

Matt Rosefsky, Geo Medic —

Offering Virginians Disaster and Wilderness First Aid and Supporting Ivy Creek Too!

Matt Rosefsky has a passion for the wilderness that has led him to a career in preparing people to deal with natural disasters and mishaps in the wild. Since 2007 he has been teaching wilderness medicine around Virginia and neighboring states, but he began donating to Ivy Creek Foundation in 2004 while planning the founding of Outdoor Adventure Social Club (OASC) and making Charlottesville his home. Matt says, “I wanted to influence people to donate to relevant, awesome nonprofit organizations, including Ivy Creek Foundation. Where better to inspire people to donate, than the wonderful steward (and more) of a gem of trail systems so close to the City of Charlottesville? When people joined the club, they could choose to add a donation to ICF; then I had OASC add some matching funds, and sent the money on to ICF.”



Matt's inaugural WFA class at ICNA in 2007

Many of Matt's initial Wilderness First Aid classes were offered at Ivy Creek, but they have grown in popularity so much that he now offers them in many different

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venues: Matt says, “I loved holding the course at ICNA; I have since transitioned to holding these open-

enrollment courses at the UVA School of Medicine, to be able to serve greater numbers with the help of a second instructor.”

Matt explains: “MEDIC (which stands for Medical Education: Do-it-yourself Injury Care) is the name of my corner of SOLO, the oldest continuously-operating school of wilderness medicine on the planet, with home campus beside the White Mountains of New Hampshire. I created MEDIC in 2011 when I started teaching much more than I used to, thanks to our good friend John Holden and many others at Blue Ridge Mountain Sports who partnered with me to bring this education to all of the communities in which there are BRMS stores. To date, OASC plus the MEDIC/BRMS partners together have supported Ivy Creek by donating over \$3,000 to ICF. We thought it was important that we not only give wilderness medical education to our community, but that we also make cash donations to local nonprofits.”

An eclectic education matches Matt's adventurous spirit — a Bachelor of Mechanical and Aerospace Engineering and a Masters in Mechanical Engineering both from Cornell, followed by a dual-degree M.A. in East Asian Studies and M.B.A. from the University of Virginia, then Wilderness EMT (NREMT), and Basic Life Support for Healthcare Providers (CPR & AED).

Matt writes, “Working as a young engineer, I wondered how the general manager of our office and factory managed the entire facility, with a degree in just one discipline. Meanwhile I was lucky to travel to East Asia a few times on the company's dime. These things led me to UVA's MBA / MA East Asian Studies dual degree program, at the time when the Enron fiasco happened. While that caused me to become a bit jaded to working in the world of big business, I fell in love with hiking and backpacking the trails in our region's foothills and mountains, co-founded UVA Outdoors, and then after graduation took a SOLO Wilderness First Responder course and founded Outdoor Adventure Social Club. A few years later I wanted to be able to teach Wilderness First Aid to OASC's guides, which led me to become a Wilderness EMT and SOLO instructor.”



So just what is a “Geo Medic?” Matt explains, “Geo Medic is the term for the highest wilderness medical training I've had; it is above my Wilderness EMT certification. Geo Medic teaches practitioners how to set up and run all stations of a field medical clinic, including long-term patient care either in a disaster zone or in some remote part of the world — both cases when there is no functioning hospital nearby.

Hiking Ivy Creek's trails is quite safe with map and compass, Matt believes, but he advises, “Be prepared. In addition to the ubiquitous '10 essentials,' try another approach: Imagine your day hike unexpectedly and uncontrollably turns into an overnight excursion, with weather and temperature turned as-bad-as-you-can-imagine-is-possible. Then create a list of what you would need to survive the night. A good resource on how to maximize hiking safety and preparedness is: www.hikesafe.com (in addition to our SOLO WFA wilderness and first aid certification course below!)”

ATTENTION Charlottesville Area Hikers and Campers

MEDIC SOLO is offering the weekend-long Disaster & Wilderness First Aid course in Charlottesville on May 23-24. MEDIC and BRMS are donating 10% of the proceeds from this course to Ivy Creek Foundation. This highly-successful program will train you how to respond in the case of medical emergency in a disaster zone or in a rural or natural area far from a hospital. Become prepared to handle accidents, destructive weather, etc. More info and registration at www.solowfa.com or 434-465-8733. (This is a Blue Ridge Mountain Sports Community Event.)