

# 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 VIII, Issue 10, October, 1972

## Coming Events - - -

- 11 October, Board Meeting at Walker's, 1900.
- 18 October, Rubidoux-on-the-rocks, Technical Training, 1900.
- 25 October, Regular Meeting, County Hall of Records, 1900.
- 28-29 October, Training at Jumbo Rocks, Joshua Tree National Monument, family camp.
- 8 November, Board Meeting
- 15 November, Regular Meeting
- 18-19 November, Surprise Callout Training

Note: October and November trainings were switched in order to have a warmer family camp.

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### The Road

### Runner sez-

Just when we got long faces because our financial support seemed to dwindle, we are jolted back into our thankful and grateful moods because of a great upsurge of donations. Looks like our first order for Pagers will be for five units. The wonderful experience of public support of RMRU over the past years should prevent us from having any further temporary doubts.

Ever think about rivalry or competition between rescue units or between their members? There exists a very high level of these qualities: we train hard to prevent decrepitude from taking over our bodies; we study and practice search and rescue skills, like first aid, tracking, search, rigging, climbing, and technical evacuation, in a serious competition with further injury and death; we plot and plan so as to prevent conflicts and commitments from causing our absence at unit functions and callouts. True, the above does not constitute rivalry and competition between units and individuals, but it's very real. How well are we succeeding? Every future call for help will let us know with considerable accuracy.

Today the fall season begins. Usually means a slump in callouts. Always means we must be prepared for great temperature ranges and storms. We begin to shift into the "winter gear" so as to be prepared. I still get quite a kick out of listening to

members ask, "what shall we bring," on training or missions. The answer is the same all year long, for any operation: everything. ---Pres. Jim

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## Search and Rescue

4 SEPT., MON -- RESCUE -- No. 7247M  
Tahquitz Rock, San Jacinto Mountains

On Labor Day, Chris de St. Croix and Richard Brown attempted to climb the Long Climb on Tahquitz Rock near Idyllwild. On the second pitch just below the traverse to the Mummy Crack, Chris fell thirty three feet. He suffered a fractured tibia in his left leg, a sprained right ankle, and a laceration on his head. Richard Brown, his belayer, tied him off to three pitons, rappelled down to the base of the rock, hiked down the hill, and called the Riverside County Sheriff's Department.

I had just woken up after my all night stint in the Emergency Room where team members had been working to obtain some practical first aid experience. As the phone rang I thought that it could only be a rescue. I usually do not get social calls at two in the afternoon. Al Andrews was calling to tell me that a climber was hurt on the north face of Tahquitz Rock. I asked Al about our man power situation and learned that most of our members were out of town. I got my gear together and started the long drive to Tahquitz Rock. The Los Angeles-bound Labor Day

traffic was starting to build up. It was slow going up the hill to Humber Park where I found the van. Hank Schmel was in base camp. Rich Morris, Steve Wight and Bill Hunt were in the field. Deputy Renner had a telescope trained on Chris who was sitting on a chockstone watching the parking lot far below him. As I was packing my gear, Jack Schnurr and Al Korber drove up. We held a short meeting and decided that Rich, Jack and I would climb quickly to Chris and give him first aid. Al, Steve and Bill would follow with the litter and three three hundred foot ropes. Part way up to the rock, I volunteered to bring the second group up. Jack and Rich went directly to the Long Climb, while Al, Steve, Bill and I brought the technical gear up the north side route. We arrived at the Long Climb about ten minutes behind the first party. Jack and Rich would climb to the victim, while Steve, Bill and I would rig a brake bar system at a tree about half way up. I belayed Jack up to Chris where Jack put an air splint on Chris's leg. Jack belayed Rich up to the chockstone, and they started to rig the self equalizing anchors that would anchor the brake bar system. Jack and Rich hauled the litter up to the chockstone and found that the space was so small that they could not get the litter to lie flat. Chris had to climb in and be tied in sideways. Jack was tied in as the attendant. Rich would lower the litter vertically through a brake bar system, and I would belay the litter through a pulley.

