

RMRU NEWSLETTER

PUBLISHED MONTHLY BY THE RIVERSIDE MOUNTAIN RESCUE UNIT, INC.
A VOLUNTEER NON-PROFIT CORPORATION

MEMBER OF THE MOUNTAIN RESCUE ASSOCIATION

Volume IV, Issue 7, July 1968
Editor, Jim Fairchild

17 July - Board Meeting
24 July - Regular Meeting
26-28 July- Training Session
14 August - Board Meeting
21 August - Regular Meeting
24 August - Training Session

COMING EVENTS. Board Meeting, 17 July, 1968, Fairchild's home, 4855 Central Ave. There will be crucial items to be considered. All RMRU members welcome.

Regular Meeting, 24 July 1968, Shamel Park on Arlington Ave., west of Freeway, 1968.

Dr. Norman Mellor speaks on "How to Postpone or Prevent Heart Attacks." Also, we again plan for the Ritter-Banner trip.

Training Session (see June Newsletter). Same plans as for June only the date is different.

Board Meeting, 14 August, 1968

Regular Meeting, 21 August, 1968

(Remember, Regular Meetings are preceded by Board Meeting & Dinner, 1800, Sir Georges.)

Training Session, 24 August, a day of Bloodhound Training followed by a picnic.

PLEASE! Your Call Captains and especially their wives implore all members to let them know when you are unavailable or not at listed phones. Considerable time is lost by Call Captains making wasted first calls, then the wives often lose hours of sleep trying repeated subsequent calls. The Call Captains have a habit of letting each other know when they just go out for inner, for instance.

APOLOGY. You are right, the June Newsletter was too long. News items just kept snowballing, then the deadline arrived with its usual rush. The misspelling and broken sequence resulted. Even so, several people commented favorably on the news and ideas therein. We'll try to eliminate the errors, though.

WHY? Several years ago an official of a Sheriff's Dept. was asked why he would call RMRU instead of another unit. His answer, "I'll use the best tool to get the job done." We believe this answer applies to MRA (Mountain Rescue Association) units. These groups have achieved proficiency in search and rescue skills and have been tested prior to acceptance into MRA. Here in the California Region, MRA, we test for a high standard in rock and snow rescue, individual skills, and preparedness in organization and equipment. You might review the two-part series, "What Does RMRU Have to Offer," in the May and June Newsletters for further answers to, "Why Call An MRA Accredited Unit?"

REALISM, HOW MUCH? At last month's meeting a unit member asked, "Can we justify the degree of realism we put into staging problems on technical terrain, and the intensity of practice?" He was referring to our winter training trip where a practice fall caused a real collision between two roped climbers on high-angle snow, and a simulated fall prefacing an evacuation problem on similar terrain came too close to a real injury. Through the years RMRU's leaders have felt that pushing realism to the ragged edge results in safer, more efficient rescues. The real thing then presents fewer surprises and no insurmountable problems. WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT IT? Write and let us know, we might run a resume later.

RESCUE ACTIVITY. After the long drought came the flood...

THE PRESIDENT'S BOX - "That Was The Week That Was" (June 23-30). RMRU just had the busiest week in its history with four missions. The members put in 702 hours manhours in three short missions and one very long one. These 702 hours represent 28% of the total search and rescue

hours of 1967. One of these missions produced a most generous donation. The money from this donation along with money previously contributed through the sustaining membership drive will allow RMRU to purchase two 5 watt portable two-way radios. The cost of these two FM radios will be \$1500. This is a tremendous step toward a complete radio system. However, we still need almost \$4000 to complete the system.

'TWTWTW' made it very clear that we still need more men. The men who responded put in a lot of long hours, all volunteer. However, they all agreed it would have been easier if there had been more manpower. If you know of anyone who might be interested in joining RMRU let us know or have them write to our post office box. - Pres. Walt

WHISKEY CREEK SEARCH - 16 June. Sierra Madre called about noon on Sunday, the 16th of June, requesting assistance in a search for a 6 year-old in the Whiskey Creek area (about 40 miles south of Yosemite National Park). The boy was found while we were preparing to leave town.-Al

SEARCH - On Saturday 22 June a five year old boy wandered away, barefoot, from the campground above Twin Lakes in Mono County. The teams in the California Region of MRA were requested to assist in the search. Members from the following teams started leaving for the area at 4 a.m. Sunday: Altadena Mountain Rescue Squad, China Lake Mountain Rescue Group, Montrose Search and Rescue Team, Riverside Mountain Rescue Unit, Sierra Madre Search and Rescue Team, and Sylmar Mountain Rescue Unit. Also two prospective MRA teams assisted: Alameda County Search and Rescue Team and San Diego Mountain Rescue Team. Don Colbert, with two Bloodhounds from the Charles Mel Search and Rescue Foundation tried in vain all day Sunday to track the lost boy. Numerous other groups along with the MRA teams searched all week but without success. The lake is at an elevation of about 7000 feet and temperatures dropped into the thirties at night. The surrounding terrain is very steep and rocky. On Friday 28 June, two C-119 airplanes from March Air Force Base, under permission from Western Air Rescue Center at Hamilton Air Force Base, airlifted men from the above teams to Bishop. They were then bussed to the Twin Lakes area arriving after midnight. Early Saturday morning the teams went to work and searched all day without finding even a footprint. The whole operation was put back into motion early Sunday morning. At about 10 a.m. the unhappy word was radioed to the teams that the boy had been found, but not alive. The teams assembled at base camp and were bussed back to Bishop and then flown home. Mono County Sheriff Evans and his staff supported the MRA teams in any way they could and many thanks are in order to them. - Walt

