

RMRU NEWSLETTER

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A VOLUNTEER NON-PROFIT CORPORATION
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MEMBER OF THE MOUNTAIN RESCUE ASSOCIATION

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Walt Walker, Editor

Search and Rescue

3 & 4 FEB., SAT. & SUN. — SEARCH — No. 7306M
Crestline, San Bernardino Mountains
by Art Bridge

The weekend of 3 – 4 February demonstrated a classical example of the utilization of all available resources in the search for a missing person, and thanks to adequate communication and cooperation between these several organizations, the person was found no worse for the wear.

Along about 10 p.m. Saturday, the Riverside Mountain Rescue Unit was called by the San Diego Mountain Rescue Team to assist on an operation in Crestline, in San Bernardino County. Why we didn't get the initial call was a bit puzzling but it was of no real importance because San Diego, immediately upon receiving their call, called all of the Mountain Rescue Association teams in Southern California, namely: ourselves, Sierra Madre, Altadena, Montross, Sylmar and China Lake.

Because we had the least distance to travel, we were the first MRA team on the scene. The situation that we found was that an eight year old Cub Scout had strayed from his group sometime after two p.m. A search utilizing the local San Bernardino County Sheriff's search team and a local REACT unit (an organization equipped with four wheel drive vehicles, CB radios and an excellent knowledge of the area) was well under way and all of the immediate area, cabins, etc. had been covered. Upon our reporting in we were assigned a drainage to search, leading north and east from the Lake Gregory Dam. The other MRA teams were arriving and were given similar assignments.

From here on in this report I can only give the activities as we saw them. The canyon was too narrow to need the nine of us that were in the field, so Jack and I were asked to cover a ridge and a road on the west side of the drainage to search for tracks. After half an hour we found ourselves very near to our van which had moved its position for better radio transmissions. We were asked to wait for Rich Morris who was on his way out from the Sheriff's base at the school. When we started moving again we skirted a

sewage plant that was well lighted and headed on down the hill. Some fifteen minutes later it struck us that we had committed a terrible goof in not examining the sewage plant very closely for the boy as it was a natural place for a person to get in out of the rain and snow. We radioed back to our van for our people to have the plant searched. They passed the word on back to the main base and were informed that the place had been checked out earlier in the day by a REACT unit.

We weren't happy about the situation, but we headed on down the canyon. I'll omit the next seven hours in this story —. Jack and I beat the rest of the team down the hill because we had been following a road and the sewer out-fall line while they had been boulder hopping in the stream bed and negotiating snow covered logs all night. We found waiting for us a couple of REACT units that had been assigned to take us back up the hill. While waiting for the rest of our gang we killed time telling war stories, and we mentioned our goof of the night before.

The vehicles carried us back up to the base of operations and we had an excellent breakfast provided by the Sheriff's mobile kitchen and then along with all of the rest of the MRA teams took a new assignment and continued looking for tracks and calling for the boy. Incidentally, by now the Border Patrol expert trackers were on the job and they are a joy to work with, real pros in this kind of work and we always learn from them.

Just after finishing the second assignment we learned that the boy had been found. The REACT unit that we had been talking with had driven out to re-investigate the sewage plant, found nothing, but had given a couple of calls for good measure, and the boy appeared from behind a log not a stones throw from the plant and not more than twenty feet from our tracks of the night before. He said that he had slept there all night.

I would really feel bad about my own role in this search except that we had been calling every minute or two all through that area and this isn't the first time that a lost youngster has slept through a mob scene activity. In fact it reminded several of us of the rainy night a few years ago when Don Ricker gave a casual kick at an abandoned poncho on a search up in Skunk Cabbage, and the darned thing sat up. Children really sleep soundly under the worst circumstances if they are tired enough.

I say again that this was a very good operation by the San Bernardino County Sheriff's Office, utilizing all of their available resources; their own units, the REACT people, the Border Patrol specialists, the Sheriff's helicopter and the Mountain Rescue Association teams. There were some seventy-five of us there from MRA teams from all over Southern California. We were glad to be able to help, that's why we are in being. Call us again, San Bernardino, anytime you need a little extra manpower.

