

Search and Rescue

SEARCH

Mission No. 7932C

**11 Sept., Tues.
Mt. Whitney,
High Sierra**

We received a call from the Inyo County Sheriff's Department requesting our help in searching for a missing teenager out of the Whitney Portal. Due to the fact that no veteran members could respond, no members were sent. • RMRU

RESCUE

Mission No. 7933M

**27 Sept., Thurs.
Devil's Slide Trail,
San Jacinto Mountains**

By Jim Fairchild

Just after 1740 this afternoon Jim Garvey and I were discussing autos and RMRU at his auto agency. We parted with the observation that it had been a long time since the last mission and, "See you tonight . . . !"

Just after 1800 I was at the intersection of Central and Riverside Avenues when the pager sounded. Two blocks later I was talking to Al Andrews, who told of an injury at Chinquapin Flats near Tahquitz Peak, and could I drive the van. Well, sure, I'm standing 50 feet from it.

At our roadhead, Humber Park, we assembled gear for the hike. An injured ankle would not be at all hard to care for. John Dew, Kevin and Walt Walker and I took off up the trail, leaving instructions

that later comers bring the wheeled litter and accessories.

A lovely evening for a fast hike if it were cooler. We were well into our second winds when we spotted flashlights halted at Jolley Springs, a mile up. As we approached the party with flashlights came barreling along without slowing and we spotted a large fellow carrying another large fellow "piggy-back." John asked if this were the injured person as they sped past him. They slowed to a halt after Walt spoke a few, rather harsh, words. Before long this party acknowledged the wisdom of such things as air splints, insulation, and a wheeled-litter ride back to Humber Park.

Shortly Tony Loro, Pete Carlson, Larry Roland, Jim Garvey, Craig Beasely and Ron Barry hustled up with the litter.

The splinted and warmed Mr. William Richards was loaded into the litter and was started on his journey that ended at Loma Linda Hospital.

We also were assisted by Riverside County Radio Association members, Mary Bowman and Gordon Johnson, of Idyllwild who manned the base radios for back-to-town communications. • RMRU



RMRU PHOTO BY JIM FAIRCHILD

EMT'S AT WORK — RMRU member Kevin Walker steadies the injured hiker's ankle, while Walt Walker inflates the air splint.



RMRU PHOTO BY JIM FAIRCHILD

SMOOTH RIDE OUT — RMRU members wheel the injured hiker down to Humber Park.

TRAINING



Familiarization

**7-9 Sept., Fri.-Sun.
Tahquitz Canyon,
San Jacinto Mountains**

By Ed Hill

Due to the high water in Tahquitz Creek in June, we postponed our Tahquitz Canyon exercise until September. We had never done the canyon in the hottest month of the year, and a number of members needed some hot weather training.

The team met for dinner at the Chart-house in Idyllwild and ate well before starting the hike. We meant to leave at 8 p.m., but it was nearer to 10 p.m. before we were on the trail to the Saddle. Consequently midnight found us at Laws Camp instead of Caramba Camp. I was sleepy, so rationalized that the walk to Caramba would be easier in the morning. I was asleep within ten minutes of that decision.

At first light, Jim Fairchild started moving, and woke me up. I started breakfast in bed and observed that the rest were not moving. A few stanzas of "Oh What a Beautiful Morning" netted me a barrage of pinecones from Kevin Walker, Larry Roland, Jerry Niswanger, Hal Fulkman and Avery Powers.

I started out for Caramba in the lead and commented on how warm it was in the high country. We took a break at the pools below Caramba Camp and then started down. I had not been down the canyon for several years and noticed that the "hippie trail" was in poor shape. I also found that I had forgotten major sections of the canyon. At least I remembered most of the stream crossings, so kept the group out of trouble.

We made very good time and were below the worst of the canyon by noon. There was a nice pool there, so we went swimming. Everyone was feeling tired from the heat. From there it was a short hike down to RMRU's swimming hole; the best pool in the canyon. This pool is about 15 yards long and 10 feet deep. We made camp just below the pool and went back up to go swimming. Bernie McIlvoy, Joe Ericson, Brian Hixson and Craig Beasley entertained the rest of us by diving from a ledge about thirty feet above the pool.

