

With the closing of 1980 RMRU had saved 394 lives since the unit was formed in September of 1961. By the time our 20th anniversary rolls around the total lives saved should be well above the 400 mark. We urge you to mark the date October 3rd on your calendar. On that Saturday we plan to celebrate our 20th anniversary and honor the veteran RMRU members. The place will be in Riverside at the Raincross Square. The evening will be very low key. The members will be wearing their uniforms so that you will be able to

easily recognize them and talk with them. The team will have both of the rescue vans on display plus a large display of old equipment and photographs. There will be a very short program so that the majority of the evening will be free for everyone to talk and renew old friendships. We are urging anyone that has been rescued by RMRU to plan on attending the event and help in honoring the veterans. In upcoming issues of the newsletter we will have more information.

Training



**10-11 Jan., Sat.-Sun.
San Jacinto Mountains**

By Joe Erickson

It's January, time for winter shake-down, deep powder snow, snow caves, skiing! Traditionally the team spends this weekend getting used to new equipment, readjusting our packs and legs for the worst ol' man Winter can inflict. But this January there was no snow to be found.

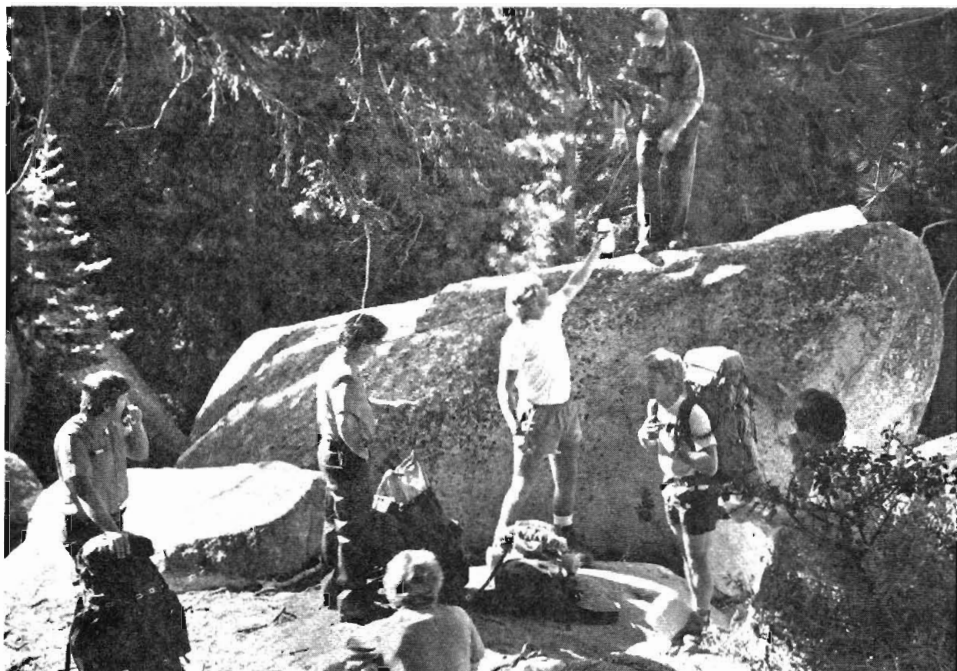
At 8:00 AM we met at Marion Mt. Campground. The Marion Mt. trail is a steep, direct route to the western side of Mt. San Jacinto. Our goal was to camp at Little Round Valley early and explore the high country. Familiarization of the area is important to develop in our newer members. Due to a late start and some unadjusted legs it was decided that Little Round would be an appropriate camp for the afternoon.

With the weather clear and mild some of us packed lightly. RMRU finally reached a windy, chilly camp and those that could started dinner. J. R. Muratet was supposed to bring dinner for our food group, including Bob Attride, Craig Beasley and myself, but J.R. was late. Jim Fairchild was cooking steak in mushrooms and onions with that all knowing smile that veteran members can get. J. R. entered Little Round at dark with my birthday cake, and about ten pounds of homemade stew.

