

Volume XIV, Issue 5, May 1978 — Jim Garvey, Editor — Walt Walker, Publisher — Dona Towell, Artist

A Message from the Publisher

Once again we are very late in getting out the *RMRU Newsletter*. The reasons are many and I won't bore you with the details. We are sincerely trying to make plans so that this will not occur in the future.

By the time you receive this mailing, we will be hard at work on the August, September and October issues. They will be mailed together. Then we will complete the November and December issues and they will be mailed after the first of the new year.

Search and Rescue

SEARCH

Mission No. 7821M

**7 & 8 May, Sun. & Mon.
San Jacinto Mountains**

By Ron Barry

I had gone to bed early Sunday evening with a headcold, wanting to get a good night's rest before work Monday. Two hours later, Jerry Muratet is bringing me out of a blissful sleep - a woman hiker has strayed from her back-packing class in the San Jacinto back-country. As I stagger around the house sneezing, and gathering my gear, my wife comes to my rescue by preparing my food supplies, filling

water bottles, and loading up the first aid kit.

Two hours and a half a Kleenex box later, I arrive at the Idyllwild Sheriff's Office for assignment. Five of us are soon heading up the Devil's Slide from Humber Park: Jim Garvey, Steve Jensen and myself from RMRU, and Don Oates and Mike Kinkaid from Hemet Search & Rescue. Our assignment is to contact the two back-packing teachers who are camped at the Saddle, and from there, deploy into two search teams.

Once regrouped at the Saddle, we fan out into the silent darkness calling for the two teachers, Jack and Harry. We locate their camp 200 yards beyond, and the two men are soon dressed and packed. From them we get a more accurate story of our missing lady, Betty Harrison.

It seems this one woman, around 35 years old, was straggling behind as the class made their way from Round Valley towards Saddle Junction. One of the other students had been staying back with her all day, but when she rested at Wellman's Cienaga in near exhaustion, the student continued on to catch up with the group, which by now was far ahead. That was the last place she had been seen. She never arrived at Humber Park, so the two concerned teachers told the Rangers about her, then proceeded back up to find her. Jack and Harry arrived back at the Saddle in darkness and were unable to pick up their tracks in the snow so they could back-track.

She had food, sleeping bag and warm clothing, so it seemed she could easily have just bedded down after it got dark on her. Though it was her first time backpacking, Harry assured us she was intelligent and had good sense to take care of herself. The obvious search plan seemed to be to head for Wellman's Cienaga on a direct cross-country route, cut tracks in the snow the class had taken, then

follow them down towards the Saddle until we caught up with our lost victim.

Jim Garvey led this assignment taking Don Oates and Harry with him. I took Mike Kindaid and Jack with me, heading directly towards the Willow Creek trail crossing in a chance she could have strayed down that far. Steve Jensen stayed in a cosy bivouac at the Saddle as radio relay.

Mike, Jack and I skirted quietly around Skunk Cabbage at sunrise. The meadow was a cold, primeval bog, with the trees on the eastern bank silhouetted by a crimson and golden dawn.

Arriving at Willow Creek crossing, we found not a sign of tracks. By now, Jim Garvey and his band had reached Wellman's Meadow, and were proceeding uphill towards Wellman's Cienaga in search of tracks in the snow. Our group headed up the snowy drainage of Wellman's Creek, towards Wellman's Meadow.

We had no sooner reached the scenic meadow, when Garvey came across tracks. As if on cue, the San Bernardino Sheriff's helicopter appeared in the ice blue sky, with Art Bridge as observer. Finally, things were coming together. Art soon spotted the tracks that Garvey was on, and began to slowly follow them, cruising at treetop level. This was it, I was sure. Our group joined up with Garvey's and the six of us were weaving through a quiet, early morning forest at an urgent pace.

Jackpot! Art radios that the chopper has indeed spotted and identified our goal - about a half mile ahead of us. The woman is quite all right, but she's in a heavily forested area, so there's no place for the chopper to drop Art off close by. We trudge along through the forest, while overhead the chopper slides by at treetop level - a graceful movement of red and white, with a sudden flash of reflected sunlight.

