

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 XI, Issue 4, April 1975

Walt Walker, Editor

Coming Events ---

9 April, Board Meeting
23 April, Regular Meeting
26-27 April, Training
14 May, Board Meeting
28 May, Regular Meeting
31 May & 1 June, Training
11 June, Board Meeting
25 June, Regular Meeting
27-29 June, Training

SERVICE TO THE COMMUNITY

By Hank Schmel

A safety program started by Riverside County Sheriff's Deputy Ed Von Pingel had its grand finale at the Sheriff's Academy March 25, 26, and 27. RMRU put on six demonstrations, two per day, which had a total attendance of 700 children and adults. This program on outdoor safety was designed to teach bicycle and hiking rules and regulations.

Deputy Von Pingel approached me in January and I immediately started briefing him about our rescue team. We discussed the "Lost Boy Scout" slide show and associated information pertaining to outdoor safety education. Ed had asked if it would be possible to have a demonstration at the Academy. After some thought, I committed myself and the team. I immediately contacted Lee Owen, our good friend from the Riverside P.D., and explained what we planned to do, at the same time asking for a helicopter. Without hesitation he accepted the invitation.

I was now faced with the task of getting volunteers from the team to help in the demonstration. For the first four shows I had John Dew, Pete Carlson, Rich Quackenbush, and myself. For the last two we had Steve Bryant, Steve Stevens, Sonny Lawrence, and —

We started the show with a display of truck equipment and personal gear, giving a brief history of the team, our cost of operation, etc. We then did a climbing exhibition showing the use of nuts and chocks, rope types, jumars, and rappels. After this demonstration the chopper flew in with the help of some red smoke. Upon landing one of the team members got in, flew around, and then did a helitac jump to the rocks. Pilots Lee Owen and Roy Lineberry, and observers Dan Horton, and Bob Skilling did a real

fine job. We finished off the show by flying a "victim" to the "hospital."

We sincerely thank the Riverside Police Helicopter Unit and the Riverside Sheriff's Department for allowing us the opportunity of exposure to the children of the Moreno Valley School District.



RMRU PHOTO BY HANK SCHMEL

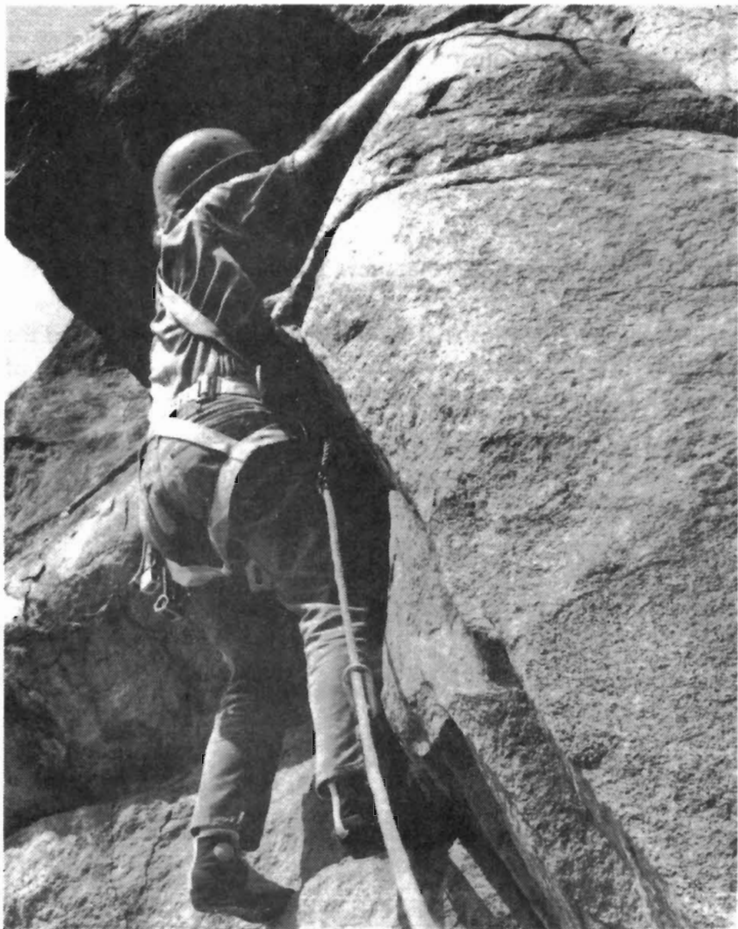
In the center of the assembled youngsters, John Dew spoke to them about RMRU's specialized equipment.



