




# The Mountain Rescue Page

## Disaster Response Big Time! Boulder's 1,000-Year Rain, 100-Year Flood

John Keller, Vignettes by Katie Johnson, et al.



By Wednesday, September 11, 2013, it had been raining for three days straight. At least it felt that way. The day before, I slipped in the mud down a grassy hill next to the supermarket parking lot and crashed over a retaining wall, landing face down in a bush. A bruised pelvis and a bunch of lovely abrasions, along with the nasty weather, had me limping and grumpy about pretty much everything at the office Wednesday morning. That afternoon, the rainfall really picked up. Leaving work at 7:30 that evening, I could see that the creek near the office had risen dramatically since that morning, and I was having fun driving through the moderate street flooding. When I saw a sheriff's vehicle parked by the side of Valmont Road monitoring cars splashing slowly through floodwaters, I stopped caring about my aches and pains. I turned on my radio and started to listen.

For more than five hours at home, I listened and watched (mostly via computer) and talked with friends as the events progressed. I don't

### Flood Sirens

We had all been hearing the weather forecasts, but our first sign that something might really be going wrong came in the evening of Wednesday, September 11, 2013.

"Flood sirens going off in Boulder. Do we need to move trucks and gear from the Cage?" – J. Sparhawk, 9/11/13 email

think the team members who were online that night and I realized that our sharing information, watching videos and listening to radio traffic was building our situational awareness – information that we would need and use in the days to come. Early on, it was interesting and even kind of fun. There were reports of a few cars parked or stuck in flooded streets. We watched videos of students on campus enjoying riding bikes through underpasses with high water flow. And there was

one amazing multi-way urban waterfall photo and video (better than any park fountain) coming down in a dozen directions from a road bridge to the creek path.

### The First Night

At 22nd and Mariposa, downhill from Chautauqua and the Flatirons, I parked my car a foot off the curb due to the rain coming down before entering the house for an evening with RMRG friends. A few hours later, we walked out the front door into 8 inches of water and a raging river coming down the street. We knew then we were in for the big one. Cars were being swept away, boulders were grinding and tumbling, asphalt was being ripped out of the road, and basements were flooding. Neighbors were trying to shore up what they could around their homes. The foot off the curb was not enough and I barely made it across the "22nd St. River." When I got home, I would find my basement flooded as well and a long night and days ahead. – S. Dundorf

That didn't last long. Road closures began as the street flooding made roads impassable. The soil, supersaturated from days of rain and runoff, couldn't take any more. The first reports of mudslides came late in the evening. At some point, the first home evacuations started in Coal Creek. From there, things went from bad to worse very quickly. Street flooding began to knock people (and emergency crews) off their feet, and parked cars began to move. Mudslides blocked access roads to mountain communities. The flooded streams chewed away at neighboring roads. Rushing water pushed houses off their foundations and cars off roads. The first reported death occurred around midnight. In the space of about five hours, Boulder had gone from wet hillsides and high stream flows to a major natural disaster. To say dispatch was "busy" that night doesn't come close to describing the continuous situation reports and seemingly nonstop dispatches. Emergency calls were prioritized to only those in

imminent danger. All others were told to "shelter in place." It seemed impossible to keep up with the speed of the changing situation. Within hours, every creek, stream and drainage in Boulder County, swollen with days of runoff, had become a raging torrent. Water severed access to mountain communities and many areas of the city. At some point late that night, after the first emergency vehicle was trapped by mudslides in Four Mile and flood "surges" were reported in several drainages, the decision was made and word came out from dispatch: "All units seek higher ground now! Repeat, all units move to higher ground!" The situation had become so bad that it was no longer safe to be out in any low-lying area, much less possible for emergency crews to function safely. There were requests during the night for SAR resources to help check for people who may or may not be in trouble. The sheriff decided it was too dangerous to deploy teams overnight during the rapidly changing incident.