Clouds were blowing over the peak with very light precipitation. The team bedded down dry only to wake hours later shaking snow out of our bivi-sacks. We awoke to a winter wonderland. The members that slept outside the tents were covered with 10 inches of white powder.

This unexpected snow could have caught others on the mountain unaware also. So it was decided to break camp, delay breakfast, and hike out. Much of the upper trail had patches of ice, now hidden by the snow. This facilitated a rapid descent, because it was important to make ourselves available for a mission.

Most of the members ate breakfast at Jan's in Idyllwild, while J. R. warmed his cold feet. There was no mission forthcoming, so I enjoyed a comfortable afternoon drying my gear. • RMRU



RMRU PHOTO BY JIM FAIRCHILD

MILD DAY — In this photo team members have stopped for a water and snack break. Notice the short sleeves and hiking shorts



RMRU PHOTO BY JIM FAIRCHILD

VERY COLD MORNING — RMRU member Bob Attride burrows out of his bivouac sack, after being covered by nearly a foot of snow during the night

Search and Rescue

RESCUE

Mission No. 8101M

**15 Jan., Thurs.
North Fork,
San Jacinto River**

By Kevin Walker

At a little after 10:00 in the morning my dad, Walt Walker, came into the shop and told me that a hiker had fallen and injured himself while descending the fishermans trail to the North Fork. I quickly changed and gathered my gear, then picked up the No. 1 Van. The No. 2 Van was at Walt's for routine maintenance, so he loaded his gear in to it and off we went with the vans for the Control road, which was the original road up to Idyllwild from the San Jacinto area. Now a fire control road, we left the No. 1 Van where the dirt road starts, and consolidated gear into the No. 2 Van which has a better wheel clearance. After driving in approximately four miles we came upon where the operation was taking place. There we found that Hemet Valley Ambulance owner/Hemet team member Gary Fritzinger, and Dr. Pete Boss, also a Hemet member, had already gone down to assess the injuries. At the top where we waited there was a large crew from the forestry waiting to assist. We did not wait long before Gary radioed up that the unfortunate hiker had fractured his lower left Tibia. Gary also stated that they were about 400 feet below us, and if we came down with the RMRU wheeled litter and would tail out a 300 ft. goldline, we would be able to have the forestry's vehicle winch pull the litter back up the steep hillside. Walt and I plus a few eager fire volunteers started down with the litter from the road. Within minutes we were at our destination. Gary and Pete had splinted the leg of the hiker. So, we carefully loaded the injured man into the litter, and secured him in. We radioed back up that we were ready, and that the haul line was hooked up. With that the winch started pulling, and we guided the litter around obstacles such as brush and boulders, as we were pulled up. But all in all it went smoothly and soon we were back to the dirt road and the waiting ambulance. After loading the man into the ambulance we secured the mission. Just a quick note. You may have noticed that

Walt and I were the only RMRU members present. It was decided after arriving at the road head and assessing things that no extra help would be needed because of the closeness to the road, and that meant that extra members would not have to be away from work. • RMRU

RESCUE

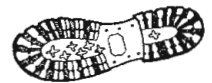
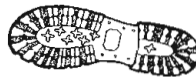
Mission No. 8102M

**17 Jan., Sat.
Foothills above
Whitewater Canyon**

By Walt Walker

It was early Saturday evening when we received word that a 14 year old boy was stranded in the foothills west of Whitewater Canyon. When we arrived at the roadhead we learned that Brian Reinert and a friend were hiking downhill when Brian slipped and fell. He was not injured, but he was stranded in a very dangerous spot.

We drove up a dirt road for about four miles, where we were met by the informant David Wilshire. Having had experience in this area in the past, we knew there would be no natural anchors (large rocks or trees). So out came the snow pickets along with our normal pile of rope and hardware.



