

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 IX, Issue 2, February 1973

Editor, Walt Walker

Coming Events ---

- 14 February, Board Meeting at Art Bridge's.
21 February, Regular Meeting at County Hall
of Records.
23 - 25 February, Annual Winter Trip to San
Geronio.
14 March, Board Meeting.
21 March, Regular Meeting.
23 - 25 March, Training, a "Canyon Technical."

* Note the same dates for all events in both
February and March.



by Walt Walker

As you now know, the January issue was not lost or forgotten. We had two things happen that could not be helped. The first, missions, seven in a thirty day period (Dec. 30, 1972 to Jan. 28, 73). We really got behind with the three missions on the New Year's weekend. Then, when we thought we were about to catch up, the type composing machine broke down and parts were not available locally. Finishing the January issue on February 1, Hank Schmel (Mailing Chr.) and I decided to mail the January and February issues together.

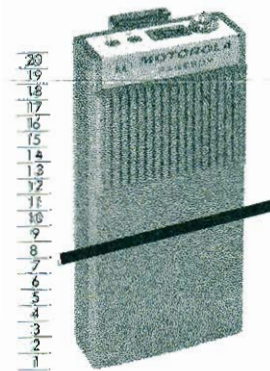
Since I dusted the 'old' box off I thought I might as well expound on a couple of other items. The pagers, or 'beepers' as we call them, are working out just great. Recently, mine came on while I was driving through the small community of Sage fifteen miles south of Hemet and Art Bridge's beeper activated while he was in Pasadena! Looks to me like they are going to be the best thing, or worst, depending on who is listening, RMRU members or their wives.

In recent years, we old timers, have noticed something that is hard to figure out. In the early years of RMRU we had about twenty searches for every rescue call. Just last year we had one and one-half rescues for each search. The only thing that is a known fact, is that more people are using the outdoors each year.

Sustaining Members

by Al Andrews

Pager Fund



We now have three Pagers on order and four in operation. Our sustaining members can be very proud of the fact that they are making it possible for us to have such fine equipment.

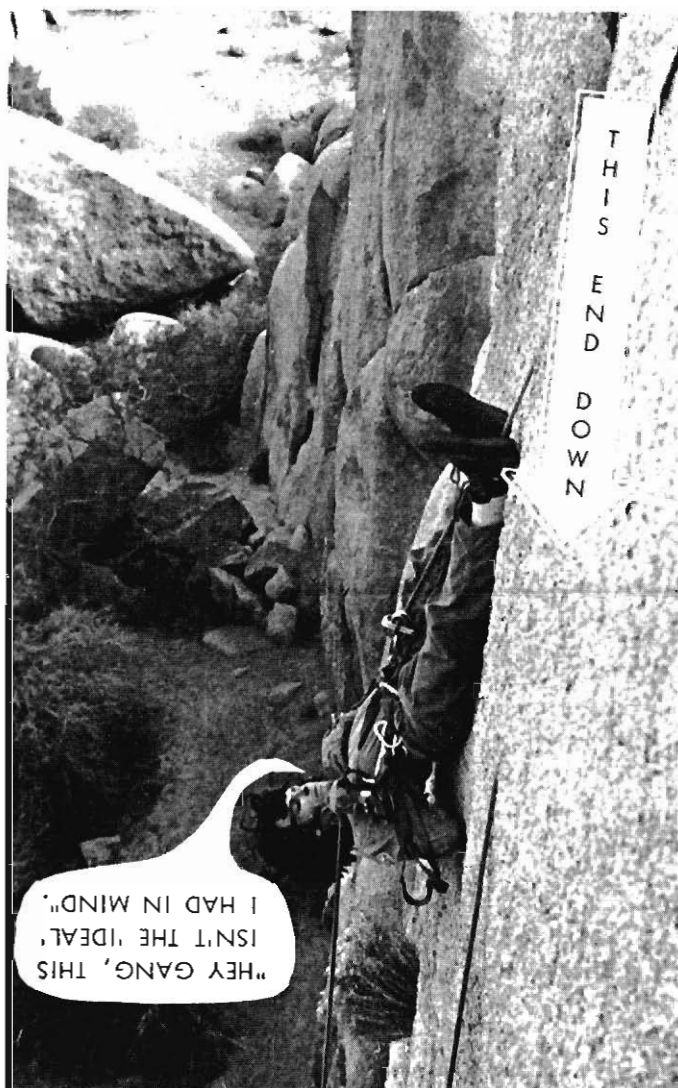
We want to welcome Craven, Dargan and Company to our sustaining membership this month and to thank once again the following for renewing their memberships:

