



Link Line



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

Issue #24 Summer 2014

Sudbury District dominates

Vale East Mines, FNI's Prevoست earn honours at provincial

In a taxing scenario that first challenged physical endurance, and then challenged mental acuity, mine rescue volunteers from Vale Canada Ltd.'s East Mines earned top place in the 64th annual Provincial Mine Rescue Competition in Timmins, in June.

And while Vale took home gold hard hats as the overall team champions, Denis Prevoست, mine rescue technician for First Nickel Inc.'s Lockerby Mine, won the award for top technician. Both had won the Sudbury District competition in May.

The Vale East Mines team consisted of Captain Lorne Plouffe, Will Davies, Justin Whitmore, Jonathan Hamilton, Fred Pelletier, Aime Gagne, Jean Yves Doiron, Perry Simon and Briefing Officer Mike Johnson. The team also earned the First Aid Award.

Compass Minerals, Sifto Canada earned runner-up honours. Richmond Mines,



Island Gold Mine and Mill, in their first appearance in a provincial competition, won the Special Equipment Award for their use of the GripTech rope system, and St. Andrew Goldfield won the Firefighting Award.

Barrick-Hemlo's Denis Bilodeau, a top three finisher in the technician competition for the past four years, and last year's

winner, finished second, while Dan Rulli, of CGC Inc.'s Hagersville mine, finished third.

St. Andrew Goldfields' Lynn Bouchard gained attention as the first woman to captain a team in the provincial competition, while Red Lake Gold Mine #2's Heather Willis became the first woman vice-captain in a provincial.

See "Competitors" Page 5

The 2014 Winners

Overall Winners

- 1st – Vale Canada Ltd., East Mines
- 2nd – Compass Minerals, Sifto Canada

Technician Award

- 1st – Denis Prevoست, First Nickel Inc., Lockerby Mine
- 2nd – Denis Bilodeau, Barrick-Hemlo
- 3rd – Dan Rulli, CGC Inc., Hagersville Mine

Firefighting Team Award

St. Andrew Goldfields Ltd.

First Aid Team Award

Vale Canada Ltd., East Mines

Special Equipment Award

Richmont Mines, Island Gold Mine and Mill

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



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2014 AWARD WINNERS



First Overall

Vale East Mines



Second Overall

Compass Minerals, Sifto Canada



**Technician Award
1st – Denis Prevost**

First Nickel Inc., Lockerby



**Technician Award
2nd – Denis Bilodeau**

Barrick-Hemlo



**Technician Award
3rd – Dan Rulli**

CGC Inc., Hagersville



Firefighting Award

St. Andrew Goldfields



First Aid Award

Vale East Mines

Platinum Sponsors



Special Equipment Award

Richmont Mines, Island Gold Mine & Mill

Gold Sponsors



Competition Gallery



Prepared for the past 85 years

Ontario Mine Rescue timeline reveals commitment

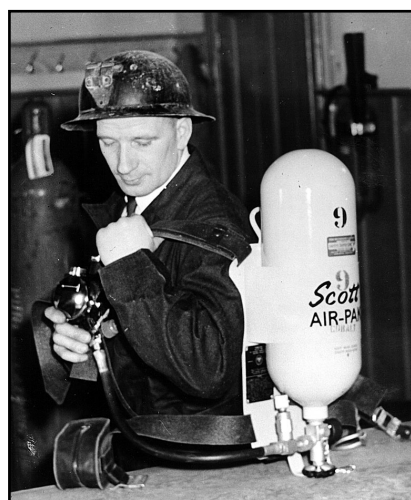
The story of the origins of Ontario Mine Rescue in the Hollinger Gold Mine Fire, the tragic loss of 39 lives, and the commitment by miners and mines to be prepared, is well-known and often told. But each of the 85 years since has at least one or more, less well-known stories about mine rescue in Ontario, and the commitment of OMR and its members to be prepared.

