

RMRU NEWSLETTER

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A VOLUNTEER NON-PROFIT CORPORATION
P. O. BOX 5444, RIVERSIDE, CALIFORNIA 92507
MEMBER OF THE MOUNTAIN RESCUE ASSOCIATION

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Jim Fairchild, Editor
Bill Speck, Photographer
Walt Walker, Publisher

COMING EVENTS ---

- 10 June, 1900 at Highland Outfitters, Newsletter Mailing. Board Meeting later at Al's.
- 24 June, 1930, at Highland Outfitters, Regular Meeting. Plans for training, Dr. Mellor's medical care presentation.
- 26-27 June, Training Session.
- 8 July, Board Meeting.
- 15 September, first session of The First Aid Course. Starts at 1900, at the Southern California Gas Company auditorium, Riverside. Full details in the August Newsletter.

The June training session will be hot. We plan to ascend the south ridge of Tahquitz Canyon from Palm Springs to about the 3000' level, then drop down to the stream for Friday night's camp. Saturday we'll descend by climbing down and rappelling the falls. Backpacking and climbing in 100 Deg. plus weather can be quite a revelation, and takes good physical conditioning along with bulldog determination to be successful. Full details on preparations at the regular meeting. A wise member will study "Hot Weather Hints" in the training manual.

WARNING! ---

Son John and I were on our way Friday evening to go birding. Drove by Walt's to leave the Newsletter copy. Walt was gone so left material on porch under flower pot. Walt returned home to find that "puppy" (80 pounds) had broken out of fenced yard and devoured much of the newsletter. Most of the mission accounts, The Roadrunner Sez, and other features have been re-typed, from memory to a great extent. Lesson: always make carbon copies, never underestimate a Bloodhound's appetite.

SEARCH AND RESCUE ACTIVITY ---

3-4 May, The Sink Search. At about 2130 the Riverside County Sheriff's Dept. called to report a Boy Scout Troop overdue. Ten young Tenderfeet, led by Scoutmaster Bill Braden, had hiked into the area Saturday morning to camp overnight in the Sink or Grape Canyon. When they had not returned by 1330 Sunday, a man who was to help transport them waited until 2030 to tell the Banning Sub-station. RMRU rendezvoused at the Sub-station and planned the search. Bud White led a party up the E. FK. of Millard Canyon to check the Sink and Grape Canyon area. Jim Fairchild led a party up Whitewater Canyon to see if they had come out that way. It was a beautiful, dark evening. Everyone had been advised to watch for rattlesnakes, none were seen. But Fairchild's party found tracks of rabbit, coyote, bobcat, raccoon, lizards, quail, and a particularly large bear. The only human tracks were two adults going up canyon and returning. White's party was on the Scouts' tracks all the way up to and over the pass and below the Sink. By radio conversation we encouraged them by not having any Scout tracks in the Whitewater. Just prior to dawn we bivouaced near an extensive rock-slide where we lost the faint trail. This trail had led up Grape Canyon from Still's Landing, an old fisherman's cabin in a thicket of sycamores

and brush. Only a great horned owl was present now. At dawn we quickly hiked upward and found the trail to join White's party which, of course, had come across the Troop.. Scoutmaster Braden had done the right thing by keeping the boys together and in a nice camping spot -- one of the boys had sprained an ankle, hence, the delay. When we came in sight of RMRU and BSA we were providentially near a fine helispot that only needed some brush removed. Walt and tools were soon on hand, having been flown in by Darrell Ellenberg of Western Helicopters. After recalling my summer with the USFS (1943) by cutting brush, we were all lifted up to the Sink, while Walt and the injured Scout were flown out to the roadhead. We had a most enjoyable hike out with Scoutmaster Braden and nine of his Scouts. Have you any idea what nine hungry Scouts can do to our meager two-day iron ration? Spectacular! - Jim Fairchild



TECHNICAL RESCUE - 9 & 10 May - Tahquitz Rock

Saturday was one of those typical late spring days, it had begun cool, but by afternoon it had warmed to the point where you just want to lay around. Upon returning from the Scout Fair in Sunnyside I found a note, placed there by my dad, that there had been a rescue call. I had missed it only by a few minutes. Upon calling the Hemet sub-station I learned that two climbers were stranded. As quickly as possible the whole family helped to load my gear into the station wagon and was on my way. Arriving at Humber Park, I talked to two young climbers and they said they had heard about the problem and that the stranded climbers were on the route called the 'Error'. After transferring my gear, first aid belt and radio into my rucksack I started out for the base of the rock, a 30 minute hike up a trailless slope.