Jerry Niswanger, Larry Roland, Joe Ericson and Craig Beasley had to go out early, so they left while the rest of us settled down to steak dinners with all the trimmings. The night was hot. I slept on top of my bivvy bag until just before dawn when I crawled into it.

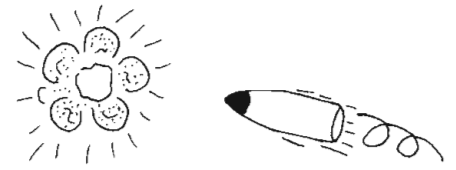
We started hiking early Sunday morning to minimize the time we had to spend in the sun. I was just plain hot as we climbed up to show the new people where Grapevine heliport was. Once again, it was hike for half an hour and then cool off in the nearest pool. We took a long break before climbing around the third falls area. Away from the water, the heat felt like someone had slugged you.

We dropped down to Halucination Pool for lunch and another swim. This pool had a waterfall dropping into it, which was great to stand under and feel the force of the water. There was a cave along one side and Steve Zappe developed a slide from the cave into the water. From here we had to take the high trail out to Palm Springs.

Everyone soaked their clothing and poured water all over themselves before starting off. The water would evaporate keeping us cool until we dried out. Then the heat would attack us in full force, and we would have to either be out of the canyon or find another pool to cool off in.

We reached the pool below the first falls without mishap. Just beyond that pool, Avery complained of feeling disoriented and of double vision. He did not look particularly bad, but we placed him into the creek to cool off. The rest of us sat on the bank and told jokes. When Avery started telling jokes, we figured that he was ready to walk out. Later on, we decided that he had leached most the vital salts out of his body by drinking so much water and was suffering from heat exhaustion.

This descent really showed me what intense heat can do to supposedly experienced, trained and conditioned people. Heat problems can sneak up on a group and before one realizes it, overwhelm the entire party. • RMRU



\$USTAINING MEMBERS

BY MIKE DAUGHERTY

With the troops somewhere in the Inland Empire, late reports from the financial front indicate that RMRU has not yet been overrun by the forces of insolvency. That's the good news. It is said to arise from the coincidence of two positive developments. First, there was the timely arrival of fresh reinforcements, supplied by provision among team supporters of a draft . . . on their checking accounts. The other was an unexpected lull in enemy activity on our front, that is, there has been a decline in search and rescue activity. This eases pressure in both the telephone and gasoline theaters and gives weary defenders a much needed rest. So disaster has been averted, if temporarily. Yet, we hear the storms of winter approach and when the snow flies we can expect another onslaught against our resources. That's the bad news. We clearly need something better than a band-aid solution. The loyal Sustaining Members who labor in our cause on the home front have repeatedly answered our calls for help. Yet we cannot forever balance RMRU on the brink of disaster. Eventually we will exhaust our supporters or wear out our credibility. So I'm going to step out of character and be blunt.

Something better has to be found. There has been debate on the team about what that something might be. We could look again at expenses. Various things might be postponed or eliminated. Postponement doesn't solve the long term problem, it only borrows from the future. It's hard to see what we might eliminate without either reducing our effectiveness in the field or reducing our income by cutting communications with the base of our financial support. Either way the cut is almost certain to be counter productive. Finally we must see RMRU expenses in context. The team operates on less than \$8,000 per year. How much search and rescue could the people of Riverside County (or of California) buy for \$8,000 per year . . . damn little without RMRU. No public agency or private entity could even study the problem for that much, much less solve it. And that is what RMRU has been doing faithfully for nearly twenty years - solving the problem. The members of the team and the people whose lives RMRU will save in the years ahead deserve something better than a constant struggle to produce a stead-

Coming Events-

OCTOBER

3 — Regular Meeting

5-7 — Training

24 — Board Meeting

NOVEMBER

7 — Regular Meeting

9-11 — Training

28 — Board Meeting

ily declining income. In the months ahead we are going to be asking you not just for yet another contribution, but for your help in finding a way to stabilize our financial base.