Mrs. M.A. Johnston
Miss Patricia Higgins
Mr. David Harrah
Mr. & Mrs. Kenneth N. Andrews
Mr. & Mrs. Alfred W. King
*Mr. and Mrs. Carl F. Tennant
*Mr. & Mrs. Jack M. Bamberger
*Kennel Club of Riverside
*Dr. & Mrs. Norman H. Mellor
*Mr. Theodore L. Young

* Century Club Members - Donation of \$100 or more.

Ding Bat of the month

by HANK SCHMEL



call Mr. Andrews." Dan MacIntosh ran down to make the call while the five of us packed gear. Meeting Dan at the road we found that a young child was missing near Thermal. Thus our pager already proved to be effective. It also proved that the generosity of our Sustaining Members is putting RMRU into a more effective mode of operation — we can contact and obtain the services of our members more quickly. Four of us now have the pagers, with three more ordered. Jack Schnurr and Rich Quackenbush saw the need for a pager and paid for their own now, to be reimbursed by the unit as funds are available.

Department of gratitude. During the past year or so we have called upon other SAR units for assistance at a somewhat greater frequency than before. We wish to thank especially Sierra Madre and San Diego, two units that have responded quickly with manpower. While most of the operations ended before they got into the field, they know and we know that sooner or later they'll play a crucial role in a life-saving mission. All of us can remember past missions where a victim's life depended upon what we did as individuals, and we further know this will occur again before long. So, we perform on every mission as though this were the case.

Department of the inevitable. From reading of other units' newsletters and conversation with their members we are aware that in some states there are Search and Rescue Coordinators paid by the state governments to control SAR efforts therein. For the most part, this has been a most frustrating and discouraging situation for volunteer units. Without elaborating, I can accurately say this has not been in the best interests of the victims. Further, there is within the state of California a SAR unit supported by government funds that purports to be ready for "any kind of operation, any time, any place." Bunk! I solicit rebuttal to this statement: "Local, well trained, volunteer SAR units can do a far better job than any other."

Search and Rescue

3 JAN., WED. — SEARCH — No. 7301M
Indio area
by Hank Schmel



The Road Runner

sez— by Pres. Jim Fairchild

Wednesday evening, 3 Jan., six of us were in the midst of practicing a technical evacuation on mighty, ice-sheathed, wind-swept Mt. Rubidoux (1337' El.). Gear all over, men on rappel on the cliff. Our first pager went "beep," and said, "All RMRU personnel

It was Wednesday evening and many of the team members were practicing at Rubidoux. I myself, worked late and decided to relax for the remainder of the evening. The phone was to be my master as it rang at 8:30 p.m. Instinct told me it was a rescue call. Sure enough, Al Andrews was on the other end, "A 3½ year old boy missing since 3:00 p.m., ten

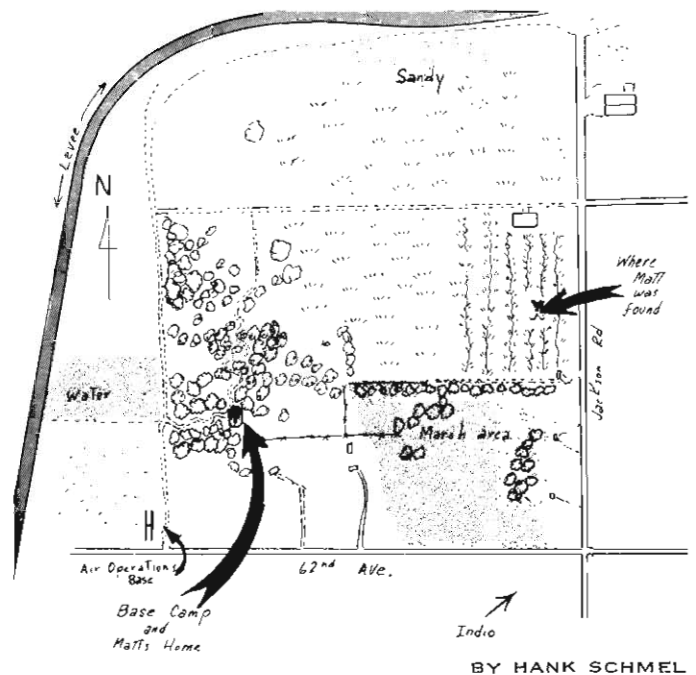
miles out of Indio". I took the truck and arrived at the Riverside County Sheriff's Indio sub-station at 2220. Ten minutes later Jim Fairchild and Dan McIntosh walked in. We left immediately for the scene. When we arrived at the homestead there were several deputies and the C.H.P. helicopter from Indio, with Art Trask at the controls. While Jim got information from the deputy, I talked with the mother of the boy, filling out the information sheet as she explained what happened. Mrs. Atkinson indicated that "Matt" and his dog were last seen about 3:00 p.m. that afternoon. The parents had left the boy in care of a friend while they went shopping in town. It was when they returned home and they had noticed Matt missing that they made the report to the Sheriff. It was now 2330 and we had twelve team members on the scene. Al had also called in the Sierra Madre dog teams and they were on the way. We divided up into two man teams, each with a radio, and began to carefully follow Matt's footprints.

