

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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John Dew, Editor
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COMING EVENTS

APRIL

13 - Board Meeting
20 - Annual Meeting, Elections
22-24 - Training

MAY

11 - Board Meeting
18 - Regular Meeting
20-22 - Training

TRAINING



18 - 20 March, Fri. - Sun.
Horse Thief Creek

By Hal Fulkman

Friday night found Jim Fairchild, John Dew and myself hiking in from the road with the corral near Horse Thief Creek as our destination. It was a moonless night and with the exception of our flashlight beams, the surroundings were completely blacked out.

With much conversation and camaraderie, we arrived at the corral in short order. John and I went for water while Jim prepared the fire pit. When we returned, the fire was doing good and Jim was breaking out the ingredients of what was to be one of the most outstanding meals I've ever had in the field.

Saturday morning became a reality with the sun breaking over the surrounding hills. After a short time of unsuccessfully trying to avoid it, the inevitable decision to get up won out. After breakfast, all those that

Search and Rescue

SEARCH

Mission No. 7708C

13 March, Sun.
North Face,
Mt. San Jacinto

RMRU was asked to search, by the Banning Station of the Riverside County Sheriff's Department, for two climbers that were overdue on a climb of the North Face. While the unit was in the process of a normal call-out, the sheriff's department notified our co-ordinator that the two climbers were safely out of the backcountry. •RMRU

hiked in during the night and that morning met at the creek.

This training was to focus on compass and map reading. Three team members had been sent in early Friday morning to plot a compass course by tying strips of trail tape in different locations with each tape having a new bearing. Those of us at the creek split into two groups and set out - each group thirty minutes apart.

With my group being second I took the opportunity to clean wax out of my compass which had melted from a candle. It was incredible to me that a full size utility candle had completely disintegrated on some previous hot day; nevertheless, it's a part of our training to check equip-

from Old'en Days

by Walt Walker

MARCH

Ten years ago —

A forthcoming evening first aid problem was noted as well as a training session that would start at the top of the Palm Springs Aerial Tramway and descend Chino Canyon in one day.

A message from the president of RMRU praised the members for an almost 100% turnout at the snow and ice training held the month before in the San Geronio Wilderness Area. He also commented on the search for a three year old boy lost in the Lake Hemet area. Walt Walker started his tracking Blood-

ment for possible failures.

The compass course proved to be challenging and informative. My group got off to a great start by missing the second tape. Without the second tape we couldn't continue. We were just starting to backtrack when we heard Jim Fairchild, way off in the distance, give one of his notorious moose calls. It wasn't much, but it was a direction. So we decided to fudge a little and upon finding tracks from the previous group, we had no trouble finding the third tape.

With our sins behind us and a promise never to transgress again, we continued on course finding tape after tape. Sunday was dedicated to familiarization of Horse Thief Creek and connecting drainages. ■ RMRU



hound 'Sugar' and she went right to the lake. The team searched all night, hoping to find the young lad. In the morning an underwater team from the San Bernardino Sheriff's Department found the boy's body in about six feet of water.

Five years ago -

The Road Runner (Jim Fairchild) commented on the tremendous support that friends of RMRU give financially and also thanked RMRU member Bernie McIlvoy for the improved frame, Model II, for our wheeled litter.

Early on a Tuesday morning we received word three young men were overdue from a climb of the North Face. We met at the Banning station of the Riverside County Sheriff's Department and then moved to the Snow Creek roadhead. A helicopter had been ordered from Western Helicopters. When the bird arrived, longtime friend Darrel 'Ely' Elenberg was at the controls. Walt Walker climbed aboard and the two of them began to search the North Face. The wind was strong and gusty and created some anxious moments. The missing trio were spotted at the 6000' level. A note was dropped, inside a message container, asking if they were all right. They signaled that they were OK. The bird returned to base and picked up a container of food and flew up the North Face once again. The food drop was made and the bird returned to base. Later that afternoon the trio hiked out to the roadhead.

The next day we received another call from the Banning station, this time two 19 year olds were overdue. While Jim Fairchild was talking (via telephone) to the parents of one of the boys, they telephoned that they were safely out of the backcountry.

