

Search and Rescue

SEARCH

Mission No. 7844M

8 Oct., Sun.

**Lower Palm Canyon
Palm Springs Area**

By Kevin Walker

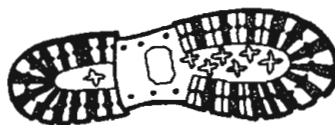
After having spent a delightful Saturday with my girlfriend and hoping to catch a movie in the evening, I was notified by my dad that we had a search, and that we were to meet at the lower end of Palm Canyon, Sunday morning at 0430.

Upon arriving at the road head we were met by the relatives of the person we were to search for. The subject was a 95 year old Indian man who had been missing since the previous Monday. We were told by his relatives that he took frequent walks up to the base of the hills. Also once before he was missing, but luckily he was found by his relatives. The other elderly gentleman that lived with him, told the relatives that he seemed quite restless on the evening that he disappeared. So with that, we started out on our assignments. Hank Schmel and I were assigned to try and cut tracks to the northwest while the rest of the team would search in a sweep to the southwest. After searching for nearly two hours to no avail, the team re-grouped. It was decided to call for a helicopter to assist in the search operation. Hal Fulkman had arrived late, so he was assigned to stay in base and wait for the chopper. Hank and I were

also told to return to base and await it's arrival.

At approximately 0830 Don Landells arrived with his Bell Jet Ranger. After placing the radio in the front, Hank, Hal and I climbed in and started a very slow and tedious search pattern, flying up to the base of the mountain and then back to the other side of the canyon. This went on for nearly two hours with no results.

After completing our search assignment, Don radioed operations leader Walt Walker for further instructions. He told us to expand our search into the surrounding areas while the rest of the ground units would continue to make sweeps of the prime search area. So with that we started working our way towards the Palm Springs city limit. Since the area we were now searching had little vegetation, we could fly at about 35 mph and still cover the area well. We had made about four passes over a plot of land about a mile square, when I was just about to ask Don to fly back to base and get a relief crew for us, because the fast flying was beginning to take its toll on our eyes, when Hal yelled, "There, Don!" With a quick move of the stick, Don maneuvered the chopper back around to where Hal had spotted the man. Don sat the bird down, and we climbed out and went over to the small bush where the man lay. Apparently the elderly gentleman had walked away from his home and had just wanted to be by himself. From the looks of things he had probably passed away the same night he had disappeared. Death is always a sad thing to encounter. But when someone has lived a rich and full life, especially that of 95, one can only look back to the happy times spent together. Our job was complete. • RMRU



TRAINING



Technical

**13-15 Oct. - Fri.-Sun.
Joshua Tree
National Monument**

By Larry Roland

Another delightful technical training session took place at Joshua Tree. The group met at Split Rock Campground in preparation for the first day of personal skills practice. We drove over to "Isles in the Sky" and began rapelling, jumaring and setting up raise and lower systems. Each person was required to demonstrate his ability and improve his skill in each area.

Following a morning of personal review we spent the afternoon practicing actual climbing technique. In the past we have slighted climbing somewhat in an effort to cover the actual technical rigging which seems to slip from memory so easily. The climbing session, however, proved enlightening. We were surprised that so many members could climb a 5.7 jam crack. Even a couple of new members with little rock experience were able to do it. We had fun, learned some things, and returned to camp for dinner.

The next day we returned to the "Isles in the Sky" to do a mock rescue situated on a vertical wall 100' up. A beautiful location which allowed several people to practice setting up rigging systems, attending the litter in both raise and lower modes. Anchors were interesting and hard to come by

which challenged even the better of us.