Walt Walker, who had been out for a family drive, arrived with the litter wheel. Deputy Renner also hiked up with him. Jack had to pull the litter as Rich lowered it. The litter banged several times against the rock but generally the ride was smooth. About half way down one of the pitons anchoring the brake bar system pulled out and the load was taken up by the remaining pitons.

When Jack reached the ledge where we were, we rigged the litter for a horizontal lower. This lower is much easier on the victim since his legs do not have to support any weight. Walt tied in to the litter as a second attendant to keep the litter from striking the rock. Rich belayed with the original lowering line while Steve and I manned the lowering line. Bernie McIlvoy arrived just in time to help Rich clean all the pitons that were used at the chockstone.

Once the litter reached the base of the rock, Chris was zipped into the rescue sleeping bag. He was quite cold since he had been in the shade most of the day. The team attached the wheel to the litter and started to wheel Chris down the north side route. Darkness fell as we picked our way carefully down the talus slope looking for a route that would jolt Chris the least. Jim Fairchild and Dave Nehan arrived at base and were told that we did not need any more men. It was late when we finally got Chris off to the hospital, gear sorted out and ourselves on the way to Pine Cove where we enjoyed an excellent steak dinner provided by the sheriff. — Ed Hill

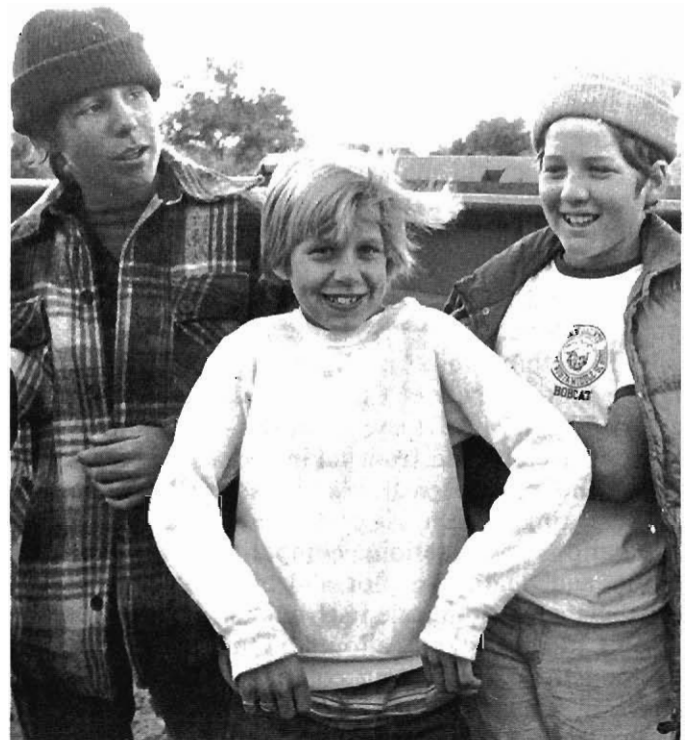
22 SEPT., FRI. — SEARCH — No. 7249A  
Tahquitz Valley, San Jacinto Mtns.

23 SEPT., SAT. — SEARCH — No. 7250A  
Fern Basin Cmpg., San Jacinto Mtns.

24 SEPT., SUN. — SEARCH — No. 7251A  
Southern Riverside County

The first call on the five hundred mile rescue weekend came on Friday at three p.m. A young man had been missing from Tahquitz Valley since Wednesday. I went home, got my gear together and started driving for Norm Mellor's cabin in Idyllwild. Searching in Tahquitz Valley seemed much more pleasant than training in the Soboba mudhills. As I drove through Riverside, I was pulled over by a City of Riverside panel truck. It turned out to be Bernie McIlvoy who told me that the mission had been aborted. The victim had walked out.