Four days later we received a call from the Hemet station that two 12 year old boys were missing. While we searching in the Soboba Hills, word was received that they had been found in the City of Riverside.

Four more days! This time the call was from the Elsinore station, a glider had crashed in the mountains above the Ortega highway. Jim Fairchild wrote of the frustrating drive in the busy Saturday afternoon traffic. Just as he and Dave Cook, traveling in the rescue van, neared the top they spotted a helicopter heading toward Elsinore. They received word that the injured pilot had been removed from the crash and placed aboard the bird. We later learned that the injured man had been dead on arrival at the hospital.

That same Saturday, but at 11 p.m., we received another call from the Elsinore station. Two young men riding motorcycles, one a diabetic, were about six hours overdue. While our call out was in progress the missing men turned up.

Six more days and we were requested to help search for a missing two year old boy. Just as Pete Carlson and Jim Fairchild, both in the rescue van arrived at the search area, the toddler was found. Cold and tired, but safe.

Three days this time, another call from the Banning station. Three girls, aged 11 to 14 years, were missing from the Fern Basin Campground. While we were rolling to the area the girls were safely found.

Same evening, but this time the call was from the Hemet station. A 20 year old man was missing in the Soboba Hills. Since details were sketchy, it was decided that everyone would meet at Walt Walker's home. Walt's wife, Sondra, brewed up coffee and popped mounds of popcorn. While waiting for more information the unit members took care of the coffee and popcorn. In the midst of all of this, word was received that the man had hiked out to Banning.

Five days more, but for a change the call was from the Indio station. The bad news was, it was Saturday of RMRU's winter training weekend and most of the members were participating. There wasn't any good news. Hank Schmel, with an injured knee, Al Korber, just out of sick bed, and Walt Walker and his son Kevin were all that were available on the initial call-out. The San Diego Mountain Rescue Team was called for additional manpower. Hank, Al and Walt loaded their packs and started hiking up Tahquitz Canyon and left Kevin to man base. The call had been for a stranded hiker. That was what the trio of RMRU members found, but with a twist of humor, the stranded young man was wearing a surfers wet suit. The problem was a blank wall of granite between the rescue members and the subject. Walt rock climbed over to the man, secured a rope to him, Hank, Al and Walt helped him back to the other side. They bandaged his bare feet and started hiking out. They met three more RMRU members who had been hiking in to help out. On the way, the second group had, bandaged a burned hand, bandaged a badly swollen ankle and picked up a young man who was lost and did not have a flashlight. This rather odd hiking group finally, after about two hours, made their way back to base. Mrs. Ann Dolly, who owns a large house on the corner where we always set up base, brought out some freshly baked sweet rolls and drinks. The sweet rolls and drinks were quickly consumed. Thanks was given to Mrs. Dolly and everyone headed to the next one. Read on!

Same night. The Elsinore station had called for help, while we were in the canyon. Al Andrews had wisely sent the San Diego team to Elsinore. Just as the group from the canyon got to the top of the Ortigas', word was radioed that the missing man had been

found. At four a.m. a weary group of RMRU members headed for home.

NEXT DAY! Mid-afternoon and the Banning station called, stating that there were injured climbers on Tahquitz Rock. When we arrived at the roadhead, we received the word that other climbers on the rock had removed the injured climbers. With the help, from members of the Idyllwild Fire Department, the climbers carried the injured climbers to the road and they were sent to the hospital.

Sustaining Membership chairman Al Andrews welcomed the following as new supporters: *Kelty Mountaineering & Backpacking, Inc., Mr. R. H. Schuppe and Mr. David E. Melendez. He also thanked the following for renewing their memberships: Mr. & Mrs. Wynlow L. Swick, Mr. & Mrs. R. O. Ridenour, Mr. & Mrs. Albin Merzals and Mr. & Mrs. Harold E. Carlson.

*Century Club member.

The annual San Gorgonio winter training was written up by RMRU member Dr. Joe Bell. He described a great weekend, full of, ice axe arresting, team arrests, use of different types of anchors and the testing of prototype Thompson litter. •RMRU