professional manner at all times, showing respect and compassion to those in need and maintaining a positive image of AMRC in the community.

## **INTEGRITY AND HONESTY**

We shall act with integrity and honesty in all our interactions, being transparent in our communications and reporting.

## **RESPECT FOR DIVERSITY**

We value and respect the diversity of our team members, volunteers, and those we serve. Discrimination, harassment, or any form of disrespectful behavior will not be tolerated.

## **TRAINING AND PREPAREDNESS**

We shall continually strive for excellence and to improve our skills through regular training and development programs, ensuring we are well-prepared.

## **TEAMWORK**

We recognize that successful rescues depend on effective teamwork. We shall collaborate and communicate openly to achieve our objectives. We value community and support each other in training, on missions, and in life.

## **CONFIDENTIALITY**

We shall treat all sensitive information with confidentiality, respecting the privacy of individuals involved in rescue operations.

## **COMMUNITY SERVICE**

We are committed to serving the community, providing free life-saving services, and serving alongside local agencies as requested.

## **CONFLICT OF INTEREST**

Team members and volunteers shall avoid any conflicts of interest that could compromise the best interests of the AMRC. A conflict of interest exists when a team member's personal, financial, or other interests may interfere with the objective and unbiased performance of their responsibilities. If a potential conflict of interest arises, it must be disclosed to the AMRC Board of Directors promptly.

## **COMPLIANCE WITH LAWS AND REGULATIONS**

We will comply with all local, state, and federal laws and regulations relevant to our operations.

## **CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT**

We will regularly review and assess our value statements, policies, and practices to ensure they remain effective and aligned with our mission.

# 2023 HIGHLIGHTS

## REACCREDITATION

On April 15th, Albuquerque Mountain Rescue successfully completed our reaccreditation!

Every 5 years, region teams must complete a recertification test comprised of search, high-angle rescue, scree rescue, avalanche rescue, and winter technical rescue scenarios. A huge thank you to team members for all the time devoted to training and to the evaluators and observers for making time to travel and be part of our reaccreditation.

## PREPARING FOR REACCREDITATION

The team put in loads of extra work preparing for reaccreditation this year. This included a weekend trip to Silverton, CO where rescuers honed their avalanche and winter technical skills.

## BONUS RESCUE

After a long day of running reaccreditation scenarios for the Mountain Rescue Association, we were called out to provide a true rescue for a hypothermic hiker stuck in the snow. Thank you to the ~30 rescuers who fielded from multiple different teams. Additionally, thank you to the Sandia Peak Tramway who got us to the top of the mountain quickly to reach our patient, and provided a fast and efficient trip back in order to transfer our patient to awaiting emergency medical personnel and ultimately to the hospital.



# 2023 HIGHLIGHTS

## MEMORABLE MISSIONS

**FEBRUARY 8-9, 2023**

AMRC members fielded overnight in the Sandia Mountains for 19 hours in extreme terrain working to recover a hiker who experienced a medical emergency that ultimately proved fatal. Our hearts go out the family and friends of the hiker, and our appreciation goes out to our brothers and sisters in the following agencies who participated in the mission: Cibola Search and Rescue, Atalaya Search and Rescue, Santa Fe SAR, Socorro Search and Rescue, Santa Fe County Sheriff's Posse, Sandia Search Dogs, UNM EMS Consortium, Mountain Canine Corps, Los Alamos Fire Brigade, Bernalillo County Sheriff's Department, Bernalillo County Fire and Rescue, and New Mexico State Police.



**APRIL 2-3, 2023**

Albuquerque Mountain Rescue had back-to-back missions Sunday night into Monday morning.

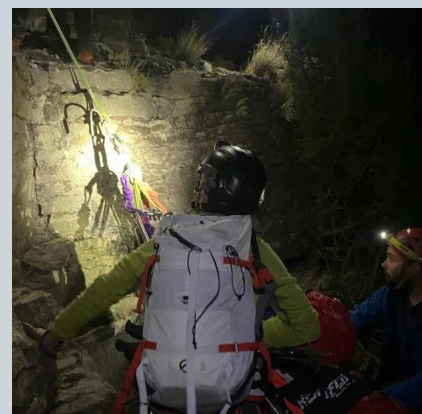
The first mission was in support of Albuquerque Fire Rescue in technical operations to free a girl who fell and was wedged horizontally into a deep crevice in Embudito Canyon. Teams used high and low angle rope systems to extract the girl, who was then trail evacuated to definitive care. On-site medical care was provided by Albuquerque Fire Rescue paramedics and UNM EMS Consortium Reach and Treat.