On the way I met a young couple who said they had heard that one of the stranded climbers had a nosebleed. This didn't sound too good and I started hiking faster, arriving at the bottom of the Error in 22 minutes. There was a group of very young climbers gathered and none of them felt that they could climb the 5.6 route. Looking up I could see a pair of feet sticking over a small ledge and another fellow standing. Discussing the situation with the group assembled I learned that a two man climbing team had fallen and that both needed help. The rescue truck arrived and I advised Al Andrews of the situation and what equipment would be needed. Shortly after sunset Bill Briggs arrived and we decided that we would start climbing immediately. Bill began leading the first pitch as darkness settled upon us. He belayed me up to a very large ledge and he started on the next pitch, which is the crux of the climb, the overhang. It was now dark and Bill was having trouble with his headlight. With my lamp lighting the way and a very heavy rucksack upon his back he led masterfully up and over the overhang. During this time one of the victims began to complain of being cold and thirsty. Bill belayed me up to him and I scrambled over to where I could look down on the victims. The sight was bone chilling, a climbing rope looped and laying around, tremendous splashes of blood and two climbers grossly injured sitting on the edge of a down sloping ledge. The most direct route to them was too dangerous for them as loose rock lay everywhere. So I had to climb down to them, off to one side. While climbing I bumped a small piece of dead wood and it bounced down. Immediately I yelled "rock". That small piece of wood dislodged a rock and it hurtled downward and struck Dick Webster's hardhat. He and Mike Daugherty were climbing up with the litter and the rescue sleeping bag. Needless to say they were not too thrilled with the rockfall.

As I reached the victims, Ron White began to move about and said he wanted to get up and leave. The tremendous laceration on his forehead, which bared the bone of the skull, was almost unsettling. I convinced him to stay put and yelled to Bill to tie me off and come over and help. The second victim, John Guthe, was sitting slumped over. Upon checking him, I found that he had died, probably shortly after the accident. Bill then secured the victims rope to a small tree and lowered another rope down to Mike who tied on the rescue sleeping bag. While I examined John, Bill hauled on the rope. The necessary first aid was given and the sleeping bag was placed around John. Once again the rope was lowered, this time the litter was tied on and Bill began to haul. However, it hung up on the overhang and he could not get over. I pendulumed out onto the face and with Bill pulling I worked it free. Bill then belayed Mike up the overhang while Dick worked on setting up an anchor for the second lower that would be needed later. Mike

quickly climbed down to Ron and I and we placed the injured young man into the litter. This was not as easy as it sounds and it was with considerable effort. Bill, Mike and I then hauled, pushed and strained to move the litter with victim up 20 feet to the ledge where we would start the first lower.

While Bill and Mike set up anchors I prepared to descend with the litter. We quickly got the litter moved over to the edge and then started the 400 foot descent. Everything was moving smoothly until the litter and I started over the overhang. It was extremely hard to move past the overhang and for days I could feel the sore muscles. (Bill was all ready sore since he had only been out of the hospital a few days for treatment on his back.) Dick began to give me directions so that the litter would stop near the second anchor. After he and I placed the litter securely on the ledge he transferred the ropes into the second set of brake bars and once again we were on our way down the steep cliffs complete with more overhangs. Dick shouted down that he was out of rope. The litter was not down to the base of the rock but on a tongue of snow. The team members who had all carried great loads to the base of the rock then climbed up the snow and took the litter. During the evacuation plans and routes were made for the carry back down to Humber Park. Part of the team started down carrying the victim with help of climbers who had been in the area. While this was in progress Mike, Bill and Dick started the operation to lower the young man who had died. The team members who had stayed behind and climbers carried the deceased out to the roadhead, arriving at first light.