As a group, RMRG joined the flood fight the next morning, Thursday, September 12. Several of our senior members had been working the Emergency Operations Center and Incident Command through the night. Others made sure our rescue headquarters (the Cage) and trucks were in good shape. Thursday morning, all members who were able worked their way into the Cage with no idea what to expect of the next five days. Like the rest of the community, many members couldn't even get out of their neighborhoods or find open roads allowing access to the Cage. And like many others in Boulder, some members had already spent sleepless nights that would turn into sleepless days saving their own flooded houses.

Thursday was all about access and uncertainty. Worst of all, it was still raining. All emergency agencies were limited to ground access as nothing could fly in the storms. The floodwaters remained high, and even driving around town was difficult and dangerous. Access to the mountain communities was severely limited. Already damaged roads continued to disintegrate under the onslaught, and flood "surges" were reported every few hours for different drainages

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Road closure on U.S. 36 north of Boulder impeding rescue access.

Photo: Katie Johnson





### Welfare Checks

One of our jobs was to visit the many homes that had been cut off from road access to check for people in need of help. Teams were transported by helicopter to spend the day in what remained of several ghost towns around the county.

A team disembarks a Chinook en route to search a section of the Fourmile Canyon area. Photo: Kevin Cossel

### Jamestown

Several days after the major flooding occurred, on the first full day of air operations, I was helicoptered into Jamestown with three other MRA members from Western State College Mountain Rescue Team. We were the first outside help to get to Jamestown since the floods, during which the river jumped its banks and split the town in half. There was major damage here with whole properties washed away (house, foundation, soil and all), leaving an angry red river in its place. The resourceful Jamestown residents had tried several ways to bridge the still swift-running waters but without success. We created a highline with the rescue gear we had available and ferried people across the river, reuniting friends and neighbors, dogs with their owners, a bride-to-be with her fiancé. Even the mayor got a ride across to physically reconnect her with her town. In total, we ferried nearly 20 people across to the north side. Because of this, several people were able to be airlifted out later that day. – D. Hildner



Rescue crews use a Tyrol to ferry stranded residents across the river in Jamestown.

Photo: Drew Hildner

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As Friday dawned sunny and pleasant, activities shifted to flight operations at the airport. The devastation was unreal, but it finally felt like progress was being made as the floodwaters receded and air evacuations began.

For many, Saturday and Sunday remain a blur of sleep deprivation, continued airlift operations, tons of house checks and evacuations. The fieldwork was intense: physically demanding and emotionally difficult, yet rewarding all at the same time. We saw many parts of our beloved county demolished, but we also saw thousands of examples of the goodness of people helping each other.

Monday was mostly air evacuations, with RMRG members standing by for rapid deployment if needed. By midday Tuesday, the end of military air operations and RMRG's airport operations, the team recorded nearly 2,500 person hours. We will always be grateful for the massive amount of support we received by our nearby (and not so nearby) fellow Mountain Rescue Association (MRA) Search and Rescue (SAR) teams. Alpine Rescue Team, Aspen Mountain Rescue, Douglas County Search & Rescue (DCSAR), Front Range Rescue Dogs, Summit County Rescue Group, Vail Mountain Rescue Group, and Western State Mountain Rescue Team provided teams and equipment, and recorded almost 1,300 hours working with us to fight the flood. Over the course of eight days that September, 17.5 inches of rain fell

over Boulder and Larimer counties, with totals of 10 to 12 inches widespread across the region. It's been referred to as a 1,000-year rain that precipitated a 100-year flood.

It's easy for us to focus on our stories from the 2013 flood. We worked hard, did things that others could not do, and this newsletter is about our team and what we do. But the Boulder Flood of 2013 was a community event and a national-level disaster. It's important to remember that we functioned as a small cog in what turned into a huge logistical and emotional engine. Every emergency service from Boulder County was involved. Specialized flood services from other counties and states responded. The National Guard orchestrated the largest airlift evacuation of stranded communities since Hurricane Katrina. Thousands of volunteers worked to open shelters, supply food and maintain services. While we remember it as a huge effort in which we played a part, it was only the first step for our community. The work and recovery will likely continue for many years. Our hearts go out to those who are still fighting the flood of 2013.



A scene from the Cage. Primary activities were drying gear and refueling ourselves.