While this mission was ongoing, Albuquerque Mountain Rescue received a call-out for three hikers stranded on La Luz trail. Albuquerque Mountain Rescue teams and a Cibola SAR member were transported to the top by Sandia Tram, and then made their way to the hikers over steep, exposed, and icy terrain. A third team drove to Ellis Trailhead in case high winds shut down the Tram. Contact was made and the patients were warmed as other members established hand lines and shoveled a trail above significantly exposed terrain. Bernalillo County Fire Rescue also established hand lines. All three hikers were short-rope and were able to walk out to where they were transported via Ellis Road. Cibola SAR further supported operations and communications at incident base.

**SEPTEMBER 16, 2023**

AMRC fielded with Cibola SAR and other agencies Friday afternoon to search for a subject who had been missing in the Placitas area for two nights. Excellent searching by Cibola SAR members within Sandia Man Cave discovered clues that helped lead teams to the subject, who was found in difficult terrain above the cave. AMRC conducted high- and low-angle lowers to get the subject down to the trail and on to definitive care. Other teams that responded to help search included Sandoval County Fire, Sandia Search Dogs, New Mexico Mounted Search and Rescue, Atalaya Search and Rescue, Santa Fe SAR, and Socorro SAR. Strong teamwork by New Mexico's search and rescue community to made sure someone in need got to go home.



# 2023 HIGHLIGHTS

## ADVANCED TRAINING

After a successful reaccreditation, the team focused training efforts on developing advanced skills and training upcoming technicians. Spring trainings included individual rope skills, rope mobility (ascending/descending), pickoffs, and small party assisted rescue techniques. We moved into a series of highline trainings at the park and then field training with strong work from our rock technicians-in-training. Topics included guiding lines, highlines, reeving systems, artificial high directionals, artificial anchors, roped-group travel, and more...



## RESCUE CHALLENGE

Special thanks to Jay for putting together an excellent annual Rescue Challenge this fall with a trad climb and high-angle patient lower on Flake 'n' Bake, and highline with rappel over La Cueva Canyon. All gnomes were safely extracted from the field and transported to definitive care which included re-gluing the base after a bilateral femur fracture.



# 2023 FINANCIAL SUMMARY

## Albuquerque Mountain Rescue Council Statement of Activity January - December 2023

	TOTAL
Revenue	
Contributed income	
Corporate & foundation grants	\$1,562.53
Donations directed by individuals	\$33,616.37
Grants from other nonprofits	\$5,500.00
Special Events Donations	\$4,924.00
Total Contributed income	\$45,602.90
Investment income	\$1,882.35
Sales	\$6,221.40
Total Revenue	\$53,706.65
Cost of Goods Sold	\$6,778.14
GROSS PROFIT	\$46,928.51
Expenditures	
Bank fees & service charges	\$524.97
Equipment Expenses	\$6,009.50
Insurance	\$6,221.00
Legal & Professional Fees	\$1,395.00
Membership dues & subscriptions	\$1,071.00
Occupancy <sup>1</sup>	\$639.27
Office expenses	\$515.18
Social Events	\$709.59
Software & Apps Program Services	\$1,777.19
Software Management and General	\$45.21
Training Expenses	\$1,778.55
Vehicle expenses	
Vehicle gas & fuel	\$913.54
Vehicle repairs	\$234.61
Total Vehicle expenses	\$1,148.15
Total Expenditures	\$22,834.61
NET OPERATING REVENUE	\$24,093.90
NET REVENUE	\$24,093.90



# Thanks for supporting Albuquerque Mountain Rescue!

## CONTACT

If you have an emergency PLEASE DIAL 911.  
The 911 system is the only way to initiate a rescue response. If you have a question or want to learn more, you can contact AMRC via

Email: [info@abqmountainrescue.org](mailto:info@abqmountainrescue.org)

Mail: 500 4th St NW  
Suite 102 PMB 1928  
Albuquerque, NM, 87102

Facebook:  
<https://www.facebook.com/Albuquerque-Mountain-Rescue-Council-301259154971>

## DONOR FUNDED, FREE RESCUE

Albuquerque Mountain Rescue is a non-profit, 501(c)(3) charitable organization. We rely upon contributions from private citizens, companies, and charities to fulfill our annual operating budget. Our annual budget covers the cost of medical supplies, insurance, vehicle operational costs and maintenance, replacement and upgrades of team technical gear and radios, as well as funds for team training and skill development. AMRC has never charged a fee for rescues and never will. We are a self-supporting, non-governmental organization. If you would like to help AMRC and become a sponsor, there are several ways you can donate. Your contribution will help ensure our ability to safely locate, rescue, and provide free medical assistance to those lost and injured in the mountains.

Donations can be made via PayPal:



<https://www.paypal.com/us/fundraiser/charity/1955030>

Check:

AMRC Treasurer  
500 4th St NW  
Suite 102 PMB 1928  
Albuquerque, NM, 87102

