



# Link Line



an update from **WSN** on **YOUR** Mine Rescue program

Issue #25 Winter 2014

## Ontario to Host IMRC 2016

### Sudbury site for world event

▶ **W**orkplace Safety North's Ontario Mine Rescue will host the next International Mines Rescue Competition in Sudbury.

"We can commit to the participating teams that this will be a successful event and our guests will be treated to the best international mine rescue competition ever," said Alex Gryska, general manager of Ontario Mine Rescue.

Details have yet to be determined, but the tenth biennial competition, which has the support of government, industry, and several international mining companies operating in Canada, will be held in August 2016.

OMR is in the process of finalizing dates, securing necessary venues and preparing an information package – website, newsletter and registration material, for the event.

Additional information will be released in early 2015.



### The Next Competition is on Us

*Prior to competing in the 9th International Mines Rescue Competition this fall in Poland, teams from Vale East Mines, left, and KGHM International's Sudbury operations, right, pose with a team from Turkey's Black Diamond Mine. See "Passion" Pg. 5. Ontario will host the 10th international competition in 2016.*

## Mine Rescue – A Family Affair

### Like father, like daughter

**A**nnie Bilodeau does not have much of a memory of her father, Denis, being involved in mine rescue.

"Just study, lots of studying," said Annie, who nonetheless joined her father on the Barrick-Hemlo team in this year's Thunder Bay/Algoma District competition, becoming the first father-daughter pairing in Ontario Mine Rescue.

Annie had little interest in mine rescue or mining.

"I honestly never thought I'd work underground," said Annie, who studied to be a police officer before joining Barrick's security department.

See "Desire" Page 2

### 3 generations of volunteers

**M**ike Boutet and his son Ron each have a lifetime of mine rescue stories, and now grandson Aaron is collecting his own stories.

"He's going to have his own stories to tell," said Ron of his son and Mike's grandson, Aaron, who joined Ontario Mine Rescue in January 2014, making the Boutets what is believed to be first three-generation OMR family.

Additionally, all three worked for Falconbridge and at times at Fraser Mine. Though Mike retired before Falconbridge was acquired by Xstrata, and subsequently Glencore, both Ron and Aaron have followed the company through its ownership shifts.

See "Sons" Page 4

### We need you!

If you have comments about the newsletter, or suggestions for future articles, please contact Ken Sitter at WSN, (705) 474-7233 ext. 234, or [kensitter@workplacesafetynorth.ca](mailto:kensitter@workplacesafetynorth.ca)



P.O. Box 2050, Stn. Main  
690 McKeown Ave.

North Bay, Ont. P1B 9P1

PH: (705) 474-7233

FAX: (705) 472-5800

[www.workplacesafetynorth.ca](http://www.workplacesafetynorth.ca)

# Desire to help draws pair to MR

## Dad delays retirement to compete with daughter

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Then, “I went underground and I really liked it. Since I’ve been there, I love it and I wouldn’t want to be anywhere else,” said Annie, who now works in an automated area on a crusher.

Having her father in mine rescue made joining it attractive, said Annie, “but I really like the first aid part of it . . . I like to help people, and if something were to happen I’d like to know what I’m doing.”

“It took me awhile to get on” mine rescue, said Denis, who tried when he worked at Kidd Creek in Timmins and still had to wait several more years when he joined Barrick. But he was determined.

“I had the interest because I wanted to do first aid,” he said. “We had an injury on the ice while playing hockey with 20 guys standing around and nobody knew what to do. That bothered me a lot. Everybody wanted to help, but nobody knew what to do.”

Denis, who works in Barrick’s safety department, finally joined mine rescue when Annie was about three, and started to compete when she was about 10. He’s earned a china cabinet of trophies and awards through 15 years of competition in his more than 23 years as a volunteer.

Six years ago after competing at the provincial competition on Barrick’s team for three consecutive years, Denis decided to try his hand as a technician, relying on his friend and retiring technician Norm Begin and mine rescue officer Pat Gauthier for help.

“They were both very knowledgeable people. They gave me the experience, the knowledge and the confidence to succeed.”

As a technician, Denis won the district competition for six consecutive years, and in the subsequent provincial competitions placed second three times, and won twice, including 2013 in Windsor. He thought that would be his last.

“I was retired. I had won the provincial in Windsor. I was done,” Bilodeau said. “It was time for someone else.”



*Annie and Denis Bilodeau competed together for Barrick-Hemlo at the 2014 Thunder Bay/Algoma District competition.*

And that was that, until Annie changed his mind.

