

Season's Greetings



FROM ALL OF US... TO ALL OF YOU

TRAINING



Helitac 20 Dec., Sat. Desert Hot Springs

By Kevin Walker

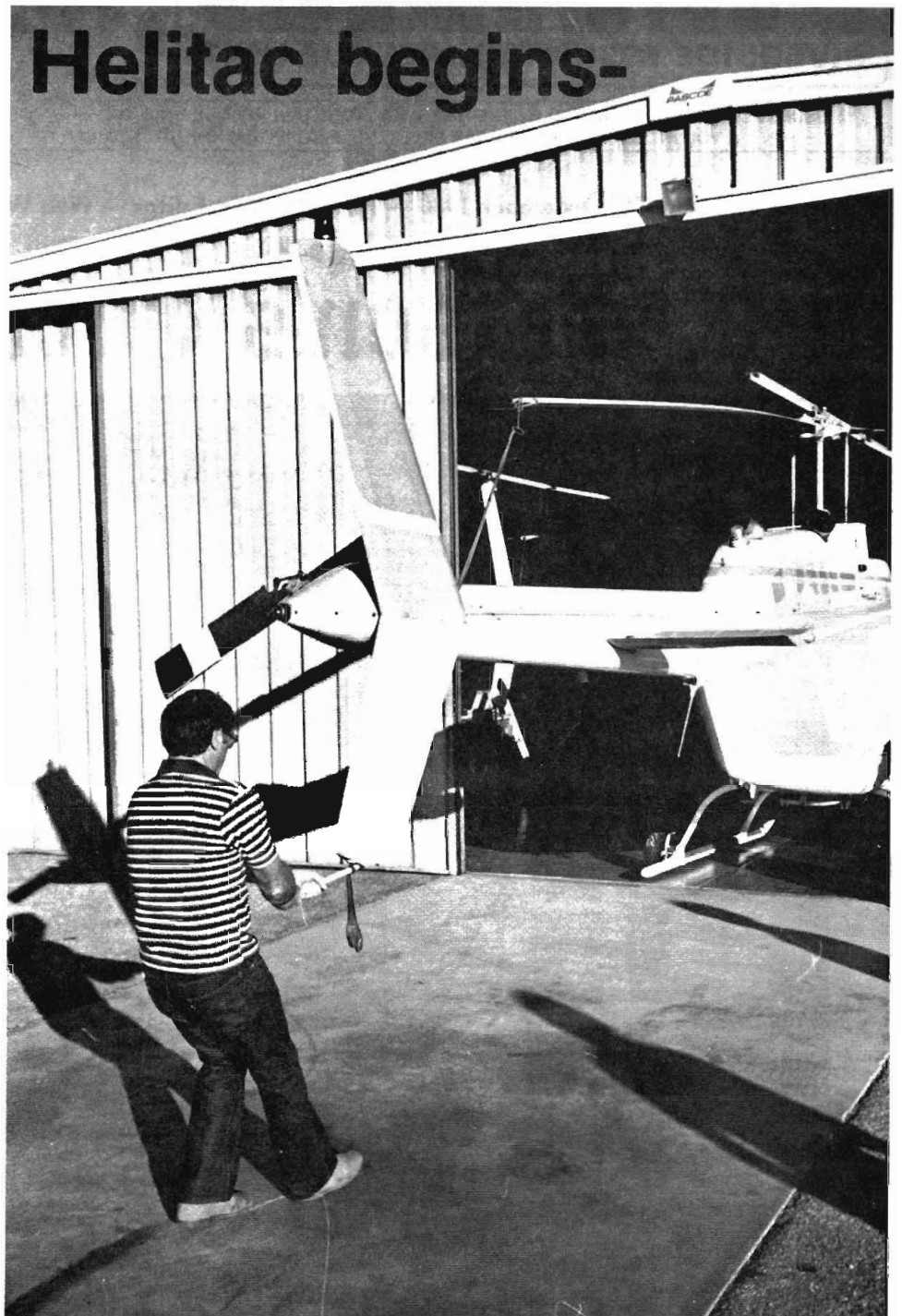
Striving for perfection. That is what helitac is all about. Our goal for helitac, is to have all of our members trained so that they can work safely in and around the helicopter in tough situations, and even in what would normally be termed a safe situation.

First off you need a helicopter and a pilot. For the past four years, that has not been a problem, as veteran pilot Don Landells has given his time and the use of his Bell Jet Ranger (this year Don has added a third Ranger to his fleet).

RMRU met at Don's heliport (and residence) at 8:00 am. Traditionally, and this year was no different, we started off by letting new members walk around Don's hanger and just get familiar with the bird, while veteran members related past experiences. Next, everyone gathered around the powerful machine out on the ready pad. At this point Don described how the chopper works, and what he would have to watch out for while flying in a tight spot such as a canyon or a steep snow covered slope. Don also told members what to watch out for. For example, Don cannot see the tail rotor, and if we were working around brush, rocks, etc. it would be our job to help keep Don aware of where it was.

Next, all of the members practiced getting in and out of the helicopter while it was sitting on the pad with the turbine shut off. This is done so that while new members practiced, the veterans could coach and point out errors or just help a member improve his technique.