- 1929 – Ontario Mine Rescue established
- First Mine Rescue Station opens in Timmins
- Austin Neame appointed first Mine Rescue Officer
- 1930 – Kirkland Lake Mine Rescue Station opens
- First edition of the OMR Handbook printed



- 1931 – Sudbury Mine Rescue Station opens
- 1947 – East Malartic Mine fire in Que. leads to standardized equipment and training
- Geraldton Mine Rescue Station opens
- Percy Smith appointed Senior Mine Rescue Officer
- 1948 – Red Lake Mine Rescue Station opens
- 1950 – Pamour Porcupine Mines Ltd. wins first Provincial Mine Rescue Competition
- 1953 – Cobalt Mine Rescue Station opens
- 1955 – George McPhail appointed Senior Mine Rescue Officer
- 1957 – Management/Supervisory Mine Rescue Course introduced
- 1958 – Ron Eveson opens Elliot Lake Mine Rescue Station
- 1965 – Mine rescuers battle week-long McIntyre Mine fire in Timmins

- 1966 – BG174 selected as standard breathing apparatus
- 1968 – John Guthrie opens Onaping Mine Rescue Station
- 1973 – Tenth edition of the OMR handbook printed



- 1977 – Geraldton Mine Rescue Station closes
- Cobalt Mine Rescue Station closes
- Manitouwadge Mine Rescue Station opens
- Ron Eveson appointed Senior Mine Rescue Officer
- 1978 – First woman, Cynthia Cameron, qualifies as a mine rescuer
- 1979 – Provincial Mine Rescue Competitions centralized for first time in approximately 20 years in Timmins
- 1981 – Conveyor fire burns for 60 hours at Denison Mine in Elliot Lake
- 1982 – Manitouwadge Mine Rescue Station closes
- Thunder Bay Mine Rescue Station opens

- 1984 – Falconbridge Mine rockburst claims four miners
- OMR volunteers rescue youth trapped in old, underground workings in Timmins
- 1986 – Goderich Mine methane explosion in Goderich
- Ontario Mine Rescue team wins national mine rescue competition in British Columbia
- Stevenson inquiry expands the scope of Ontario Mine Rescue to emergency response
- 1987 – Manitouwadge Mine Rescue Station re-opens
- Thunder Bay Mine Rescue Station closes
- Malcolm Smith appointed Senior Mine Rescue Officer
- 1989 – Delaware Mine Rescue Station opens
- 1990 – Campbell Mine fire in Red Lake
- 1993 – Macassa Mine rockburst in Kirkland Lake
- 1997 – Second Macassa Mine rockburst in Kirkland Lake
- 2000 – Campbell Mine rockburst in Red Lake
- Battle Mountain Gold wins 50th annual Provincial Mine Rescue Competition

- 2001 – Responsibility for Ontario Mine Rescue transferred to Mines and Aggregates Safety and Health Association (MASHA)



- Alex Gryska appointed Manager of Mine Rescue

- 2002 – Campbell Mine methane explosion in Red Lake
- Charlie Burton appointed Supervisor of Mine Rescue
- 2003 – Kidd Creek Mine fire in Timmins

- 2004 – BG4 replaces the BG174 as standard breathing apparatus
- Thunder Bay Mine Rescue Station re-opens
- Provincial Mine Rescue Competition held underground for the first time at NORCAT's Fecunis Mine
- 2005 – Ontario Mine Rescue's newsletter, The Link Line, begins publication
- 2010 – OMR and MASHA incorporated into Workplace Safety North



- Porcupine Gold Mine win the 60th annual Provincial Mine Rescue Competition in Timmins

- 2011 – Goderich tornado strikes Sifto Canada Mine
- 2013 – MX6 iBrid selected as standard mine gas detection unit
- 'Prepared since 1929' becomes OMR's official motto

Competitors challenged by scenario

Continued from page 1

In the closing banquet, Jeff Sowerby, a mine rescue volunteer at Compass Mineral's Sifto Salt Mine in Goderich, was honoured for 30 years of service to Ontario Mine Rescue (See story Page 7).

The seven competing teams from across Ontario were challenged from the start of the simulated emergency underground at Goldcorp Canada's Dome Mine. Advised of reports of smoke and missing miners on the 2,400 level, teams could only use the hoist to the 2,300 level because a fall of ground blocked access to the 2,400 level from the hoist.

