

# RMRU NEWSLETTER

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

MEMBER OF THE MOUNTAIN RESCUE ASSOCIATION

Volume V, Issue 2, February 1969  
Editor, Jim Fairchild

|            |                 |
|------------|-----------------|
| Feb. 5     | Board Meeting   |
| Feb. 8     | Training        |
| Feb. 19    | Regular Meeting |
| Feb. 21-23 | Training        |
| Mar. 5     | Board Meeting   |
| Mar. 26    | Regular Meeting |
| Mar. 29    | Training        |

## IN MEMORIAM

DON BUCK

DENNIS HUESTIS

CHARLES RAYE

These men gave their lives while directly involved with helping people during Southern California's recent floods. Don and Dennis were drowned in the same accident, January 19. They were members of the Los Padres Search and Rescue Team. Charles, of the Montrose Search and Rescue Team, was drowned a week later, January 26. We of RMRU extend our heartfelt sympathy to the relatives and team members of these men.

### COMING EVENTS

Feb. 5 - Highland Outfitters, 0700 to ?, Newsletter Addressing, Board Meeting.

TRAINING - The training session for January, snow camping on San Jacinto, got off to an inauspicious start with two members being late. Fortunately, however, this gave us time to reconsider our fate as we learned from the tram operators that it was most likely to be closed down for the weekend and it was raining heavily. Consequently, we opted to the discretionary better part and rescheduled it for 1 February, fully expecting to be called on a rescue anyway.

Saturday, 8 February, we have the rescheduled HELITAC session starting at 8 a.m., Western Helicopter at the Rialto Airport. Practice your PLF's and don't forget hard hat and goggles. Call Fairchild for directions to field.

Feb. 19 - Highland Outfitters, 1930 to ?, Regular Meeting. Board meets for dinner at Sir George's, 1800. Bring your entire Training Manual -- we'll review the material now that it's pretty well along to completion.

Feb. 21-23 is the long awaited San Geronio annual winter trip. Departure time will be up to the individual groups, starting probably as early as Friday morning. This year the plan is to go with minimum gear, bivouacing in snow caves or igloos with one-man tents or bivouac sacks as back up. We should be high in the Little Draw with full technical gear. Perhaps this year we will camp on the peak, even camp on top as in 1965.

Mar. 29 - Mt. Rubidoux, 0800-1700, First Aid Seminar & Review. Your perfect opportunity to renew your Advanced ticket, hear four medical people on Hot & Cold, Internal Injuries, Soft & Bone Tissue Damage, and Care of Children. All these presentations will be slanted toward our operations in the wilderness. More details later.

April 18-19 - The wives of RMRU team members are going to have a rummage sale with all proceeds being donated to the Unit. We need the support of everyone to make this a big success and

are putting out an S.O.S. for rummage of any kind. How about doing your spring cleaning a little early this year, and gals, don't be hesitant to get rid of that dress or hat because you might some day wear it...pack it up and donate it to us for this sale. If you have any large items, we have three team members with transportation to pick up your items. Call one of the following: Jim Fairchild, 683-2657; Larry Percy, 689-2448; or Bill Speck, 688-6947. We would like to start collecting things from now on so we have enough time to sort and mark the items. Call one of the above fellows or a team member you know if you have anything to donate. Be sure and put Friday, April 18 and Saturday, April 19 on your calendar. Our sale will be from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. at Shamel House (adjacent to Shamel Park Pool), 3650 Arlington Avenue, Riverside; and remember the old saying: ONE PERSON'S TRASH IS ANOTHER PERSON'S TREASURE! (Note to all RMRU gals: We will hold our next planning meeting on Wednesday, February 19, 7:30 P.M. at the home of Natalie Andrews, 5947 Green Valley, Riverside. Plan to attend.)

#### SUSTAINING MEMBERSHIP

We want to thank the Mineral Wool Insulations Corporation for their very generous donation. We are sorry their acquaintance was made under such tragic circumstances, (search of 22 Jan). The team is very pleased to see the following people renew their sustaining membership: Mr. & Mrs. David Harrah, Mr. & Mrs. Albin Merzals, Norman H. Mellor, M. D., and Mr. & Mrs. Roland Wilhelmy. We wish to express a very special thanks to Mr. & Mrs. Wilhelmy for the gift of their 1963 Jeep 4-wheel drive pick-up to the team. Words cannot adequately convey the appreciation of our team members for this most generous donation. The "driver" of our old vehicle is still on "Cloud Nine." Al

#### SAR ACTIVITY

Search - 1 January 1969. Of all the inconvenient times to get a rescue call, RMRU received the first one of the year at 0210 on 1 January. Nearly everyone on the team was already together at Ron Harris' house, so it took very few calls and a lot of convincing to get us going.