With "static practice" complete, the team moved out into a nearby field while Don started and warmed up the machine. Soon Don had flown over to the field and members were practicing climbing in properly, followed by a jump back to mother earth. The word jump is not an accurate statement though. Actually, after Don would give the nod to climb out, and then to go, a member would actually just (gently as possible) step off. If you were actually to jump, it would drastically upset the helicopter. Besides



RMRU PHOTO BY JIM FAIRCHILD

ROLLING OUT THE BIRD — Pilot Don Landells rolls out his newest helicopter, a Bell Jet Ranger III equipped with an ambulance package. This allows a patient to be transported inside the helicopter with the doors on.

practicing the above, new members learned (and older ones practiced) giving hand signals to the pilot, to help him get the bird into position. All in all it was a very good session.

After helitac was complete, everyone adjourned back to the heliport for lunch (Don's dog Cinder liked that part). After lunch we unloaded all of the gear out of

the vans onto Don's landing pad. While one group of members worked on sorting gear, and checking ropes to decide what should be retired, and the group worked on washing and waxing the vans.

All together a very busy day. But that day would not have been possible without the continued support from our friend Don Landells. • RMRU



RMRU PHOTO BY JIM FAIRCHILD

LAST MINUTE POINTERS — Veteran pilot Don Landell's gives a few last minute pointers about helicopter safety to RMRU members before starting the actual helitac practice



RMRU PHOTO BY JIM FAIRCHILD

DEMONSTRATION — Training chairman Hal Fulkman prepares to jump, hoping it will be a good one, as his trainees are watching his every move

Search and Rescue



RMRU PHOTO BY JIM FAIRCHILD

NEW MEMBER JUMPS — New RMRU member Bob Elgin makes his first jump out of a helicopter. Two things Bob needed to work on were keeping his feet together, and tucking his arms tightly against his body.

SEARCH

Mission No. 8052C

13 Dec., Sat.

San Jacinto Mountains

We received a call from the Banning office of the Riverside County Sheriff's Department that a Boy Scout Troop was overdue in returning from a day hike in the San Jacinto Mountains at approximately 8:00 PM. The group had planned to hike from Black Mountain to Cabazon via the new Pacific Crest Trail. This of course was quite an undertaking for a day hike. As darkness approached the Scout master decided to go to the lights of the Twin Pines Boys Ranch instead of trying to hike into the darkness. The troop walked into the Ranch at about 8:30 and phoned out that they were OK. With that the mission was cancelled. • RMRU

SEARCH

Mission No. 8053M

19 Dec., Fri.
San Jacinto Mountains

By Kevin Walker

Everyone was just finishing lunch when the phone rang. It was Sgt. Weakly from the Banning Sheriff's office with news of two overdue hikers. After finishing his calls, my dad Walt Walker and myself picked up the No. 1 van and headed for Cabazon where the team was to rendezvous. Walt and I were the first to arrive followed shortly by Rick Pohlers in the No. 2 van and soon after that Jim Fairchild. At the meeting point were the two wives and a friend of the missing hikers. While the rest of us troopies were preparing gear, Walt and Captain Canova gathered information from the informants. They learned that the two had set out from Cabazon on Tuesday and started up a ridge that would put them on the Fuller Ridge; once there they would head for Little Round Valley, the summit and then down to the tram for a Thursday pick up. They were now a full day overdue. Our job was to cut tracks on the ridge first with a helicopter, and then set members out in various locations along their route of travel. We soon heard the familiar sound of a Jet Ranger approaching from the desert. That of course was Don Landells with his newest Bell Jet Ranger (number 3). For the initial run to cut tracks, Walt assigned Rick Pohlers and myself to fly with Don. We were soon under way flying towards the ridge that the pair had started up. At about the 4,000 foot level we spotted what looked like one set of tracks. We were almost to the 6,000 foot level when Don spotted what he thought was two sets. After circling back around and then maneuvering in close to the ridge line, and sure enough it was two separate prints in a sandy spot. Just as Don was about to radio back to base that we had found two good sets of prints, base beat us to the microphone. It seems that our two missing hikers had just walked into the tram and had phoned out that they were in good shape. It just took them a little longer than expected (about one days worth). With that it was back to base.

With this mission coming to a close, so would the missions for 1980. Out of 53 calls 35 of those were actual missions in the field. All in all a very busy year. • RMRU

\$USTAINING MEMBERS

BY WALT WALKER

It has been almost three years since eight students and their teacher, plus a number of RMRU members spent a long cold night in a snow storm. It was April 6, 1978 at 9 p.m. when RMRU was activated to search for the group from El Camino Real School.

By the time John Dew, Jim Fairchild, Kevin Walker and I had reached Saddle Junction, the snow was falling and the wind was blowing. We found the groups' tracks and began to follow them. Around 3 a.m. the falling snow had completely covered the tracks. The weather cleared in the morning and two large Marine helicopters and Don Landells in his Jet Ranger began searching for the missing group.

It was early afternoon when a "HELP" stamped into the snow was located by John Dew, flying with Don. It was the teacher and three boys hiking for help. They were flown out and Don and I headed in the direction

from where their tracks had come. We quickly located the five other students. Don stuck the tips of the bird's runners into a steep slope and I jumped out. Going to the students, I found that four could hike, but one girl could not. I picked her up and we all started up the slope. Don returned, we loaded the five into the bird and they were on their way to Camp Maranatha.

DECEMBER

New—

- *Col. & Mrs. Forrest R. Dupont
- *Dr. & Mrs. Mace
- *David M. Black

Renewing—

- El Camino Real Student Body
- *Jane & John Wiefels
- *Sgt. Keith Borges
- Betty Johnson
- M/M Dooly
- M/M Francis Johnson
- Steve & Mary Bryant
- M/M Robert Kowell
- *Marian & Paul Trotta
- *Avis M. Anderson
- *Circle City Auxiliary

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