“I got pretty lucky,” said Annie, who unlike her father, was quickly admitted into mine rescue, and then with less than a year experience, became the competition team’s No. 3 position.

“Everything was really, really new to me when we were training,” she said. “But we had an excellent team, they really helped me out.”

### ‘ONE MORE YEAR’

And then there was her dad.

“Once I found out Annie was on the team, I said, ‘You know what, I’ll give her one more year’, and that’s what I did just because she was there. It’s her fault,” he said.

Annie said her father, “showed us a few things, and he had a lot of experience, and gave us some tricks, like study tricks, like how to memorize stuff, and he showed us the BG4.”

This year, it was Annie who was studying.

“It was a lot of work. I don’t think

people understand how much work is put into training for a competition. A lot of it is on your own too, at home studying.”

Denis, who finished second at this year’s provincial, has retired from competition, but not mine rescue, again.

“I know I want to help the young people. I know I can’t get mine rescue out of me. It’s in me,” he said. “I’ll probably be judging or training or helping out our team in any way I can.”

And though Barrick did not reach the provincials this year, Annie has no plans to stop competing.

“I definitely have the itch,” she said. “I definitely want a gold hat.”

Though he has numerous trophies and awards, Denis has a more rewarding experience earned through his years of competition that he wants to share with younger volunteers – the sense of bond, of family, that exists between mine rescuers regardless of mine, company or country.

“Although we compete, we all do the same thing,” said Denis, and “what we do brings us closer together.”



## A Snip Here

*Jason Defosse, a trainer with CODE 4 Fire and Rescue, directs Ontario Mine Rescue Officer/Consultant Bruce Hall to cut through the front passenger pillar of a vehicle with a Hurst eDrualic cutter. MROs received 'Train the Trainer' training in Hurst's edraulic rescue equipment this September, as Ontario Mine Rescue purchased a set of edraulic equipment – cutter, spreader and ram – for each district.*

## Working group to report on emergency preparedness to mining safety review

▶ A three-person working group on emergency preparedness is putting the finishing touches on their report to the Mining Health, Safety and Prevention Review, established in late 2013 to examine occupational health and safety in Ontario's mines.

The group led by Alex Gryska, Ontario Mine Rescue's general manager, includes Jamie Mortson, health and safety manager for Lake Shore Gold Corp., and Dave Stewart, Joint Health and Safety Committee co-ordinator for UNIFOR at Glencore's Sudbury Integrated Nickel Operations.

The group has been soliciting input from stakeholders and experts on the current state of emergency preparedness in Ontario mines to identify best practices and gaps, issues associated with future mining processes, and strategies to ensure mine emergency preparedness in Ontario and OMR continue to be among world leaders.

Topics discussed by the group include exploration sites and new mines, managing

risk, critical post incident stress, regulatory requirements for surface mines, fitness of volunteers, and new technology.

The working group is one of six groups to report to the review led by George Gritzotis, Ontario's chief prevention officer, by the end of December. The input of the working groups will be considered in the drafting of the final report which will be released in early 2015.

A progress report released by the review in September said, "There was across-the-board support for Ontario's mine rescue system, including the current way that mine rescue is set up and operates."

Some stakeholders, however, "highlighted a need to evaluate the ability of mine rescue to respond to hazards created by new technologies and mining methods," as well as "concerns about the ability to launch rescue operations as mines" grow more extensive.

The progress report is available at [www.labour.gov.on.ca/english/hs/pubs/miningprogress](http://www.labour.gov.on.ca/english/hs/pubs/miningprogress).



IMRB GERMANY 2015

## Conference registration now open

Registration is now open for IMRB Germany 2015, scheduled for Sept. 6 to 10 in Hanover.

A call for papers for the seventh biennial International Mines Rescue Body conference has also been issued. Conference topics will be "Mine Rescue Management System and Effective Operations," "Emergency Preparedness," and "Future Trends".

The IMRB conference is an opportunity for mine rescue experts from around the globe to meet and share innovations, trends and practical experience. In addition to the formal conference proceedings, delegates will have the option to visit various mining operations, and the Drager global headquarters.

The IMRB, an informal, non-profit association representing mine rescue organizations from around the world, was formed in 2001 to share information on emergency preparedness, mine rescue operations, equipment and other mine rescue issues.

Approximately 240 delegates from 20 nations attended the last conference, IMRB 2013, held in Niagara Falls and Sudbury, and hosted by the Canadian mining industry and Canadian mine rescue organizations.