Capt. Del Fountain had by this time called for Don Landells to join the CHP bird already in the field. I remained behind as Base Operator, with the parents anxiously standing by. At 0110 Thursday morning we received word that the dog teams of Sierra Madre would be with us in 20 minutes. Upon their arrival Lin Kroll and Mike Waite went immediately into the field, while Jerry Newcomb remained at base with the other dog.

In the meantime, the teams in the field were having their problems following tracks that seem to keep circling back on themselves, but leading in a general direction of northeast. The terrain was something else. Mesquite and other desert shrubs made the search very difficult. The open fields to the north, the direction Matt seemed to be headed, were covered with grass about two feet high. The helicopters were not having too much success at this time and the dog team was also having some difficulty. It was about 0500 when Jim called me from the field to see if we could get the rest of the Sierra Madre Team, San Diego Team and the U.S. Border Patrol.

At about 0700 the Sheriff's department had arrived at base camp with a hot breakfast for everyone. It didn't take long for all the teams to come in from the field once they found out about food. Even the helicopters seemed to smell the Ham and Eggs.

After we finished eating, we came up with a plan to skirt the outside perimeter of the field, one square mile of brushy terrain, in hopes of cutting the boys trail. It wasn't long after this that Ab Taylor and his crew of Border Patrol trackers arrived from El Cajon and started to work in the Northeast sector with Bernie McIlvoy and Ed Hill. After 11 hours at base, Jack Schnurr relieved me. He sent Pete Carlson and myself out to check Jackson Road, which would close off the East side of the quad. We slowly covered each side of the road, while Bernie and Ed were walking the levee on the north and west sides.



Jim was up in the bird with Landells and other teams were searching the interior.

The time was 0930, Pete and I were convinced that the boy did not cross Jackson Road nor did he cross the Levee on the north. We met up with officers Kearney, Burns and Harlan of the Border Patrol, who were working the area, and discussed the situation and concluded that the boy, exhausted from running most of the night, was sound asleep in a field that covered the N.E. sector. We called for a helicopter to come in low and search the area. The dogs also joined in the hunt. Sierra Madre units started to cover the north section and Riverside units along with the Border Patrol, the east section. The time is now 1200 hours, many of us began to feel Matt may have fallen into one of the many wells that dotted the field. We must face reality, so with the help of some local citizens we began to search all the water holes and wells. Pete and Bernie were now teamed together and assisting the Border Patrol with a sweep of the field just east of the farm house. At 1229 hours the report came over the radio that little Matt Atkinson had been found. Besides being a little dirty and tired he was none the worse for wear. I was in base at the time and gave the information to the parents. Tears of joy prevailed for the moment. The reunion of their son took place a few minutes later, the tears of happiness on the cheeks of Mr. and Mrs. Atkinson. Satisfaction of a job well done was written on the faces of the rescuers. This is our only reward, a feeling of well being and gratification that Matt will live to see the light of a new day.

We, of the Riverside Mountain Rescue Unit would like to extend our heartfelt thanks to those that helped bring our search to a happy ending:

California Highway Patrol
Art Trask, Bill Carbaugh and Helicopter
U.S. Border Patrol - Cajon and Indio Units
Under the direction of Ab Taylor
Riverside Police Department
Lee Owens, John Olsen and helicopter
Don Landells and helicopter
Sierra Madre Search and Rescue Team
San Diego Search and Rescue Team

and of course Capt. Del Foutain and crew from the Indio Sheriff's Sub-station who coordinated the search.