When we reached the roadhead with Ron White, he was placed into the Idyllwild Volunteer Fire Dept. ambulance and Ron Harris and I rode with him to the Hemet Hospital. He was examined by the doctor and x-rayed. It was determined that he had two skull fractures and a compound fracture of the knee cap. When his head was shaved the lacerations upon his head looked like a roadmap. He was then transferred to the Kaiser Hospital. Ron Harris and I sat around the emergency room until our fellow team members drove down from Idyllwild and picked us up. As I showered and dressed for my wife's capping ceremony I couldn't help but think this was not going to be a happy Mother's Day for everyone. -Walt Walker

SEARCH - 16 May - Lake Riverside

After working all day Saturday and having to report for work at 7:30 the next morning, I had retired early. About 9:45 P.M. the phone rang and being a little groggy, I naturally turned off the alarm clock. Jack Schnurr, a little upset at being turned off, explained there was a missing boy in the Anza area. Shortly after Jack's call, Jim Fairchild was on the "horn" looking for transportation for himself and equipment. Jim's truck had been involved in an accident earlier in the month and had not, as yet, been reassembled. After picking up Jim and while enroute to the search area we tried to piece together what we already knew about the missing boy.

The boy's name was Georgie, he was 11 years old and had been fishing with his family at Lake Riverside - a land development near Anza on Highway 71. The lake covers an area of approximately 80 acres with 1½ miles of shoreline. The lake is located in a desert climate and, during this time of year, is teeming with rattlesnakes. When Jim and I arrived, Walt Walker was already interrogating the mother and other people that had helped search the area that afternoon. According to his mother and aunt, the boy was missed about 2:00 P.M. that afternoon. Georgie was reported to be small for his age, husky, and had difficulty seeing without his glasses.

He was wearing blue jeans, T-shirt, and tennis shoes. Since Georgie was purported to have been fishing near the dam at the end of the lake, interested parties on horseback and in Jeeps combed the lakeshore thoroughly during the late afternoon and evening. Then Sgt. John Myers arrived and called RMRU.

Walt assembled the RMRU members and briefed us on all the details surrounding the missing boy and divided the group into two search teams. Since the lakeshore was reported to have been thoroughly searched without a clue, it was concluded that the boy wandered off into the area surrounding the lake. One team would comb the area looking for tracks while Walt, Don Ricker and myself prepared to "fire" Sugar, our tracking bloodhound, on a scent article given us by the mother. The daylight hours had been hot and with a slight wind blowing, any scent would be faint and much harder for Sugar to follow. Walt "fired" Sugar above the lake where a boy answering Georgie's description was last seen.

Sugar worked her way back to the lakeshore and headed toward an old buffalo corral obviously on the trail of something much larger than an 11 year old boy. Walt steered Sugar out of the corral and aimed her toward the lake.

During our run by the lakeshore a track was found which appeared to fit the general description of the tennis shoes the boy was wearing. The parents were asked to look at the print in order to make a positive identification. The mother indicated the track was about the right size, but wasn't sure about the sole print. Sugar was again "fired" and we headed down the lakeshore towards the dam. With her nose to the ground and tending to the business of tracking it wasn't long before Sugar met up with some business left by a horse earlier in the evening. Scents like that are hard on the delicate nose of the bloodhound and Sugar was no exception. With tracking at a standstill Walt, Don and I retreated with Sugar in tow and reconnoitered with the rest of the RMRU search team. None of us had "turned" any signs of the missing boy.

It was decided to assemble as many details before calling in more searchers at first light. Jim and his group split up to comb the area along the lakeshore, since many times an experienced searcher can find things the amateur overlooks. Half way across the earth dam we checked the pumphouse which supplied the lake with water. No sign of anything. As Walt and Don remarked about the pipe leading from the pumphouse into the lake, I flashed my light across the pipe. The beam caught what looked to be a long pole floating about 20 feet from shore and 10 feet to the right of the inlet pipe.

I removed my pack, boots and outer clothing and attempted to wade through the shallow water to substantiate our find. The lake bottom was slick and difficult to negotiate. Yes, it was a fishing pole and it answered the description of Georgie's in every detail. The three of us seemed to sense the outcome without saying a word. Base was notified of the situation. It was 2:00 A.M. and 12 hours since Georgie was found missing. Dragging the lake in the spot where we found the fishing pole our search reached its tragic conclusion. Georgie was found with his glasses clutched in his right hand in about 6 feet of water. Our job as a search and rescue team was done, but I couldn't help thinking that for me this was not to be a very happy Sunday. -Tom Dadson

SEARCH - 20 May - Cabazon Peak

At 0600 five RMRU members met at the Sheriff's substation in Banning to get the details of a missing person report. Wayne Newkirk, age 31, of Garden Grove had taken Friday the 8th of May off from work and had not been seen since. On Monday the 11th of May his car had been found just South of Cabazon at the base of the old road leading South to Twin Pines Ranch. Helicopter searches by the Sheriff's Dept. during the subsequent week had turned up no clues. The team was shown photos of the individual and told that mental and personal problems might be possible factors in his disappearance. Several vehicles were used to then transport the team to the location where the car had been found.