9 FEB., FRI. — SEARCH — No. 7307A
Tahquitz Canyon, Palm Springs

Late Friday afternoon, just at quitting time, we received a call from the Indio office of the Riverside County Sheriff's Department that three boys and two instructors from a private school were overdue from a day hike. Just as many of us were going out the door we received word that the group had shown up safely.

10 FEB., SAT. — SEARCH — No. 7308M
San Jacinto Mountains
by Rich Morris

At approximately 1400 on Saturday afternoon I was sorting through my callout gear when Hank Schmel's wife called to tell me we had a missing person in the high country near the Palm Springs Tram. I hastily gathered everything up and drove to the base of the tram.

Hank had already arrived with the truck followed by Bob Claybrook, Jack Schnurr and Dave Nehen. Sgt. Bill Herring of the Riverside County Sheriff's Department told us that the subject, Ronald Gidoumb, age 22, from San Diego was missing in the Willow Creek area of the Tahquitz drainage. The subject was described to us as irrational and suicidal. He had been in the mountains since Wednesday, the seventh of February, traveling by himself. Sgt. Herring also told us that several people from the State Park had made a preliminary search of the area and found the subject's pack and other belongings scattered along the trail between Long Valley and Saddle Junction.

With the above information in hand, Bob, Dave and myself ascended the tram to begin the search. We left Dave at the tram to serve as radio relay and hiked down to the Long Valley ranger station where we discussed the situation with Ranger Eugene Crawford. He described the extent of this preliminary search of the Willow Creek Crossing area and gave us some of the subject's possessions that he had packed out.

By then it was almost 1600, so Bob and I put on our snowshoes and began to hike towards the Hidden

Lake Divide. The wind was blowing extremely hard with bad weather closing in on the mountain. We hiked for a while in alternating freezing rain and drizzle following the ranger's earlier footprints back towards Willow Creek. Soon after leaving the State Park we discovered a single set of prints in the granular, crusty snow leading away from the trail. We followed the tracks for about 200 yards and discovered a pair of shoes on the snow's surface with barefoot prints leading down the hill. We advised base of the situation and requested more manpower.

At this point we learned that another mission had been initiated to search for a lost boy from the Buckhorn Camp in Idyllwild (see mission No. 7309). Since the majority of the team members were still at the tram and because the chances for the victim's survival were extremely bleak, Chief John McCoy, Sgt. Herring and our team leaders decided to put off further action until the boy was found. The RMRU members at the tram descended and drove around to Idyllwild while Bob and I hiked out to Humber Park. Before leaving we marked the area with trail tape and rested for a few minutes. At Willow Creek Crossing we found the subject's pack and some of his possessions. Both of us were carrying very heavy packs so we were unable to carry anything out. The hike out was long and rather difficult due to the weather and deep snow. We arrived at Humber Park at 2230 where we were met by Deputy Fred Grutzmacher who drove us to Buckhorn Camp where we were served a fine dinner by the staff.

Shortly after our meal the boy was found safe and sound, but a third search for two overdue hikers (see mission No. 7310) was being initiated. Since the San Diego and Sierra Madre Teams had been called, Bob and I went to Palm Springs to get some sleep (we were exhausted). The next morning I returned just as the third search was successfully completed. During the night a considerable amount of snow had fallen on the mountain so the Sheriff's Department decided to put off the original search until a later date.

10 FEB., SAT. — SEARCH — No. 7309M
Idyllwild area, San Jacinto Mountains
by Dan MacIntosh

Being a Southern California boy most of my life, I welcome rain like most. That is, to a point. I personally had reached that point much earlier this month. The mission started for me when I returned home from Joshua Tree after one day because of the weather. I remember calling Art Bridge's house, getting a busy signal and joking to myself that it was probably a rescue. It was, so I re-arranged the mess my gear was in and got started.

