

# 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

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Editor & Publisher, Walt Walker  
Photography by the members

## *Coming Events ---*

- 14 June, Board Meeting at Pete Carlson's, 1900.
- 21 June, Regular Meeting at County Hall of Records, 1930.
- 23-25 June, Training, Descent of Tahquitz Canyon - re-scheduled because of the changed May training. This becomes a genuine desert survival-type outing as well as our most important familiarization trek.
- 12 July, Board Meeting
- 26 July, Regular Meeting
- 29 July, Training and Pot-luck, Suicide Rock and Sky Yacht.

## *Search and Rescue*

6 & 7 MAY, SAT. & SUN. - RESCUE - No. 7234M  
Tahquitz Canyon

Friday night at 1915 is a hard time to get RMRU people. So I drove the van by myself out to Palm Springs. If I count right this is the fifth call to the canyon this year. Coming into Palm Springs the wind and sand were really blowing, I slowed to 20 m.p.h. to try to avoid getting the truck sand blasted. At 2030 I pulled up to the mouth of Tahquitz Canyon and met with the deputy Sheriff and the two informants.

Four boys had been hiking in the canyon when one (Jerry) had fallen and broken his ankle. One boy had stayed with Jerry and two had come out for help. The description of the area of the fall was not too clear and we would have to do some looking. With this information I began to pack: three quarts of water, technical gear, air splint, and other regular gear. During this time Mrs. Ann Dolley, whose house we park next to all the time, came out and offered the usual cold drinks and water to us. We greatly appreciate you, Mrs. Dolley. Thanks again from RMRU. The Deputy was also helping out, by working on getting us a helicopter for first light in the morning.

Meanwhile, Dennis Simpson, Bill Hunt, Ray Ross, and Bernie McIlvoy arrived and we divided up team gear: three 150 foot ropes, two radios, the rescue sleeping bag, and the break down litter. With Ray running base camp the other four of us set off up the first falls. We reached the first falls in good time and crossed the creek just below the falls and started up the canyon wall on the other side. There are many little paths going up the canyon wall and then cutting over to the second falls, but only one goes all the way without hard climbing. Somehow at night it is easy to miss the right trail and it took us three false starts before we got the right trail. Once on the trail we reached the second falls in 30 minutes, where we again crossed the creek below the falls. It was now midnight as we started up the other side of the canyon to reach the third falls area.

We climbed up the canyon wall until we were at the same elevation as the third falls but a quarter mile from it. We looked into the canyon and gave a yell. No answer; we talked to base and decided maybe we were still too low. So we continued up and got above the third falls by 200 feet on the canyon wall. It was almost a vertical drop below us to the creek. We yelled again and still no answer. If the boys were near the water like we were told, it would be hard for them to hear us. We shot a flare up, which lit the canyon below. No response. We shot another up canyon; this time a voice. Some

campers up canyon answered but they had not seen or heard any injured people. We concluded the boys must be near the water between the second and third falls.

It was now 0200; we started down to a good spot to overlook the area between the falls. We shot a flare and heard a yell. We were sure we had found them. Just then a voice from above, "Are you the rescue team?"

"Yes," we answered.

"I can show you where the injured boy is," said the voice. So back up to where we were an hour ago we go, after having awakened the whole canyon with flares and yells. We met a young man in bare feet and no shirt whose name I never got, but wish I had. He had been awakened by us and gone to see if he could find anyone hurt. After he had found the boy, he climbed up 600 feet, hiking one half mile to yell to us. He then led us down a trail we never would have found to the canyon bottom again.

Once in the canyon bottom, we hopped boulders until again we had to climb out and above the creek. Soon we were above the injured boy, but had



(RMRU PHOTO BY DENNIS SIMPSON)

Chopper pilot, Don Landell, holds the bird in a tight spot while the litter, with the injured boy in it, is secured to the bird. Pete Carlson climbs aboard to observe the victim on the way to the hospital and Walt Walker hurries around the front of the bird to load a pack on the left side to help balance the load.

to go up stream on the side 100 yards, then dropped back to the creek and went down it to the boy. At 0500 we reached Jerry. He was in a sleeping bag and had been sleeping. His ankle did not hurt much but if we moved it the wrong way he had pain. We put on an air splint and took a break to eat and drink as the sun rose.