The team proceeded up the old road on foot to a location about 3/4ths of a mile north of the Twin Pines Ranch and an elevation of 3200 feet. No trace of the missing person was found enroute. At this point (time: 0830) the team was split into two units. Each was to proceed in a northerly direction along one of two canyons located on either side of the road we had just come up. Walt Walker and Bill Speck searched the one lying about 1/2 mile east of the road. While Ed Hill, Steve Bryant and I took the canyon to the west. The west canyon was very steep and rugged at first but soon became a series of level areas interspersed with cascades and waterfalls. At an elevation of about 2700 feet at the bottom of a waterfall area a footprint was found. Ed took the east ridge to get a better view of the canyon while Steve and I stayed in the creek area tracking footprints. About 1015 at a location just above a water gauging station Ed spotted something about 50 yards ahead on a rock. Steve and I proceeded quickly to the location. Just as we got the object Ed had seen into view we were startled by a haggard person moving out from under a tree and standing to greet us. We immediately recognized him as the missing person. His condition was very good except for sunburned hands and face. He had entered the area dressed in a suit carrying only an electric shaver, men's accessory box, and a notebook containing some of his notes from work. The only food he had taken with him was six or seven "Space Sticks"; these apparently lasted only a couple days. He had eaten no food during the next 10 days; however, plenty of water from the stream was available.

He was at first reluctant to go out of the area with us because of a fear that the wrong people would pick him up. We did not delve into the reasons of his concern but merely pointed out to him that his father was worried about him and that he could telephone him as soon as we got out. At this point he decided that it would be best to go out with us. After cleaning his feet of sand, putting on a pair of Ed's socks, and then his shoes we slowly hiked directly east towards the old road. After a couple of encounters with "busstails" while in the high grass we were glad to reach the old road after only a third of a mile hike. We slowly made our way down the remaining mile and a half of road towards Cabazon. Walt and Bill, having been down for quite some time, and Tom Dadson who had just arrived, were out in the San Geronio River wash looking for tracks when we let them know we were on the road heading down. We arrived at our vehicles just before noon.

We took Wayne back to the Banning substation where subsequent questioning revealed that by mental telepathy he had been directed to the location where we found him so that he could be picked up by a space ship. He felt that the difficult terrain had prevented the spaceship from landing. He was then taken to the hospital for treatment of exposure and to obtain specially prepared food required by a person having gone such a length of time without food. - Phil Moedt

SEARCH - Baja, California - May 21 - 25

We omnivorously watched the desert of Baja California roll by while bouncing down the dusty Highway 1 on an overnight drive to basecamp in El Rosario. We are to look for a young pilot who emergency landed his plane when out of fuel and then left the aircraft. Arriving there in the total confusion our new search and rescue forces from Sierra Madre and Riverside (Fairchild, Bryant, Michleson, Briggs) join the San Diego team which is already out in the field, out of radio contact for the last few hours, days. Mexicans have been searching which compounds the confusion with a language barrier. Oh how rich we are to have topographical maps of our local mountains, in Rosario we get the locals (Espinosas) to sketch a map of the roads and villages in the search area. A quick aerial reconnaissance by Sierra Madre shocks us into the vastness of the terrain. Another dusty four hours into the night gets to what we thought was our search area, but morning proves us wrong, we search anyway, for tracks, for gasoline, for the field base camp. Noon finds us there and another few hours driving and tire changing gets us finally to within sight and six or seven miles of the primary search area, the San Carlos Mesa. Another flat tire puts us out of service for another day by which time the tenacious Mexican trackers locate the body of the lost pilot. Help finally arrives after another bivouac to get us back to base but now we find our transportation back home (Sierra Madre rescue truck) has a broken axle in the field so we draw lots as to who has the worst family and job situation to be another day out and wrangle him a ride home on an airplane.

Lessons learned: Under these conditions, the aid of experienced Jeepers is invaluable, communications again becomes a problem with mobile ham equipment the only answer, local people who know the country are invaluable and should be utilized, a bell helicopter is essential. Why weren't we called earlier? As the pilot Sam Spry learned, the tenet is to always stay with the ship. Thanks must be given to Jim Brocamonte of JIMSAIR AVIATION SERVICES, San Diego, for his continuous spearheading of the operation.