When we reach our lost victim, there's a warm exchange between her and her instructors, Jack and Harry. Though this turned out to be a happy ending for them, I'm sure Jack and Harry will keep a closer eye on novice students in the future. • RMRU



RMRU PHOTO BY JIM FAIRCHILD

Betty Harrison was overcome with emotion, while being escorted away from the helicopter, after having been rescued.



RMRU PHOTO BY JIM FAIRCHILD

Wind direction was given to pilot Jim Davidson, by Kevin Walker giving Helitac hand signals, as the helicopter descended towards the small clearing that was the helispot.

tion transmitter) signal emanating from the Red Tahquitz area in the San Jacinto Mountains.

We were met at the Banning Airport by Capt. Ray Canova of the Banning Sheriff's Office and a Major of the Civil Air Patrol and his T-6. It was decided that Walt and the Major should fly over the area and try and find the wreckage.

After about 30 minutes they returned to the airport, where to our amazement Walt informed us that he had spotted what looked like an orange tent and someone waving to him, but no wreckage was visible. But never the less, at least one survivor.

With that, we immediately asked for a helicopter. After 15 minutes the Capt. informed us that Scott Air Force Base had been notified and we would be getting a Marine chopper within the hour. After an hour and a half we began to wonder if they forgot us or something.

After checking with Scott again we were informed that there were not any choppers available for rescue.

It was now 4:00 p.m. Darkness would soon be a factor in this mission, and to top it off storm clouds

were approaching from the northwest. It was decided to call Western Helicopters, in Rialto. We then moved up to Idyllwild where we had a quick dinner and then set up base.

At 5:30 p.m. we were joined by one of Western's new Hughes 500D helicopters. First load in was Jim, Walt and myself. After sneaking under the now present clouds, we started searching. After a few passes in the area, Walt spotted tracks on the PCT and upon following them further we spotted not only one but two people waving, and another in a tent right in the middle of the trail.

The pilot found a small clearing large enough to land in on the ridge above the parties camp. After we were let off the pilot left for more men and equipment. Upon reaching the camp we were met by two men and a young woman in the tent. After questioning them about the ELT, the girl responded back that it was her ELT and she had activated it after she became injured, and was found by two other hikers.

While Walt examined her for injuries we were told what led up to the accident. Kathryn (Katie) Joost was doing the San Jacinto segment of the