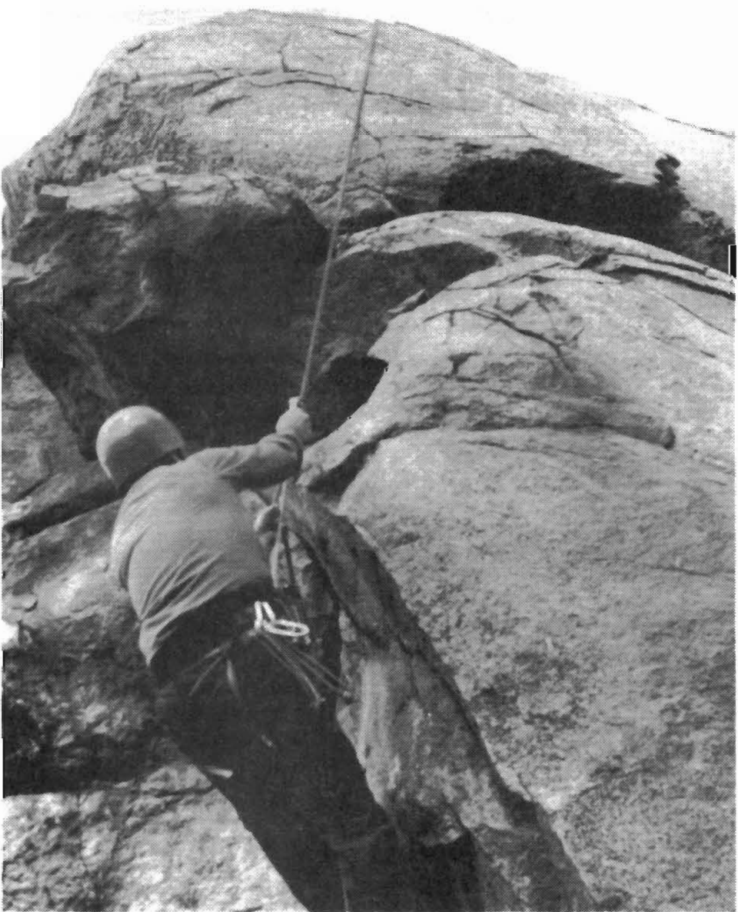
RMRU PHOTO BY HANK SCHMEL

Riverside Police Department Pilot Roy Lineberry prepares to take off with a "victim," one of the school teachers with the youngsters from Moreno.

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 2)



Pete Carlson (above) demonstrated roped climbing and Hank Schemel (below) demonstrated how to ascend a climbing rope using Jumars.



Search and Rescue

1 MAR., SAT. — RESCUE — NO. 7509M
Tahquitz Canyon, above Palm Springs
By Pete Carlson

Sat. was planned as a day of relaxing around the house and getting ready for a party I was giving that night. At 1130 the phone rang with that funny ring, all RMRU members know the ring, and sure enough a rescue call.

The Indio Sheriff could not reach any of the 5 call captains, so he got me, the sixth person on the list. It seems a 26 year old man had broken his ankle near the second falls of Tahquitz Canyon and needed help in getting out. I called Al Andrews, and got his wife who said she would take the calls, so I could take the van. I put out the pager call, grabbed my gear, and headed for the rescue van.

Jim Fairchild got the pager call and met me at the van. On the way to Palm Springs we radioed the Sheriff and asked that a helicopter be called to meet us. When we arrived at base we learned that Don Landells would be there in 20 mins. I put a radio, full first aid kit, a full leg splint, some food and water in my pack as we waited for Don. Also, the informats had not yet come to our base and it looked like we would have to search for the victim.

Don arrived right on time and as soon as a radio was put in the bird, Don and I were off. We flew up above the third falls on our first pass up and did not see the victim. We went back to where we had seen some people and Don did a one runner touch down to let me out. The people informed me the victim was above their spot.

Don picked me up and we went higher to another group of people. Another one runner touch down and this time the people said they had not heard of any injured persons. So I was picked up again and we started searching between the two points. Don's eagle eye spotted the victim this time and even saw a red towel wrapped around his foot.

I was let off to check out the situation and Don went back to base to wait. The victim, Bob Bandar was in no pain unless he touched his foot against something. So we packed up his gear and I helped him up to the helispot.

I radioed base, and Don came in with the two informats, so they could take their gear and dog, and hike out. I put Bob in first, then loaded his pack and mine on the outside. I got in and we flew out to base. At base we were met by 10 RMRU members who had arrived ready to help.