Our arrival at Buckhorn Camp was welcomed by the four of us who, with all our gear, had somehow

fit into my little Bronco. There were patches of snow and the temperature was in the forties. Like so many times before, tracking would be vital. We divided into four teams and started down the drainage. Myself and Rich Quackenbush were assigned the northern most canyon.

Our canyon soon became somewhat rugged. Bud White radioed that they had tracks. We had seen nothing and felt discouraged because we weren't in Bear Trap Canyon with Bud and his group. Somewhat later, a little wetter and veterans of the slippery wet rocks, we came to a road. Upon reporting our position via radio we were instructed to follow the road making a lot of noise. Meaning, we were to call out quite regularly. Having gone about a half mile we heard a young voice repeating our call. It was soon determined that this was nine year old Eddie Edwards, the young man we were searching for.

Eddie had travelled down one of the ridges to Royal Pines Trailer Park. He explained that he had been there for a couple of hours. Twice he had knocked on doors and asked where Buckhorn Camp was. Both doors were shut in his young face. Perhaps this is an example of the survival rule: 'Look out for old number one'.

We returned to Buckhorn Camp where RMRU can always be sure of a soft bunk, a warm fire and some of the best food on the mountain.

10 & 11 FEB., SAT. & SUN. — SEARCH — No. 7310M
11 FEB., SUN. — ESCORT — No. 7311M
by Bud White

The phone rang at 8 p.m. Saturday night just as I was settling down to watch the Southern Cal basketball game. Art Bridge asked if I wanted to go hiking and the response was "Hell, no!" but after explaining that the team was out on a rescue at the top of the tramway and that a nine year old was lost out of Buckhorn well, what are you going to do? You're not on the call list but all the retreads are being contacted as well as San Diego and Sierra Madre because this is shaping up as one of those weekends. A nine year old lost in San Jacinto Mountains with a bad storm coming everybody rolls. But this isn't about him because he was found in the early a.m. Sunday by Rich Quackenbush and Dan MacIntosh and they'll write about that. This is about two hikers in their early thirties, well equipped and experienced, who set out on Saturday to climb Tahquitz Peak via South Ridge trail and then to Saddle Junction and down to Humber Park where their pick-up was parked. Tahquitz Peak in the summertime is to see the Forest Ranger and get your squirrel card. In the wintertime it is a prodigious feat and reasonably dangerous because of the many 1000 foot long ice chutes. In bad weather it is better attempted with

full gear rather than day hike equipment.

As we left to search for the nine year old we were alerted to the possibility of splitting our forces to look for the two hikers. Fortunately, we were back in a few hours to Buckhorn where a planning session decided that the best plan for the two hikers was to send a strong three man team up the South Ridge trail to the lookout on top of Tahquitz. Because RMRU had the tram search and the nine year old already under their belt, Sierra Madre was assigned this task. In addition, another two man Sierra Madre team would go up the Devils Slide trail out of Humber Park and go to the peak in a pincers movement. I was one of four RMRU members who were assigned to set up an advanced base camp at Saddle Junction to intercept the two hikers if they came out that way or to direct the search of the Wilderness Area if that became necessary. Between Art Bridge, Don Ricker (welcome back) and myself, we had 32 years of RMRU and San Jacinto experience plus Bill Hunt with one year. If nothing else, we had a fresh ear for "sea stories" if our two lost hikers walked out the other way.

We left Humber Park at 3:05 a.m. after a marvelous meal at Buckhorn Camp. At 4:00 a.m. the storm hit us. The trail was virtually non-existent. If it hadn't been for the tracks made by RMRU members Rich Morris and Bob Claybrook as they hiked across from the tram after their search for the victim who started all of this, we would have had an even more difficult time. Our biggest problem, and one that continued to plague us, was that we were wet to the skin from the search in the dripping woods for the nine year old and as we hiked higher and the wind blew harder we got chilled and never really got warm again.

