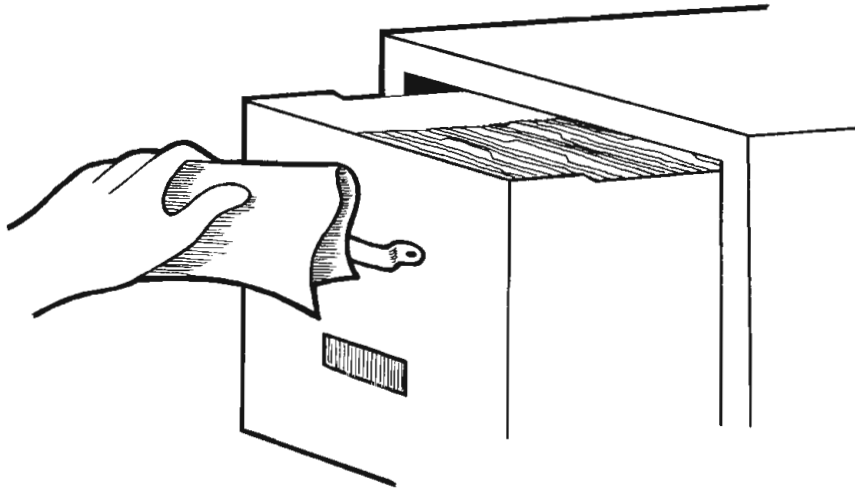


# RMRU NEWSLETTER

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A VOLUNTEER NON-PROFIT CORPORATION  
P. O. BOX 5444, RIVERSIDE, CALIFORNIA 92507  
MEMBER OF THE MOUNTAIN RESCUE ASSOCIATION

Volume XII, Issue 5, May 1976

John Dew, Editor  
Walt Walker, Publisher  
Dona Towell, Artist



## \$USTAINING MEMBERS—

BY MIKE DAUGHERTY

If one were to judge by the list of names below, we would have to conclude that this has been a good month for RMRU's sustaining membership. Actually, while it's been better than average, it isn't quite as good as the length of the list might indicate. Truth is that things have gotten pretty hectic around the S/M chairman's house. So it was with surprise and not a little chagrin that I reached into my top-notch filing system this morning and discovered just how far I've let things slide. Well, while you're waiting for your thank you letter, you can reflect on all of the money which is made available to our lifesaving efforts because it hasn't been consumed by administrative overhead. Just don't ask me why it costs less money to be late than to get the job done on time.

Our heartfelt (if less than prompt) thanks to the following New and Renewing Sustaining Members:

### New —

M/M Charles Davis  
M/M Hauschild  
BSA Troop 145, Chino  
M/M A. Peterson  
Donald Julius  
William Jones  
D. D. Trent  
John Johnston  
Albert Kishaba  
Wayne Steinmetz  
Hemmerling School, Banning  
\*Aetna Insurance Co.

### In Memory of Joe Powers

M/M Granison Oots  
M/M Tom Kirkbride  
Mildred Montgomery  
Dolly Osberg  
M/M Worth Rowntree  
Beatrice Knieff  
Pauline Gounaris  
Mrs. Mary Doris Powers

### Renewing

\*M/M Milton Levy  
Hundred Peaks Section,  
Angeles Chapter, Sierra Club  
Hyatt Elementary School,  
San Jacinto  
\*M/M Kenneth Andrews  
Stanley Brown  
Dr./Mrs. Jay Wallis

\*Century Club member,  
donation of \$100 or more.

## Search and Rescue

### SEARCH

Mission No. 7624M

2 May, Mon.  
Willow Creek,  
San Jacinto Mountains

By Ed Hill

Re - Search for Kenneth Self  
November 1975 - May 1976

Thanksgiving morning, Ken Self signed out from the Lone Valley ranger station for Deer Springs. He planned a two day trip if the weather was poor or a four day trip if the weather stayed fair. He had made the trip several times that summer and fall.

Thursday afternoon, a fast moving storm hit the mountain. First, a freezing rain and then snow fell and continued to fall. By Sunday there were three or more feet of powder snow and scores were trapped and needed help to get off the mountain.

Sunday night after returning from a Thanksgiving holiday at Morro Bay, I was called out and told that Ken Self was missing since before the storm. Since we knew his listed destination, we decided to call all the teams in the California region, and have them snowshoe his route. On Monday we had teams from Sierra Madre, San Dimas and San Diego covering the route. The deep soft snow either stopped or otherwise frustrated the teams. We kept searching from the air, and located

several other groups in need of help. We did not locate Ken Self.