Photo: Page Weil

"While flood operations were in full swing, RMRG's headquarters was in a constant state of use and staffed nearly 24/7. Food was donated and brought in by both rescuers and community members to support the operation. On the wall you see close to a dozen ropes and assorted gear being dried after that day's operations." – P. Weil



Wolf spider.

Photo: Scott Kohla

### Animal Rescue

Not only were countless household pets saved by the hundreds of rescuers who served Boulder County in our time of need, but wild animals also struggled to find a safe place.

"Even the animals were seeking refuge during the floods. One night at the fire station, a firefighter was going to take a nap on one of the cots. When he pulled back the blanket, a wolf spider jumped out. I rescued it and brought it home for the kids to keep as a pet." – S. Kohla



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## Other News

2014 is shaping up to be another busy year for RMRG, but fortunately a little lighter than our record-breaking past few years.

### Colorado Gives Day 2014!



RMRG is now part of Colorado Gives. Donations made on Colorado Gives Day on December 9 include partial matching funds that will boost your donation.

Colorado Gives provides another avenue

for one-time or recurring donations in addition to donations through our website, the Combined Federal Campaign, and the Colorado Combined Campaign.

### Jonny Copp Award

RMRG was honored to receive the Jonny Copp Award last year for our continued service to our community. The award came with this note: "Be the change you wish to see in the world".

See [www.JonnyCoppFoundation.org](http://www.JonnyCoppFoundation.org) for more information.

### Prospective Training Process

Interested in joining our team? Then become a prospective member. Prospectives must first attend four meetings before signing up for a prospective training series, which is offered once or twice a year. The training series consists of five required training sessions. Once complete, prospectives can join the team at our regular Sunday practices and continue the process toward becoming a member of RMRG. For the latest information on prospective training and membership, see [www.RockyMountainRescue.org/get\\_involved.php](http://www.RockyMountainRescue.org/get_involved.php). As always, our training meetings are open to the public and are a great way to learn about specific rescue topics and our team.

## In Service

If you would like more information about RMRG, please visit our website at [www.RockyMountainRescue.org](http://www.RockyMountainRescue.org). Also, please consider that we are an all-volunteer organization with no paid positions. About 40% of our yearly budget comes from private donations. RMRG is an IRS 501(c)3 charitable organization, and all contributions to RMRG are tax deductible. We accept donations at our website or by check (made out to Rocky Mountain Rescue Group). Checks can be mailed to:

**Rocky Mountain Rescue Group, Inc.**  
**3720 Walnut St.**  
**Boulder, CO 80301**

## Newsletter Distribution

We publish this newsletter once per year. If you would like a copy, you can receive an electronic copy by signing up on our website [www.RockyMountainRescue.org/publications.php](http://www.RockyMountainRescue.org/publications.php) or receive a hard copy by

emailing Newsletter (at) [RockyMountainRescue.org](mailto:RockyMountainRescue.org) and include your name and mailing address. Your information is kept confidential and will only be used for the newsletter distribution.

## Flood Safety

**Adam Fedor**

While the greatest concern for flooding occurs in springtime, the threat of flooding can appear almost any time of year. The September 2013 Boulder flood is a testament to this notion. September is traditionally a time of dry, cool weather, but the storms that hovered over Boulder County for more than four days caused the most severe flooding Boulder has had in more than a century.

Getting people prepared for the outdoors is one of our goals as a mountain rescue group. If you live or even hike in flood-prone areas, it's a good idea to make some minimal preparation for the possibility of flood or any kind of severe weather. If you live in a flood-prone area, be sure to have a bag or bin of important items you can grab and go with (e.g. insurance and other important documents, children's essentials, emergency cash/credit cards, essential medication and prescriptions, spare and foul-weather clothing). You may also want to keep a list of important items in your home that need to be taken with you. Get to higher ground quickly or follow the advice of emergency personnel in your area.

If you are hiking, be sure to have some rain gear (even just a trash bag) and stay aware of the weather. Make sure you aren't going to be trapped in a gully or other low-lying area – water can come from above suddenly. During the flooding in September, gullies that have traditionally been dry most of the year were overwhelmed with water, causing large debris slides and other hazards. Remember also that rain can be accompanied by cold weather. If you get soaked, it's easy to become hypothermic and disoriented even in the summer.