We reached the saddle at 5:00 a.m. and set up our 4-man tent and were in sleeping bags by 5:20. At 6:00 the two Sierra Madre members went by and we exchanged pleasantries through the tent. By 7:00 a.m. the radio and the storm had picked up in intensity so we all woke up. The wind was gusting to 50 mph, the temperature was 23; we had received eight inches of snow in a little over an hour and a half and it continued to fall at the rate of four inches per hour. The Sierra Madre duo were literally beaten back by the storm near the peak so it was decided to have them return to advance base. Art, Don and Bill were sent out to do a check of the various structures in the Wilderness Area (Johns — which on several previous searches were found to have people huddled therein). Thanks to the excellent job done by these three in alerting the people they ran into to watch out for two lost hikers and to check in with me at the saddle, we were able to avert several possible additional rescues or call outs because while we were in the area, calls were coming in from concerned parents who knew their scouts or boys were up there. In all, twenty-nine people were turned up, eight of whom

needed assistance in finding their way down. Our two hikers showed up little the worse for wear but glad to find concerned people looking for them and best of all, hot coffee.

Much credit is due to the three Sierra Madre men who made it to Tahquitz Peak and advised that the hikers were not there which doubly alerted us to the possibility of them being in our area. The hikers had done well climbing Tahquitz Peak but bad weather obscured their view and they missed the turn that would have led them to Saddle Junction. They had traveled until dark, spending the night huddled around a fire somewhere north of Red Tahquitz Peak. Realizing the next day that there were no tracks to follow and they had better do for themselves, they headed due west which led them right to our tent.

I can't compliment the two Sierra Madre teams enough for their really outstanding performances in extremely bad weather. It was really a rewarding experience as I sat in that tent and told these two very appreciative hikers what was being mobilized to help them fifty-eight MRA men from three teams; nine in the field, sixteen on their way up and the balance standing by to help as necessary. Where else could you go, get this kind of money, no cover charge, and the show changed three times in twenty-four hours?

11 FEB., SAT. — RESCUE? — No. 7312A
Toro Peak, Santa Rosa Mountains
by Art Bridge

Anticlamatic! If ever a rescue call could be called this, we had it on the evening of 11 February. Having participated on three separate operations in the high country of San Jacinto, starting mid-day Saturday and finishing late afternoon Sunday, the team was as near being 'spent' as I have ever seen them. I snoozed my way down the Banning Idyllwild Highway with the rest of the west end contingent and was surprised when Dan pulled into the Banning station of the Riverside County Sheriff's Department. He explained that he thought that we should check in before heading on home. In less than a minute he was back at the car telling us to come on in for the briefing. Sergeant Bill Herring had just received a call from the Indio Station asking for help to rescue a van that had ventured too high on a slippery muddy road on Toro Mountain. This idea flew like the proverbial lead balloon with us and Bill got the idea loud and clear. It wasn't mutiny, it was just a well phrased suggestion that this was a much more appropriate task for one of the desert "four wheeler" organizations than it was for RMRU. Shortly we and the others who had been turned around were again rolling westward. I don't know about the others on the team, but this "old man" slept entirely around the clock that night.

13 FEB., TUE. — RESCUE — No. 7313M
Santiago Peak, Santa Ana Mountains
by Jack Schnurr

I guess a phone call at 1:30 in the morning is a significant enough sign that the rescue call will be different; the time coupled with the Elsinore locality, promises anything but ordinary. Although 80% of our calls come at night, usually we get notified between six and ten o'clock and are hiking by midnight: 1:30 in the AM????? Elsinore????? I get the creeps everytime I roll to the lake area: missing winos, thick brush, glider crashes on Sunday afternoons (traffic), thick buck brush, liberated souls roaming the mountains inspired by "mind releasing agents", thick buck brush with long thorns, etc.

"No Art!" slipped out before I could stop that part of my body that likes to sleep at night.

"Sure could use your first aid experience, we have a four-wheeler over the side on the Ortega Highway." (I just knew it was going to be something like that!!)

"O.K. Art." (my conscience won out!)

"Meet at my house."

With Rich Quackenbush in my car and Art in McIntosh's Bronco, we made it to the roadhead about 3:15 AM. Meeting ten other RMRU members, we had plenty of manpower and was soon on our way up a fireroad in four-wheel drive vehicles. The road offered numerous opportunities for early morning fun and adventure: either the road was nearly washed away or half a mountain had slid down onto it. Travelling slowly, it took us an hour and a half to get to the accident scene.