On reaching the 2,300 level, the five-member teams had to proceed along a narrow drift to a raise, lower their equipment and descend a vertical distance of 150 feet using the GripTech system, an exercise that took teams an hour or more to complete.

Once on the 2,400 level, teams explored for the source of the smoke, extinguished a scoop fire, provided first aid to a miner suffering a leg injury, and rescued a second miner whose arm was trapped beneath a large tire.

While teams worked through the scenario, a sixth member was assessed in a separate location on using the foam generator and lifting bags.

Competing mine rescue teams represented Compass Mineral, (Southern District); Goldcorp Canada, Red Lake Gold Mine #2 (Red Lake District); Richmond Mines (Thunder Bay/Algoma District); Kidd Operations, a Glencore Company (Timmins District); St. Andrew Goldfield Ltd. (Kirkland Lake District); Sudbury INO, a Glencore Company (Onaping District); and Vale, East Mines (Sudbury District).

This year's competition was co-hosted by: Goldcorp Canada; Kidd Operations, a Glencore Company; Lake Shore Gold; and Dumas. The event was sponsored by: Drager Safety; Kidd Operations, a Glencore Company; Technica Mining; Zetec; MSA; Acklands Grainger; Dynamic Safety International; Levitt Safety; SPI Health and Safety; and Soucie Salo Safety.



Thunder Bay/Algoma teams wear their pride

Mine rescuers wear their pride, says Gilbert Wahl, director of safety and security at Wesdome Gold Mines Ltd.'s Eagle River Mine, and mine rescuers in the Thunder Bay/Algoma district now wear more of their pride – an additional badge on their coveralls that indicates their district.

"It's a pride thing. Your whole pride is written all over you," says Wahl, who represents the district on Ontario Mine Rescue's Technical Advisory Committee.

Mine rescuers' coveralls and hard hats indicate mine rescue, usually Ontario Mine Rescue, as well as their company and/or their mine, and often a Canadian flag or a red maple leaf. A district badge belongs there as well, he says.

"We're proud of our district."

The idea originated several years ago at a district co-ordinators' meeting, and it was agreed to hold a competition, won by Dalton Beaudet, a long hole planner at Wesdome.

The design on an approximately three-inch diameter circular badge incorporates a portion of the Ontario Mine Rescue logo, a red maple leaf, three Great Lakes (Superior, Michigan and Huron), and a headframe. The Thunder Bay area or subdistrict is indicated in orange, and Algoma in yellow.

Each team in this year's district competition was given 10 badges, and were asked to wear them, Wahl says. They did, high on the left sleeve.



Though the badge made its first district appearance this May, it actually debuted at last year's provincial competition when it was worn by the Wesdome team. This year's district representatives, Richmond Mines, wore it at the provincial competition, and Wahl believes the badge will become a permanent part of the garment for Thunder Bay/Algoma teams.

"It's good," says Wahl, adding that should other districts follow suit, exchanging mine rescue badges could be as common as exchanging caps at competitions. Scout groups, police services, fire departments and military units frequently exchange badges as souvenirs, tokens and for recognition, he says. "It becomes a trading deal."

"Ontario Mine Rescue, what you do, is something to be proud of."

Saying 'Goodbye' after 37 years

Isabella Caron retires from mine rescue

Ontario Mine Rescue is preparing to say goodbye to its longest-serving member – Isabella Caron.

Caron started as a contract worker in the Ontario Ministry of Labour's chief mining engineer office at 260 Cedar Street in Sudbury in 1977, but quickly found an interest and passion for Ontario Mine Rescue.

At that time there was no office assistant in mine rescue so Ron Eveson, then Ontario Mine Rescue's senior mine rescue officer "started to get Issy to do stuff," said Charlie Burton, supervisor of mine rescue and the second-longest serving member of OMR.

"By the time I got there, she was doing mainly stuff for mine rescue," said Burton, noting that not until Malcolm Smith became senior mine rescue officer in 1987, was Caron "officially" on the books as working for OMR.

In the intervening nine years, he said, she had merely become indispensable, including taking a major role in the organization and administration of the Provincial Mine Rescue Competition.

In her 37 years of working on competitions, Caron missed only one when she was on maternity leave. Her presence and role at the competition brought her recognition and friendship with many volunteers from across Ontario.

