

RMRU NEWSLETTER

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

Volume VII, Issue 5, May 1971
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COMING EVENTS ===

- 12 May, Board Meeting, 1900 at Fairchild's house.
- 19 May, Regular Meeting, 1930, County Hall of Records.
- 21-23 May, Training Session, Climb of Snowcreek on the North Face of Mt. San Jacinto. Full details at the regular meeting.
- 9 June, Board Meeting
- 23 June, Regular Meeting.
- 25-27 June, Descend Tahquitz Canyon - top to bottom.
- 29 June, 6, 13, 20, 27 July, First Aid Instructor's Course, Riverside County Red Cross Chapter House, 7-10 pm. Call FAIT Fairchild if you are interested.
- 9, 16, 23, 25 September, Advanced First Aid Review. The first three dates are Thursday evening, the last is a full day realistic, outdoor, even on-the-cliff, practice. Preliminary sign-up is required for both the above courses so we can tell you details like what to bring, what to study and practice, etc.
- 4 January 1972 is that time again! When we start the First Aid Course, covering Standard and Advanced material with emphasis upon problems related to wilderness and long term care of the sick and injured. The course will run every Tuesday of January and February, maybe the first Tuesday of March.

INTERIOR ALMOST COMPLETED



Al Andrews and Don Ricker along with help from some other team members have almost completed the work on the interior of the new van. The photo was taken by RMRU member Bill Speck.

PLANNING AND PREPARING AHEAD ---

While we may still encounter a mission where we must use ice axe and crampons, summer is approaching with its heat problems. This past winter was a complete bust regarding rain and snow, so springs and streams will be either absent or greatly diminished. We will have to carry ample water with us on searches and evacuations, and, most important, take a reserve of three to five gallons to have on hand at base. When the air temperature exceeds 90 deg. F., and we are carrying packs and searching-hiking-climbing in the sun, the need for water increases spectacularly in contrast to the cool or balmy days of winter. We simply cannot carry enough water to adequately sustain ourselves and a potential victim for 24 hours if the temperature exceeds 100 deg. F. That's when exercising in the sun, and when

aren't we exercising in the sun on a mission? Also, check your call-out good for items that may melt or spoil in heat, and other items of gear that might need protection. Actually, operations in summer heat are not so bad if you are properly prepared physically, mentally, and materially. One thing is for sure, you'll be well prepared on the second operation in extreme heat!

SEARCH & RESCUE ACTIVITY ---

7 APRIL 1971 - SEARCH & EVACUATION #7109 - Tahquitz Ridge

The call came at 2030 saying there was an injured person near Tahquitz Peak. I thought it would be a simple mission, hike in and give first aid and a carry out or fly out in the morning, how wrong I was.

When I arrived at Idyllwild the true story began to come out. Two boys, Mark and Steve, both 17 year old high school seniors, had been camping in Little Tahquitz Valley and had gone to climb the peak. When they reached the peak in late afternoon the trail was becoming icy. They decided to climb down on the rocks of the northwest ridge high above Tahquitz Rock, keeping off the icy trail. Steve went ahead and got around out of sight of Mark. At 1800 Mark heard some rocks fall and a short yell. Mark called and got no answer, after 45 minutes he reached Steve at the bottom of a cliff. He was unconscious, Mark covered him with jackets and went for help.

We packed gear quickly expecting the worst. Mike Orr took the RMRU oxygen unit, Bob Nelson two air splints, Dave Crimi the rescue sleeping bag, Tom Dadson and Dave Hadley tents and first aid belts, Mike Daugherty and I radios, while others took the break-down litter, technical gear, and ropes. At 2245 we started up with Mark showing us the way.

By 0015 we reached the chute Mark thought Steve was up. Dave Hadley and I went ahead quickly while the rest of the group came up slowly with Mark. By this time we were on hard steep snow and climbing and searching by flashlight was getting hard. Half way up the chute we still had no sign of Steve, and Mark was having doubts as to if we were in the right chute. We split up with Mike Daugherty, Mike Orr and Bob Nelson with radio 59 going down to try the chute to our East. Tom staying with Mark, and Bernie McIlvoy, Dave Hadley, Dave Crimi and I continuing up the chute with radio 58. We reached the top and drew a blank, so down to Tom and Mark. Talking to Mark again we got a better description of the chute and went West one chute to try again.