- Bill Briggs

EVACUATION - 23-26 May - Bucks Lake (Quincy, Calif.)

On Friday the 22nd a call for assistance came from Sheriff W. C. Abernathy of Quincy, Calif. (located about 100 miles northeast of Sacramento). James Henthorn, age 22 of Castro Valley, Calif. had been missing for four days after becoming separated from his father while fishing near Bucks Lake (located 15 miles west of Quincy).

At 2:00 AM Saturday morning word was received that a flight had been set up with the 303rd Air Rescue Squadron from March Air Force Base, near Riverside, for transportation north. A total of 19 members from three different Rescue teams participated in the mission.

The scheduled departure time of 6:00 AM Saturday morning was delayed until 7:40 AM due to heavy ground fog. After a two hour flight on a comfortable C-97 we arrived at Beale Air Force Base located about 40 miles north of Sacramento. An Air Force bus, driven by A1C Doug Bartley, had been authorized to take our group to Quincy which was still about 70 miles away. After a tedious five hour ride along the beautiful Feather River Canyon we were stopped by a CHP officer about 10 miles out of Quincy. He informed us that the victim had been found alive and that our assistance was not needed. We proceeded into Quincy to check in with the Sheriff.

The deputy on duty was in radio contact with the Sheriff when we arrived at the office. He informed us that the victim had been found at the bottom of a cliff near Bear Creek and that, in fact, was deceased. The victim's father (who along with other relatives evidently contributed much to the effort of finding him) was with the victim. Evacuation by use of ropes, etc. was indicated. Our services were offered to assist in the evacuation but the Sheriff said the situation was under control and that we would not be needed.

Since return air transportation to Riverside had not been firmly scheduled and because none of us looked forward to the long bus trip back to Beale we decided to camp that night on the fairgrounds located just out of town. After dinner, Ron purchased a softball and bat for an enjoyable baseball game. At dusk the group proceeded to a local establishment for shuffleboard and refreshments. About 9:30 PM a Sheriff's deputy and a worried looking gentleman in civilian clothes (Sheriff Abernathy) entered the room. The Sheriff stated that the victim had not in fact been precisely located and requested our assistance. He informed us that no topographical maps of the area were available for our use and that no helicopter could be obtained to give us assistance. It was agreed that we would meet the Sheriff at 3:30 AM Sunday morning.

After an early breakfast in town we proceeded west towards Bucks Lake. After a half hour ride on a good road we turned off onto an old logging road. It was quite a ride in that Air Force Bus jammed with 19 Rescue members and equipment packed from floor to ceiling in the last three rows of seats. When the bus could go no further, the deputy we had been following led us on foot to the creek we were to follow. Dawn was just breaking. Since it had been indicated that the way to the site of the victim was to be easy going, the bus driver decided to accompany us. The small creek we were at was supposed to be the shortest way into the apparent location of the victim. We had been told that the site would be about $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles down the creek from this starting point. As it turned out the creek was not the best way into the area. Use of an existing trail only a short distance away would have saved us about four miles and four hours of indescribable effort. The creek soon began to follow a steep canyon covered with dense undergrowth and hazardous dropoffs. Moving men and the empty stokes litter through this became extremely difficult. It was soon evident that the bus driver was committed to remain with us for the duration of the mission. His subsequent herculean contribution to the mission was appreciated by all rescue team members.

At the point where the small creek we had been following emptied into Bear Creek the terrain became somewhat easier. Bear Creek (which could be considered a river in most other parts of the state) has many large cascades and waterfalls bordered by high cliffs. As a result our group became dispersed into essentially three separate units. The first unit reached the site of the deceased about 11:30 AM. Because the radio that the first unit carried had been inadvertently dunked in the creek, no radio contact between the first unit and the other two units was possible at this time. With the victim was a close relative (the father had evidently left the site the night before) who had a topographical map of the area. Evaluation of the map indicated that the closest road available for evacuation purposes was up the 45 degree angled West slope approximately 3000 feet above Bear Creek. After a brief discussion it was decided that the relative and two Sierra Madre members from the first unit would take the map and proceed up the west slope to determine if that way would in fact be an acceptable route to haul the loaded litter up. Unfortunately they took no radio with

them. They were to return back down the west slope if they found the way to be too difficult for evacuation.