It seems two doctors from Indio were twelve hours overdue. Walt Walker and Larry Percy were also overdue, to the rescue, as Walt's car was lacking enough fuel to make it to Idyllwild and ran out near Strawberry Creek at 0315. Since both victims were doctors, and so much overdue, it was felt by all that a chopper should be called. Just after dawn a bird piloted by Darrell Ellenburg from Western Helicopters in Rialto, arrived and shortly thereafter took off with Al Andrews and Jim Fairchild. They headed straight for San Jacinto Peak. There they found two hikers that fit the description of the victims. Al and Jim helitaced into waist deep snow only to find out it was the wrong pair of hikers. Again they were picked up by the helicopter and headed for Wellman's Cienega to try and backtrack the doctors from their starting point. Upon reaching Wellman's Cienega they found two more hikers who proved to be the right ones this time. However, the victims seemed to feel slightly indignant that someone had called a rescue team to search for them. They thought that just because they were some 18 to 20 hours overdue there should have been no cause for alarm. Since the doctors didn't want to be flown out in the chopper, we thought it best to accompany them out. So Bill Speck was flown in to help with the trip out. The remainder of the operation was uneventful and just a good hike in the snow.

RMRU would like to say "thanks" to the Riverside County Sheriff's Department for the help and cooperation that was given us. Our special thanks to Chief McCoy, Capt. Gib Crowell, Lt. Harley Margrave and Lt. Ed Brown.

By the way, we did catch the tail end of a couple of the bowl games. Larry

Downed Aircraft Search - 22 January 1969. About 1830 on 21 January a two engine aircraft belonging to the Mineral Wool Insulations Corporation, a division of the Susquehanna Corp. with three persons aboard enroute to Riverside radioed Ontario Airport that they were over Banning and unable to continue due to poor weather. The pilot then indicated an intention to turn back towards Palm Springs. This was the last heard or seen of the aircraft.

When the Mineral Wool Insulations Corp. offered to hire a helicopter to aid in the search, the Riverside Sheriff's Office called RMRU to assist. About 0800 on the 22nd, five team members assembled at the Banning Substation and by 0850 Walker and Ricker were aboard the heli with pilot Don Landells, searching for the downed aircraft. In 20 short minutes they located the wreckage at the 4000 ft. level just west of the Banning-Idyllwild highway. Though hindered by indirect communications, Fairchild, Briggs, and Daugherty were soon on the scene. All three passengers of the aircraft had been killed instantly on impact and the aircraft was unrecognizably strewn over several thousand square feet. There was little to be done other than to collect the victims' personal effects, hack a path through the brush to facilitate removing the bodies and await arrival of the coroner.

Disturbing as this task was, we all tried to remind ourselves that these people might have survived the crash, in which case they might have been in urgent need of our help. We really have no choice other than to proceed on the premise the victims of such a crash are alive and awaiting rescue. Once again, the importance of adequate communications was made evident. Fortunately, no damage was done this time. As soon as RMRU has one or two more radios and a helmet-headset for use in the helicopter, we will have a self sufficient communications net. Mike

Evacuation, 27 January 1969. The swift, boulder-rolling tumult of water roared down the narrowing gorge. Through a light flurry of snow our headlamps illuminated the approaching litter. A small head with saucer-sized eyes lifted above her father's chest. Soon, both father and baby were safely on terra firma and we sent the litter back across the Tyrolean Traverse for another human load. 13 people and one dog later we had completed what was a spectacular and satisfying mission. The people were friends of King Dalton who live in cabins in a side canyon off San Antonio Creek. They had sent word to King earlier in the day that they wanted out -- huge boulders had destroyed several cabins already. After unsuccessful attempts to cross the river, we found a climbing rope at the head of the gorge and utilized it to send Jake across with other lines. Walt and King followed and while Jake and King went the half mile to get the people, we rigged the Tyrolean. It was about 120' wide. Whenever one of our members or their friends or relatives are in need of help, we roll regardless of circumstances (we were out of our own billiwick). This mission turned out to be a tremendous impromptu training session.

