



2023

Annual Report



KING COUNTY
EXPLORER
SEARCH & RESCUE





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ESAR's mission is provide critical emergency services to people in distress in wilderness and urban settings in King County.



Message From The President

Thank you for taking the time to review our annual report and help us celebrate these successes, which are only possible because of our dedicated volunteers.

By itself, volunteerism is already a profound good; a community united to provide a service it is passionate about. If you combine that passion with urgency and personal sacrifice, courage to venture into the dark, cold, and wet, and an imperative to render aid at another's time of greatest need, you will find a Search & Rescue volunteer.

Few things a person can do are as much of a net-positive as Search & Rescue. I take great pride in the service that King County Explorer Search & Rescue provides to our community and its members and we are grateful for the opportunity to continue our service through generous donations of supporters like you.

2023 was a great year for ESAR during which we took on initiatives to streamline our operational model by aligning it more-closely with the Washington Administrative Code (WAC); improve our leadership training and operating guidelines by providing clear and measurable evaluative criteria; and kick-off a multi-year project to replace our aging "Rescue Truck", one of our most-critical resources.

As the first full-year out from under the restrictions of the Covid-19 pandemic we've been able to return to full implementation of our Basic Training, including the return of Team Leader Training which we were unable to conduct in 2022. We have also seen an uptick in call-outs that put us back over 150 missions annually.

In 2024 ESAR will institute a formal, annual process for setting and reviewing long-term organizational goals; expand recognition and team-building programs for our volunteers; evaluate opportunities to modernize our Basic Training program; and continue to strengthen our strategic relationships with our partner organizations and agencies to ensure that our critical, life-saving training and resources are available to deploy at moments notice.

I hope you are as excited as I am about the coming year,
Valon Miller,
President



In 2023, King County ESAR had **283** active adult and **20** youth members.

ESAR participated in a total of **123** missions throughout 2023, averaging **7.43** hours per mission.

(A typical work day)



Graduation 2023



In 2023 we welcomed 52 new trainees (42 adult, 10 youth) into ESAR after putting them through our rigorous basic training season.

At the end of 2023, 86% of our new adult members and 100% of our youth members had either gone on their first mission or participated on a RAD (Rapid Alpine Deployment) team. Our mentor program continues to be a great success, with 79% of new adult members signing up for the mentor program.

Our ceremony was held at the Issaquah Senior Center, and as well as welcoming our new members, we celebrated milestones of our existing members.



Zachary Colburn was promoted to Team Leader;

Scott Behmer, Kyle Montgomery and Katie Reed advanced to Field Leaders, and Nancy Ward became our newest Operations Leader.

Amber Cosand, Matt Cosand, Cheryl Drevecky, and Julie Wartes celebrated 25+ years in the unit.

Joe Cruikshank, Brian Dennis, Thomas Hobbs, Jairid Hoehn, Steve Hulet, Nathan Lorance, Stu Mullen, Debbie Newman, Ben Piermattei, Peter Shuleski, Mike Slack, Erik Swanson, and Edmund Tse reached their ten-year milestone.

We also celebrated Matt Cosand, Nancy Ward, Laura Adam and Rick O'Leary for completing 500+, 250+ and 100+ missions, respectively.

**The life-saving work that
ESAR performed in 2023
required a collective
17,228 mission hours
committed across our
members.**

**Throughout 2023 ESAR
members invested a
total of **24,469** hours in
training across the unit.**



Youth Development

KING COUNTY **EXPLORER** **SEARCH & RESCUE**



"ESAR has been such a formative experience for me. I have developed my confidence and leadership skills as well as my personal outdoor recreation knowledge and skill set."

-Brenna O'Leary, ESAR Team Leader



King County ESAR takes immense pride in our dedicated youth members, they exemplify the very essence of commitment, resilience, and community service.

Leadership Opportunities: Our youth members actively engage in leadership roles within our organization. They learn to navigate complex situations, make informed decisions, and inspire their peers. Through mentorship and hands-on experience, they emerge as confident leaders who can guide others during critical missions.

Real Responsibilities: ESAR believes in providing our youth members with the same genuine responsibilities as our adult members. Whether it's leading teams on assignments, managing equipment, or staffing training events, they shoulder these tasks with maturity and diligence. These real-world experiences and skills follow them in life beyond our organization.

Community Contribution: ESAR youth members have profound impact in our community. By participating in life-saving missions, they directly contribute to the safety and well-being of our community. Their commitment to service extends beyond themselves, reinforcing the values of empathy and compassion.