August

- Beverly Laing
- * San Gorgonio Chapter, BMC
- Janice McCawley
- * Circle City Auxiliary
- Ruth & Jack Echols
- Lucille V. Hensley
- Dorothy E. Webley
- * Circle City Hospital
- Charles & Margaret Jameson
- Sylvia M. Broadbent
- James Larson
- Larry Kick
- Roy L. Haglund

September

- Jim Fairchild
- * Ruth Kuykendall
- * Thomas Aldrich
- Ruth R. Wright
- * Circle City Auxiliary
- * Circle City Hospital
- M/MBruce D. Carlson
- * Dr. & Mrs. Bruce Bindel
- Diann Coate
- Mr. & Mrs. Wilford F. Keith
- Mrs. Harry C. Walton
- David Westheimer
- Harry & Olga Hein
- M/M H. C. Baumeister
- Kevin Walker
- Chester C. Gilbert
- Freeman C. Bovard

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

from
Old'en Days

by Walt Walker

SEPTEMBER

Ten years ago—

The first, of what has become an annual event, the Pancake Breakfast sponsored by the Idyllwild chapter of the Izaak Walton League was held on August 17, 1969. This 'happening' was described in the **President's Box** by Walt Walker. It was a tremendous success with 635 served breakfast. The proceeds were added to the fund to purchase a five watt handitalkie radio.

We were called at 2230 that a 42 year old was overdue from a hike to Mt. San Jacinto. We met at the Marion Mountain Campground. When we arrived we were told campers in the area had heard cries for help. We were packing when one of our members heard a call. We used the truck's PA system to tell the man to stay put. After a brisk 30 minute hike up the trail we called the missing man's name. He responded and was only about 100 yards below the trail. We went down to him and found that he was not injured, only cold and hungry.

While we were driving down the hill towards Banning, from the previous mission, we received word that some Girl Scouts were missing. We turned around and headed for Garner Valley. When we arrived at the camp we were told two girls were missing from a hike towards Cedar Springs. We were on the trail hiking when we met a cowboy, from the Garner Ranch, who had also been searching. He had the girls in tow. They were fine.

Five years ago—

It was late afternoon when we received word that a brother and sister (ages 15 and 16) were overdue from a hike. They were going to hike from Humber Park to the Palm Springs Aerial Tramway. Groups of members had started searching from Humber Park. At about 1950 we received word that the pair had walked out into Palm Springs.

A group of people were camping at Boulder Basin Campground and six of them decided to hike down to Lake Fulmore and go swimming. When the group had not arrived, the friend who was going to pick them up, drove back up the road and called. He made voice contact, but it was now dark, and they were a long way off. He contacted the sheriff's department and they called for our help. We started hiking and calling. Bernie McIlvoy, Steve Stephens and Pete Carlson located the group who were cold and thirsty. They provided water and extra clothing. When the rest of the members arrived the group was led out to the road.

A week later, just at dinner time, we received a call that a 70 year old man had wandered away from a resort in the Ortega Mountains on the Riverside/Orange County border. Bernie McIlvoy and Rich Morris started searching up a firebreak. Only a few hundred feet from the road, Rich found the man deceased.

Another call for an injured person in Tahquitz Canyon. It sounded very serious, as the informant, described the head injuries. When the helicopter arrived, Hank Schmel climbed in, and in a very short time the injured man was located. He was not as seriously injured as we had thought. He was given first aid and helped up to the helispot and flown to the hospital.

Just before noon, on a Wednesday, we were advised that a 3½ year boy was missing from a mobilehome park near the city of San Jacinto. We responded, along with other groups, and searched all night and into the next day with no success. The sheriff's department decided that we were no longer needed. We later learned that the youngster was found dead inside a small ice chest. • RMRU