This chute fit the description, steep, brushy with hard snow under it, and cliffs on the sides. But soon we were near the top and no luck. Dave Crimi and Dave Hadley were on each side and Bernie and I in the middle. Bernie and I stopped and were shining our lights around. "There he is," Bernie said. About 30 feet above us in the brush was Steve. About 30 seconds later all of us were to him, his face covered with dried blood was a pale white color.

Dave Hadley checked for life signs, none. "This is 58 to all units, we have found the victim, he is dead." (Ed. note: Actually a code system was used to transmit the message in



case relatives or friends might be near the radio at base.) Time, 0230 on a dark and cold night. It was the first time I and some other team members had seen a body and it was quite a shock. The victim had sustained multiple head injuries, many abrasions on his back, and an obvious fracture to the upper left leg (femur).

We radioed base that a body bag and a steel litter would be needed. A team, composed of Walt Walker, Dick Webster and Ed Hill, who had been hiking in to assist in the search were radioed to return to base to pick up the requested gear. While at base Lee Mickelson was added to the team and they started up the hill.

Bernie and Dave Hadley went up to see if they could find where he

fell. About 20 feet above was a glove, 30 feet more another, and 50 feet more a pool of blood. All this was on a 45 degree slope leading to a cliff where he fell from about 40 feet to the snow before rolling down into the brush. We all tried to catch some quick sleep before the other members arrived.

At 0530 the other team members arrived and as the sun came up we prepared for the carry out. It is quite a job carrying the litter down hard snow, through brush, and down the rocks. Finally at 0830 we reached the road head. After talking to the officials and giving the coroner the body we went down for breakfast in Idyllwild. After eating, 14 RMRU members headed home tired, sleepy, and sad, hoping we would never have another mission like this again. - Pete Carlson

14 APRIL 1971 - SEARCH - #7110
San Jacinto Mountains

Early Wednesday afternoon the Riverside County Sheriff's Dept. called to say a young man (27) was missing from a home in Idyllwild. The informant said Pete left, or was last seen, about 0930 Tuesday morning, having mentioned he would like to hike up to Suicide Rock, or Tahquitz Rock, or Tahquitz Peak. This missing business was true, but the location was in doubt. Anyway, we rendezvoused at the Sky-Yacht. The weather was cool and unsettled, but later the clouds closed in and a drizzle began, followed by genuine snow during the night. We assigned two teams to go around and up Suicide Rock, checking the bottom of its cliffs and the area around the top edge. Soon after they departed, another team hiked into the mist to search Tahquitz Rock the same way. On the basis of the meager information we had, this seemed like a

good plan. After all, we heard that Pete had recently shaved his head and was probably barefooted, wearing scanty clothing. Both rocks were "socked in" by dense clouds and when darkness fell searchers reported the whiteness threw their flashlight's beams back at them. As the teams neared completion of their assignments with negative results, representatives of the Sheriff's Dept., Hollis and Herring, along with Walt and I, recalled numerous operations in the past where we went after people who just weren't there. When the teams returned we terminated the search, at least for that night. The next morning Pete called the Sheriff's Dept. in Riverside to say he had read the newspaper article about his missing status. He was with acquaintances in Riverside.

- Jim Fairchild

4 APRIL 1971 - EVACUATION - #7108
San Jacinto Mountains

Just after lunch RMRU received a call from the Banning office of the Riverside County Sheriff's Department that an injured youth needed to be evacuated from Willow Creek Camp. He had struck his foot with an axe the evening before and could not walk.

Dick Caffroy, Bob Nelson and I all arrived at the lower terminal of the Palm Springs Aerial Tramway about the same time. It was decided that Dick and I would start up and hike into the area with a radio. Bob would wait for Pete Carlson (who was driving the rescue truck) and they would come in with the wheeled litter. Dave Crimi who lives in Idyllwild, was already hiking in from that side.

Dick and I stopped to talk to the State Park ranger in Long Valley as he had originally received the call for help. He had sent two seasonal rangers in with a first aid kit and instructions either to wait for us, or if they could, bring the victim back to Long Valley.



Just before Dick and I reached Desert Divide Dave Crimi came running into view. He related that the rangers had carried the victim to Skunk Cabbage Meadow and that one of them was hiking out to Idyllwild to get a helicopter. We radioed this information to Pete, Bob and Hank Schmel (who had joined them) who were bringing the wheeled litter. They radioed back that they would wait for us as we started hiking back to Long Valley.

When we all arrived back at Long Valley the ranger stated that his men had erred and that the state park had no way of securing a helicopter. It was now almost 1630, so we phoned the sheriff's office in Banning and related the problem. It was decided to call Don Landell of Palm Springs Aviation and ask him to fly us in.