SOBOBA HOT SPRINGS - 25 June. The hills that rise from the very edge of the resort are precipitous, consisting of loose rock in a matrix of dirt. Two young men on a day hike were overtaken by darkness as they descended this treacherous terrain. They stopped and called for help. A maid at the hotel heard them, the result was that RMRU was called at 2130 and rolled to the scene. We ascended the old trail several hundred feet to a point near the boys. A flashlight's beam and encouragement got them safely down. The rescue was simple and easy, but could have been the reverse had they tried to get back in the darkness. Walt has described the extraordinary climax to this mission. - Jim

SEARCH ALVIN MEADOW AREA - 26 June. On Wednesday the 26th of June at about 5:30 p.m. the Riverside County Sheriff called us on another rescue. We were still bubbling and exuberant from our great success the evening before in the hills behind Soboba Hot Springs, so we jumped into this with all fours. That is Sugar, one of the teams tracking Bloodhounds, jumped in with all fours. We arrived at the Idyllwild Sheriff Sub-station approximately an hour and a half after the call came in. Captain Crowell of the Riverside Sheriff Department, who heads up the majority of our local search and rescue operations, gave us all the information he had on the subject, a nine year-old boy, last seen in the Alvin Meadow area behind the Art Center in Idyllwild at about 3:00 p.m. that same afternoon.

Walt Walker, President and #1 doghandler on the team obtained a scent article and we all started for Alvin Meadow. Sugar was given the scent and fired up. Right away she went into her routine and took off cross country, and soon led us down a dirt road. We had gone a hundred yards when the word came over the radio that the youngster had been found. He was on the same road we were but about three curves away. He had walked onto the road just as a sheriff's vehicle came around the curve. However, we all felt quite good knowing that Sugar was on the right scent and would have led us to the boy shortly. The boy was not injured and

was found well before dark. - Larry

TECHNICAL SEARCH ON TAHQUITZ ROCK - 1 July, Morning. After a long hard week of search and rescue operations, 2 searches in our local areas and an eight-day search in the Bridgeport region, we all felt it was impossible to have any more excitement. Several of us had landed Sunday evening at about 8:30 p.m. at March Air Force Base after the search for the five year old boy had ended, in the Bridgeport region of the High Sierra. We were all beat from the search and the long ride on a C-119 cargo plane. But there's no rest for the weary, (or is it the wicked?); anyway at 2:00 a.m. Monday morning July 1st we received the usual call from the Riverside County Sheriff, two rock climbers were stranded on the White Maiden, a northern route on Tahquitz Rock. Again we met at the Idyllwild Sub-station, and went to Humber Park. We could see a light being flashed by the stranded climbers and thus could get a fairly good idea of their location on the rock. The predawn hike around the rock and up the backside was long and warm. We got to the top of the rock as it became light enough to see well, from there the deputies Gilmore and Hollis could direct us via radio to a spot over the climbers. Once voice contact was made everyone went to work setting up a rappel point for someone to get down and render aid to the victims and establishing anchors for a mechanical advantage so the two climbers could be hauled up from their perch on the rock. Larry Percy was elected to go over the side as he happened to be the smallest and lightest and consequently the easiest team member to haul up after the victims were safe on top. By 6:30 a.m. Larry had reached the victims, both were in fine shape and had done the proper thing when they found that they were off the normal climbing route, STAYED EXACTLY WHERE THEY WERE. Both victims were hauled up very quickly and without incident. The trip down went quite well and fast with the exception of a couple of places that required some pack passing, very heavy pack passing! Both victims were in good shape and none the worse for wear after their night out; fortunately it was a balmy night and neither one complained of being cold.-Larry

SUSTAINING MEMBERSHIP. RMRU is overwhelmed by the very generous donation of Mr. & Mrs. Frank Nevins for the assistance RMRU rendered their son, Tom, above Soboba Hot Springs on June 25. The \$1000 they gave will be added to the donations of our other Sustaining Members used as mentioned in the President's Box. This month we would also like to welcome to our Sustaining Membership DeAnza Chevrolet, Heller's Chevron, and Highland Outfitters. - Al

RUNNERS NOTE. Your training footgear can make quite a difference. On the recommendation of Dick Webster and his father, your editor went to Santa Monica for "Tiger Shoes." This reduced his average time for five miles from 39 to 35 minutes - he just can't wait until he gets in shape. See him for the brochure.



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