Meanwhile, because of lost radio communications the second unit (including Ron, Tom and Ed) had difficulty in the locating of the first unit. This situation arose because the negotiation of the 300 foot cliff area, from which the victim had evidently fallen, placed them downstream of the first unit. They arrived at the victim's location at approximately noon. Every one felt that evacuating the victim upstream, back the way we had come, would be extremely difficult and hazardous and was therefore out of the question. While the group was having some lunch a cousin of the victim and a friend showed up at the site. The cousin, who apparently was somewhat familiar with the area, indicated that the brush conditions up the west slope would make it extremely difficult and that the east slope, although somewhat steeper, would be more feasible. They then left the area. Since the advance party had not returned from the west slope it was felt that it would be possible to proceed in that direction as planned. This approach, it was felt, would enable the group to intersect the closest road shown on the map.

By the time I arrived at the site with the third unit the litter had already been moved up about a hundred feet up the west slope of the canyon. The task was a difficult one because of the almost impassable brush and lack of discernible trail. Ropes and pulleys were used many times to help haul the litter straight up the slope. This work continued all afternoon until about 6:30 PM; we had reached an elevation approximately 2,000 feet above Bear Creek by this time. From this point a newly developed road located on the East side of the canyon could be seen at a slightly lower elevation than ours. The two Sierra Madre members, who had gone on ahead to determine the difficulty of the terrain and to locate a possible trail and road had not returned. Since they had no radio with them, no word as to their success was known. The situation ahead of us seemed worse than what we already came through. It was disheartening to think that the new road we could see on the East side might be our only way out. It was decided that if the road on the west side of the canyon could not be exactly located within the next few hours the plan would be to take the litter back down to Bear Creek and up the East side of the canyon to the new road. Taking a radio with them, Ron, Tom and 2 Sierra Madre members continued up the west slope looking for a road while those remaining with the litter pooled all remaining food for a sparse supper. It was hoped that their finding the road quickly would alleviate the grim thought of taking the litter to the road on the east side. After dark Ron reported that no sign of the road had been seen and that the terrain he had encountered in the previous 2 hours was impossible for evacuation due to immense unbelievable growths of Manzanita. With this bad news we bedded down with dulling thoughts of the task to be executed the next day. This task would be doubly difficult due to the fact that our food supply had been exhausted.

At dawn we began moving the litter back down the slope we had climbed with so much difficulty the day before. After a couple hours word came from Ron that they had finally arrived at a road. Ron indicated he would get some needed food and water and come down the east side of the canyon from the new road and meet us as we moved up the east slope. After hiking several more hours along the road they were finally picked up by the father of the victim who had been driving the road looking for our group to show up.

In going down the west slope we tried to traverse as much as possible so

that we would arrive back at Bear Creek at a position slightly downstream of the site where the victim was found. This was necessary since it was the only feasible point at which to start the assault up the east slope. While traversing we took a slightly different path back down to Bear Creek. In doing so we missed two Sierra Madre members (the same two who had originally gone up the west slope to check it out) coming up the west slope from Bear Creek. They had made it out the day before and returned (via the trail we should have taken at the start of the mission) to the site where the victim had been found; they had spent the night at that location. They had hoped to make contact with us only a short way up the west slope and tell us that it would be too difficult for us to continue in that direction. They also had brought with them additional food for us. Since they could not locate us they continued up the west slope and out again as they had done the day before.

At a distance about a quarter of a mile away from Bear Creek, and still several hundred feet above it, we came to a small creek with impassable vegetation on both sides. We proceeded to take the litter down the center of this creek; poor footing on the slippery rocks and knee deep water made it very difficult. We finally got the litter to Bear Creek where we had to wade through waist deep water to get it across to the East side. By the time we all made it across it was close to noon. We dried out while resting for about a half hour on the gravel bank located on the East side. Just as we started to proceed with the task of moving the litter up the East slope we received word over the radio that a helicopter had been obtained to assist us (efforts of the victim's father had made this possible). Since there was in our opinion, no acceptable spot for a helicopter to land in the immediate vicinity, the plan was to have the helicopter verify our position and to let us know what exact direction to head while moving up the East slope. This plan would enable us to link up with Ron and additional help in a most expeditious manner.