It was only a five minute hike downhill to where we could look down on Brian, who was astride a narrow dirt ridge, with long drops off on both sides. While team members began working at the task of trying to set up anchors in the rock ground, Bernie McIlvoy got the nod to descend to the stranded boy. Bernie tied into one rope and snapped a second rope onto his harness for Brian.

There were hundreds of rocks sticking out of the 70-80° slope. The potential danger, due to rockfall, was extreme. Bernie started his rappel and slowly tested some of the large rocks. When Bernie had descended the 50 feet to Brian, he quickly secured the rope around him.

Other team members had set up a hauling system while Bernie had descended. They were now ready to haul Brian up while Bernie would Jumar up his rope. Brian was about 10 feet up from his perch when a rock broke loose and landed right in front of Bernie. The rock was about the size of a basketball. Had it struck Bernie? I don't even like to think of the possibilities. The hauling continued and Brian was shortly at the top.

The pickets that we had been watching so closely, proved to be very secure. We could not get them out. This was one time when we were not saddened to leave some equipment behind. It was worth it, another life had been saved! • RMRU



RMRU PHOTO BY JIM FAIRCHILD

CRUCIAL S.E.A — RMRU member Randy Iwasuik makes a final check on a crucial Self Equalizing Anchor. Because there were no trees or rocks stable enough to make anchors, snow pickets (arrows pointing to) had to be driven into the ground. A team member was assigned to each picket to watch for unusual pull or strain.

SEARCH

Mission No. 8103A

**18 Jan., Sun.
Whitewater**

On Sunday evening RMRU received a call from the Banning office of the Riverside County Sheriff's Department that an 18 year old male was overdue in returning from a day hike up the Whitewater. The pagers were activated, and members were contacted and told to meet at the Whitewater Fish Hatchery. While the team was enroute, the youth walked out, in good condition. • RMRU

SEARCH

Mission No. 8104C

**25 Jan., Sun.
Palm Springs Tramway,
San Jacinto Mountains**

At approximately 8:15 Sunday evening RMRU received a call from the Banning Sheriff's office. A solo hiker from the San Diego area were overdue in hiking into the tramway. The team was placed on standby while more information was being gathered. While the State Park and the Sheriff were doing so, the hiker walked out unharmed. • RMRU

\$USTAINING MEMBERS

BY KEVIN WALKER

No long speeches this month, just a few numbers for you to think about.

29, a very good number. That figure refers to the twenty-nine people (not counting flood oriented rescues), that would not have celebrated the new year if not for RMRU and you.

53 times during 1980 RMRU was summoned, of which 35 times RMRU actually went into the field.

8,521 volunteer hours were given to RMRU by its members during 1980, 3,881 hours were spent on Search & Rescue.

And as best as I can count, RMRU received 189 donations from you the sustaining members. Thank you for making all of these wonderful numbers possible.

JANUARY

New—

M/M James E. Carta II
H. Glenn Stevens, M.D.
*Superior National Insurance Co.

Renewing—

*M/M Kenneth Andrews
Karin Allen
M/M Malcolm Alexander
M/M H. C. Baumeister
*Norm & Maggie Mellor
M/M Allen
David Harrah
*Lloyd Allen
M/M Larson
M/M Donald Lovelee
*M/M Thomas E. Gillen
M/M Lundquist
M/MMcMillan
M/M Micka
Jane & John Wiefels, Trading Post
Dr. & Mrs. Jay Wallis
*Theodore L. Young
*George & Norma Ruptier

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

Coming Events-

MARCH

4 — Regular Meeting
7-8 — Training
18 — Board Meeting

APRIL

1 — Regular Meeting
4-5 — Training
22 — 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



Old'en Days — Feb. 12, 1963 - During the construction of the Palm Springs Aerial Tramway, RMRU was called to search for a man missing after a heavy snowfall. Walt Walker unloads gear from a construction helicopter that was piloted by, then chief pilot, Don Landells. The photo was taken at the upper end of Round Valley in the San Jacinto Mountains.