Previous conferences have been held in China, Australia, the Czech Republic, and the United States.

Conference website - [www.imrb2015.de](http://www.imrb2015.de)

Conference brochure - [www.imrb2015.de/download/Flyer\\_IMRB2015.pdf](http://www.imrb2015.de/download/Flyer_IMRB2015.pdf)

Conference registration - [www.hinte-e-services.com/de/IMRB\\_Registration.html](http://www.hinte-e-services.com/de/IMRB_Registration.html)

# Sons raised on mine rescue stories

## Boutet family gives 28 years of service to mine rescue

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Ron joined OMR in January 1989 and volunteered for 10 years until knee problems forced him to retire. He was raised on mine rescue stories from his father, Mike, and Mike's mine rescue friends.

"I remember them, everyone coming to the house," said Ron. "They had all kinds of stories." They were all friends and after work and training, someone would host the team. "They went from one house to the next. I always said one day I'd like to be a mine rescuer."

A family favourite story involved Mike in a competition, he said.

"During the competition Mike was quietly given a note, advising him to pretend to pass out at a particular point in the scenario," Ron said. "When that occurred, his acting was so impressive it not only convinced his teammates that he was in trouble, he convinced the judges" who nearly stopped the team mid-scenario to care for Mike.

Mike was a mine rescuer for 17 years, joining in the late 1960s, when he was trained by mine rescue officers Harry Moorehouse and John Guthrie.

"It was very interesting. John always had different ways of teaching things," said Mike, whose only training resources were the Ontario Mine Rescue Handbook, and his training officer.

"There was never a dull moment. John always had a story," Mike said, and some unique training measures.

But by the time he joined mine rescue, Ron said, "the days of the guys coming over to the house stopped. It was a generational shift."

A similar shift occurred at OMR, as John



**Three generations of Boutet family mine rescue volunteers and their respective training officers, held a brief reunion recently. From left: Mike Boutet, Aaron Boutet, mine rescue officer John Hagan, Ron Boutet, supervisor of mine rescue Charlie Burton, and (front) former mine rescue officer John Guthrie.**

Guthrie started to purchase the specialized equipment that allowed the organization's shift from fire response to full emergency response.

Partway "through my time they introduced a new book with special equipment," said Ron, who had been trained by Charlie Burton, now supervisor of mine rescue. "There was the mine rescue book itself and special equipment which came out in a little binder which got bigger and bigger and bigger."

While Aaron didn't grow up with the benefit of visitors telling mine rescue stories, he did hear his grandfather's and his father's stories.

"I knew Dad was on the (mine rescue)

team. He had pictures of his various competition teams on the wall in the basement, and he told me a few stories here and there, and once I got a job with the company I figured I'd give it a try," said Aaron, who was trained by mine rescue officer John Hagan.

In addition to mining and mine rescue, Aaron has plans to do one other thing both his father and grandfather have done.

"One day I want to go on a competition team too. Once I get a little more knowledge."

That desire come with family approval.

"Competitions," said Mike. "That's where you really learn."

## Mine rescue heat stress standard released

A Mine Rescue Heat Stress Report, including an Ontario Mine Rescue Heat Exposure Standard, has been released by Ontario Mine Rescue (OMR) to help provincial mines encountering higher temperatures in their mining operations.

The new Heat Exposure Standard is now part of OMR's operating procedures for mine rescue teams, while the report advises

mining operations on heat stress and how to minimize the risk of heat stress for their mine rescue teams.

Approximately a dozen mine rescuers in Poland, the United States, China and South Africa have died from heat stress disorders in different incidents during the past 15 years.

These incidents and a growing awareness

of the issue here as Ontario mines reach new depths and encounter hotter operating temperatures, prompted Ontario Mine Rescue to prepare the report and determine a standard for its volunteer mine rescuers.

Both the standard and the report are available for free download at the Ontario Mine Rescue website – [www.workplacesafetynorth.ca/minerescue](http://www.workplacesafetynorth.ca/minerescue).

## Poland dominates international competition

Polish mine rescue teams dominated the 9th International Mines Rescue Competition this September in Bytom, Poland, winning 13 of 18 top three finishes.

Twenty-one teams from 13 countries, including KGHM in Sudbury and this year's Provincial Mine Rescue Competition winners, Vale East Mines, participated in the event.

In addition to a simulated emergency scenario set in a coal mine, separate competitions were held for first aid, servicing breathing apparatus (the Draeger BG4, the Faser W-70, or the DZGA P-30 EX), and in the use of mine gas measuring equipment.