Getting outside is great any time of year, but minimal preparation can be the difference between a fun hike and an uncomfortable or even dangerous experience.

### Help Support Our Mission

**Please consider the  
 Rocky Mountain Rescue Group  
 in your year-end donations!**

We depend on your generous donations for 30% of our annual operating budget. Without your help, we couldn't be there when needed. Thank you.

[www.RockyMountainRescue.org/fundraising.php](http://www.RockyMountainRescue.org/fundraising.php)

## Flood: The Scene at Incident Command

Rebecca Stubbs

As the sun rises, the noise of the rain on the hangar's metal roof is punctuated with the gravelly splash of approaching footsteps. A commotion forms inside the three-sided warehouse looking out upon the tarmac -- the briefing is about to begin.

Each morning, the incident commanders give a short but fiery speech to civilian first responders gathered in the aircraft bay. The briefing is equal parts information and heavily salted pep talk. They show road conditions. Packets are distributed. They tell rescuers to Be Safe -- but go get the job done. Commend yourselves -- but realize how far there is to go.

The briefing disbands, and coffee cups steam in the hands of Colorado's mountain rescuers. Clustered around a set of map-covered tables along the southern side of the bay, the field teams are a patchwork of colors. Scattered piles of litters, ropes and evacuation gear each serve as cairns, marking the mountain rescue teams from across the state that braved the overflowing roads. Each set of hands would be crucial to assist with rescues in areas that only a helicopter or hard-earned foot travel could access.

As the morning wears on, time slows in the hangar. Despite the excitement of the helicopters, the tension of the unknown, combined with waiting in complete readiness without an outlet for action, begins to take a mental toll. The air is laden with the deep scent of mud. It is an anxious tedium. Despite the long hours waiting for a respite from the rain that would lead to deployment, no rescuers remove their boots, still wet from the night before. Bathroom breaks are rushed, and layers are removed and replaced into packs that are immediately buckled back into a state of readiness.

Even trivial tasks are cherished. The faint sun seems brighter as busy hands stuff together aid kits for the families still trapped on the ridgelines. Rescuers sip coffee brewed by the highly overqualified hotshot firefighters from the southwestern corner of the state. Suddenly, a gap of clear weather shatters the hangar's calm. A representative from incident command approaches, and the relative boredom of the last few hours evaporates. The room blossoms into organized chaos. The Chinook helicopters are loaded without ceremony, and the chopping sound of the aircrafts' blades carries into the distance.

Those left working on digital mapping and logistics prepare for a storm of data. In addition to rescue equipment, each team was sent into the field with a GPS to capture invaluable information. While the road and terrain conditions prevented urban search and rescue evaluation, mountain rescue teams served as the eyes of incident command by gauging levels of damage in Boulder County's isolated mountain communities. While searching for those in need of help, the state's volunteer mountain rescuers took GPS points



Photo: Dave Christenson

With so many roads closed and so many rescuers from out of county, mapping occupied several members full time.

Rescue personnel discuss an assignment using one of hundreds of maps produced by the mapping team. Photo: Dave Christenson

As search and rescue (SAR) field teams received missions and prepared for deployment, RMRG's mapping team worked

to quickly develop mission-specific maps for each team. In coordination with geographic information systems (GIS) experts from Boulder County, the National Geospatial Intelligence Agency, and FEMA, RMRG's mapping team directed field teams to gather preliminary information on the evacuation status of residents as well as damage to structures. At the end of each day, the information gathered by the field teams was summarized into GIS datasets and submitted to FEMA for incorporation into its daily reports. Working in the hangar at the Boulder County Airport during flood operations was a very interesting and unique rescue experience. I will never forget listening to the morning debriefs with a multitude of other responders from across the country, the rush to develop maps for field teams deploying via helicopter, discussions and coordination with other agencies on GIS issues, the camaraderie of SAR teams awaiting deployment, and witnessing evacuated residents arriving at the airport with their belongings, all as the rain continued outside the open hangar door. -- B. Paxton

and corresponding recordings of building damage and structure inhabitation.