The accident had occurred eleven hours previous and three of the victims had hiked out for assistance. The fourth member of the group had a broken leg and awaited our arrival. The three victims in hiking out, made a tremendous effort as they suffered from broken ribs, a sprained ankle and the shock of the gross accident.

The road was very slippery, it was easy to see how an accident might occur. The vehicle had slid off of the dirt road while taking a curve, probably too fast. Once the vehicle started rolling on the steep slope, it probably never stopped till it reached the bottom. The victims were all thrown clear within the first 100 feet.

Despite the amazingly thick underbrush, Walt, Art and myself were soon over the side to the victim. Suffering from shock and frostbite, Rex Batts the victim, was reasonably lucid as we stripped him of his wet clothes, applied an airsplint and loaded him into the rescue sleeping bag and litter. Jim Fairchild and Bernie McIlvoy rigged up pulleys to belay the litter as the litter carriers fought the undergrowth and slippery mud. Soon the victim was enjoying hot soup at the road.

Art and Dan dropped 300 yards down the mountain slope to find the wrecked Blazer but finally gave up when the terrain steepened and the underbrush thickened. Money found along the way was frozen to postcard rigidity from the wind and blowing snow.

Putting the injured man into the back of Walt's Jeep Wagoneer, we started down fifteen miles of dirt road which became worse and worse as the sun came up. We deposited Rex at the emergency room of the Elsinore Hospital and headed for a coffee shop in downtown Elsinore. After the fourth rescue in three days, I'm sure that most of the fellows retired early that night.

Coming Events - - -

- 14 March, Board Meeting at Carlson's.
- 23-25 March, "Canyon Technical," mock mission.
- 11 April, Board Meeting.
- 25 April, Regular Meeting.
- 27-29 April, North Face of Mt. San Jacinto climb.

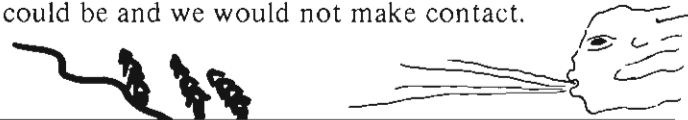


The Road Runner

sez- by Pres. Jim Fairchild

Department of, "Don't let it happen to you!" Twice this year we've had three real missions on one week-end. This means we call for help from other MRA units. When your unit comes to help please come prepared for any kind of terrain and any kind of weather. If you try to guess the conditions you'll wind up hurting - no long trousers in the brush, no storm gear up in a howling blizzard, insufficient water in scorching heat. These three problems have hurt our "guests" in the past. We try to be hospitable at Base, but in the field it's another matter.

Recently we've been postulating conditions that would be nearly impossible to overcome while trying to find or aid people in the wilderness. Our last snowstorm just about answered the postulate - very deep snow, whiteout visibility, 50 mph wind. Sort of scares one when one thinks of how close the victim(s) could be and we would not make contact.



RMRU MEMBER HONORED!

(The following is the text from a presentation given before and on behalf of the Hemet - San Jacinto Exchange Club on Thursday, February 22, 1973 by Lt. William Park, Hemet Station of the Riverside County Sheriff's Department.)

Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen, Exchange Club members, I have been given the distinct honor of introducing the man who is to receive the Outstanding Citizen Award given by the Exchange Club.

I do consider this task an honor for very few times in a man's life, do we find a citizen who has given as much of himself as this person has in helping his fellow man.

He has risked his own safety and life on many occasions while helping others. The Outstanding Citizen Award is being given to a man from this valley and it gives me great pleasure to introduce him to you at this time. . . . ladies and gentlemen, Mr. Walter Walker.

Now, let me tell you about this man. He was born in 1936 in Bell, California and shortly thereafter moved to San Jacinto where he graduated from San Jacinto High School in 1954. He is married and his wife's name is Sondra. They have two children, a boy Kevin, age 13, and a girl, Lisa, age 11.

