

Volume XVI, Issue X, October 1980 — Kevin Walker, Editor — Walt Walker, Publisher — Dona Towell, Artist

Search and Rescue

RESCUE

Mission No. 8046M

15 Oct., Wed.
Foothills,
North of San Jacinto

By Kevin Walker

It was a cold and somewhat cloudy day when Walt Walker received a call from the Hemet Sheriff's office. Walt was told that a nature photographer had been reported overdue, and that the vehicle had been located on Soboba Road, north of the City of San Jacinto. A deputy rolled out to where the vehicle was found and followed a set of foot prints up a small canyon. The deputy located Norman Berman at the top of a 50 foot dry waterfall about a half mile up the Canyon. Norm had spent two nights with no warm clothing at that location. Needless to say he was in hypothermia. The deputy radioed back out and asked for rescue personnel. At that point the Hemet team was notified and then Walt was called. Walt went home for his gear, while I grabbed mine and then picked up the No. 1 van. Within twenty minutes we were at the base camp below North Mountain. There we met Capt. Bill Park and several deputies from the Hemet S.O. and Gary Fritzing from the Hemet team, who was handling radio communications from the rescue operation. Gary told us that a paramedic and two of his team members had already hiked in to start giving aid to Norm. While we were deciding what gear to carry in, the paramedic radioed out that it would have to be a litter evacuation, and that a technical lower would have to be made over the waterfall. With that I radioed Riverside and had Al Andrews notified to activate RMRU.

Shortly thereafter Walt and I and Dave Fisk from the Hemet team were on our way in. It was a quick walk up the gentle



PHOTO COURTESY OF HEMET NEWS

TECHNICAL LOWER — RMRU member Kevin Walker guides the litter containing hypothermia patient Norman Berman down the narrow 50 foot dry water fall, to Rick Pohlers at the base. At the top, Jim Garvey handles the lower line, while Walt Walker relays commands.

canyon to the base of the water fall. But gentle was not the word for the 50 foot, near-vertical waterfall equipped with loose rock. After ascending the fall itself, we left the sandy creek bed and started up the steep side of the canyon. After making our way up the side, we traversed over and back down to where the other rescuers were. Norm was looking a lot better now. An I.V. had been started, warm clothing had been put on him, and he was finishing his second cup of hot soup. With the paramedic seeing after Norm, we started setting up for a lower over the waterfall. As we were finishing setting up the lower line and the belay line, RMRU members could be seen approaching from down canyon. I volunteered to be the litter attendant, Walt would be the safety officer. Jim Garvey and Pete Carlson were sent up to handle the lower and belay. Once Norm was secured into the Stokes litter, we carried him over to the edge, and then slowly worked our way over the side to where I could lean out and pull the litter away from the wall. The tough part was getting started; once we were out on the waterfall itself, the lower went extremely smoothly. Once we had Norm down fellow RMRU members Chris Smith and Rick Pohlers lent a hand in carrying Norm away from the base of the falls.

While we secured the "wheel" to the litter, the rest of the troopies brought down the technical gear. After that it was a smooth wheel out to the road, and the waiting ambulance.

Later that evening, Walt and I visited Norm in the Hospital. He was resting comfortably, and was going to be released with doctor's instructions to get a warm meal, a hot bath, and a good nights rest.

• RMRU

RESCUE

Mission No. 8048M

**18-19 Oct., Sat.-Sun.
Little Round Valley,
San Jacinto Mountains**

By Pete Carlson

Saturday evening at 7:30 I was sitting down to play cards with some friends. Joe Erickson was finishing a dinner with friends. Craig Beasley was walking up to his date's front door. Tom Aldrich was relaxing at home. Within 2 and one half hours we would be the first team hiking into Little Round Valley to help a young woman in hypothermia. (Beep . . .) All RMRU members call Al Andrews for a rescue. And that is how an RMRU members evening gets ruined.

It seems two young women, Debbie and Melody, drove to Idyllwild Friday night. They spent a cold and uncomfortable night in their car. In the morning they hiked up the Deer Springs Trail to meet their church group in Little Round Valley. They ate nothing and had only a little to drink all day. When the leaders were checking on all the tents they found Melody shivering. They gave her hot drinks and extra clothes. They thought Debbie was asleep, but when they tried to wake her they found her unconscious from hypothermia.

State Park Aid Sue was checking the area and came across the problem. She used her radio to call for help. Once Al Andrews was contacted he relayed information to the group telling them how to

treat the unconscious subject. ***1. Put two sleeping bags together and place the subject inside. 2. Take off all wet or damp clothes. 3. Place two warm bodies inside the sleeping bag on either side of the subject. 4. Once the subject becomes conscious and can take liquids, give hot drinks or soup. ***

As we drove from Riverside (high temp. 82°F) we were amazed to hear of 5" of snow and a temperature of 20° in Little Round Valley. We planned to go light, taking just enough to get through the night. We were to hike the Marion Mountain Trail and stabilize the subject until morning when Don Landells would fly the subject out. We arrived at the roadhead and a group of eight started hiking up the trail and arrived in 3 hours and 15 minutes at Little Round Valley. By this time Debbie had responded to the treatment described above and was asleep. We checked things over and went to bed ourselves at 2:30 AM.