A new bank of weather rolls in, and the teams are called back to the hangar. With rain-soaked grins, the returning rescuers drop off their GPS units, each one filled with the precious information that will go to the White House later that night. After an exhausted trip to the food tent, the rescuers load into mud-splattered vehicles and begin to head home. Exhaustion washes away the day's stresses, and sleep overtakes the day's soreness. But before nodding off, an alarm is set -- getting ready to drive to the airport in the morning once more.



## THE LEFTHAND CANYON MISSION

*Kevin Vranes and Bijan Tuysserkani*

### Perspective 1: Field Team Leadership

Four summers before, a large wildfire tore through the hillsides of the Fourmile Creek drainage. Colorado had some history with flash flooding and debris flows after wildfires, so Boulder County put huge effort toward mitigating and preparing for flooding in Fourmile Creek. But the flooding, at least on a large scale, never came.

Three years later the flooding was here, but it wasn't confined to Fourmile Creek. It was all over the county, from the mountains to the plains, from south to north. Dry creeks in the city of Boulder were now raging torrents, and two teenagers had already been swept away by water coming down a road in the hills around town. The town of Lyons, picturesquely situated at the confluence of the North St. Vrain and the South St. Vrain rivers, was underwater, cutting off access to all mountain communities above it.

As Thursday morning dawned and rescue calls began to trickle in, RMRG had already been on high alert for 24 hours. Members had been staffing the county Emergency Operations Center, readying the Cage for deployment, or performing many other small tasks, but we hadn't yet been deployed. Thursday morning changed that, as we began to send small teams to respond to calls for help. One call was for a stranded and injured firefighter, possibly stuck in a tree, up Lefthand Creek.

As I sat at the Cage directing field teams via radio and helping with the search and rescue management tasks, a few things were becoming clear. We were in a whole new paradigm of rescue for our team. We are not trained for swiftwater rescues. We were deploying teams that often would be completely on their own, and communication was spotty at best. Our leadership training is some of the most intense in the mountain rescue community, so we have the utmost faith in our field team leaders to get the job done safely and effectively, even



Flood-filled gully outlet crossing Lefthand Canyon Road with skid-steer used to move personnel across. The highway runs from upper right to lower left.

Photo: Katie Johnson

while cut off from the rest of the world. But that thought didn't make my job any easier as I couldn't get ahold of our teams over the radio, only able to imagine what they were up against.

Finally, early in the afternoon, I couldn't take it any longer. After a long morning at the Cage, I headed out for Lefthand Creek to try to meet a team that sounded a little understaffed for what they were trying to pull off: skirt a road washed out by a raging Lefthand Creek, cross a flooding side creek with no help on the other side, and bring a barely conscious patient back to safety.

When I arrived I was shocked by what I saw. Lefthand Canyon Drive was gone. Completely. What had been a trickle a few days before was now a 100-200-meter-wide rushing monster, gobbling up trees and cars as if they were grains of sand. As I walked along the road's



Lefthand Canyon Road with only a shoulder remaining for rescue access.

Photo: Katie Johnson

shoulder – all that was left of the road – I began going through a checklist of challenges I would look for once I arrived. The team had already been there for an hour, but I didn't know what I would find. The mental checklist is something I developed in my Rescue Support training. Environmental conditions? Rescuer safety? Rock fall? Where is the patient and why is he there? What *can't* I see? I arrived to find a Tyrolean highline (rope system to shuttle people and gear) already set up across a raging side channel that I am sure was dry just two days before. The Tyrol was strung from what appeared to be a stable enough bank, across to a tree on what was rapidly becoming an island between the side channel and the main channel of Lefthand Creek. It was hard to know when the water would rise high enough to overtake that island, but it didn't look to be far off. We had to move quickly. We already had six rescuers on the other side of the creek, moving up a road toward the patient. Once they got back to the Tyrol with the patient, we needed to get them across quickly to make sure nobody was stranded on the other side. In this case, stranded would mean *stranded*. For who knows how long.