RESCUE

Mission No. 7822M

10 May, Wed.

**Pacific Crest Trail
San Jacinto Mountains**

By Kevin Walker

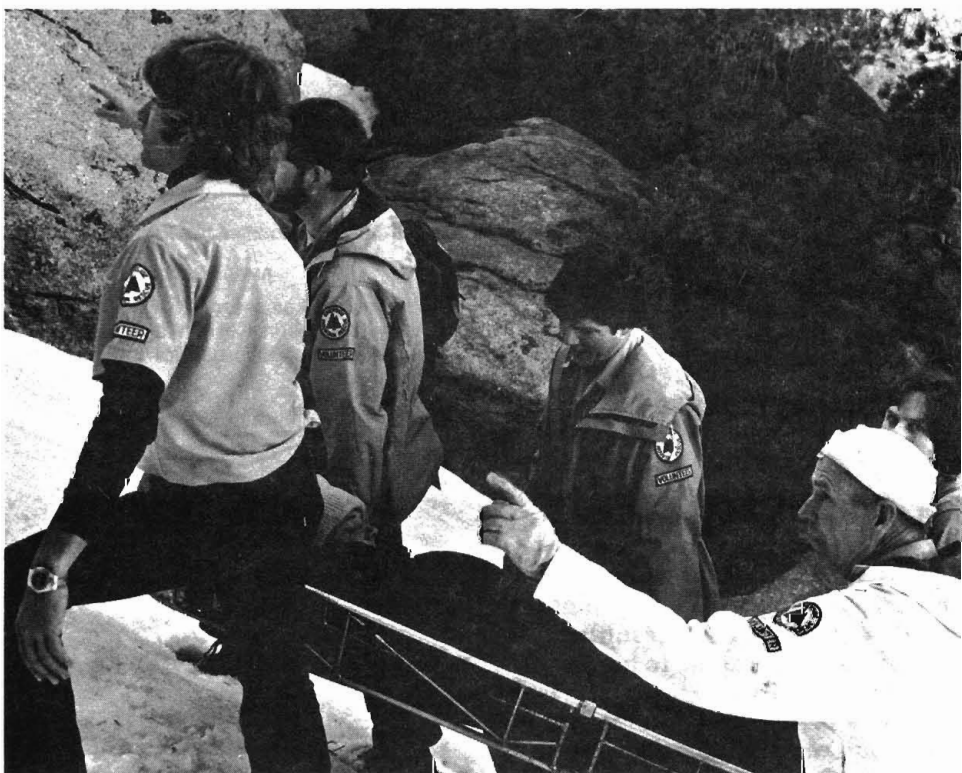
At approximately 1:00 p.m. Wednesday while I was preparing to start running a job on my press, I heard the familiar sound of my grandfather's voice, summoning either my dad or I to the phone for a rescue mission.

After having several body evacuations from plane crashes, I was very pleased when I heard that we were to investigate an ELT (emergency loca-



RMRU PHOTO BY JIM FAIRCHILD

RMRU member Kevin Walker gave Helitac hand signals to Western Helicopter pilot Jim Davidson so that he could land safely in the uneven terrain and the failing light



RMRU PHOTO BY JIM FAIRCHILD

RMRU members, Jim Hanson, Walt Walker, Kevin Walker (talking to Katie), John Dew (pointing the way) and Jim Garvey, carried the injured young woman up the snow slope.

PCT solo, and on horseback. Tuesday afternoon Katie reached an icy point on the trail. She dismounted and led her horse across the icy spot, and just as she was returning to get her pack animal, it started towards her. As it was crossing the icy patch, it slipped and fell. The animal fell about 100 ft. Upon reaching the animal, Katie found that the horse was severely injured and it would be best to destroy it. Using a 25 caliber pistol, Katie shot the animal. It then fell another 200 ft. Thinking that the horse was now dead, Katie started back up to the trail gathering up her gear. Part of the way up she slipped and fell herself. In the fall Katie injured her right hip, lower back, received a blow to the head, and also had many bruises on her body. She managed to find her sleeping bag before darkness came. Wednesday morning the two hikers also doing the PCT came across the site where the horse fell. They then followed the debris down to where Katie's sleeping bag was. Katie was feeling a little better so they were going to move her back to the trail, when they heard the horse whinnying down below. This time using a 30-30 rifle they went down to shoot it again. Katie said she would take care of the horse. To top it all off, when she shot it, the horse kicked her in the left shin. With this injury, it made it impossible for her to walk. After one of the men finally destroyed the animal, they carried Katie back up to the trail and set up her tent, and put her back into her bag. It was at this point she had them activate her ELT and at that point RMRU fit into the complex picture.

After completing the exam, Walt decided we would need a litter, full leg air splint, and the rescue sleeping bag. Upon the birds return we were joined by fellow team members John Dew, Jim Garvey, and Jim Hanson.

With the needed equipment now on the scene, we moved as fast as possible because of the fast approaching darkness. With Katie now in the rescue sleeping bag, we loaded her into the litter and made our way to the ridge. Upon the return of the chopper, we loaded the litter into the bird. Walt rode out with Katie to the Palm Springs Hospital.