So another successful technical training came to a close. • RMRU

\$USTAINING MEMBERS—

BY MIKE DAUGHERTY

After a very slow start last Spring, which at the time seemed to threaten us with the specter of insolvency. The Sustaining Membership has staged something of a rally. This has been accomplished largely through the efforts of three groups: I) the loyal nucleus of "hard core" Sustaining Members, II) the rescue team in the field (there is no advertising like a successful search or rescue) and III) the timely intervention of team physician Dr. Norman Mellor who has enlisted the aid of a number of his friends and professional associates. All of this in aggregate has managed to boost our monthly income all the way up to . . . the level of last year. Sigh. Unfortunately, this leaves us "trying to get along on a 5% return in a 10% world," which is another way of saying that the income is still in doubt.

Of course, we recognize that our efforts are not enhanced by the somewhat erratic timing of the newsletter. On the other hand, in the struggle between competing demands on the time and energies of the team's members, it's pretty clear that the function of answering calls for help is always going to take precedence over administrative tasks. So, if you don't hear from us for awhile, don't assume that we've disappeared. On the contrary, we're likely busier than ever. Correspondingly, if we haven't had a chance to ask your help recently, it isn't because we don't need it.

We would like to **thank** those listed below for their help.

July—

New

Capt. Michael Evinrude
Capt. Michael Johnson
*Louise Syvertson
Edward Dillingham
Robert Bogle
Diz Zell

Renewing

El Camino Real Student Body
Larry & Cathy Brown
*Milton Levy
*Marydoris Powers
*Dr. Donald Browning

August—

New

ASB, Long Beach City College
Martha Bradley
Douglas & Joan Pinnon
Ms. Betty Brite
M/M Herman Rohbacker
*Idyllwild Bluegrass Invitational

Renewing

Sylvia Broadbent
James Collins
*Capt. Michael Johnson

September—

New

*Dr. & Mrs. Roger Ridley
Kent Mitchell
*Guy & Betty Mitchell
Himovitz Construction Co.
Jack & Mary Bowman
Herman & Sylvia Sulkin
M/M Jack Olson
*Kellogg Psychiatric Hospital
Dr. Charles Fraser
Dr. Hugh Stephens

Renewing

Tom Aldrich

October—

New

Betty Johnson
Mildred Chase
*Dr. Mikel Duino
Dr. E. Howard Jayne
DR. Anand Prakash
Dr. G. Carlton Wallace
*Dr. Benjamin Herndon
Dr. James G. Mead
Dr. Vean M. Stone
Agnes Parker
Ruth Wright
Dr. D. Robert Johnson
Dr. Robert M. Zweig

Renewing

Jack Nelson
*Izaak Walton League,
Idyllwild Chapter

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

from

Old'en Days

by Walt Walker

OCTOBER

Ten years ago—

The front page had a photograph, of a ice wall, that was taken by RMRU member Bill Briggs while he was climbing 22,205 foot Mt. Husacaran in Peru along with other members Mike Daugherty, Jim Foote, Woody Stark and Dick Webster. They had put together a movie and slide program of their climbing in South America. The program which was given in Riverside benefited the team.

The only item under Search and Rescue occurred on the first day of the month. We had been called to evacuate a 16 year old boy who had fallen in the Soboba Hills near the City of San Jacinto. When we arrived, it was dark, and the informant could not remember which canyon he had descended. So we had to search for the injured boy. It was a night of dodging Rattlesnakes, climbing loose, steep dirt walls and finally evacuating the boy back down through all the same problems.

Five years ago—

The Search and Rescue column started out with the rescue of a man who had driven his car off the road on the Ortega Highway above Elsinore. He had injured his leg and we splinted it, put him into the Stokes litter and hauled him up to the road. Four days later we searched for a two year old missing near the City of San Jacinto. We searched all night and he was found by a posse member early the next morning. Two days more and we were searching for a six year old boy missing from the Marion Mountain Campground. Just after we had started searching the boy was found by Deputy Richard Buckman. Two weeks later we rescued climbers who had been stranded on Tahquitz Rock. We had no sooner finished the above mission when we were told that a hunter was missing in the Santa Rosa Mountains. We drove over there and the mission had hardly begun when the hunter was found by his partner. • RMRU