All of this took 45 mins. with the help of Don Landells and his bird. Without a helicopter we estimate it would have taken 25 men and about 12 hours of hard work to get the victim out.

It's **TAHQUITZ**
Canyon
SEASON AGAIN!

13 MAR., THUR. — SEARCH — NO. 7510M

West of Palm Springs

By Jim Fairchild

One o'clock in the morning is a great time for the phone to rouse one out of deep slumber. Waiting for the conference call to be set up gives one a chance to awake, ready for . . .

AI's information from the Sheriff's Department had to do with 60 yr. old Frank Miller overdue from a hike that was to take him from the west edge of Palm Springs (455' el.) up the Skyline Trail on Mt. San Jacinto to the Mountain Station of the Tramway (8515' el.) and back, hiking from 0900 to dark. Well, it's a deceptive mountain! One can look down on the city from a high elevation and hear cars, see people swimming in pools, and think one is only a few minutes away. Actually, one can be a mile in elevation above the city and hours away by trail or cross-country.

Anyway, a bunch of us gathered at the Chamber of Commerce building and had men heading up two branches of the Skyline Trail, by about 0330. Some late-comers made up a four-man team that was to go up the 0700 car to the Tram's upper station and descend the trail. We had Frank hemmed in, thinking to catch him somewhere along the trail, perhaps shivering outside the mountain station door.

Now, searches wind up in three modes: (1) we, by diligent and perceptive methods find the subject; (2) the subject, by wily and devious means eludes us and gets himself back to safety; (3) the victim is never found. Frank chose the second alternative, traversed southerly down to Tahquitz Canyon (a route we suspected and would have covered with another team if available), then walked through town back to his worried wife at a hotel.

Meanwhile, back on the mountain, the two lower teams were doing a masterful job of tracking — even radioed back a very accurate description of the sole print which we accurately drew on the log sheet. They would have faithfully followed Frank and rendered aid as he lay desperately injured someplace, had he become desperately injured. The team above had quite a tale to report as they dropped off the eastern scarp of the mountain in deep snow: "Snow's thigh deep and our packs are dragging in it." "It's cloudy up here, how do we tell when we've dropped down opposite Kauffman Krag?" Pretty soon they were below the snow and having a snack for breakfast, then came word Frank was out. They elected to descend the remaining 7000' to the city rather than wallow uphill through the hindering snow.

So, while Frank got out at 0900, our teams were two, three, and five hours up the hill. Frequently relatives and employers and friends ask why it is that the victim is located early in the day, then it's the middle of the afternoon when we get home. The above is one instance that gives the reason.

Perhaps sometime I'll check the statistics, but I think about four out of five searches wind up with the subject getting out by themselves.

23 MAR., SUN. — EVACUATION — NO. 7511 M

Tahquitz Canyon, above Palm Springs

By Ed Hill

The high trail in lower Tahquitz Canyon runs about 150 feet above the canyon bottom. At one point in the trail there is a very

exposed 'belly roll' slab before the trail resumes. On Saturday Richard Henderson of Riverside was killed in a fall off the 'belly roll.' Two people camping below in the canyon saw the accident. Someone going out of the canyon reported his death, and the Sheriff asked us to go in early Sunday and recover the body.

At seven o'clock the team arrived at Ramon Road and found representatives from the Palm Springs Mounted Police, the Riverside Sheriffs Department, the U.S. Marine Corp and the Coroner. Don Landell came flying in while we decided that Pete Carlson would be the base camp operator and Jim Fairchild would be the operations leader. Gary Gillespie and I would fly in to look things over after the Sheriff had been shown the body's location. Don landed us within thirty feet of the victim. We asked for a body bag and a litter. Don flew in two marines, Jim Fairchild, Bernie McIlvoy, Bob Claybrooke, a Mounted Policeman and the Coroner. While RMRU and others moved the body, the Sheriff talked to the two witnesses. He decided to fly them out also since they were feeling quite rocky after the night. Don shuttled in and out transporting the body and the rest of the troops except the marines who hiked out. The operation was secured at 8:30, and those of us who were hungry went to breakfast.