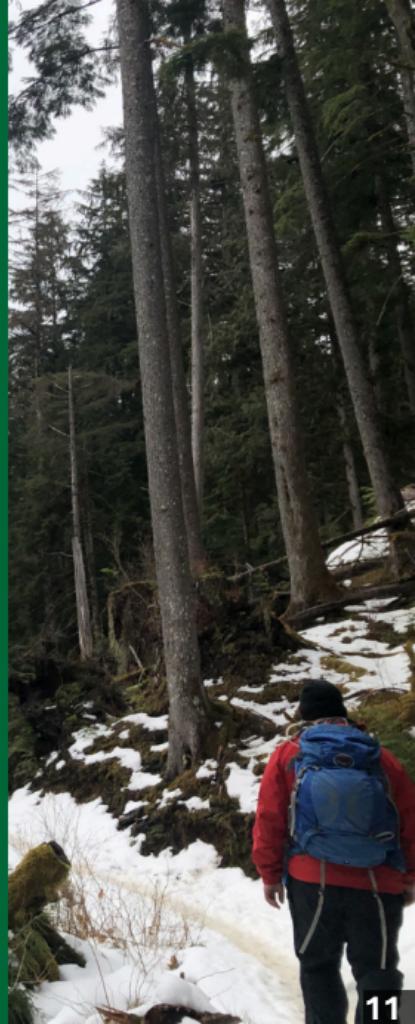
Teamwork and Collaboration: In the field, effective teamwork is paramount. Our youth members learn to communicate seamlessly, trust their colleagues, and adapt to dynamic situations. These collaborative efforts not only enhance their skills but also foster a sense of camaraderie that transcends our organization.

Our youth members are not just future leaders; they already make a difference in our community in their dedication to ensuring that "others may live". ESAR is proud to be a part of their growth and development on their path toward excellence, guided by the principles of service, integrity, and unity.

Across 2023, King County ESAR assisted in helping 71 injured subjects and locating 58 lost subjects.

ESAR also assisted in 21 evidence searches and 7 Urban Search & Rescue missions.

On an average year, ESAR works alongside other KCSARA units across many different mission types - Evidence Searches 13%, Recovery 9%, Search 37% , Urban 5%, Rescue 45%, and Turnaround 10%



Current & Upcoming Projects



Current Project: Personal Rigging Kits

Over the past year, ESAR has been working on rolling out personal rigging kits. The idea is to get rigging equipment deployed more quickly by sending it into the field with the rigger. This is an approach similar to one that Seattle Mountain Rescue has been using recently. Before the personal rigging kits were distributed, the rigging team would need to wait on equipment being brought from HQ to the command post. This significantly delays the equipment getting into the field and delays building systems required to rescue people when rigging is required. Some soft goods have been distributed to most-active riggers already. We recently purchased new hardware to add to those kits, including a roll clip, mini pulley, and a couple of extra carabiners. When used with the already required minimum equipment (high friction slot device, carabiners, personal prusiks), a rigger should be able to build the same 3:1 raise or lower station as we do out of the standard rigging kits.

Kits are initially distributed to the most active riggers, and may be redistributed over time to ensure that the most active riggers are equipped with these personal kits. Shout-out of thanks to Connor Burshears who has been sewing bags for the kits.



Upcoming Project - New Rescue Truck



Although much of the KCESAR's emergency response relies on volunteers using their own vehicles to respond, KCESAR owns a couple of vehicles that are critical to mission response, including the Rescue Truck. Beyond being an dedicated vehicle to quickly

transport team members to the scene, the Rescue Truck serves as a mobile command center and carries life saving rescue equipment.

Our current Rescue Truck has served us well for 16 years, with over 83,000 hard-earned miles and over 1900 missions to its name. In 2025-26, we plan to retire the current truck and upgrade to a new Rescue Truck, which will increase our mobility, improve communication support, and allow us to use the most current technology in our response.

The new Rescue Truck will have several important upgrades, as the current Rescue Truck was built before many of the electronic tools we use became standard.

Some of the new features include:

- Improved off road capability to support remote missions and winter conditions
- Better payload capability to facilitate gear and team transport safely
- Off Grid power system to support long missions in the field with solar recharging capabilities
- Inverter for charging, radio communication, mapping, printing, and internet connectivity
- Advanced communication systems, such as satellite internet and GPS, enabled by improved power system