With the bird's return to the mountain, we quickly loaded gear and two men into the bird. The pilot ask-



RMRU PHOTO BY JIM FAIRCHILD

Jim Davidson piloted the powerful Hughes 500D helicopter out of the small clearing as Walt Walker rode with the injured Katie to the hospital.

ed me if there was anywhere close by where he could let us off. I told him Garner Valley was the closest with accessible roads. He said fine, because it was now impossible to fly to Idyllwild because of cloud cover. With that it took only three runs to Garner

Valley with the bird to get us all out. And at 8:00 p.m. with help from the Hemet Search and Rescue Team in transporting us back to Hemet and Idyllwild, Mission No. 7822M was secured. • RMRU

SEARCH

Mission No. 7823A

**24 May, Wed.
Desert Divide,
San Jacinto Mountains**

A light airplane was missing from a flight that had started in Arizona and was to have landed at Cable Field in Upland. A C.A.P. search plane had located wreckage on the eastern slope of the Desert Divide. The Riverside County Sheriff's Department had called the team on a stand-by basis while Don Landells, in his Jet Ranger helicopter, checked the sighting. Both Don and senior RMRU members suspected that it was an old crash site. In about 30 minutes the team was notified that it was indeed, an old crash site. • RMRU

RESCUE

Mission No. 7824M

**27 May, Sat.
Near Cedar Springs,
San Jacinto Mountains**

By Steve Jensen

A Memorial weekend backpack trip for a young woman from San Diego turned sour when she stumbled on the trail just above Cedar Springs on the Desert Divide. The resulting fall caused a severe trauma to her left elbow. She was unable to move so two members of her backpacking group hiked out and RMRU was called in.

Walt Walker and Jim Fairchild flew in to the poor lass and soon had her stabilized and in good spirits. She apparently suffered a fractured elbow



RMRU PHOTO BY JIM FAIRCHILD

Senior RMRU member and Emergency Medical Technician, Walt Walker, checked vital signs of the injured girl.



