

RMRU NEWSLETTER

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A VOLUNTEER NON-PROFIT CORPORATION

MEMBER OF THE MOUNTAIN RESCUE ASSOCIATION

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Editor, Jim Fairchild

November 6 - Board Meeting
November 13 - Regular Meeting
November 14 - Expedition Movies
November 15 - Idyllwild Benefit
November 15-17 - Training Session



The RMRU Newsletter really got around in October. We published 1500 copies and all but a few were either mailed or handed out. This has to be some kind of a record.

Search and rescue again has broken and set records in October for RMRU. Three more call outs brought our total for the year to 21. RMRU members spent 801 manhours on these three missions. This brings our total for the year to 3,244 manhours and that is 775 more hours than last year, which was our highest. With the winter snows there will probably be more missions as this has been the pattern in prior years.

RMRU received the two long awaited FM radios just one day before the first call out in October. These new lightweight radios are just tremendous. We put them to good use in Sequoia National Park and on the search for the man near Red Mountain. All we need now is MORE of them, radios that is, NOT missions.

Well, it finally happened. While part of the team was up north in Sequoia working a search, with other California Region teams, we at home received a call. We received the call Sunday afternoon, an unusual time for a call out. Fortunately all but two of those who were not up north responded. This gave us nine men which was very good considering the situation.

Don't forget to bring your unsold tickets and money on the 14th. Larry will be there to collect both. Once again I urge all RMRU members to be there for the benefit of all. The more money we raise the sooner we will be able to purchase more radios. - Pres. Walt

COMING EVENTS

November 6 - Board Meeting will have passed prior to the Newsletter's mailing, but just a reminder that board meetings occur two Wednesdays before the monthly training session, regular meetings the Wednesday before training. Just which Wednesday of the month depends upon the weekend of the training session, usually, but not always the last weekend.

November 13 - Regular Meeting, 1930 Highland Outfitters. Board dinner meeting, 1800, at Sir George's.

November 14 - Riverside Andean Expedition movies, 1930, Magnolia School Auditorium, Riverside. Still time left to interest your friends and acquaintances in this exciting trip. Emphasize that this is the chance to obtain first-hand information on touring and climbing in South America. Money from ticket sales goes for more radios--the two we have now show the extreme value and necessity.

November 15-17 - San Jacinto familiarization hike. Friday evening, when convenient, hike to Skunk Cabbage Meadow and camp for the night. Saturday and Sunday we'll backpack the high country to become better acquainted with the terrain. There will be numerous pauses to practice a bunch of the skills we've not formally worked on for quite a while. We plan to be home by 1800 Sunday.

November 16 - The Los Podres Unit will be tested in the Montrose area. It is customary for two men from each MRA unit to participate -- rating the candidate teams' performance and offering helpful suggestions.

SUSTAINING MEMBERSHIP

We would like to congratulate our first renewing sustaining members, Mr. & Mrs. Kenneth L. Andrews. Thanks again for the continuing support. - Al.

TRAINING

The October training session gave us a much needed opportunity to sharpen our technical rescue skills. A pleasant fall day was spent in Joshua Tree National Monument practicing in the boulders with litters and willing victims.

Looking forward to November, we have a renewal of the San Jacinto familiarization hike initiated two years ago by Bud White. Two days later, several team members will be heading to Baja to spend the holiday climbing the big one, Pico Diablo, 10,126'.

At the last meeting a tentative training schedule was presented which was wholeheartedly accepted by the team, so for next year it looks as follows:

November 15-17 - San Jacinto familiarization

December 14 - Helitac at Western (probable)

January 25-26, 1969 - Winter trip, San Jacinto, hike and winter gear shake down, tram to peak

February 21-23 - San Gorgonio trip, practice and peak climb, lightweight, primitive shelter

March 29 - Open

April 25-27 - Ascent on E. Fork Snowcreek, N. Face San Jacinto Peak to Marion Mountain Camp

May 30-June 1 - San Jacinto familiarization. Black Mountain to Palm Springs and reverse.

June 28 - Family day hike, Tahquitz Peak and Valley.

July 26 - Tahquitz Rock technical practice

August 29-31 - High Sierra trip, Le Conte and Corcoran Peaks.

September 27 - Desert trek

October 25 - Joshua Tree, technical at Hidden Valley

November 21-23 - Desert Peaks, Coxcomb Mountains, Spector, Topaz, Dyatic.

December 12-14 - South San Jacinto, Herkey Creek/Desert Divide.

- Bill

KEARSARGE-GARDINER BASIN SEARCH - October 9-20th.

On October 9, 1968, while on an extended trip in the Sierras, Jim Fairchild and King Dalton of RMRU became involved with the NPS in a search for David Oldfield of Bakersfield, California who had failed to return on October 8th from a solo backpack trip between Kearsarge Pass and Gardiner Basin. On the 10th Jim and King found his entries in the Kearsarge Pass and Mt. Gould registers dated the 5th of October and managed to find and follow a single set of tracks from Mt. Gould down to Dragon Lake but lost them there. Being unable to find any further trace of him, John Bowdler of Sequoia-Kings Canyon National Park called Walt Walker of RMRU who in turn called out the California Region MRA teams.

Members of the China Lake team, Sierra Madre, Riverside, San Diego, Montrose, and Sylmar teams arrived at the Onion Valley roadhead late Friday the 11th. Saturday morning dawned raw and gusty so while two teams from China Lake searched the east side of Gould, the remainder of the searchers packed over to Bullfrog Lake hoping to be lifted by helicopter from there into specific search assignments. Unfortunately the weather deteriorated throughout Saturday, the 12th and Sunday the 13th, preventing helicopter operations and eventually depositing several inches of snow over the entire search region and sending the searchers home in disgust.