The Vale team finished in fifth place in the first aid competi-

tion. The top four teams were Polish, making Vale the best foreign team in the category.

Activities included excursions to the Barbara Experimental Mine and the Wieliczka Salt Mine, as well as a trip to Krakow.

Other countries represented at the competition include Russia, Australia, China, India, Kazakhstan, Colombia, Mongolia, Romania, Slovakia, Turkey and Vietnam.

The International Mines Rescue Competition began in 1998, and has been held in numerous countries including the United States, Australia, China and the Ukraine.

For more information on the competition, visit [www.imrc2014.pl](http://www.imrc2014.pl).

## Passion unites competitors

### Differences don't divide world's mine rescuers

The differences between countries in mine rescue operations doesn't divide mine rescuers, though it can make it difficult to compete in an international mine rescue competition, two teams of Ontario Mine Rescue volunteers learned this fall.

"They share the same passion, that passion for mine rescue unites us," said Tom Hopkins, who led a team from KGHM International's Sudbury operations in the Ninth International Mines Rescue Competition in September in Bytom, Poland.

"We're all in mine rescue doing the same things, but everyone does things a little bit different," said Hopkins, who with Lorne Plouffe, captain of Vale's East Mines mine rescue team, and their teammates had to meet the challenges posed by those differences in the competition.

"It was like learning a whole new game in a short period of time. It was quite a task," said Plouffe, whose provincial championship team sought advice from mine rescuers at the Diavik Diamond Mine, which placed third at the last international competition in 2012, and from mine rescuers at Glencore who competed at the 2008 competition.

#### GEARED TO COAL

The international competition is geared to coal and soft rock mining, said Plouffe, and not hard rock mining like both teams experience in the Sudbury basin. In addition to seeking advice from former competitors, Vale's team worked through problems used in previous international competitions.

Both teams "had the rules for the competition but no information on how the event was to be judged," said Hopkins, adding that was the biggest problem.

"We tried to find out what they were looking for," Plouffe said. "Sometimes they have time guidelines, so we weren't sure how fast we had to be" on various parts of the field exercise.

KGHM International, headquartered in Poland and a partner in the competition, matched Hopkins' team with a team from one of their Polish mines the week before the competition.

"First we watched them train, then we trained with them," he said, working together on several problems.

"It was very different from what we were used to," Hopkins said, noting that the international rules were also different from the rules under which the Polish team usually competes.



Among the differences in the competition, "they map everything," Plouffe said, the results of numerous gas tests – including temperature, humidity, air flow, smoke conditions and more – as well as "where the lunchbox was found and the hard hat."

"You basically have one guy making notes on a clipboard for two hours," Hopkins said.

Actually, "you're down to two guys doing the meat and potatoes work of mine rescue," Plouffe said, noting not only is one team member mapping, but another is handling a reel of wire for hard line communication with the briefing officer.

"It (communications) was always on" Hopkins explained, "so the briefing officer heard everything you and the team were saying." The situation created some confusion for briefing officers trying to distinguish what was said to them and what the team was actually doing.

#### PRETTY INTENSE

Though administering first aid during the field scenario was basic – "It was pretty much slap a respirator on the casualty and haul him out," Hopkins said – both he and Plouffe enjoyed the first aid event held separate from the field exercise.

"The first aid problem was pretty intense. I liked that," Hopkins said.

"The first aid event was the highlight of the competition," Plouffe said, adding the competition was realistic, and the Polish teams' first aid kits and training were "very intensive".

The two captains also echoed each other's comments on the reception and hospitality in Poland as "amazing", and found the competition a great learning experience.

"We do some things differently," Hopkins said, "but it's in those differences we learn things."

And results aside, neither team had a podium finish, both are satisfied with the outcome.

"It was a good experience," Hopkins said.

"I think we did the best we could in the amount of time we had and with the information we gained," Plouffe said.

# Explore collaboration, Elliot Lake inquiry suggests

The Report of the Elliot Lake Commission of Inquiry by Justice Paul Belanger could result in a shift in the role of Ontario Mine Rescue.