Throughout his adult life, Walt Walker has dedicated himself to helping his fellow man. As an example, he is the only charter member left of the original six members of the Riverside Mountain Rescue Unit. He has been president of this organization for six years and has been with the rescue unit for a total of 12 years. Prior to the forming of the Riverside Mountain Rescue Unit, he was a Reserve Deputy with the Riverside County Sheriff's Department, and branched out to organize the Riverside Mountain Rescue Unit.

It is needless to say to all of you, of the splendid service that the Riverside Mountain Rescue Unit has accomplished for the entire Riverside County, as well as all of California. We consider the Riverside Mountain Rescue Unit to be an organization of highly professional people that have dedicated themselves to helping others, and all law enforcement agencies. They respond with equipment and manpower and bear the financial burden themselves.

As president of this organization, Walt Walker has exemplified this professionalization. They are ready and able to respond and have been instrumental in saving many lives. The Riverside Mountain Rescue Unit has performed an invaluable service to the Riverside County Sheriff's Department and as a representative of Ben Clark, the Sheriff, we are sincerely gratefully to Walt Walker and the rescue unit.

Walt Walker has been injured three times during a search and rescue mission. On one occasion, while in the process of rescuing a boy out of Little Round Valley, he was injured in a helicopter crash. The helicopter crashed into the tree tops where Walt Walker was injured and had to be taken to the emergency room at the Hemet Valley Hospital. In fact, he has had to received medical treatment from the hospital on three occasions, due to search and rescue missions.

In citing some of the experiences that Walt Walker has been involved in, there is the case of Mattie Zimmerman's. This was a rescue of a six year old boy that had been lost in the San Bernardino Mountains for six days. He was found in the snow badly dehydrated and suffering from exposure. Walt and a deputy were responsible fro saving this boy's life. After the boy was found he was enroute via helicopter to the hospital. The boy experienced a clinical death in the helicopter but was saved due to Walter's administration of closed heart massage while the deputy gave mouth to mouth resusitation. Upon their arrival at the hospital, the boy was again breathing and regained consciousness and is alive today with no brain damage. Walt knew what to do and did it.

On another incident, a six year old boy, Bobby Sitz, had hiked from his church camp in the San Jacinto Mountains. He was tracked by the Riverside Mountain Rescue Unit fro five days where he was found in Tahquitz Canyon just 10 feet from water, where he had fallen because he was too exhausted and dehydrated to go any further. The doctor commented that the boy would have expired within another four hours and wouldn't have made it had it not been for Walker and the Riverside Mountain Rescue Unit.

These are only two of the many, many experiences and benefits that Walt Walker has done to serve his fellow man.

Some of the other activities that he is involved with are indicative of the services he performs for other citizens. He has been connected with the Scout program for nine years, three years as Scoutmaster and he is now assistant Scoutmaster. He is active at the district level in the Boy Scouts. He is an instructor for the Scoutmasters in the Back Pack Training Program and Desert Survival Training Program. He is an instructor with the Red Cross and has come to the Hemet Sheriff Station on his own time and conducted a class in first aid to our officers. He is involved at this time in paramedical training to further his activities, and he has just put in his application with the Volunteer Fire Department in San Jacinto.

You can readily see that this man is dedicated to community services, in fact, last year was the first time his family took a vacation for two weeks since he has been with the rescue unit. Again, ladies and

gentlemen, it gives me great pleasure and honor, to be able to introduce Walt Walker as the Outstanding Citizen of the Year.

TRAINING



23-25 FEB., FRI. - SUN. - SNOW TRAINING
BY Jim Fairchild

Bill Hunt and I were carrying "Character building" packs, that is, in excess of seventy pounds. The trail to Saddle Junction was deep under snow, the San Jacinto Mountains having received a most generous covering. We should have been on the trail to the Little Draw on Mt. San Gorgonio, but soft snow conditions would have made our original plans for practice on hard, steep snow useless. So, we ground along, conjecturing whether the many big cumulus clouds would consolidate as we hoped and give us a snowstorm.