Since the mock mission call-out was scheduled for nine that evening, I decided to stay in Riverside at Steve Bryant's house rather than return home. At eleven, the second call came through after a false alarm. Three boys, Kevin (Walker) Jones, Bill and Joe (Schmel) Brown had gone hiking up Massacre Canyon and had not returned.



"Victims", Tom Schmel, Bill Schmel and Kevin Walker appear to be happy after being "rescued". All kidding aside, these three young men spent a cold three hours up in the hills waiting to be rescued and missed a nights sleep for their bother. Their only compensation was breakfast and a job well done.

PHOTO BY HANK SCHMEL

Steve Bryant, Dave Hadley and I drove out in a two car caravan, and met Walt Walker who said that someone must have driven at over a hundred miles an hour since it was midnight and the call had gone out at eleven.

We found the three boys and spent the rest of the night evacuating them down a rubble filled chute and over a waterfall.

The third call came while I was asleep. For a few minutes I tried to turn off my alarm clock but it kept ringing. Finally I picked up the phone and was told that two boys eight and five were lost out of Fern Basin Campground. My sleep fogged brain was not working too well, and I drove off without really knowing where I was going. In Banning I met Dave Nehan, a new member, and asked him. He didn't know either so we stopped off at the Banning Sheriff's station and Sergeant Bill Herring told us that the boys had been found.

We drove back to our respective houses and some of us went back to sleep. After an hour and a half of sleep, the phone rang again. A deer hunter was lost near Fig Valley near the San Diego-Riverside county line. We met at Anza at six a.m. and waited until the San Diego Sheriff decided who was to start searching. The San Diego Mountain Rescue Team used their four wheel drive capability to get into the deer hunter's base camp and promptly found him in Salvador canyon.

On the scenic drive home I looked at my odometer and noticed that I had driven over five hundred miles in response to these three call-outs. --Ed Hill

form our efforts of search and rescue. As we have mentioned before, all of your contributions are applied toward operating the team. Team expenses fall in several categories: truck operation, telephone, new equipment (ropes, radios and first aid) and newsletter.

This month we want to welcome the following new members:

- Mrs. Henry C. Vacher
- Mr. & Mrs. Lee J. Ware
- Mrs. Ina F. Titus
- Mr. George Phillips
- Mr. & Mrs. J. D. Markley
- Mrs. Faye McDuffee
- Joan A. Michel
- Janice Waldo
- Mr. Weston Robinson
- Mr. & Mrs. B. B. Garrett
- Kelty Pack, Inc.

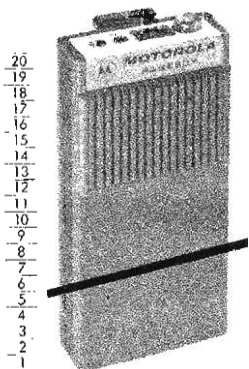
Our renewing members are as follows:

- \*Idyllwild Property Owners Assoc.
- Mrs. Camille S. Ware
- Mr. William F. Zauche

\*Century Club Member - donation of \$100 or more  
---Al Andrews

## Sustaining Members

### Pager Fund



Another month has gone by and our sustaining members have continued to provide RMRU with the financial support which is so necessary for us to per-