During the night Steve Bryant, Dave Cook, Ken Crane, Dave Nehan, John Murdock, and Walt Walker arrived at base and were awaiting the helicopter. Bill and Dennis stayed with Jerry while Bernie and I looked for an evacuation route and a helispot. After twenty minutes we had found both and radioed base we were ready for them.

We got Jerry in the litter and set up for a 200 foot raise up the canyon wall to a spot where we could hand carry Jerry to the helispot. I tied onto the litter to ride up the canyon wall with Jerry. Bill, Bernie, Dennis, and John Murdock started pulling us up, while Dave Cook belayed us and Walt lent a hand with the litter. With the mechanical advantage (MA) it was not too hard for the group to pull Jerry and I up the wall. We then took Jerry over to the helispot and called the helicopter back. Don Landell, our expert pilot, owner of Palm Springs Aviation, flew in and picked up Jerry and myself for the flight to the hospital.

We landed on the front lawn of the hospital at 0900 and Jerry was taken to the emergency room for x-rays. The rest of the group gathered up the equipment and packs and Don flew them out two at a time back to base. The Riverside County Sheriff's Department then took us to a late breakfast at 1030. I had a small one: five large glasses of O.J., a chocolate shake, steak, eggs, hash brown potatoes, toast, and a side order of french toast to fill any left over space. Somehow when RMRU men hike and work all night with no sleep, they get a little hungry.