We all hiked up to the upper terminal of the tram and waited with the Sunday afternoon crowd to ride down. At the bottom we got into our vehicles and drove to the lowest of all the parking lots to wait for Don.

Our wait wasn't long, as Don's tie down is not very far from the tram. When the bird sat down we quickly installed an RMRU radio and Don and I were off and on our way to Skunk Cabbage Meadow. The sun had already set on the eastern side of the San Jacinto massif as we climbed up to Desert Divide. Don knows the mountain and was taking advantage of all the thermals to speed our ascent.

Shortly we were over Skunk Cabbage Meadow and as we circled people began to walk out into the open of the northern end. Don quickly descended into the shadows and landed near the upper end of the meadow. A ranger was carrying the victim on his back and I jumped out to give him a hand. We slid the injured youth into the bird.

As I started to get into the bird I noticed that Don was putting his shoulder harness on. As he buckled the victim in I secured my shoulder

harness and wondered if I ought to hike out. Before I could give it a second thought Don had the bird whirring at red line RPMs' and we were off and flying. We sped down the meadow and began to rise up. As we gained speed, we also were heading towards three large trees and I began to wonder if I would once again end up in the trees.

However, Don had planned his exit, he banked the supercharged Bell and we slipped out over some smaller trees and were on our way back. We landed back at the parking lot, unloaded the boy, removed our radio and thanked Don for another great job of flying. - Walt Walker



The Road

Runner sez-

Do you know that an exceptionally effective aid to healing grows on trees? Actually, it's the sap of conifers. When you've sustained a skin wound of some kind, smear a liberal amount of the sap from a conifer like the desert nut pine, ponderosa, or white-bark pine on the area. You'll be amazed at how rapidly and how well the wound heals. Naturally, we've seen it work on ourselves and fellow outdoorsmen. Father-in-law even tried it last summer up at Mammoth on a stubborn split thumb, worked fast. The stuff is a bit sticky, but smells good.

An aside to a few fellow new RMRU members: it can get cold bivouacking at 7500' el. on snow, can't it? Conditions up there aren't always easily and accurately determined from down here in balmy Riverside.

Through the years we've come to expect aircraft crashes in the San Gorgonio Pass area during these spring storms. Sure enough, one is now missing. This Monday a Piper 140 with four people aboard took off from Palm Springs bound for Santa Maria (coastal central Calif)

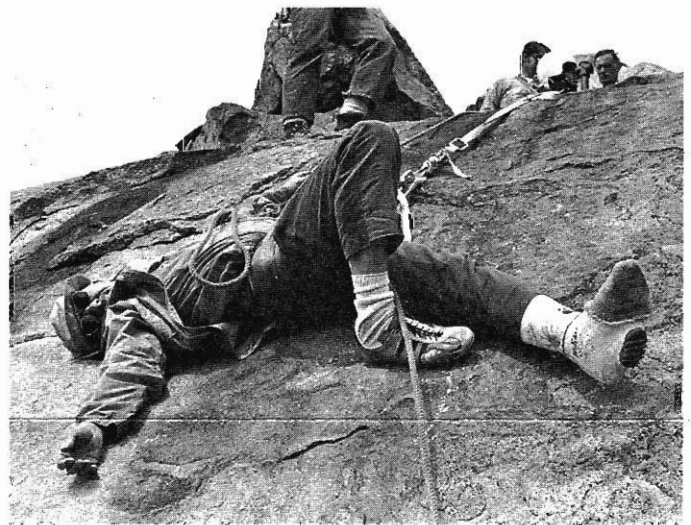
It's not been heard from since take off. CAP aircraft and ground units are searching. They even found a small plane in the brush a few miles east of Walt's house. It had crashed and killed two people two and a half years ago. In conversation with Bill Lorin of radio station KPRO at 1700 hours we learned that no trace has been found of the plane with four people. We of RMRU sort of wonder whether and when we will be called if the plane is found in difficult terrain. We wonder too, if the passengers may be still alive, praying we'll get there in time. One of these days, hopefully, we will arrive at a wreck with live ones. We have had too many of the other kind.

24 APRIL - TRAINING, TECHNICAL

This month, the team reviewed various phases of technical rescue to get ready for the summer climbing season. Early in the morning, we drove up to Mt. Rubidoux, a local climbing area among other things, and divided into two groups. Some of the older members were to work on a solution to the small ledge problem. This problem is how to get an injured climber off of a ledge that is too small for the rescuers to place a litter on or an injured climber on a steep face, without causing unnecessary pain to the injured climber. The second group reviewed our skills and taught the new members. We dropped five ropes over the cliff and practiced rappelling down, stopping halfway down the cliff, and tying ourselves off so that our hands would be free to do something else, such as give first aid to an injured climber.

