

RMRU NEWSLETTER

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MEMBER OF THE MOUNTAIN RESCUE ASSOCIATION

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COMING EVENTS ---

Board Meeting, 11 March, 1900, Al Andrew's home.

Regular Meeting, 18 March, 1930, Highland Outfitters. Various conflicts have prevented Dr. Mellor from giving us the injection instruction, but this month should be the time.

Training, 20-22 March. A lack of snow influenced the board to switch

24-26 April. our destinations. For February we go to the Granite Mtns. for technical and climbing instruction; in March we may go to the High Sierra for snow-ice practice; the April trip may be the North Face of San Jacinto climb. Of course, frequent actual missions during that period may cause a modification as has happened in the past, and, actual missions do constitute the best training. Our paucity of missions this year must influence us to attend all the training sessions. We've had it so impressively demonstrated in recent years that knowledge and skills developed from both training and actual missions contribute to the effectiveness and safety of our operations.

Rummage Sale, 17-18 April (see article)

Seminar, 2-3 May, Buckhorn Campground, Idyllwild. The California Region, MRA, is conducting a seminar on equipment design, application, use, and techniques. The six member units of CR-MRA have various phases for which they are responsible. Every SAR member has received an information sheet. This is a great chance for education on equipment, exchange of ideas, and fellowship. RMRU should be well represented as participants -- we have a lot to offer, we have a lot to learn.

SEARCH AND RESCUE ACTIVITY ---

15 February, Plane Crash, Banning Pass. On Saturday the Civil Air Patrol spotted the wreckage of a small plane which had been the object of a week long search for a missing pilot overdue on a trip from Arizona to the Torrance Airport. The wreckage was located approximately 3 miles SSE of the Twin Pines Boys Ranch on the south side of the Banning Pass at an elevation of 4500 feet. Late Saturday afternoon, a deputy sheriff and coroner from Riverside County, were lowered by helicopter to the crash site. At dawn on Sunday, members of RMRU assembled at Twin Pines to assist in recovery of the dead pilot and his personal effects.

Two RMRU members were flown to a large boulder near the crash site and Helitac jumped from the supercharged Bell helicopter chartered from Western Helicopters, Inc. of Rialto. They then unloaded packs and two chain saws as the bird hovered. With chain saws buzzing they cut a path toward the crash site and immediately started cutting a helispot. Six more RMRU members and two officials from the FAA and NTSB were flown to the boulder. While investigators inspected the wreckage RMRU members carried the body of the dead pilot to the helispot. The bird was rigged, at basecamp, for an aerial pick-up of the body. As the helicopter hovered high overhead the body bag was secured and our job was done.

The recovery went smoothly, largely due to the Helitac training received in December with the cooperation of Alec Ferguson of Western Helicopters, who supplied the aircraft and pilots necessary for the meaningful exercise. Once again a distasteful job was completed safely due to RMRU training and experience. -Tom

