

Way to Be

Spotlight on our members



Steve Fleischer, K7WON

On Saturday July 28 Steve Fleischer, K7WON, was serving at High Camp (up near the summit) for TERT (Timpanogos Emergency Response Team) and got more than he bargained for.

Steve's a relatively new ham, having gotten his Technician license only this past February 2018. After joining TERT and going through the required training, he volunteered for High Camp, a two-night backpacking trip to near the top. Here's his own story:

Up to this point I've participated on some local nets and met some people on the '76 repeater, and so far it's been a fun hobby. I found an opportunity to practice my radio skills by joining TERT, a team of medical and radio people. This was my chance to use radio in a real service situation. Since I was brand new, my position on the team was more of a helper, and to get some training.

On July 28 I was on the High Camp team on the back side of Mt. Timpanogos. We were hanging out at the shelter by Emerald Lake about noon when a hiker with a ham radio and his son stopped to chat with us on the way down the trail from the summit. Thirty minutes later, we got a radio call from the same hiker: he had slipped and broken his ankle. Our team leader sent me, along with an EMT, to investigate. Once we found the injured hiker, we determined that he could not get down on his own power. I radioed our team leader at Emerald Lake that we needed help from SAR (Search and Rescue). A short time later SAR had set up a makeshift command post at the base of Aspen Grove, the trailhead on this side of the mountain. Since the terrain was so steep where we were, they radioed me that they had decided to send a helicopter with a hoist to retrieve him.



Having never been part of a helicopter rescue, and not wanting to make any mistakes, I radioed down to the trailhead and asked for a quick run-down of the procedure for this type of operation. The chopper flew over us and lowered a medic down on the winch to the ground, then took off. Once we helped him get the patient secured in a sling, the chopper circled back and picked up both the medic and the patient, then flew away.

To be involved in such an intense rescue was a real rush, especially so early on in my TERT career/experience. I learned a lot that weekend about how radio communication with a team is critical for a successful rescue.

Nice work, Steve!