I watched the six rescuers move up the road on the other side as the creek rose inch by inch. I checked the haul system setup on the stable side of the creek, thought through 10 possibilities of things that could go wrong, and looked to the other side. To realize that nobody was over there to check the far side of the Tyrol. There was plenty that could go wrong over on the far side and somebody needed to go check it. -K. Vranes

**Perspective 2: The Team on the Far Side:**

On the first day of flooding, my team was staged just east of Lyons when the call came in to evacuate a firefighter from Lefthand Canyon, which was cut off due to several flash floods. After some time spent trying to find open roads, we made it to the Lefthand fire station at the bottom of the canyon. It was still raining and the river was chewing on

the roadway, which was only passable by foot and the small-track skid-steer that John had brought along. We came to a major gully that had produced a raging torrent right across the road, cutting off all access to the west. I looked for some form of crossing (tree, narrow, etc.) up the gully but couldn't find a safe way across. Wading was out of the question as floodwaters carry an immense amount of debris. John's skid-steer eventually solved the problem by being able to cross the 15- to 20-foot torrent with two rescuers in the bucket. Having someone on the far side allowed for a Tyrol to be set up. Climbing the wet trees in the rain to establish high points for the Tyrol proved to be quite exciting. As soon as we were done with setup, more rescuers with gear arrived and crossed via the Tyrol.

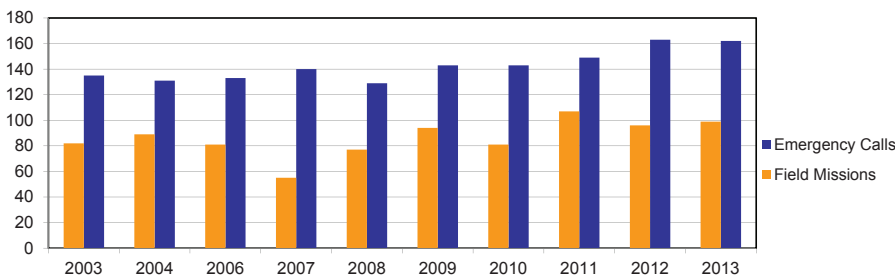
All of us were aware of the dangerous situation we were in. Floodwaters can build unstable dams that cause instant flash floods when they collapse. We had a lookout a few hundred meters up the hill to warn us of such an event, but none of us was sure how much time we would have between the warning and the wall of water and debris hitting the location of the Tyrol. While the evacuation team made contact with the patient and packaged him in our litter system, the remaining members at the Tyrol worked on improving the system for a litter load while nervously watching standing waves (created by debris getting stuck underwater) randomly coming into and out of existence. To make matters worse, the floodwaters kept digging away at the banks, and it was only a matter of time before the landing points of the Tyrol were going to be compromised. When the litter team emerged from the rain, everyone worked hard to get the patient and the remaining rescuers across the Tyrol as fast as possible. The last rescuer made it across just as the water was lapping at his feet at the landing point. On the way back along Lefthand Canyon Road, we all were surprised by how much road had been washed away in the meantime. When we came in, we could still see the center stripe. When we left, we could see only the bike lane. -B. Tuysserkani

**Mission Statistics**

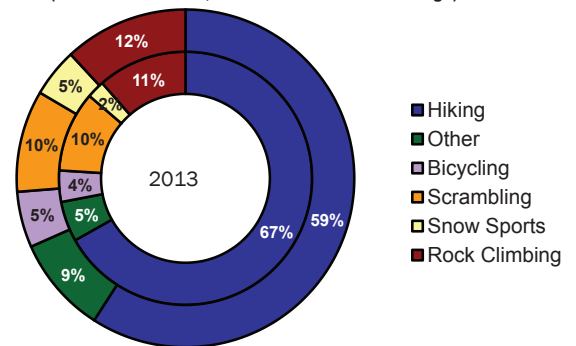
**Steve Dundorf**

Our 2013 mission volume increased the 5-year average again with 162 calls for assistance and 99 field missions.