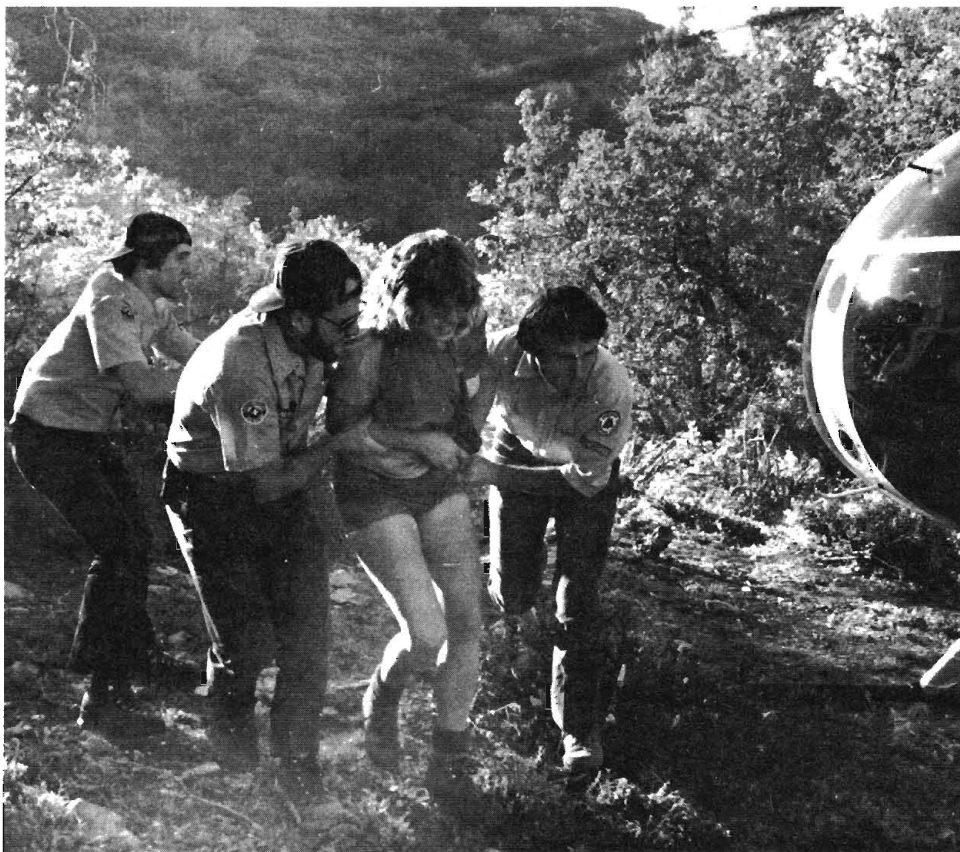
RMRU PHOTO BY JIM FAIRCHILD

Walt Walker passes the RMRU chain saw to his son Kevin Walker as they worked to clear brush for the needed helispot.



RMRU PHOTO BY JIM FAIRCHILD

Steve Jensen and Steve Vaughn, using brush cutting tools, also worked at clearing brush.



RMRU PHOTO BY JIM FAIRCHILD

Kevin Walker gave Helitac hand signals to Western Helicopters' pilot Bill Barrett while Walt Walker and Hal Fulkman helped the injured young woman to the waiting helicopter.

and was in a mild state of shock.

When the time to transport the subject came, the team faced a dilemma. Moving her $\frac{3}{8}$ of a mile back to the ridge for evacuation by helicopter would involve a lot of pain and jostling. Alternatively, a "Helispot" could be created where she fell, but this would entail the removal of a fair amount of shrubbery. Once again the team acted in the best interest of the victim and the decision was made to create a helispot where she fell. The chain saw and brush hooks were brought into action and in no time a helispot was created, which even the Corps of Engineers would have been proud of. Soon afterwards, the helicopter (from Western) landed and within ten minutes the victim was at the hospital in Palm Springs.

A grateful acknowledgement is extended to the Hemet Search and Rescue Team for assistance on this mission. • RMRU



SEARCH

Mission No. 7825M

**27 May, Sat.
Desert Divide,
San Jacinto Mountains**

By Kevin Walker

Just as my dad and I were finishing loading the jeep with rescue gear for a rescue mission in the Cedar Springs area, the phone rang with news of a second mission. A light aircraft had been spotted down below a ridge in the Desert Divide area from another aircraft. Since this mission was in the same area as the first call, base camp for the plane crash would be at the same location. Base was set up in Garner Valley. Shortly after arriving, we were joined by John Dew, and Hal Fulkman. Jim Fairchild was spending the weekend in the Idyllwild area, so he was already gathering the necessary info on both missions.

It was decided we would fly in and drop Walt and Jim off on the ridge so

they could see to the injured girl, and I would remain with the chopper and search for the downed aircraft. Just as the battle plan was being completed, we heard the familiar sound of the Hughes 500C from Western Helicopters. We were joined by long time friend and pilot Bill Barrett of Western. We quickly climbed into the bird and were off. After leaving Jim and Walt off on the ridge, Bill and I went on our way to search. After about 20 minutes of searching with no results we returned to base.

After talking to the informant, we decided it would be best to have the informant and a Civil Air Patrol officer join us in the chopper. After the informant directed us into the general area it was only about another 10 minutes before the crash site was located. As soon as I saw the wreckage, I could tell (being a pilot myself) that this was an old site. And just to add more icing to the cake, we had been called the previous Wednesday for a downed aircraft, which turned out to be the same one as what we had just located.

With both the C.A.P. officer and the informant satisfied, we flew them back to base camp. Enroute Bill dropped me off back on the ridge to assist with the REAL mission of the day.

• RMRU

TRAINING



**13 May, Sat.
Technical,
Big Rock,
Lake Perris Area**

Since RMRU had been calling the Hemet Search & Rescue Team quite often it was decided, by both teams officers, to have a joint training session. The inner-action of the two teams would benefit the people we are called upon to search for and/or rescue.