RMRU PHOTO BY HANK SCHMEL

Young Matt reunited with his parents.

18 JAN., THUR. - SEARCH - No. 7302M
Red Mountain area, south of Hemet
by Walt Walker

When the phone rang at 4:30 a.m., the first thing that came to mind was, that the alarm had gone off and that it had been an extremely short night's sleep. However, I finally answered the phone and found myself talking to Sgt. Mike Gilmore of the Riverside County Sheriff's Department, Hemet sub-station. He related that a 76 year old woman was missing. He described the situation and suggested a rendezvous point.

Setting up a conference call with the other call captains went amazingly fast, generally I can dress while waiting, but not this time. After a brief discussion concerning the situation, we decided it was best to call the other MRA teams in the area and re-

quest their assistance. Al Andrews agreed to contact the teams while we started rolling.

Upon arrival at the rendezvous point Sgt. Gilmore related that the woman had last been seen on Monday morning and was not reported missing until Wednesday evening. (During this time there had been heavy rainfall.) He also said that the Sheriff's Department fixed wing aircraft had been requested by Lt. Bill Park and that Lt. Park was on the way. Sgt. Gilmore and I drove to the missing woman's home and was met by her son. He basically told us the same information as to where and when.

Shortly, RMRU members began arriving and Jim Fairchild pulled in with the big orange van. Radios were quickly unloaded and tested, assignments given, and teams started out into the field. The mounted posse arrived and they quickly saddled up and started checking the berm along the many miles of dirt roads in the area. The Sheriff's radio came alive and 'Adam one' the fixed wing aircraft was soon in sight and started searching with Deputy Williams at the controls and Deputy Ferguson as an observer.

As the sun slowly warmed us, team members from the San Diego Mountain Rescue Team, the Sierra Madre Search and Rescue Team and the Montrose Search and Rescue Team arrived and were quickly given assignments. With no luck in finding any tracks, Lt. Park requested one of the helicopters from the Riverside Police Department. When the bird arrived, Chief pilot Lee Owens was filled in on the search. He and I quickly were flying over the dense brush. We had just completed an area when the radio reported that the woman was in the hospital. (Although the Sheriff's Department had contacted the hospital three times, there had been a foul up and they were not advised that the woman had been admitted.)



RMRU PHOTO BY HANK SCHMEL

Chief Pilot Lee Owens, of the Riverside Police Department, pauses for the camera just before lift off from base.

25 JAN., THUR. — RESCUE — No. 7303M
Soboba Hills, north of San Jacinto
by Walt Walker

The noon speaker at the service club I belong to had just began when a voice in the background said, "Phone call for Walt Walker". As I walked to the phone I thought it must be my office since my 'beeper' had not went off. Wrong again, it was Lt. Bill Park of the Riverside County Sheriff's Department, Hemet sub-station. He related that a young man had fallen and asked if I could hurry up to the area and assess the need for a helicopter and give what aid I could. He said he would call Al Andrews to get the rest of the team going.

While changing clothes my beeper went off and I heard the call for RMRU members to respond. After loading my gear, I sped out to the base of the hills where I was met by Lt. Park and many onlookers. Swinging on my pack I quickly started hiking up the very steep hillside, thinking about the times I had climbed this very same hill, while in high school, to work on the 'S' that sits a top North Mountain. (A group of high school students had gone up to the 'S' and cleared brush and whitewashed the rocks. On the way down, Peter Woolfolk, age 16, had slipped and fell about 300 feet and was severely injured. His hiking companions had split up, some going for help, others staying with him.)

Coming up and over a steep knoll, I could see a group about 200 feet away. Upon arrival at the victim, I found Gary Fritzinger and other members of the Hemet Search and Rescue Team giving closed heart massage and artificial respiration. Gary filled me in on what they had encountered and done in the way of first aid. Since they were doing a very good job I began to look for a place for the chopper to land. As I was doing this RMRU member Pete Carlson showed up and he and I put our heads together.