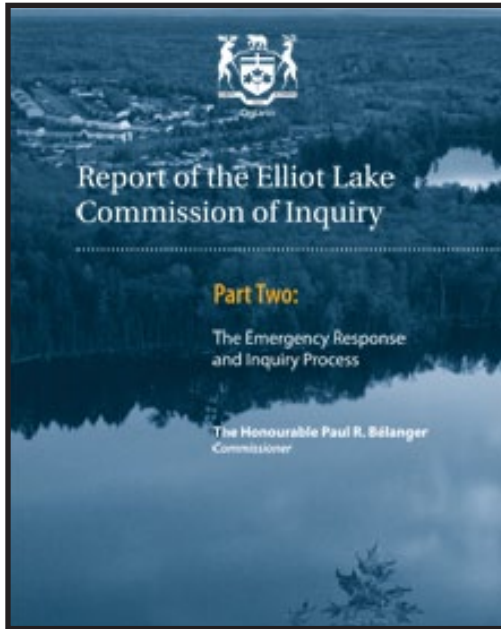
The report, the result of an intensive inquiry into the June 2012 collapse of the Algo Centre Mall in Elliot Lake which claimed the lives of two people, made more than three dozen recommendations on emergency response, one of which focused specifically on OMR.

The recommendation was that “the provincial government and others should explore possible collaboration with Ontario Mine Rescue as a partial solution to ensure adequate province-wide capability to respond to structural collapses.”

The rationale, the report explains, is that “Ontario Mine Rescue appears to be an untapped resource that could potentially make a significant contribution to the USAR (Urban Search and Rescue) inventory.”

OMR’s network covers an area most distant from Toronto and the existing urban search and rescue agencies, the report said.

Belanger noted that discussions on possible collaboration between OMR and the Heavy Urban Search and Rescue (HUSAR) Unit based in Toronto were held earlier this year, and suggests that the provincial



government become a part of the discussion.

“A mine collapse is not the same thing as a building collapse,” the report states, but there are commonalities in the rescue response. As well, OMR is fully equipped and operational, particularly in northern Ontario, it said.

OMR general manager Alex Gryska, said there is interest to continue discussions but no talks have been scheduled.

The commission report is available at: [www.attorneygeneral.jus.gov.on.ca/inquiries/elliottlake/report/index](http://www.attorneygeneral.jus.gov.on.ca/inquiries/elliottlake/report/index).

## Mine rescue welcomes new MRO

Denis Leduc, a 20-year volunteer with Ontario Mine Rescue, is OMR’s newest mine rescue officer/consultant.

Leduc, who has more than 25 years experience in mining, will work out of the Hemlo Station, and can be reached at (807) 238-1155.

Leduc was briefing officer on the 2012 Provincial Mine Rescue Competition winning team and has been responsible for coordinating mine rescue activities for several years with previous employers.

He was most recently a health and safety supervisor at Goldcorp Canada’s Musselwhite Mine.



Denis Leduc

### Who’s where at WSN Mine Rescue

#### Mine Rescue Officers/Consultants

- **Walter (Wally) Adler, Sudbury**  
(705) 670-5707 ext. 331
- **Wayne Baker, Kirkland Lake**  
(705) 567-4606
- **Emanuel (Manny) Cabral, Timmins**  
(705) 235-4861
- **Duane Crowell, Thunder Bay**  
(807) 344-8211
- **Tim Ebbinghaus, Thunder Bay**  
(807) 344-8211
- **Pat Gauthier, Hemlo**  
(807) 238-1155
- **John Hagan, Onaping**  
(705) 670-5707 ext. 334
- **Bruce Hall, Sudbury**  
(705) 670-5707 ext. 335
- **Denis Leduc, Hemlo**  
(807) 238-1155
- **Grant Saunders, Red Lake**  
(807) 735-2331
- **Danny Taillefer, Timmins**  
(705) 235-4861
- **Tim Taylor, Delaware**  
(519) 652-9809

#### Head Office (Sudbury)

- **Shawn Kirwan, Emergency Services Specialist**  
(705) 670-5707 ext. 322
- **Becky Barrett, Mine Rescue Associate**  
(705) 670-5707 ext. 325
- **Charlie Burton, Mine Rescue Program Supervisor**  
(705) 670-5707 ext. 329
- **Alex Gryska, Ontario Mine Rescue General Manager**  
(705) 670-5707 ext. 330
- **Ted Hanley, Ontario Mine Rescue General Manager (transitional)**  
(705) 670-5707 ext. 337
- **Penny Pagan, Executive Assistant**  
(705) 670-5707 ext. 321

#### Communications (North Bay)

- **Ken Sitter, Writer**  
(705) 474-7233 ext. 234

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760 Notre Dame Ave.  
Notre Dame Square  
Sudbury, Ont. P3A 2T4  
PH: (705) 671-6360  
FAX: (705) 670-5708  
[www.workplacesafetynorth.ca](http://www.workplacesafetynorth.ca)