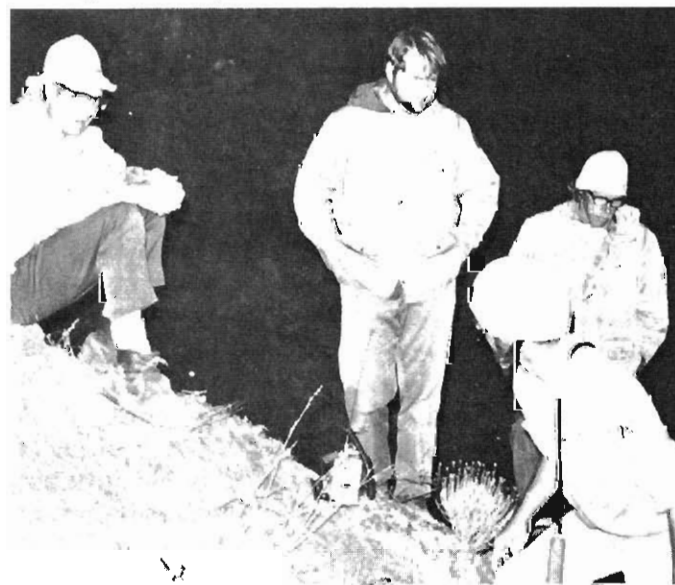


PHOTO BY HANK SCHMEL

FINALLY THE WORD IS OUT!!!

QUALIFICATIONS FOR  
HOLDING OFFICES IN RMRU

Board of Directors,  
Walks on water.

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 4)

President,

Walks on water, if the water is calm.

Vice-President,

Walks on water, in indoor swimming pools.

Treasurer,

Can stay afloat, if properly instructed in the use of a Mae West.

Newsletter Editor,

Plays in mud puddles.

Membership Chairman,

Freezes water with a single glance.

Most other Committee Chairmen,

Can dog paddle, if thrown in water.

## TRAINING

22 SEPT., FRI. — MOCK MISSION  
Soboba Hills, north of San Jacinto

We expected the mock mission to begin sometime after 9:00 p.m. After an anxious hour the phone announced the beginning of a long night. The mission: three boys lost in the Soboba Hills. We joined forces near the Massacre Canyon Inn. Walt was already on hand and a strange, small box sat on his tailgate. Being daring, one of the men threw a lever, and an old familiar voice suddenly filled the air, "Good morning Mr. Phelps." As if the mission wasn't bad enough this voice had the gall to rule out most of the experienced help on the team. "The following members are ineligible for team captains, base camp operator or operations leader: Fairchild, Schmel, McIlvoy, Carlson, Bryant, Bridge, Hill . . ." Clearly this was a training mission aimed at the newer members. Base camp operator fell to Rich Morris, field team leaders fell to Claybrook and Simpson, and Hadley was operations leader. Three groups were formed and assignments given out. Simpson's group was to ascend the western ridge of Massacre Canyon, Claybrook's group stayed in the canyon proper and Hadley's group ascended the eastern ridge. In about an hour voice contact was made with the

missing kids. They were on the eastern side, about 300 feet above the canyon floor. Walt "de judge" Walker immediately ruled all members in Hadley's team as ineligible to perform the indicated first aid. So we sat around and drank hot cocoa until the other two teams could join us. Simpson's team returned to the truck to pick up the break down litter and the wheeled litter. Claybrook's team soon found their way to the victims and evaluated and treated the injuries.

PHOTO BY HANK SCHMEL



Part of the rope used was hauled up in one of the two litters that were necessary to evacuate the "victims".

The next major problem was evacuation of the victims. One team member has described the area as one huge conglomerate such that the simultaneous occurrence of a heavy rain and a mild earthquake would reduce the entire mass to a layer one centimeter thick. The usual anchors such as pitons and bolts are worthless. To lower the litters down the canyon side we had to drive in ten four-foot pickets and rig a self equalizing system. Two of the kids were transported with the litters. The third was strapped to Claybrook's back. Some members were sent ahead to investigate two small waterfalls and to start setting up the gear needed to lower the victims. Once again we had to drive pickets into the sand to establish an anchor. The two litters were rigged for a horizontal lowering. The technical training from the last two sessions was put to use and it wasn't long until we had the litters at the bottom of the falls. All that remained was to carry the victims to the road head and since we get loads of that practice anyway, we chose to terminate the training at that point. Aside from the fact that it was now six in the morning and we had lost an entire night's sleep to training, I think this was one of the better training sessions we have had. The newer members had to assume leadership roles and bear the consequences of their decisions. I feel this training will be invaluable in the event that all of our older members are unavailable for a mission. —Dave Hadley