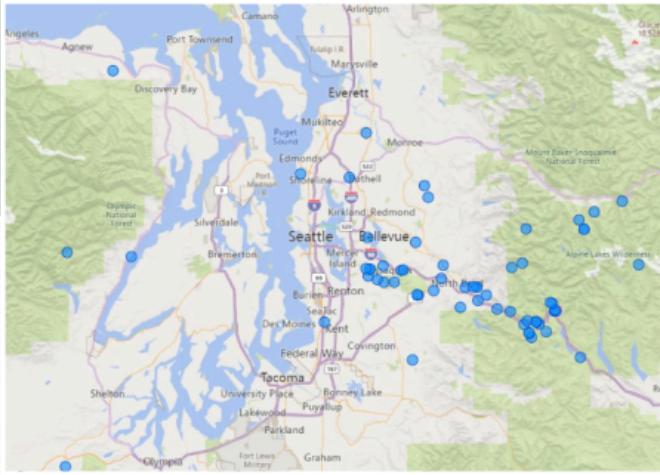
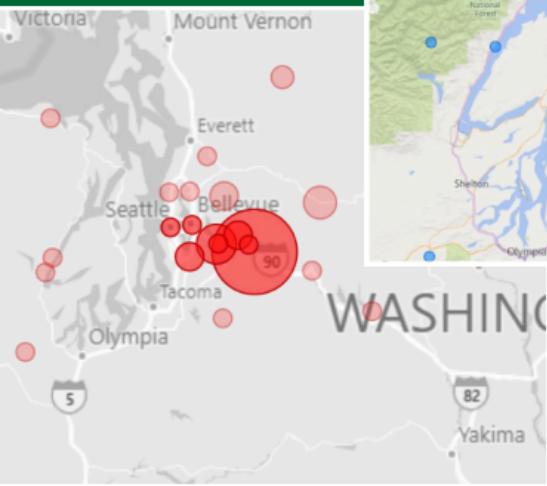
In 2023, our youngest subject was 3 years old, and the oldest? 92 years old.

Hottest average temperature during a mission in 2023 was 90F, the coldest was 27F.

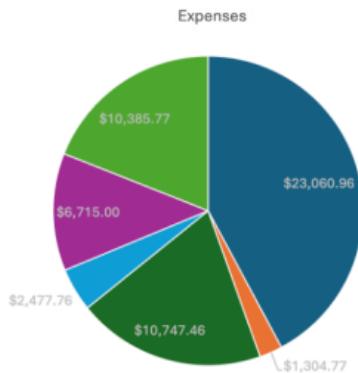
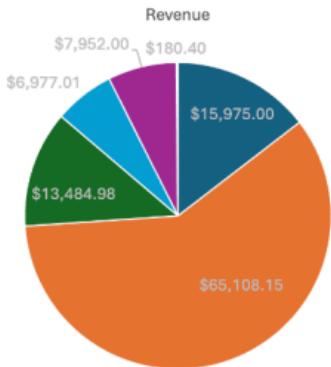
Rain, snow, or shine - ESAR responds.



2023 ESAR Missions: By the maps.



2023 Financials - By the numbers



- Training Fees
- Direct Donations
- Donations - 2021 KCSAR Rigging Network for Good + Snoqualmie Tribe grant
- KCSARA - 2022 King County Parks Levy
- Membership dues
- Interest

- Operations
- Training
- Insurance
- Equipment subsidies
- Administrative
- Financial review, credit card fees



Thank you to all our 2023 Supporters -

Aaron Czechowski	Eric Zager	Kristopher Herrell	Saowanee Panaram
Aaron White	Farzana Anjum	Kroger	Simon Conant
Adrian Lazar Adler	Frank Yandrasits	Larissa Rutherford	Slate Living Trust
Amazon	Gabriel Marcus	Lauren Johnson	Stephen Pope
Anita Mortaloni	Heather Reed	Lee Wright	Suraj Jitindar Singh
Belinda Cummins	Heikas Martirosian	Leo Pallanck	T.J. Barker
Branden Powell	Herbert Goessman	Matt Patterson	Thomas Scheppat
Brandon Smith	Imee Tribo	Matthew Senatore	Walli Garrett-Lindsey
Carla Mingione	Iverson Durrett	Matthias Knoll	
Carrie Thompson	James Carroll	Melissa Hoberg	
Cathy Gehris	Jana Shull and John Savel	Michael McKeirnan	
Washington State Combined Fund Drive	Jean-Yves Devant	Michal Prussak	
Christine Bumpous	Jeffrey Riba	Microsoft Alumni Network	
Daniel Roy	Jeffrey Snyder	Mike Atwood	
Darren Moffatt	Jennifer Szkudlarek	Mollie Albrecht	
Deane Kimerer	Jesse Anderson	Morgan Shannon	
Dermot O'Rourke	John Gruszczyk	Peter Novotney	
Discord	John Nicol	Peter Shuleski	
Elisabeth Beckstead	John Wentz	Rachael Schnitzer	
Emily Goren	Judith Juguilon-Andrew	Richard Lewis	
Eric Rosenberg		Robert Houser	
		Ryan Libby	



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