



Volume VIII, Issue 12, December 1972

Editor & Publisher, Walt Walker
Photography by the members

Because of you,



this lad, will have a joyous Christmas.

Coming Events - - -

- 10 January 1973, Board Meeting
- 24 January, Regular Meeting
- 27-28 January, Winter "Shakedown" Training in San Jacinto Mtns.
- 14 February, Board Meeting
- 21 February, Regular Meeting
- 23-25 February, Full Winter Training on Mt. San Gorgonio.

TRAINING



18-19 NOV., SAT.-SUN.
San Jacinto Mtns. Familiarization
by Steve Bryant

Our group started hiking from Dr. Mellor's cabin near Humber Park early Saturday morning. Since there were reports of a ten-inch snowfall at Long Valley during the previous week, all but one of us carried snowshoes. We started breaking trail a few feet from the parking lot, punching holes in the snow with each step. The snow got thicker as we ascended the mountain, and just below Powderbox Spring, we put on the heavy snowshoes we had been carrying. Breaking trail from that point to the saddle was much easier.

During lunch at the saddle, we discussed the feasibility of our original goal, a camp on the Marion Mtn. - Jean Pk. saddle. Since the member without snowshoes was having a difficult time in the snow, we abandoned our original plan and decided to camp on one of the benches of land between Skunk Cabbage Meadow and Willow Creek Crossing. While discussing these plans, we were treated to one of the most beautiful spectacles on the mountain: the trees were fully snow-covered, and as we watched, clouds drifted by us and through the trees, creating an almost mystical scene.

After lunch, we headed toward our camp. After a short hike, we found a very nice bench overlooking Reed's Meadow and set up our tents. The rest of the afternoon we spent bouldering and gathering firewood. (You should try bouldering on snow-covered rocks!) An early dinner around the campfire finished the day. Most of us retired to our tents, but

two hardy souls slept in bivvy sacks under the now clear sky.

Sunday morning we walked over to Little Tahquitz Valley. Leaving our packs there, we hiked up to the Tahquitz-Red Tahquitz Saddle and had a wonderful view South and East. Clouds drifted in and out among the peaks we could see as we discussed the area of our search by Thomas Mtn. Lunch found us back at Little Tahquitz Valley. We then took a hike (led by one of the "old men" on the team, who wore us out) to the Palisades and looked out over a Southern California completely blanketed with clouds. It appeared as if we could have walked over to Baldy on top of these clouds. A cross-country route back to the saddle and down the now well-traveled trail finished this trip.

Search and Rescue

13 NOV. - SEARCH - No. 7255M
Thomas Mtn., San Jacinto Mountains
by Jim Fairchild

On 12 Nov. about 1400 Mrs. Judy Androus drove nearly four miles up the Thomas Mtn. road east of Hemet Lake intending to obtain pine cones. She went along a side road, collecting cones from under trees alongside. She took some back to the car, then headed southward off the road to get more. Shortly, and not far from the road, she became confused as to directions, panicked, ran, and by nightfall had gone south then west along Willow Canyon. She continued in the moonlight for a while, falling, wandering in circles at times. Then she crawled under a manzanita bush and tried to rest, shivering. (The temperature was about 26 degrees F.) She worried about snakes and mammals attacking.

Mr. Androus became worried after dark, found his wife's car, searched by tracking her some. He called the Riverside County Sheriff Office at 2330.

Deputy Fred Grutzmacher checked out the situation and called RMRU.

As is so frequently the case, the 0030 call found us sound asleep with a lot of waking to do. Pete Carlson and I rolled in the van. At Hemet Lake we found Bob Claybrook, closely followed by Rick Pohlers, then Dennis Simpson. We caravanned to the scene (5600 El.). Pete led a group up the side road on Judy's tracks. Soon Dave Hadley, Bernie McIlvoy, Dan MacIntosh, Rich Quackenbush, Bill Hunt, and Ed Hill were in the field. Before too long, Bernie's crew had Judy's tracks headed for Willow Canyon--it was slow going because she circled about at times.

Shortly after dawn, Art Trask flew the familiar CHP helicopter to our quickly chosen helispot. Bernie's group was still on good tracks, the other men had returned to base. I rode search with Art because of recent flights over the area. We went over the searchers and down the canyon. Could not see well because of reflected sunlight on the door glass. Went up and down the So. Fork of San Jacinto River, then back up Willow Canyon. I was checking the canyon bottom and far side, Art the side of the canyon under us. As I turned to look forward Art was saying, "Isn't that her?" Yes, it was, waving an orange vest. She was right in front of our path. Art circled several times before we found an acceptable (?) brushy ridge to let me out on.

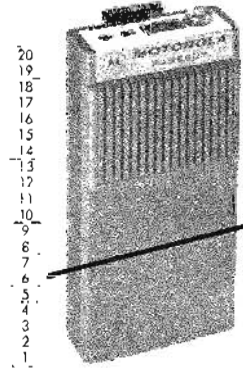
On the ground, I found the brush much taller and thicker than it had looked from the air (as usual!). We had planned to have Dave come in and clear a spot while I went for the girl, but Art said no way until the brush was cleared. I crunched and pushed the quarter mile to Judy, marking the way with tape. She was thirsty and thankful, and shivering considerably. My down jacket, canteen, and food did their work while Dave dropped not one, but two big brush hooks (one for each hand?). When Judy was ready we hacked our way back to the helispot making a Forest Service standard trail, almost. Cutting the trail and helispot made up for staying at base while the others tracked. Art came back for first Judy, then my pack and I, and the mission finished up in a hurry. Incidentally, this was a beautiful clear day between snowstorms.



Sustaining Members

by Al Andrews

Pager Fund



We finally put our first pager into field test and have ordered three more which should be in service by mid-January. Once again we must thank every sustaining member for making this long time dream come true. Please remember that your financial support is as important on a rescue mission as the men who go into the field to solve the problem.

This month a big welcome is extended to Mr. Roy L. Haglund, and our thanks again to the following for renewing their membership: Mr. George Ruptier and Mr. & Mrs. F. J. Fischer.

TO ALL OF YOU,
WE WISH YOU THE
BEST OF EVERYTHING
THIS HOLIDAY SEASON

RMRU_