While I started hiking down, looking for a heli-spot, Pete and Gary directed the movement of the stretcher downward. Just as I found a spot I heard directions being given, over the radio, to the Riverside Police Department chopper. By this time many RMRU members and our rescue van had assembled at the bottom. Jim Fairchild radioed and asked what was needed. My reply was for the aluminum Stokes litter and our portable oxygen system. When the chopper arrived the requested equipment was loaded aboard and was on its way to us. As the bird neared I ignited a smoke flare to give the pilot wind directions, as the wind was blowing about 5 to 8 knots. The bird landed and we unloaded the equipment, transferred the victim to the Stokes litter, started giving oxygen while continuing the CPR, and carrying him towards the waiting bird. We loaded him

aboard, secured the straps and gave the pilot the go signal. He lifted off and dropped towards the group waiting below.



RMRU PHOTO BY HANK SCHMEL

RMRU members Gary Anderson and Bernie McIlvoy rush to the Riverside Police Department helicopter to resume the CPR after the 15 second flight from the mountain side.



RMRU PHOTO BY HANK SCHMEL

Bernie McIlvoy (RMRU), Bob Ellefson (HS&R), Dennis Simpson (RMRU), Max Hymas (HS&R) and Gary Anderson (RMRU) load the injured young man into the ambulance.

The victim was going to be transferred to a waiting ambulance, but when it would not start, RMRU member Jack Schnurr climbed into the bird. The pilot quickly lifted the machine up and they were on their way to the Hemet Valley Hospital. A doctor met the helicopter when it landed in the parking lot. Over the radio we heard the sad news, he was dead on arrival. We gathered gear and slowly began hiking down, packs weighing more it seemed, than when we had hurried up.

We accept winning easily.....

We strive to save those all ready lost,
with heartbreak



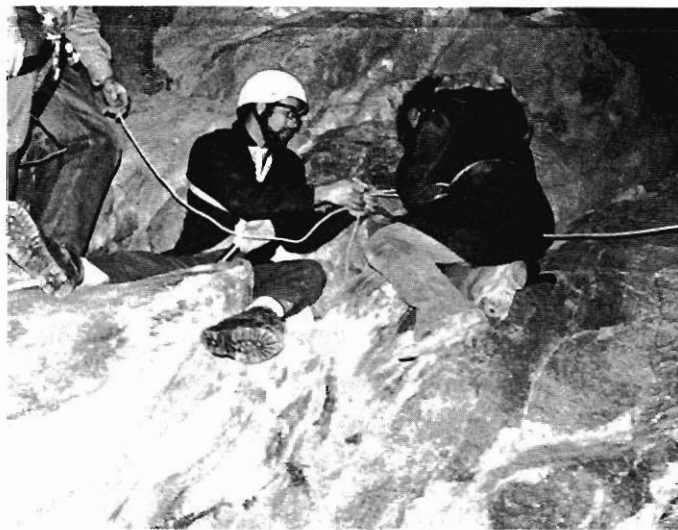
Peter Geoffery Woolfolk

16 years

28 JAN., SUN. — RESCUE — No. 7304M
Tahquitz Canyon — Palm Springs end
by Pete Carlson

I was almost home after a great weekend of training and fellowship with the team when I saw the rescue van going out of town. Being only five minutes from home and having only winter rescue gear with me I drove home and called Al Andrews. Two young men were stranded in Tahquitz Canyon and needed help to get out. I got my rescue pack, technical gear, and mountaineering boots and drove back to Palm Springs where I was one hour ago.

Arriving at the road head at 1830 I find most of the group from the winter training repacking from snow gear to technical gear, I do likewise. At 1900 ten of us start up the canyon to the first falls. At 1930 just above the first falls we make voice contact. Two young men, Ken and Gary were going down the canyon bottom and had been jumping and sliding down small waterfalls and chutes. Then they came to one they could not get down and when they went back, they could not get up the last one they went down. They called up to some people above to go for help.



RMRU PHOTO BY PETE CARLSON

RMRU member Ed Hill Ties another rope onto one of the two young men rescued, in preparation for the second belay.

We set up an anchor and Jack Schnurr went over the side, to find much to his liking, that it is not too steep and with a belay they can climb up. The two are belayed up and then Jack climbs up with their pack. At 2030 we coil ropes and put away gear as we prepare to hike out. The hike out goes without problems and at 2100 we are at base. Since we had just come off Mt. San Jacinto and had a mission, with no food in between, we all went for a steak dinner, compliments of the Riverside County Sheriff's Department.