— Pete Carlson

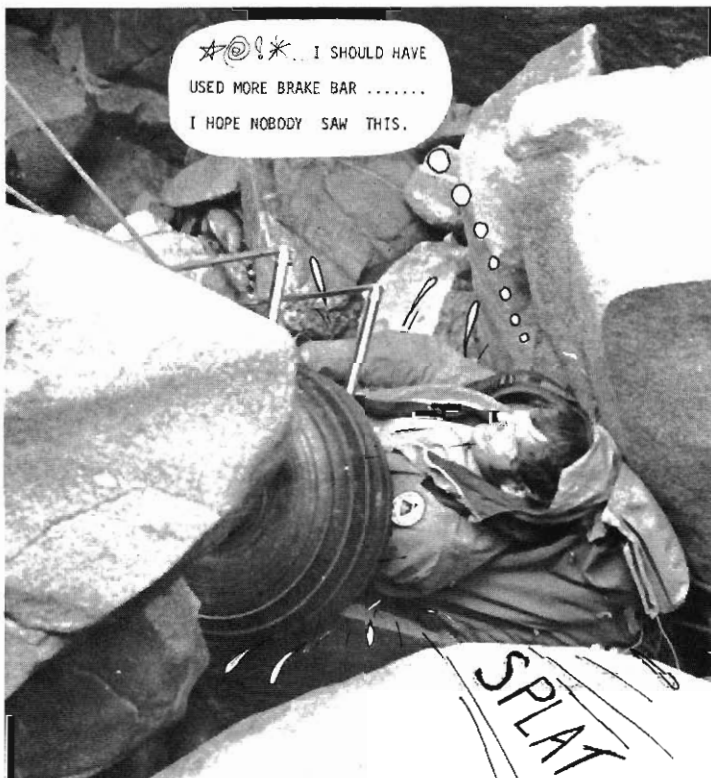
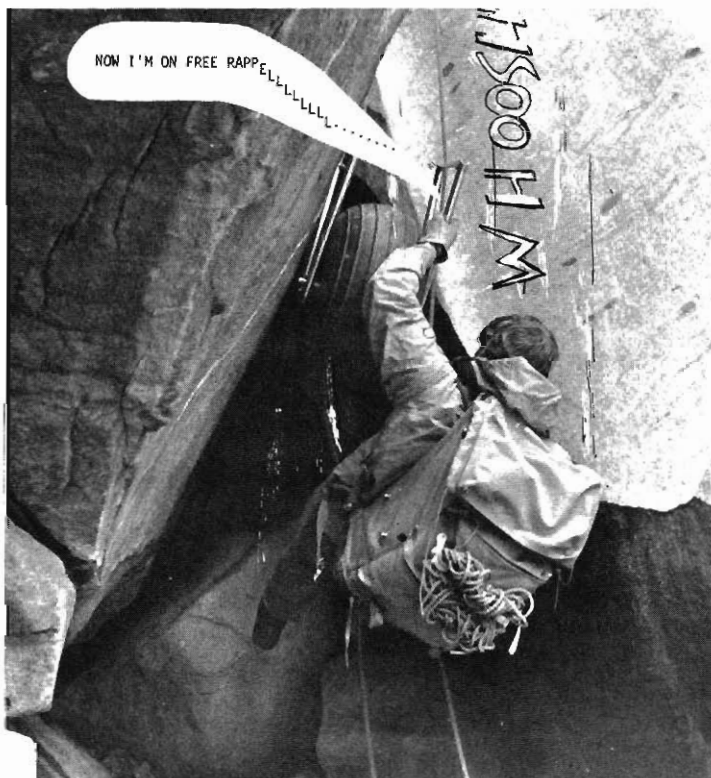
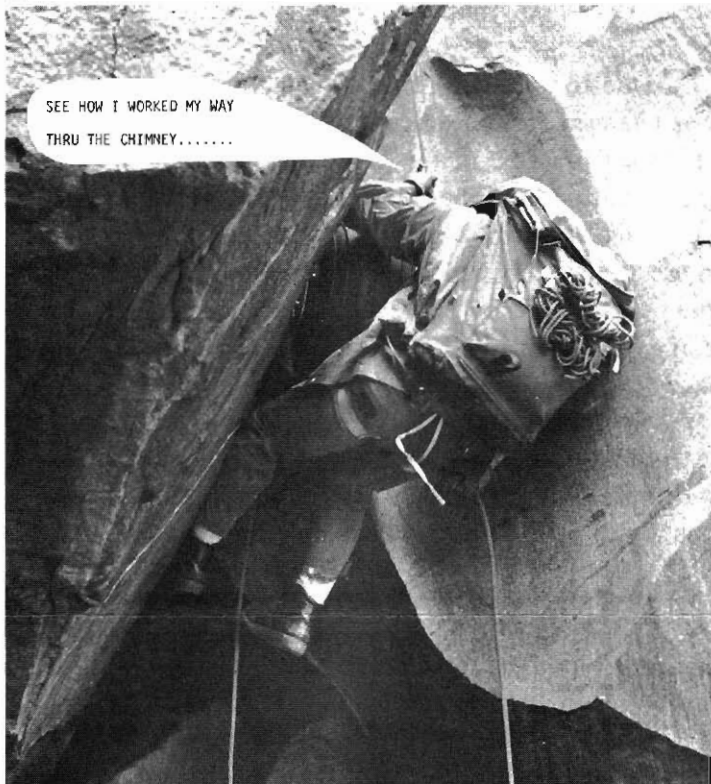
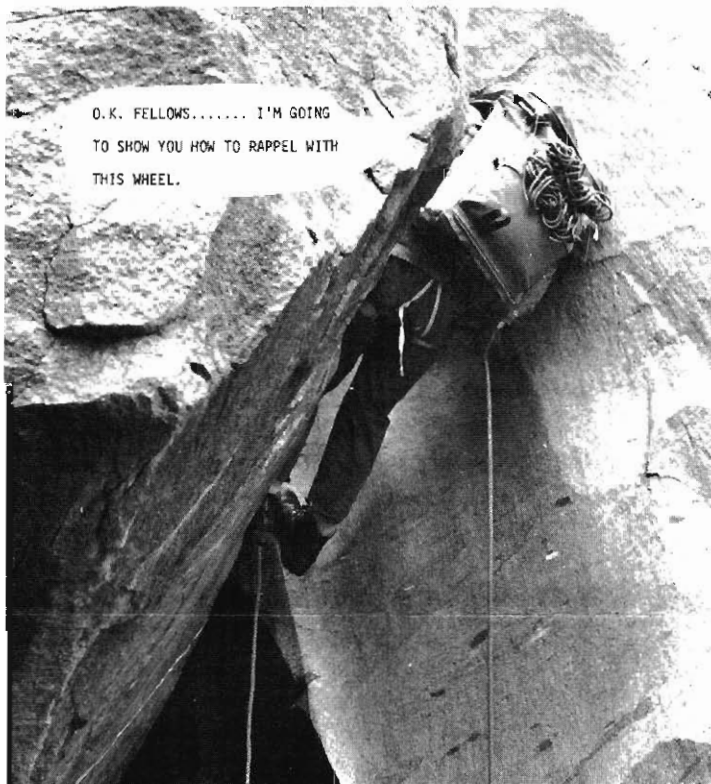
**EDITORS NOTE:** The new feature this month, on the facing page, was conceived by team member Hank Schmel. Hank's the guy who processes all the photos taken by RMRU members. Somehow I have the dubious honor of being the first "DING BAT of the month".