On a ridge near Tahquitz Valley at about 7800' snowshoe tracks led to an orange tent lighted from within. Upon arrival, announced by our crunching steps, a voice said, "Hey, come in here." Because Bud White, Art Bridge, Jack Schnurr, and Pete Carlson were already in, we only got our heads and shoulders past the door, to be immediately met with forks full of tender beef and Bud's Chinese soup. This theme of hospitality and generosity prevailed throughout the weekend.

We added a third Bishop's Ultimate tent to the scene and crawled into the down bags. The clouds were consolidating. About eleven-thirty Ed Hill, Rich Quackenbush, Dan MacIntosh, Rick Pohlrs, Gary Anderson, Dennis Simpson, and Tom Mortensen. More tents went up and they were soon asleep.

We'll never tell at what time we got through breakfast, but the wind was by now blowing high stratus clouds from the west, we knew snow was coming. Our intention was to cover the Skunk Cabbage, Tahquitz Valley, Reed's Meadow, and Little Tahquitz Valley areas thoroughly for familiarization in deep snow conditions. We managed to do just that, enjoying a noontime and lunchtime snowstorm. But the conditions were quite mild compared to two weeks ago during a search in the same area. How different the terrain is and looks when up to eight feet of snow covers the bushes, smoothes out the rough places, and makes trees look shorter. We finished the tour by a walk over to Saddle Junction and back.

Camp now had not only tents but three igloos connected by arch-shaped portals built by four "Stay-at-homes." These comfortable structures would be the scene for many of us cooking supper, a fine evening "party" (stories of old missions, discussions on techniques in SAR, classified talk about RMRU, and, stuff that men usually talk about), then over half the group slept in them Saturday night.

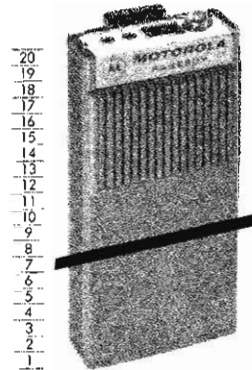
Sunday morning showed us God's Creation in brilliant splendor – an incomparable scene of white, green, gray, and blue – snow, trees, rocks, and sky. Our much earlier breakfast enabled a quicker getaway, we hiked over to a point near Skunk Cabbage, stashed our gear, and, leaving Rick as guard (with sore knee) we headed for Willow Creek Crossing. Bud's route led over a ridge, down a steep slope, directly to where the missing Ronald Gidcumb (see that write-up) had abandoned his pack. While several of the men dug for more gear with ice axes the rest of us headed up the trail hoping to find the trail tape left by Rich Morris and Bob Claybrook when they found Ronald's tracks and shoes, just before the calloff for the search over at Buckhorn Ranch. We found the tape and fanned out for several hundred yards, but, of course, the snow covered all. We regrouped and did a lot of wondering – this possibility and that.

Back at the packs we ate lunch, divided up Ronald's gear to pack it out, and began the hike back to Humber Park. Our intended training had been well accomplished. The bond of camaraderie increased. We hope that snow conditions in March will permit practice on hard, steep snow.

Sustaining Members

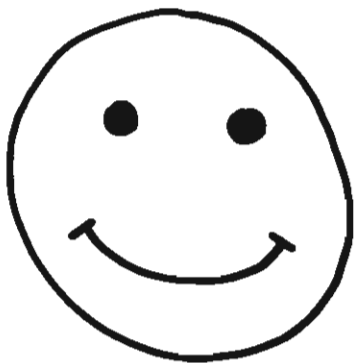
by Al Andrews

Pager Fund



We thought that by now we would have three more Pagers in operation, but to date they have not shown up. The Pagers are proving to be an even better tool than we ever expected. We caught Art Bridge over 50 miles from Riverside the other day and got Jim Fairchild to respond while enjoying a weekend in Mill Creek with friends.

This month we want to welcome Mr. and Mrs. Lawrence Spencer to our sustaining membership and again thank Mr. and Mrs. Albin Merzals for renewing their membership.



HAVE A NICE
DAY!



SPRING IS
HERE!