Members from both teams met at 8 a.m. at the back gate to the climbing



RMRU PHOTO BY JIM FAIRCHILD

Members of the Hemet Valley Search & Rescue Team and RMRU worked together on a litter evacuation problem on the steep walls at Big Rock. (Note: vehicles below.)

area. We had quite a wait, since the ranger who had been on the way to unlock the gate, had to detour and assist another ranger. With many boulders in the area, and time on our hands, naturally the boulders had to be tried. The antics of the 'boulderers' was enjoyed by everyone.

It was very warm morning and we knew it was going to be hot by noon-time. We unloaded a large amount of equipment from the van and members from both teams carried the gear up to the practice area.

We worked on self-equalizing anchors, mechanical advantages, and lowering and raising problems with a Stokes litter (complete with a mock victim, one of us). We stopped at noon for lunch. It was very warm, so we walked over to the lake to eat lunch. We thought it would be cooler. It was slightly cooler and much more humid.

Upon finishing lunch we climbed back up to the practice area and worked on some more problems. Shortly the rock and our hardware, both became very hot to the touch, and we ended a very good day of fellowship and a joint training session. • RMRU

\$USTAINING MEMBERS —

BY MIKE DAUGHERTY

Recently RMRU's treasurer (Walt Walker) and I have had a clear-eyed look at our long-term financial situation. To be honest, it isn't as bright as we might wish. Our income, 90% of which is derived from our Sustaining Membership, has been flat or slowly declining. On the other hand, our recurring expenses have been steadily increasing, principally due to "inflation." In fact, it's pretty clear that we can't go on like this for another year.

Because this situation has potentially serious implications for the actual operations of RMRU in the field, I think that it's a good idea to take a closer look at the problem.

Unlike most charitable organizations, RMRU has no paid staff. No RMRU member has ever received a cent for his services, au contraire! The

search and rescue operations as well as all administrative and "housekeeping" functions are provided entirely by a small group of volunteers. In my experience this group has never exceeded thirty and it has often been half of that. RMRU most often serves as a supporting unit for the Riverside County Sheriff, we receive no governmental support of any kind, save for an occasional after-mission meal. Members are not reimbursed for personal equipment expenditures, not even for the gasoline used to drive their own vehicles to the site of a search or rescue.

In spite of these facts, the team does have substantial recurring operational expenses. The yearly budget shows major expenditures for; our two rescue vans (maintenance, special installations, and gasoline), use of the telephone to contact team members for operations, radio communications, printing, postage, our radio pagers, new and replacement equipment, the newsletter and public education. Even if we eliminate large one-time expenditures, such as that recently made for the new van, the team's remaining expenses now exceed our income.

What can we do about this? The answer to that question is conditioned by our attitude. We believe that the mountain search and rescue service is a function which can be and should be performed by volunteers and not by a tax-supported public agency. Most team members are mountaineers and/or rock climbers who believe that those involved in our sport have two obligations: to take care of our own and to use our unique skills and experience where they are required by the general public. To carry out these obligations without resort to tax support, we rely on our Sustaining membership. An analysis of our donation income reveals that the overwhelming bulk of it comes from a few hundred loyal Sustaining Members who contribute regularly. Many of you have supported us regularly for over a decade.

Obviously, we cannot continue to run in "the red" much longer. So, we are appealing to you to do two things. First, please renew your membership once per year. This helps us justify the newsletter expense and it provides us with a more predictable financial baseline. We will investigate an inexpensive mechanism for reminding you when it's time to renew. Second, help us find new Sustaining Members. If we are to in-

crease our income without increasing the load on the existing pool of Sustaining Members, we must broaden our membership base. Surely you know someone who would like to contribute to a small, essentially local charitable organization which puts your contribution into clearly visible action rather than into administrative overhead. If so, you can be of great help by talking to this person about the virtues of RMRU. We're certain that once they see, through the newsletter, what we actually get done on a ridiculously small budget, that they will agree that RMRU is "cost effective." After all, where else could you get the service provided by RMRU for the cost of about **one-quarter** of a **single** full-time employee?