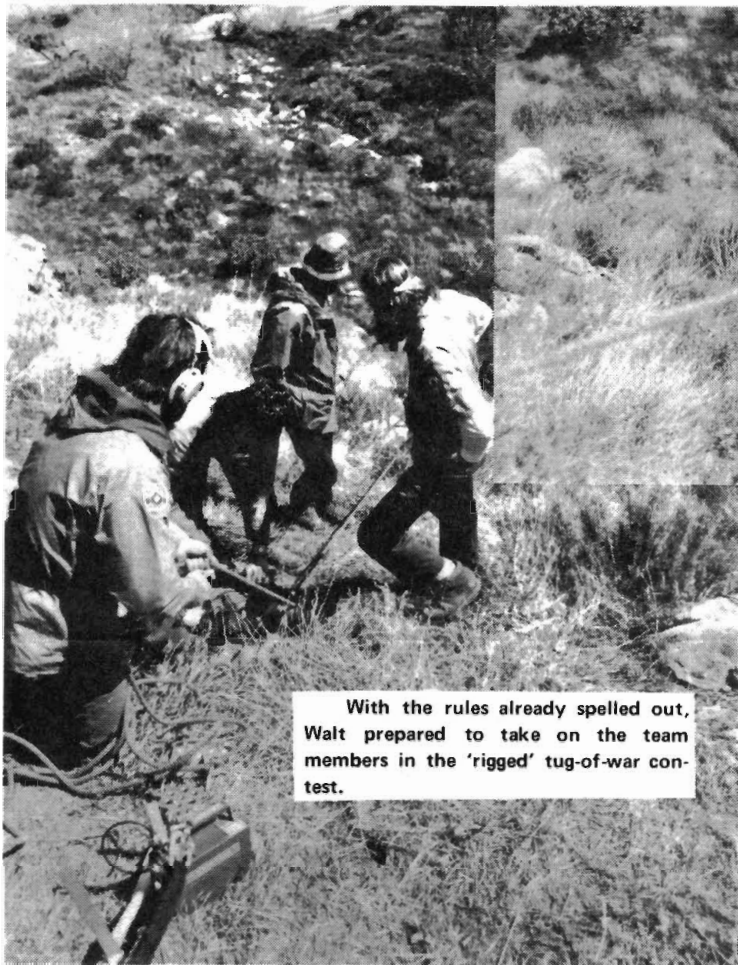
RMRU member Bernie McIlvoy helped the young lady (informant) into Don Landell's helicopter for the flight out of Tahquitz Canyon. It had been decided that the couple were in too poor of emotional condition to try and climb up and out of the canyon.

The *RMRU Newsletter* is published monthly by the Riverside Mountain Rescue Unit, Inc. It is intended primarily to inform the regular and sustaining members.

If you would like to receive the newsletter on a regular basis, and at the same time become a sustaining member, send your tax deductible donation of \$10 or more to:

Riverside Mountain Rescue Unit, Inc.
P. O. Box 5444
Riverside, Calif. 92507

TRAINING



With the rules already spelled out, Walt prepared to take on the team members in the 'rigged' tug-of-war contest.



RMRU PHOTO BY HANK SCHMEL

SURPRISE!

29 MAR., SAT.
By Dave Hadley

Expecting the annual mock mission in the Massacre Canyon area, I was surprised when Art Bridge called: "Meet at the old casino in Cabazon." Hmmm, training is getting better all the time . . . Assembled around the rescue van, we knew something was up when Walt Walker challenged the entire team to a tug-a-war. What's more, he suggested that in order to make things interesting we should have the contest on a steep cliff, with him on top. Sensing a sure thing, we quickly found a suitable slope. It was then that Walt unveiled the new power wench.

In no time at all the contest was rigged (in more ways than one). The wench was anchored with six pickets to the slope. A gold line connected Walt and the wench to ten team members. A few minutes later, united at the top, we realized the great value of the wench when long hauls and lifts are needed. Not only was the lift simple and fast, but the smooth, even pull will greatly assist in minimizing the jarring a victim can receive while being removed from a cliff.

After everyone practiced using the wench we broke for lunch. As we munched away the radio suddenly cracked: "All Sierra Madre Search and Rescue members please report your availability for a search in Hawaii." Immediately we had the Riverside County Radio Association, an outstanding unit who have been working with RMRU on trainings and rescues, patch us into Al Andrews. But alas, our fellow team apparently didn't need assistance.

The remainder of the afternoon was spent working with the wench. A special thanks to Norm Miller and the Homelite Corp. who helped us make mechanical advantage lifts a thing of the past.

Sustaining Members

by Mike Daugherty

This month's new sustaining members are:

*Mr. E. L. Covey
Ms. Heidi Price

Renewing:

*Dr. and Mrs. Norm Mellor
Mr. David Westheimer
Mr./Mrs. David Morris

*Century Club — donation of \$100 or more.