On Tuesday, we continued to fly and check out all reports. By Wednesday, we were no closer to locating Ken then we had been when we started. We were reasonably sure that he was not up and traveling on the mountain. The search was postponed until the next weekend. On Saturday, we returned and continued searching. By now, the snow had consolidated enough to allow us to snowshoe fairly easily. The day was raw and cold with a storm forecast for that evening. We checked out more gullies and drainages on the Marion - Jean divide.

Two weeks later, on our regular training date, we searched again. The team was split into two groups. One group hiked in from the west and covered Deer Springs and Little Round Valley. The other continued working the Marion - Jean divide. At this point the search was postponed indefinitely until we knew where Ken had gone.

On the last weekend in April, a party of Girl Scouts traveling cross country located Self's last camp, at 8000' el. in Willow Creek area. By now the snow had melted. The leader brought out Ken's wallet, stove and pack frame.

Following the leader's description, RMRU went directly to his camp. Ken had crossed Wellman's divide traveling south following an old phone wire that leads nowhere. From there his destination, Deer Springs, is to the west, over the Marion - Jean ridge.

We found a ripped open sleeping bag, books, cooking gear, and shredded clothing. We also found the sleeping places of several coyotes and other large predators. We fanned out, searching downhill. Two hours of careful searching netted us some more fragments of clothing and a couple of well chewed bones. In one of the clothing fragments we found a permit made out to Ken Self. We gathered up all that we had found and gave it to the Coroner.

We will never know exactly what happened to Ken Self but can only guess. My guess is that he became soaked in the freezing rain and lost his way in the snow. The storm would have made it very hard to see more than fifty feet. Staggering

along, he found the wire and followed it until he could go no farther. One of his last acts as to get out his sleeping bag, take off his boots, crawl into the bag and go to sleep . . . The snows buried him and all his gear. Toward Spring which is always a lean time in the mountains, the melting snows uncovered him, and the coyotes found him. Finally the Girl Scouts took the same route and located the devastated camp. Five months after the first effort, RMRU was able to bring the search to a close.

What can all of us learn from this? Ken made a number of serious mistakes. His gear was adequate for summer but not for winter in the San Jacintos. The area, so hospitable during Spring, Summer and Fall, is arctic during the winter.

Ken did not heed the weather. He had some warning of the fast moving storm, but decided to push on anyway. These two factors combined to kill him. The mountains belong to the wise as well as the willing. ■ RMRU



## SEARCH

**Mission No. 7625C**

**10 May, Mon.  
Sequoia Natl. Park**

*By Jim Fairchild*

Just after noon Sierra Madre called RMRU to seek manpower for a search for a child in Sequoia Natl. Park, Bearpaw Meadow area.

We had one veteran and one new member ready, with a standby alternate. Since we send no less than two men, both of which must be experienced, we opted to wait a day when we could send more. The mission was secured by the time we called back with this information.

## EVACUATION

**Mission No. 7626M**

**17 & 18 May, Mon. & Tues.  
Jensen Canyon**

*By Pete Carlson*

We received a call Monday at 1600 hours informing us that a young man hiking the Pacific Crest Trail had found a skull and bones in Jensen Canyon. The Pacific Crest Trail goes cross country in this area and it is easy to become lost. By the time we were assembled at the mouth of Jensen Canyon in Cabazon it was 1800 and dark. We made plans with Chip, the informant, to go in the next day with a helicopter and bring out the remains.

At 0600 Bernie McIlvoy, John Muratet, John Dew, and myself were at Jensen Canyon. Don Landells was only minutes behind in his Bell jet-ranger. Bernie and Chip went in first and had no problems locating the pack and remains. Don let Bernie off about ¼ mile away on a boulder. Next John M. and I came in to join Bernie.

Don went back to base to wait and we hiked over to the pack. The pack was on a rock about 300 feet above the stream. We went through the pack first. We found the usual hiking gear and also a note:

about the 24th  
July 1974

I Joe Cermack 11 E. James Way, Cary, Ill. had to leave this pack after being stranded in this canyon. I do not believe anyone will ever find this, but if anyone does, its yours to keep. for you would have had to struggle like I did to get it.

Signed Joseph F. Cermack

The skeletal remains were about 100 feet down a chute of loose rocks. We then guessed that Joe had tried to get down to the water and fell. We went down and got all the remains and some pieces of clothing. NOTE: We had been in shirt sleeves and sweating in about 70 degree weather. There had been clouds in the sky, but we hadn't really noticed them. All of a sudden it began to hail and rain very hard. The temperature dropped 20° to 50° in 30 sec-

onds. We put on our parkas, but still got soaked in 2 minutes. In 5 minutes it was all over and back to 70°F. (Most people don't realize how fast the weather can change in the semi-desert foothills, and we must always be prepared.)