New—

Diann Coate
 *El Camino Real 6th Grade, Irvine
 *M/M Edward F. Emmel
 M/M L. E. Ferri
 M/M Kelley R. Harrison
 Hemet Community Builders
 Claire Hughes
 Pedley Student Body
 Lois E. Rusk

Renewing—

Hyatt Elementary School
 M/M Rodney Anderson
 Charles Davis
 M/M Richard E. Fleming
 *M/M Nelson Gidcumb
 M/M Wilford Keith

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

from Old'en Days

by Walt Walker

MAY

Ten years ago—

The first article noted that good comments had been received on the expanded RMRU Newsletter. The April 1968 newsletter was the first issue with a photograph and more

than one page. Looking back, we have come a long way in ten years.

Election results were the next item and they listed the following:

Walt Walker, President
 Jim Fairchild, Vice-President
 Al Andrews, Secretary
 Larry Percy, Treasurer

The new committees and their chairmen were listed along with a comment that the training committee was packed with "tigers," Bill Briggs, Chr., Jim Fairchild and Art Bridge.

The next article described, "What does RMRU have to offer?" It told of our preparedness for wilderness search and rescue, our telephone calling system, how we operate, the tracking Bloodhounds and our public safety education program.

The following were thanked for becoming Sustaining Members: Mr. & Mrs. Charles G. Smith, Mr. & Mrs. Kenneth L. Andrews and the Hemet - San Jacinto Rockhounds Club.

There were also a number of announcements and reminders for the regular members of RMRU.

Five years ago—

The front page showed that the "Pager Fund" had grown to nine, showing that enough contributions had been received to purchase nine pagers. Sustaining Members Chairman Al Andrews thanked the following for becoming new members: Mr. & Mrs. Jacob Wiens, Mr. Milton Bailey, Mr. H. M. Wilson, Miss Penny Vazquez and Mr. Carlos H. Serna. The following were also thanked for renewing their memberships: Mr. & Mrs. R. O. Ridenour, Mrs. Esther Briggs, Rubidoux Grange No. 611, Mr. & Mrs. Wynlow Swick, Mr. William F. Zauche, Mr. C. Clifford, Mr. James L. Shockley, Mr. David Melendez, Mr. John F. Gilbert, Mr. Wayne A. Ford, Mr. John Chappell, II, Mr. & Mrs. Mike Daugherty and Mr. & Mrs. Bernie McIlvoy.

Also on the front page was the "The Road Runner sez" by Pres. Jim Fairchild. He commented that May could still produce storms that were dangerous in the high country. Comments were also made about a tough rescue mission from the month before and an unusual first aid problem that a friend of Art Bridges had treated.

The Search and Rescue column started with the now famous Butterfly Collector mission. It had started out as a search for a missing man and continued all night. The next morning, shortly after 11 a.m. the missing man was found. He was injured and a technical evacuation was required. Tom Morten-

sen wrote up the mission and his last sentence in the article was, "I'm a new member, and in the past few months I've learned that RMRU is more than just a rescue team, it's a brotherhood and I'm sure glad to be a part of it."

The next mission, written up by Pete Carlson, actually started as the annual winter training in the San Geronio Wilderness. Saturday during ice axe practice, Dan MacIntosh fractured his ankle. Pete and Bob Claybrook hiked out to call for a helicopter. While this was taking place, word was received about the next mission. Pete flew in with Western Helicopter's pilot Roy Cox to evacuate Dan and also fly out the other members so that they could go to the other mission. Dan was taken to a hospital and x-rayed. He had a spiral fracture that required surgery and casting.

The next mission was a call for an injured climber on Tahquitz Rock. Rich Morris wrote how he had been sent, by Al Andrews, to take the rescue van to Western Helicopters for the previous mission. When he arrived at the firehouse he was notified of the injured climber. So he drove to Idyllwild along with some other members who had not been able to attend the training session. When they arrived they found that the climbers in the area had rescued the fallen climber. Our members helped to carry the victim the last few hundred yards. • RMRU