**10 Year Mission Stats**



**Patients by Activity**  
(Inner Circle = 2013, Outer Circle = 5-Year Average)



## **RMRG Member Profile: Alison Sheets, M.D.** *by Jonathan Horne*

“You can’t dabble in mountain rescue,” RMRG member Alison Sheets says. “You’ve got to make sure your heart’s in it. It takes lots of time and physical and emotional commitment. It’s hard on people ... and can be gut wrenching at times.” An ER physician at Longmont United Hospital, Dr. Sheets has an abundance of context for that assessment.

It wasn’t always that way. Sheets deferred college in San Francisco, traded fine arts for fine lines, and called her Granddad’s camper home for the next three years. Born among the stars, it wasn’t her birthplace in the Hollywood Hills that spoke to her but the rocky cliffs of Eldorado Canyon, and soon thereafter, the sandstone towers of Utah.

On-sights and odd jobs ensued over the following decade. Sheets guided for the Colorado Mountain School, worked ski patrol at Eldora and rewired businesses for the likes of Jeff Lowe. After quitting college, she apprenticed as an electrical contractor. But that wouldn’t last.

Sheets worked full time as a medical technician at Boulder Community Hospital while finishing her degree in fine arts at CU. But once again ceramics and photography would take a back seat as medicine captured her heart. And so she was off, this time to CU Health Sciences Center, followed by a residency in emergency medicine at the Denver Health Medical Center.

“Med school is like vanishing from Earth for eight years. Where are my friends?” she pondered. But it wasn’t long before Dr. Sheets rediscovered her community among rocks and ropes. She was elected to RMR in 2008, the same year she finished her residency, and underwent the rigorous process of becoming a Rescue Support member in 2012.

Like many who have been lured into the odd appeal of serving the community through rescue, Sheets guesses that she spends as much time volunteering with RMR as she does working her full-time job in the ER. For those who know her, this comes as no surprise. While still active in missions, leading teams in the field and caring for patients on the sharp end of the rope, Sheets works as a counselor on RMR’s executive board, providing guidance

and governance to the group. She also serves as RMR’s liaison to the Mountain Rescue Association, furthering the cause of mountain rescue beyond Boulder County. The commitment doesn’t end there. She also serves as RMR’s medical director, overseeing protocols, reviewing processes, and providing quality assurance. For EMS agencies, this role is often a paid position, but as RMR is all volunteer, so is her time.

Decidedly dabble-free, this apparently is what happens when work and passion collide. Underscoring this, at the time of writing, Sheets is headed to Nepal for three weeks to study the physiological effects of high altitude.

Good natured, or perhaps hypoxic, she’s rarely without a laugh and a friendly smile. When asked why she does all this, she responds pragmatically that mountain rescue combines all of her skills that can be brought to bear in a positive way for people in need of help. “In medicine, what you do matters every day to the people you’re doing it for.” More than one injured climber has been keen to see her headlamp flicker into view and will no doubt vouch for that.



Photo: Steve Dundorf

## We Never Charge for Rescue

RMRG does not charge for search and rescue under any circumstances. Our position is guided by the experience that people's concerns regarding billing can delay and complicate rescue operations. We are members of the Colorado Search and Rescue Board and the Mountain Rescue Association, both of which also oppose billing for mountain search and rescue services. Other agencies may also be involved in patient services and RMRG cannot control billing practices of these other agencies. For more information please see [www.RockyMountainRescue.org/Charging4Rescue.php](http://www.RockyMountainRescue.org/Charging4Rescue.php).

**Rocky Mountain Rescue is an all-volunteer 501(c)3 nonprofit charitable organization.**

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### Recent quotes

*"I was majorly impressed with your operation, and it is not an overstatement to say I wouldn't be alive today without you. Thank you, thank you, thank you, for this past year and for all the years to come!"*

–Shay T.

*"The team of rescuers that got me off the 3rd Flatiron today were beyond amazing. Thanks aren't enough."*

–Karinn K.

*"Mad respect to Rocky Mountain Rescue. We were in the canyon at the time and the rescue crew was in and out of there so fast that I assumed it was an accident at the picnic area, not a climbing accident with litter evac"*

–Topher D.



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