# Ding Bat

of the month

by HANK SCHMEL



# TRAINING



## 20 MAY – TECHNICAL

Due to a late storm, the team's training mission was changed from a descent of Tahquitz Canyon to a technical practice in the canyon that we found the man waiting for the Martian flying saucer a few years ago. We took the wheeled litter along so that those of us who had gone on last month's climb of the North Face of San Jacinto and had missed the carry out from Willow Creek, could try out the wheeled litter over rough country.

We wheeled the litter up Hall Grade to the closest point to our canyon. Several of us wanted to try out the new rescue pack, so we traded packs. I carried Joe Bell's pack for a while and found it far more

comfortable than my regular call out pack. We dropped into the canyon and started down. Several times we had to pass the litter over large boulders. The new men quickly learned that once you had dropped off the litter, you had to hurry ahead and be ready to have the litter passed to you again.

We soon came to our first major obstacle, a small waterfall. We rigged a self equalizing anchor and prepared to do a vertical lower. A vertical lower is one in which the victim in the litter is lowered feet first, while a horizontal lower is one in which a victim is lowered horizontally. Once the "victim" and the attendant had been lowered, we all rappelled down to have lunch on the sandy bench below the falls. Hank Schmel joined us after tracking the wheeled litter for several hours.

One hundred yards farther down the canyon we found another dry waterfall. This one was about one hundred feet high. This time we rigged a horizontal lower and a mechanical advantage to raise the litter and attendant back up. Art Bridge, Rich Morris, Dan MacIntosh and Pete Carlson were lowered and raised. While waiting for the team to rapell this



TEAM WORK! One of the many things that keeps RMRU GREAT!

(RMRU PHOTO BY HANK SCHMEL)



(RMRU PHOTO BY HANK SCHMEL)

waterfall, Joe Bell, Pete Carlson, Dan MacIntosh and Bernie McIlvoy tried various boulder problems. After Art had rapelled down, the team continued down the canyon to the desert floor picking up shot up tin cans that thoughtless people had left behind. We hauled a litter load back to the cars where Walt Walker volunteered to carry them off. We all enjoyed an excellent dinner at the Wagon Wheel restaurant in Cabazon while watching the storm clouds pile into the pass. — Ed Hill



For many years RMRU has produced a newsletter and in that time it has grown from a one page affair to the present, with its many pages and photographs. When we first started the expanded edition, we needed 200 names on our mailing list to qualify for the bulk rate postage price. Since we did not have that many regular and sustaining members combined, we added many names to the list to achieve the needed 200. Our mailing list has now grown to almost 500 names.

RMRU's newly elected Board of Directors has reviewed the financial report for the period, May 1, 1971 to April 30, 1972. This report showed that donations were only 65 percent of the previous fiscal year. It also revealed that all budget items were up, including the newsletter. With donations down and

newsletter expenses up, the board feels that too much money is being spent on the newsletter. So, the board decided to remove the "free" subscription parties from the mailing list. This job was handled by the following: Hank Schmel, Public Relations Chr., Al Andrews, Sustaining Membership Chr., and myself as editor.

This issue of the newsletter will be the last for many people, unless they want to become sustaining members. If you are one of these people, and want to help RMRU with a donation of \$10.00 or more, we will be happy to continue to send you our newsletter. Enclosed is a Sustaining Membership application for your use. Just a reminder, all donations to RMRU are tax deductible.

## *Sustaining Members*

We are still working on the selection of the pager system equipment which was described in the April Newsletter. We are taking a serious look at "previously owned" equipment so as to provide the best system possible at the minimum dollar outlay. The unit will cost \$150 to \$200 each using this approach. This is approximately one-half the price of new units with the same warranty. We are putting aside every dollar we can for this system since it will save many man-hours and miles driven by the members on missions which are "called off" after the team is on its way. It will also benefit members who are not near a telephone to receive the call-out. It will be possible to call them by radio (pager) and give them the rescue message.

The following donations have been used to open the Pager Fund Drive:

### New Members:

Miss Patricia Higgin  
Mr. F. R. Conklin  
Mr. W. J. Peters

### Renewing Members:

Mr. & Mrs. Mike Daugherty  
Idyllwild Lions Club

Our thanks to each and every one of you and we hope that all of our past members will be able to support the Pager drive. — Al Andrews