31 JAN., WED. — SEARCH — No. 7305C
Ventura County

About 1645 RMRU received a call from the Sierra Madre Search and Rescue Team requesting help in searching for an elderly missing man. Due to our recent mission activity and the two day commitment, required of CR-MRA, we were not able to send any members.

TRAINING



26-28 JAN., SAT. & SUN. — WINTER SHAKEDOWN
by Joe Bell, M.D.

The Winter Shakedown comes after a hiatus of two months during which most of us revert back to ordinary citizens, Christmas shopping, watching bowl games on television, becoming again fathers, husbands, boy friends, etc. Then the time for departure comes. The last tram will not wait. You throw all that stuff in the big winter back pack and you put on those eight pound boots. You tear yourself out of ordinary living to wonder off in the night snow. No time for supper, so you wander off, hungry and tired and harassed by daily living.

Don Ricker, making his second annual snow shoe encore, and Bud White making his team come back bringing Mike Daugherty who had sustained an injury to his knee last year that at least entitled him to a long run on "Gunsmoke", saying, "Mister Dillon". They have a twenty minute head start. They barely expect to make the first campsite at the head of the snow shoe trail because of their crippled friend. We never catch them and their tent is pitched when we arrive.

I hate walking on snow shoes in the dark. I hate my heavy pack. I hate the cold. Why ain't I home drinking beer and watching television. I sleep like a stone.

The day is unbelievably beautiful. The warm sun reflected off the white snow brings warmth. Bodies emerge from brightly colored tents and the sounds and smell of breakfast are there.

Doug McMillan, a reporter from the *Press Enterprise*, is tented with Hank Schmel next to Pete Carlson and myself. Doug is doing a feature story on

the team to appear in some future edition of the *Press Enterprise*. The entire troupe of nineteen souls like a large lazy animal, feeds itself, cleans itself and is ready to move on.

We snow shoe along ridges up to Jean Peak with the breath taking views of Tahquitz Canyon, Tahquitz Valley, Lilly rock, Martinez and Rabbit peaks, Salton Sea, Hemet and San Jacinto. Doug takes in the scene and we wonder if he understands a little why we are here. I wonder what happened to the up tight jerk who wanted to drink beer and watch television.



RMRU PHOTO BY HANK SCHMEL

At a combination, rest stop, picture taking, apply sun screen, take off extra clothing and whatever, Rich Quackenbush, Rich Morris, Steve Bryant and Pete Carlson all take advantage of the situation.

After pitching tents at the new campsite, most of the team gets a lecture demonstration on Deadmen, except they only had a dead boy. The only Deadman was holding up my tent.

Mike Daugherty, Bud White and Dennis Simpson build an igloo with Art Bridges' snow shovel and some less than perfect snow blocks. It's too big, it's too tall, but finally it is finished by the time everyone is back from playing with the dead boy. Everyone takes a picture.

I look around at the younger team members, Tom Mott, Gary Anderson, Bill Hunt, Dan McIntosh, Bob Claybrook and Rich Quackenbush. They have one thing in common. They are big and strong. Maybe it is time for the oldtimers to pass on their accumulated wisdom and retire.

We have the inevitable camp fire to which everyone gravitates after supper, but tonight there is twist. Bud White's huge fourman tent becomes the court of our little country. Doug goes in to interview old timers and hear "war stories". Finally a total of eleven people manage to squeeze in. Rich Morris and Bob Claybrook decide to try out the Igloo and they

swear it is very comfortable.

Then there is the Bleuets story.

I sleep somewhat poorly and morning finds me less than 100% willing to climb San Jacinto on snow shoes with full pack. I decide to go back early with Hank Schmelt who has to get back to work. However, by the time we reach Jean Peak, I feel so good I have to do San Jacinto. I remember Ed Hill and Steve Bryant covering the distance with their ski poles looking curiously like water bugs flitting across the surface of the water.

The view from the top of San Jacinto cannot be described to anyone who has not seen it and does not need to be described to anyone who has.

Now the crucial part of the trip begins for Mike Daugherty, the long descent to the Tram station. The long orange line filters down to the Tram station followed by the ever faithful Scout master, leader and President, Jim Fairchild.

An hour and a half wait at the upper tram station allows for a generous critic.



RMRU PHOTO BY HANK SCHMEL

Bob Claybrook, RMRU member from Palm Springs, still can't believe that there could be so much snow to snowshoe on.