The pilot, who flies for Pacific Gas and Electric Company, and a member of the Sierra Madre team showed up overhead in a Bell helicopter about a half an hour later. After they had been gone for about 20 minutes we again heard the copter approaching. Word came over the radio that the pilot had decided to go in by himself and take a second, closer look at our location and land if he thought it possible. He made one low pass and then came towards us from the downstream direction about forty feet above Bear Creek and centered in the steep walled canyon. We waved him off (indicating to him not to land), but he continued on towards us where he finally made a nice landing on some boulders located on the east bank. The pilot said he was already committed to land when he realized that he shouldn't have attempted it. The landing site was extremely tight, from the standpoint of main rotor blade and tail rotor clearance. A fifty foot cliff rose from the edge of the East bank while trees hung out over the creek from the West side. At the most, a five foot clearance was all that he had. While in a semi-hovering condition the deceased was placed into the seats next to the pilot and tied in. The pilot then lifted the helicopter off the ground in a vertical direction, to about 30 feet and then rotated the craft 180 degrees so that he could fly back downstream and leave the way he had come in. With delicate touch the pilot did this without appreciably moving the helicopter in any lateral direction. He began to move slowly downstream for about fifty feet and then suddenly rotated the helicopter 180 degrees once more and came back upstream to make another landing. The group scattered for protective covering once again. The wind conditions in the canyon and extra weight in the helicopter made it too difficult for him to keep the craft under control. Fuel had to be drained from the tanks to

make the craft lighter. While the pilot kept the helicopter in a semi-hovering condition John Holcomb of the Sierra Madre team drained fuel from its tanks. While moving from one side of the copter to the other, John almost stepped on a rattlesnake that had come out from the rocks directly beneath the craft. The snake was probably more startled by the events occurring over its head than what John was of the snake. With both tanks only a quarter full the pilot again lifted off. This time however he flew upstream past our position. Overhanging trees leaning from both sides of the narrow canyon made this avenue of escape extremely dangerous. Everyone held their breath as we saw him bank first one way and then the other as he tried to avoid the tree limbs. He still hadn't cleared the trees when he disappeared around a turn in the canyon. All ears were strained for the sounds of what everyone thought would be the inevitable. After what seemed to be an unbelievable period of time we finally heard him approaching us from upstream and then saw him well above the trees. We were all relieved to know he had successfully flown himself out of such a tight spot. He then flew to Bucks Lake where Tom helped unload the deceased from the helicopter. While Tom was inspecting the craft he noticed that several green colored areas were visible on the main rotor blades; evidently these had come from the tree limbs he had clipped while leaving the canyon. The pilot's skill and coolness in the face of an obviously dangerous situation certainly prevented his own demise.

The assistance of the helicopter in removing the victim from the canyon certainly made our task in climbing the east slope much easier. After about three hours of climbing we arrived at the new road. Within five minutes two vehicles sent to pick us up came into view. The food and cold drinks they had brought with them were quickly devoured. We proceeded to Buck's Lake to pick up the other rescue team members and then into town for dinner. After dinner we boarded the bus for the long ride back to Beale AFB, arriving there about 11:30 PM Monday night. We were then given rooms for the night in the transient airman's quarters. The return flight to Riverside left Beale about 3:00 PM Tuesday afternoon. Our arrival back at March AFB at 5:30 PM ended the long four day mission. - Phil Moedt

ABORT - Friday Evening - 29 May

Once again Mike Daugherty got the feeling it would be a long night. Mike is the fourth call captain and when he receives the call for help (a woman and three children were overdue) it means that Al, Don and I have not been reached. My family and I were just finishing a wonderful dinner at the Speck residence when the phone rang and Mike relayed the situation. We said our thank yous and goodbyes and were on our way home. Upon arriving at home I hurriedly loaded my gear and was just about to load the Bloodhound when Kay phoned and said the missing people had walked out from their hike to Tahquitz Peak. I grabbed the abort flag and posted it near my driveway. Shortly the old 'Donut Wagon' showed up with Bill Briggs and Dick Webster. After a short conversation they were on their way back to Riverside.- Walt