Though she had been working for OMR for almost 10 years when Caron moved from the Ministry of Labour office to a new mine rescue office on Notre Dame Avenue in 1988, Burton said, as mine rescue officers "we got to know her a lot more."

"During her entire career she really took care of the MROs," said Alex Gryska, general manager of mine rescue, who met and worked with Caron when he joined the ministry as an inspector in 1977 and for the next 24 years, both professionally and as a competition volunteer. "They were part of her family. She was close to all of them."

The MROs at that time "were my uncles", she said. The late John Hallows was grandfather, and the mine rescue officers hired in the late 1980s, including John Hagan, Bruce Hall, Ernie Gulliver, and Tim Taylor, became "brothers", said Caron, adding she has seen at least three generations of mine rescue officers on the job.

"I met her when I became a mine rescue officer," recalled Taylor,



Isabella Caron and former Senior Mine Rescue Officer Ron Eveson at the All Canada Mine Rescue Competition in Nanaimo, B.C. in 1986.

who joined in 1988, accepting a foot-high stack of paperwork and documents at that time to plow through.

Stationed in southern Ontario, Taylor, like most mine rescue officers then and only to a slightly less degree now, was a one-person operation whose principal contact with the main office in Sudbury was by phone.

"She was the one at the end of the telephone for weeks to come, in fact for years to come," Taylor said, as he worked his way with Caron's help through forms, records, letters and more. throughout his career.

For the mine rescue officers, Caron was not just someone at the end of the phone or a person at the competition, said Gryska.

As 'sister' to the MROs, her home was a welcome spot for the mine rescue officers to socialize during their semi-annual meetings in Sudbury, and her passion for mine rescue spread to include her family – her husband, Gates, was a valuable member of the provincial competition "cast and crew" from 1994 until 2012.

"I always knew she worked hard," said Gryska, who joined OMR as manager in 2001, "but I really didn't know how well organized, how well connected, how efficient she was," until they started to organize last year's International Mines Rescue Body conference held in Niagara Falls and Sudbury.

The task nearly overwhelmed him, he admitted, and likely would have if not for the support and work of Caron.

"She would never say she was too busy. She would say it would get done, and it would get done."

Whether it's organizing a conference or a competition, or dealing with different types of people, "Issy just seems to do things instinctively," said Burton, and never get frustrated or angry.

"I've never seen her get mad," he said. "She's very easy going and friendly. She has a lot of patience, and just knows how to get along with people."

Having work together in the same office for more than 25 years, Burton is now getting used to coming to work and not seeing Caron, but he said he misses the friendship of almost daily contact.

"I'm going to miss all of her," said Gryska. "She was the mortar that kept all of the bricks together. But I'm really going to miss her as a person."

"It was a work relationship but she was a friend from the beginning, a close friend," said Taylor. "That doesn't go away. The availability goes away, but the friendship doesn't."



Isabella and Gates Caron at the International Mines Rescue Body 2013 conference in Sudbury last October.



Veteran mine rescue volunteer Jeff Sowerby, left, is congratulated during the 2014 Provincial Mine Rescue Competition by Southern District's Mine Rescue Officer Tim Taylor, for 30 years of service to Ontario Mine Rescue.

30 years and counting, Sowerby earns honours

Jeff Sowerby started mining at the Compass Minerals, Sifto Goderich Salt mine in the summer of 1981, joining the mine rescue team in 1984. Sowerby started participating on the competition team in 1985, becoming team captain by 1988.

With Sowerby as captain, the Sifto team placed second in the 1989 Provincial Competition. In 1990 his team won the Provincial Championship and became what is to this day the last team from the Southern District to do so.

Sowerby continues to maintain active

status as a mine rescue responder, and also shares his experience with the current competition teams, assisting as the coach of the competition team and judging at mine rescue competitions.

Sowerby, still with the Sifto Goderich Mine, is currently a trainer in the safety department and enjoys his off-time raising and training German Wirehaired Pointers. He is a well-respected member of the North American Versatile Hunting Dog Association, and judges hunting dog field trials throughout Canada and the US.

Who's where at WSN Mine Rescue

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