By Thursday the 17th, the weather in the region had cleared and the Park Service once again called on the MRA teams. With the skillful help of helicopter pilots Don Sides and Jerry Foster, 22 members of the China Lake, Riverside and Sierra Madre teams were lifted in to search assignments west of the crest and north of Glen Pass. A base camp was established at the southern end of the Rae Lakes basin and during the 18th, 19th, and 20th, an intensive search was made throughout the region north from Charlotte Lake to Woods Creek and west

from Onion Valley to Gardiner Basin. This search failed to uncover any additional trace of Mr. Oldfield probably because of the snow conditions which were sufficiently bad to make travel in the sleeper chutes and higher cirques very slow and difficult.

Weather conditions throughout these three days were clear and cold with the temperature at base camp about 0715 on the 19th being variously reported at 4^oF and 8^oF. RMRU's two new FM handie talkies functioned beautifully as part of a very effective MRA communications net which featured Sierra Madre's big antenna at the relay station on the summit of Mt. Gould. Search participants who have photographs of helicopter operations on the 19th or 20th are asked to send them to: Terry Foster, Madison Aviation, 2301 N. Greenfield Rd., Mesa, Arizona.

By the afternoon of Sunday, the 20th, the map showing the areas searched was completely filled by a maze of crisscrossing lines and it was the opinion of both the Park Service and the MRA searchers that there was little left to be gained from further intensive effort although the Park Service intended to continue search operations with their own personnel.

Search operations which do not bear fruit are frustrating at best, but this effort served to demonstrate MRA's capabilities to the Park Service as well as to further solidify MRA Southern region cooperation. - Mike Daugherty

RESCUE - October 20, 1968

At 4 o'clock on Sunday afternoon the phone rang and the thing that all of us had often feared finally happened; while having a big search going on in the Sierras, we got the call for a technical rescue in our own area. The phone call was about two little boys who were hung-up on a ledge high above the floor of Massacre Canyon in the Soboba Hills. They had been on a picnic with their parents and as they put it, "We were just messin' 'round", when they found themselves in a position they couldn't get out of without help. As with a good share of our rescues this year, the terrain was very high angle, very loose rock with lots of rattlesnakes. The boys were trapped on a good ledge about 400 feet above the canyon floor and about 250 feet below the ridge of the hill. The members that were not in the Sierra searching for the lost hiker from Bakersfield, reached the ridge above the boys about 5 o'clock and immediately started to set up anchors for a rappel and hauling point. Good rock was scarce so 3 - three foot aluminum angle pickets were driven deep into the ground as the anchor points. Larry Percy was elected to go over the side. When he got to the boys, they were in good shape and in high spirits. One was 9 years old and the other 14; both were from the Buena Park area. They were tied into the hauling line one at a time and raised to the ridge without mishap. The boys are apparently none-the-worse-for-wear as we haven't heard a word either from or about them, and just barely did get a "good-bye" and "thanks" before they left. - Larry

SEARCH - Red Mountain Area (near Hemet) - October 24, 1968

The call came at 2 a.m. that a 76-year-old man was missing. Deputy James Walsh, Sargeant Watson Gilmore and Captain Gilbert Crowell represented the Riverside County Sheriff's Department. The original call was received by the Hemet Police Department. Since the area where the man was missing from was in the county, they turned the information over to the Sheriff's Department. The victim had driven out at noon to look at property he owned. When he did not return in the evening, his wife notified the authorities. His car was found at the side of the road. His property was a 40-acre parcel that was undeveloped and with no road. We had obtained a scent article (pajama top) from the man's wife. "Sugar", one of the teams Bloodhounds was started at the car. She at once started tracking, heading in the direction of the man's property. She tracked into dense and high brush. The brush became so dense that we could not get through with the dog. As the sun came up we picked up footprints right where the dog was stopped by the brush. We began to visual track. At that time we radioed for all team members to converge on the area. About that time we faintly heard

a call. It was the missing man. However, he could not be seen because of the tall brush. We zeroed in on him by ear and were quickly with him. He was in good condition considering he had been without water for almost 18 hours and with temperatures in the nineties. We gave him water and offered food which he declined. We then led him out to his car and his son-in-law drove him home. -Walt



The Road Runner sez-

First, how about a backpack over Kearsarge Pass to indicate in what kind of condition MRA personnel may be found? Second, helitac signals may seem superfluous at times, even ridiculous to some observers, but they may mean the difference between

life and death to a pilot and his passengers and prevent damage to the machine. The Roadrunner saw how crucial the signals can be during a recent High Sierra mission. The pilot requested signals, then followed them very closely. Third, let us always try to contact subjects of search by voice: call as though you expect him to hear; listen as though you expect him to answer. Fourth, newsletters from SAR units are full of interesting and valuable information--wish more units printed and distributed them. Fifth, RMRU people who run should have favorite runs. If they would send a description of the length, route, and terrain to the Roadrunner, an informal schedule could be made up, then we could get together and lope along in a convivial group.

EDUCATIONAL ENDEAVORS

RMRU is more or less constantly involved in outdoor education. We have a slide show depicting our operation that is available to service clubs, youth groups, church groups, outdoor clubs, and others. We occasionally set up displays at public functions such as fairs. We have frequent requests for talks and demonstrations on equipment, rescue operations, first aid, and wilderness safety. While our primary function is search and rescue, we are vitally concerned with prevention of outdoor problems. Don't hesitate to call us for a presentation along this line.

DO YOU REMEMBER? "It's only 18 miles over the hump to Pahrump!"

TIME VALUE - PLEASE EXPEDITE

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