Bernie McIlvoy in his new climbing 'hot pants' (Ed. note: Would you believe pink, with blue flowers?) showed us how to use jumars in climbing a fixed rope. We also practiced climbing a rope using prusik knots and Hiebler ascenders. We agreed that jumars were the easiest and fastest to use.

After everyone felt pretty good about climbing the rope, we tied knots in the rope and practiced getting around the knot. This is important because in a real technical mission, the leader will have clipped the rope into pitons and slings, and we must go around them. One man discovered the hard way why you tie off close to the knot. He did not and discovered after he had tied in below the knot that he couldn't reach one of his jumars. The next man down the rope had to retrieve it for him.



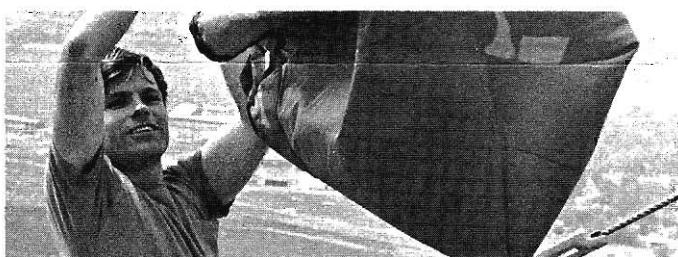
Midmorning Bud White with his foot in a cast hobbled over and became a willing victim in the small ledge problem. Bud was tied off to a rope halfway down a small cliff while the team worked out a way to get a nylon hammock around him before putting him into the litter. Once in the hammock, we were able to lower him into the litter. This procedure seems to work well and does not require a ledge to work from.

After lunch we tackled mechanical advantages and self equalizing anchors. Each member had to rig one and keep working at it until he had it right. After each member had rigged one of each, the older members called us over for a demonstration of their system. While they were showing it, the wind caught the hammock, and it looked as if one of the rescuers was going to be blown over sideways. However,



In the first photo Mike Daugherty and Bernie 'Hot Pants' McIlvoy are slipping the nylon hammock under the victim, team member Bud White. In the next photo they are lowering Bud into the litter after having tightened the hammock up around him. The victim is then secured into the litter with webbing, the hammock disconnected and the litter lowered in the usual manner.

he got the billowing hammock under control, and the demonstration continued smoothly.



The final exercise was to practice vertical and horizontal litter lowerings. In a vertical lower, the victim is lowered feet first, while in a horizontal lower, the victim is lowered horizontally. A problem occurred in the anchor of the first to practice a vertical lower. Phil Moedt took up the slack and held the three man team while the anchor was being fixed. After we fixed the anchor, he relaxed and a yelp was heard from below as the team was dropped about three feet before their original anchor took up the slack. Later on they told us that they had really had to move when the litter zipped down.

The wind and unseasonable cold finally got to us at 1600 hours, so we retired to Mike Daugherty's house for a critique of the session and our usual malted beverage. - Ed Hill



After working most of the morning on the RMRU Newsletter I had just started my lunch when the phone rang. It was the Banning sub-station of the Riverside County Sheriff's Dept. It had been reported to them a pilot had spotted the blue and white wreckage of an airplane. The missing 140 mentioned previously was also blue and white. As soon as the call was completed I got out my call list and started the call-out system.

After arriving at Banning and listening to where it was spotted it sounded to me like the wreckage of the Cessna 337 that we had worked the year before. A bird from Western Helicopters of Rialto arrived and the pilot and I flew out to the area. As suspected, it was the old wreckage.

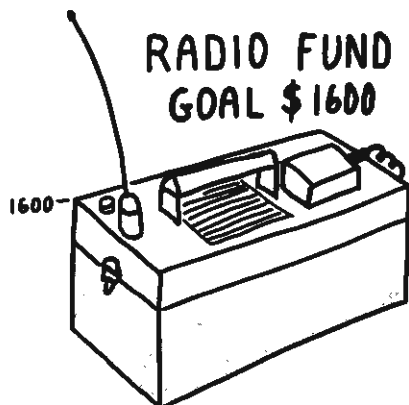
We really aren't sure as how to record the mission, but the best suggestion so far is "Abort plus" #10. So far this year we have participated in 10 missions and rolled on 10 aborts. If we take these figures and the 36 mission total from 1970 and project by ratio we should have 90 missions in 1971. In 1969 we

had 28 missions and the 36 in 1970 accounted for an increase of 28%. If we only have a 28% increase this year, the total will be 46.

