

THE SEARCH AND RESCUE ORGANIZATION

Of 60 members of the Search and Rescue units in two counties, Rick Haytman has the only bloodhound tracker, a gentle female named Thunder. She is just 9 months old now (5 months in the picture) but already she is a real professional when a scent is given her. Her usually friendly manner is changed to one of single-minded cooperation with her trainer, waiting quietly until the signal turns her loose to eagerly follow her nose unerringly through strange terrain, if necessary. Contrary to TV's baying hounds, bloodhounds are trained to work silently in order not to alert criminals nor frighten victims.



Thunder, a bloodhound tracker. (5 months)

Tovola has five members at present, not counting Thunder: Michael Manninen, John and David Mattia, and Justin and Rick Haytman. They volunteer their services to Houghton and Keweenaw Counties, and also work for Ontonagon and Seara Counties who pay their expenses when they call for their aid. The Houghton County Sheriff Department has a German Shepherd tracker as well.

Three members of Search and Rescue are licensed pilots with their own planes. To augment their searches, they are also able to look up to the Traverse City unit by computer, and call in the US-Coast Guard for assistance.



Search and Rescue has a variety of qualified professionals willing to lend a hand – doctors, nurses, divers, ambulance attendants and paramedics, the MTU's ROTC unit, the MTU Four Wheeler's Association, and the Copper Country Ham Operator's Association. When a call comes in, three persons are involved in the search to provide a better chance of a safe return with the least threat to life.

Search and Rescue is available for lectures, demonstrations and information about their work for schools, churches and any interested groups. To contact them, call any of the members listed above.

Once again, with the cooperation and training of the excellent Search and Rescue personnel, the axiom "A dog is a man's best friend" is proven beyond a shadow of a doubt.

DOUG HERMANN