#### NEW MEMBERS

Angelo Codevilla, Steve Drake, George Ruptier, and Chris Rush have recently joined RMRU. We hope to tell something about them when our biography sketches begin to appear in the NL.

#### RESIGNED.

Dave Martin resigned on 17 January to join San Diego Unit. He lives much closer to them and our loss is their gain -- Dave is a fine SAR man and will help their team.

#### 1970 TRAINING SESSIONS

It is said we don't really plan training a year in advance, so here are plans for January and February of next year: Jan. 23-25. An outing similar to this year's on Mt. San Jacinto; February 27-March 1. Traditional winter training on Mt. San Gorgonio. March 28 should be a fine time to explore the lower Fall-Snowcreek area on Mt. San Jacinto, and April 24-26 optimum for a return to Martinez Peak.

MT. RUBIDOUX. Two Wednesdays now we've had most instructive practice on the cliffs. Last night we rigged a Tyrolean Traverse for the edification of three men who were not with us 7 January. 26 February will be our next session up there...come along!

#### BOOK REVIEWS

Those of you who have read Colin Fraser's book, THE AVALANCHE ENIGMA, Rand McNally 1966, but are interested in the problem in this country, not Europe, will find Montgomery Atwater's

THE AVALANCHE HUNTERS, Macrae Smith 1968, a welcome addition to this subject. Mr. Atwater is the co-author of the presently out-of-print Department of Agriculture Handbook which is probably the best treatise on the subject to be published in this country. The book is a very readable narrative starting with his beginnings as a snow ranger at Alta in 1945 through avalanche research and control. He takes us to the major ski resorts and two chapters of pertinent avalanche search and rescue. This is a book to be highly recommended, for its wealth of detail and understanding as well as political intrigues. Bill



### The Road Runner sez-

Three missions already this year, and quite memorable at that. The New Year's Day episode to find two doctors who didn't want help; the saddening plane wreck where we hoped to find live victims. Incidentally, never fly west through San Gorgonio Pass in doubtful weather conditions! And then last Monday's most satisfying outing to help King's friends and find that our never-used-for-real-before techniques were up to the task. Years ago the Roadrunner said: "Naw, we don't need a sheet in the training manual depicting a Tyrolean Traverse, we never use it." The sheet will be ready at the February meeting. Sure glad we practiced it a few times. Two especially significant sayings come to mind and are offered for your consideration: "It is amazing how much good a man can do when he isn't worried about who gets the credit," and, "Your criticisms are welcome, and so is your help." An organization's progress up the trail of improvement has a lot to do with how many members are pulling and how many are riding. Beep Beep! Joggers alert. We may have the neighborhood running schedule ready soon. Bud White's son, Mike, finished 1st in his age group at the Las Vegas Marathon on 25 January..

.IN CONTINUOUS RAIN!

DO YOU REMEMBER WHERE AND WHEN? **ANSWER  
NEXT  
MONTH**





**TAKE NOTE  
CALIFORNIA REGION  
MRA  
CONFERENCE  
MARCH 1<sup>st</sup>-2<sup>nd</sup>  
FRESNO**

*Are you ready? →*



**TOKEN FROM SEATTLE MRC NEWSLETTER**

**SNOW & ICE TECHNIQUES - CHECK LIST**

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

PLACE \_\_\_\_\_

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

**ICE AXE ARRESTS**

**A. AXE IN ARREST POSITION**

FEET FIRST - FACE DOWN \_\_\_\_\_

FEET FIRST - FACE UP \_\_\_\_\_

HEAD FIRST - FACE DOWN \_\_\_\_\_

HEAD FIRST - FACE UP \_\_\_\_\_

SPIN OUT - FACE UP \_\_\_\_\_

**B. HANDED AXE WHILE MOVING**

FEET FIRST - FACE UP \_\_\_\_\_

HEAD FIRST - FACE UP \_\_\_\_\_

**C. TEAM ROPE MANAGEMENT**

**D. TEAM ARRESTS**

BOLLARDS \_\_\_\_\_

**ICE AXE BELAYS**

**A. BOOT AXE**

C BEND \_\_\_\_\_

S BEND \_\_\_\_\_

**B. HIP AXE**

PICKETS \_\_\_\_\_

ICE PITONS \_\_\_\_\_

STEP CUTTING \_\_\_\_\_

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TIME VALUE - PLEASE EXPEDITE

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