EVACUATION - Idyllwild - 30 May

While busily working in the darkroom Saturday (trying to catch up) I was interrupted by a call from the Riverside Co. Sheriff's Dept. that a young lady had eaten some Corn Lily and was extremely ill somewhere between Laws Camp and the Saddle. It was stated that she was being carried out by the Forest Service. Lt. Park and I discussed the situation, we decided to call for a chopper from Western Helicopter in Rialto. I called Al Andrews who

alerted the team and I hurried to Idyllwild. On arrival in Idyllwild I learned that the victim was being carried out to Humber Park and that the Idyllwild Volunteer Ambulance would bring her to the ballpark downtown. The chopper arrived with E. G. Brown at the controls and in a few minutes the ambulance pulled up to the chopper. On initial examination of the victim I had noted that her heart beat was abnormal in rhythm. We loaded Pat Treadwell and were on our way to the Hemet Hospital. Pilot Brown put the bird down right in the parking lot near the emergency room door. I ran into the hospital and grabbed a gurney. We loaded Pat onto the gurney and wheeled her into the E.R. Dr. Spencer examined her and prescribed an immediate I.V. of Ringers Solution. The doctor was not happy with Pat's general condition and especially the irregular heart beat so he admitted her to the hospital for at least 24 hours. Shortly Al and Phil showed up at the E.R. and gave me a lift home. - Walt

CALIFORNIA REGION - MRA Seminar ---

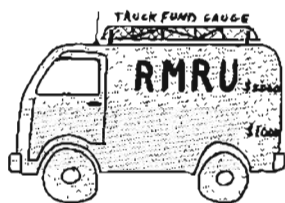
For the fifth time region teams have produced a successful seminar. May 2 and 3 saw over 200 participants from as far away as Mt. Rainier National Park attend the activities at Buckhorn Camp in Idyllwild. RMRU was in charge of registration and our own Mike Daugherty led a most interesting discussion period on 'Long Face Evacuation'. Al Andrews, Tom Dadson, Phil Moedt and Walt Walker put in many hours in the registration building.

MAY TRAINING - TECHNICAL ---

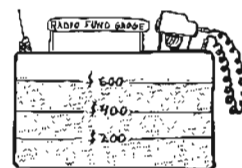
What do you do when part of the team is in Mexico and part in northern California and its the Saturday scheduled for training. You guessed it, the session goes on as scheduled. Five senior members, all with technical experience, put on a very informative program of learn by doing for five new members. All ten men benefited from the long day (8:30 to 5) on the rocks at Rubidoux.

SUSTAINING MEMBERSHIP ---

This month we have eight new sustaining members which we want to welcome to RMRU. We thank each of you for your generous donations: Memsahibs-Women's Committee, So. Ca. Gas Company; Garst & Raftery, Attorneys at Law; Rotary Club of Arlington; Mr. & Mrs. H. H. Aschmann; P.E.O. Chapter, D.O.; Soroptimist Club of San Jacinto and Hemet Valley; Mr. & Mrs. Albert A. Grorud; and Mrs. Esther R. Briggs. Thank you Mr. & Mrs. John Revie for



your continuing support. Our new rescue truck is still on order and we hope to have it during the month of June. Now that our truck is on its way, we have begun efforts to complete our radio fund. On several of the last missions we have had



need for additional radios, so at this time we are re-evaluating our radio network to determine what additional radios beyond the planned 2-watt should be purchased. - Al



The Road

Runner sez-

Pretend you are on a mission, sitting upon a prominent rock on a ridge that overlooks the search area on the south and the base camp area to the north. You have a radio and have been assigned to relay messages from field to base and vice versa.

Your responsibility is to be just a relay, an accurate relay, an alert

relay. You must relay messages as stated, like a mechanical device. If, through your past experience and knowledge of the present operation, you can add intelligent and helpful information, do so, but identify it as your own. This writer has seen the maddening if not disasterous results of bad relaying -- by SAR people, by "hams", by others who get next to a radio mike wax loquacious while twisting and confusing the messages they hear. Proper use of radios in SAR can greatly enhance the effectiveness of the operation.

Out-of-county operations are fraught with problems. To scratch the surface, we might mention lateness of call, slow or insufficient transportation, inadequate information, and lack of support like food, aircraft, radios. But rather than cry about circumstances none of us can do much about, we will admonish everyone to "Be Prepared." Take everything you could need: food, water, equipment, clothing, etc. for about two days more than you expect to be gone; keep an open mind and roll with the blows -- there's a chance you can make a suggestion or insist upon a procedure that will help the victim; searches are usually frustrating, but a rescue where the victim's location is known is "duck soup," we just zoom in and do the job. You SAR people who might be asked to come to Riverside County to help RMRU, be prepared for action from below sea level to 10500' el., for below freezing temperatures to above 100 deg. F.; for steep cliffs, thick brush, rattlesnakes and ticks, and treacherously loose dirt and rock bluffs -- all potentials on one mission!

We wish all RMRU members would "digest" the Newsletter as well as the Bloodhound does.