Morning came too soon and no one wanted to get up as the temperature was now 10°, with a wind of 10-20 MPH. But we were up and about by 7:00. We made some hot cereal for Debbie to try, but after eating a little she felt sick and laid down. We hurried with our packing up, and getting ready for Don to fly in. At 8:00 we heard the sounds of the Jet Ranger helicopter. We picked up Debbie in her sleeping bag and carried her to the helicopter. Dr. Pete Boss got in back with Debbie, and her sister Melody was put in front. We backed off and Kevin gave Don the thumbs up OK to take off.

SEARCH

Mission No. 8047C

**16 Oct., Thurs.
Boulder Basin Campground
San Jacinto Mountains**

We received a call from the Banning Sheriff's office that a van had been found in the Boulder Basin Campground by a Forest Service Ranger. The ranger stated that the van had been parked at that location before the first snow of the season had fallen. There were approximately two inches of snow around the vehicle, and misc. camping equipment in the van. RMRU was then put on stand by while the S.O. tried to locate where the vehicle was from. During that time the owners returned to the campground with another vehicle and stated that the van would not start and they hiked out for help before the snow had fallen. • RMRU



RMRU PHOTO BY JIM FAIRCHILD

EMERGENCY EVACUATION — Don Landells Jet Ranger prepares to lift off with hypothermia patient Debbie Miller on board. High winds made leaving Little Round Valley difficult for powerful helicopter.

Don gave the bird power and raised up. Then instead of the usual fly off, the helicopter was blown back towards the trees. Don maneuvered back onto the ground. As he moved around the small valley for a better position his main rotors hit some small branches. Finally he landed again and told us he was too heavy. We off-loaded the sister, Melody. Don tried again. As we all watched nervously we saw Don make it out of the valley this time.

In about twenty minutes Don was back to get more people and equipment. Since he had used up some fuel he was lighter and had no problems getting out. In four more trips we were all out and on our way to a relaxing breakfast in Idyllwild. In looking back at this mission, we were really caught by surprise in having a winter mission so early in the fall. We are all now getting our winter gear out and ready for the next one. • RMRU



Familiarization

**4-5 Oct., Sat. - Sun.
Upper Tahquitz Drainage
San Jacinto Mountains**

By Craig Beasley

This month's training began on a Saturday morning at 8:00 AM (a very reasonable hour). This training was a familiarization and unfortunately, we were familiarizing ourselves with the fire line that the disastrous San Jacinto fire left. We left Humber Park and started up that all too familiar Devil's Slide Trail. During our break at the saddle, Joe Erickson entertained us with his "stick magic." Rested up, we all headed toward Willow Creek Crossing. It was a beautiful day, the hiking was pleasant and we were soon quenching our thirst with cold water from Willow Creek.

From there we decided to leave the main trail and follow Willow Creek down to Law's Camp. We ate a leisurely lunch at Law's and then decided to take a look at Law's Cabin, or that is, what's left of it. From Law's Cabin, we picked our course to Caramba North, one of the two helispots out of Caramba Camp. We reached Caramba North, and for those of us who had not previously seen the damage done

by the fire, and I imagine even for those of us who had, it was quite shocking. The fire had burned right up to Caramba North and all along the ridge for as far as one could see. After evaluating the area, the new trails made the firefighters, and our drastically enlarged helispot (also made by the firefighters), we headed for Caramba for dinner and in a few cases, a swim.

That night after dinner when we were all just getting comfortable, our radio belated the threat of a mission. Luckily, all it turned out to be was a threat and we bedded down for the night.

Sunday morning we packed up and hiked up to Caramba South, the other helispot. From here we had an excellent view of Andreas Canyon, which was also seriously burned. We left Caramba South and followed the fire break all the way to the Pacific Crest Trail. Once back on a trail the going speeded up a bit and we were soon eating lunch at a big open spot north of Red Tahquitz Peak which the firefighters had developed as another helispot. A few of the members went hunting for remnants of a past helicopter crash, but their efforts were of no avail. As we were preparing to head back down the mountain, here came a man and his four sons, all of which were in desperate need of water. We had a considerable amount of water between us, so we gave them all we had and then instructed them to the nearest water.

We then headed down the ridge toward Tahquitz Valley, on to Skunk Cabbage Meadow, the saddle and down good 'ol Devil's Slide Trail to the cars. We did, however, take a slightly different route to Humber Park. Rather than following the Devil's Slide Trail the whole way down, we cut down cross-country from Powder Box Spring in hopes of finding Loyd Allen's cross-country skis. To refresh memories, Loyd took a fall last winter and as well as breaking his leg, he lost his skis. Sorry Loyd, we could only find one of your skis. Having reached the cars, we had a quick critique, decided it had been a good training and headed for home.

• RMRU

\$USTAINING MEMBERS

See November Issue

Coming Events-

DECEMBER

- 3 - Regular Meeting
- 6 - Training
- 17 - Board Meeting

JANUARY

- 7 - Regular Meeting
- 10-11 - Training
- 21 - Board Meeting

Notice!

The **RMRU Newsletter** is published 12 times per year by the Riverside Mountain Rescue Unit, Inc. It is intended primarily to inform the Regular and Sustaining Members.

If you would like to receive the newsletter on a regular basis, and at the same time become a Sustaining member, send your tax deductible donation of \$25 or more to:

Riverside Mountain Rescue Unit
Post Office Box 5444
Riverside, California 92517



RMRU PHOTO BY JIM FAIRCHILD

DROPPING IN FOR LUNCH — On October 18, RMRU participated in a display of various types of emergency services at the Riverside Plaza. In this photo, RMRU member Tom Aldrich rappels down in front of a restaurant window.