At our annual meeting the following were elected to the RMRU Board of Directors for 1971-72: Pete Carlson, treasurer; Mike Daugherty; Jim Fairchild, vice-president; Phil Moedt, secretary; Don Ricker; Jack Schnurr; Walt Walker, president. The newly elected board then appointed the following committee chairman: Al Andrews, Communications and Sustaining Membership; Bernie McIlvoy, Equipment Development; Pete Carlson, Finance; Mike Daugherty, Membership; Tom Dadson, Public Relations; Jim Fairchild, Rescue and Training; Don Ricker, Truck; Walt Walker, Newsletter Ed.

RMRU is looking forward to its 10th year as being the one where we tie all the loose ends together. Mike Daugherty has already got the Membership committee going full steam and training has made great strides. But we are still not satisfied with RMRU. We believe that we can do better and the entire board has pledged itself to that goal.

- Pres. Walt

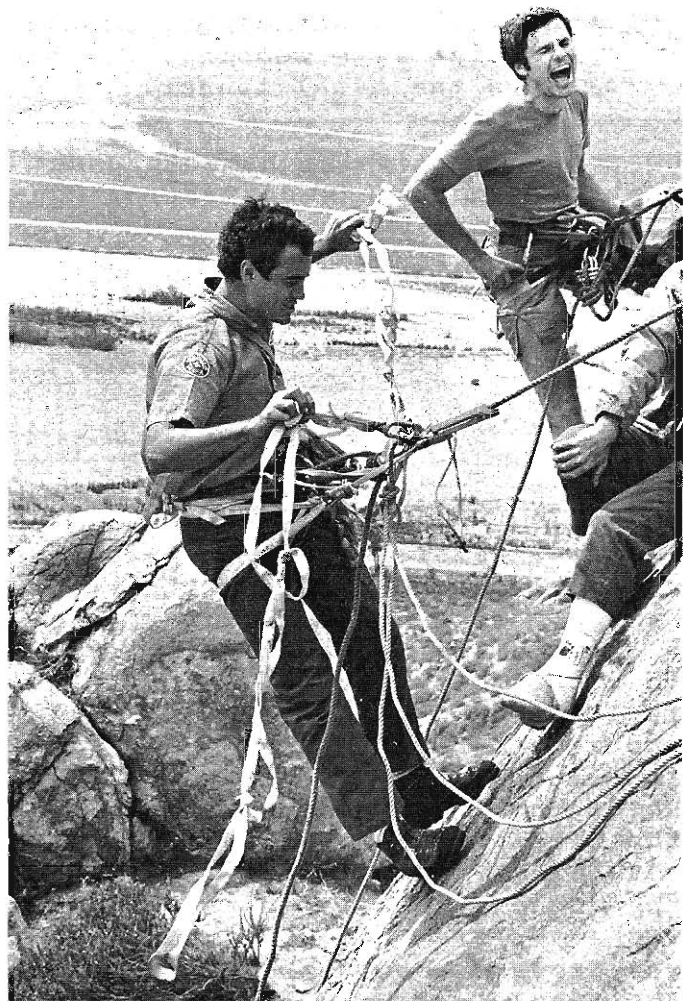


SUSTAINING MEMBERS -

We of RMRU are very happy to welcome back the following people to our sustaining membership: Mrs. Ramona B. Flinchpaugh, Rotary Club of San Jacinto, Mr. & Mrs. R. O. Ridenour, Mr. & Mrs. Ray Lavender, Dr. & Mrs. Noel Kirkby, Mr. & Mrs.

Wilford Keith, Mr. & Mrs. D. L. Miller, Mr. Sam Johnson, Rotary Club of Perris, Mr. & Mrs. Wayne Brown, Mr. & Mrs. Milton Levy, Boy Scout Troop #1, Riverside, and Mr. and Mrs. Harold E. Carlson. We sincerely appreciate your sharing "your share of the Load". This month we are also adding Mr. A. P. Crist and Church of Religious Science - Alumni Group to our sustaining membership. - Al Andrews

"WHAT DO I DO NOW, BOSS!"



Bernie seems to be enjoying comments from fellow team members as Mike appears to be having problems that even his newly earned Doctorate of Physics can't solve.