By this time we had everything back to the pack and were ready to hike back to our pick-up rock. As we hiked back we could not help wondering why so many people go solo hiking with so little experience. Solo hiking is never a good thing to do, but most people do not have experience either. From the canyon Joe said he was stranded in, it took us 15 minutes of easy hiking to reach a ridge from which we could walk down to Cabazon in 1½ hours with no problems. Of course we are experienced mountaineers and he was not. ■ RMRU

## SEARCH

### Mission 7627M

29 May, Sat.  
Bay Tree Springs

By John Dew

About 1400 hours (2 p.m.), my phone rang and I was alerted by Kevin Walker that two little children were lost from Bay Tree Springs about midway between Banning and Idyllwild.

As sometimes happens, most every team member had gone somewhere and was unavailable. Those who were available were preparing to go when the phone rang again advising us that the two children had been found! ■ RMRU

## Five Years Ago

A photograph on the front page showed that interior of the new van was almost completed. Al Andrews and Don Ricker had done most of the work.

We were called to rescue a young man who had fallen below the notches. It was dark as we began to search. We found him, but he had been dead for some time. We evacuated the body down the icy slopes the next morning. It was a sobering experience for some of our newer, younger members.

This time we were called to search for a young man who had gone for a hike to either Suicide Rock or Tahquitz Rock. We met at the Sky Yacht and started searching as the weather went from clear, to drizzle, to wet snow. With everyone soaked, we regrouped at the Sky Yacht. That morning the victim called the sheriff's department to say he had read about the search in the morning paper and that he was all right.

With the report that a young man had accidentally cut his foot with an axe somewhere near Willow Creek Crossing. We hurried towards the area. Dave Crimi, an RMRU member who lived in Idyllwild, had started in from Idyllwild. The rest of us had started in from the tram. Dave caught us at the Desert Divide. He related that rangers had carried the victim to Skunk Cabbage Meadow. We returned to the tram to meet Don Landells who had been called to evacuate the victim by helicopter. Walt Walker rode with Don to Skunk Cabbage Meadow. They landed in the meadow, loaded the victim, and skimmed out over the trees.

In the "Road Runner Sez-" Jim Fairchild noted that a blue and white Piper 140 was missing from a flight that departed the Palm Springs Airport. While the newsletter was being put together RMRU received a call to check out a blue and white downed plane. It turned out to be one we had worked on earlier.

Election results again from the April meeting:

Walt Walker, President  
Jim Fairchild, Vice-President  
Phil Moedt, Secretary  
Pete Carlson, Treasurer  
Mike Daugherty, Director  
Don Ricker, Director  
Jack Schnurr, Director

## ELECTION RESULTS!

Jim Fairchild, President  
Rich Quackenbush, Vice-President  
Ed Hill, Secretary  
Pete Carlson, Treasurer  
Bernie McIlvoy, Director  
Rick Pohlers, Director  
Larry Roland, Director

## COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN

Al Andrews, Communications  
Bernie McIlvoy, Equip. Development  
Pete Carlson, Finance  
Pete Carlson, MRA Representative  
Ray Castilonia, M.D. &  
Norm Mellor, M.D., Medical  
Rich Quackenbush, Membership  
John Dew, Newsletter  
Hank Schmel, Public Relations  
Walt Walker, Rescue  
Mike Daugherty, Sustaining Mem.  
Larry Roland, Training  
Rick Pohlers,  
Hal Fulkman &  
Steve Zappe, Vehicle & Equipment  
Jim Garvey, Historian

## from Old'en Days



### Ten Years Ago

The results of the April election were noted:

Walt Walker, President  
Jim Fairchild, 1st Vice-President  
Jake Johnson, 2nd Vice-President  
Don Ricker, Secretary  
Bob Minter, Treasurer  
Al Andrews, Quartermaster

It was also noted that RMRU had participated in 17 missions in 1965 and there had been 9 missions already.

We were called to search for a 4 year old and he walked out just as our Bloodhound arrived. We were again called to search, this time for a 16 year old boy. The mission was cancelled while we were rolling. A possible heart attack victim just below Mt. San Jacinto needed help. When we arrived we found a man who had eaten some poisonous plants and was now all right. However, another man in the party had pulled a groin muscle. We loaded him into the litter and carried him back to the tram.

