

Volume XX, Issue X, October 1984

John Dew, Editor — Kevin Walker, Publisher — Dona Halcrow, Artist

## Search and Rescue

### ABORT

Mission No. 8425A

14 Oct., Sun.  
Camp Lacky,  
San Jacinto Mountains

We received a call from the Hemet station of the Riverside County Sheriff's Department that a deer hunter had fallen and injured himself near Camp Lacky. The team was activated and while members were enroute the mission was aborted, as the friends of the injured man helped him to the dirt road, and then he was transported out by the Pine Cove Ambulance. • RMRU

### SEARCH

Mission No. 8426M

17 Oct., Wed.  
Indian Canyons,  
San Jacinto Mountains

By "Major Disaster"



We got the call bright and early that some Palm Springs city workers had seen some signal flares coming from the Tahquitz and Andreas canyon area. Boy, did that sound marginal. The last time we went out to that area someone had seen a signal mirror and after hours of searching, we found nothing. Must be those NINJAS fooling around again.

The turnout was slim as we collected at Ann Dolley's place at the mouth of Tahquitz canyon. Don, our favorite helicopter pilot, flew in just as the last of our small band arrived. It was decided by our commander Walt "General Grump" Walker,

that he, as usual, would fly search for a while along with a trusted observer, Joe "Lieutenant Ludicrous" Erickson. Gee, some people get to have all the fun, but rank has its privileges.

It was warm there at Ann Dolly's but higher up it was cool enough for snow and quite windy. We had taken the doors off the bird to facilitate not only entry and exit, but observation as well. Anyway after about an hour of flying around Don landed with a very blue Joe, who had not taken a parka.

Well, enough of this flying around big, the troops were chomping at the bit to get out in the field. So teams were made up, assigned radios and points on the map picked for them to search.

Kevin "Colonel Klutz" Walker and I were the first to be put out on the east ridge of Tahquitz canyon. Don could barely get the ship to land, the wind was so squirrely. I could see why Lt. Ludicrous was green as well as blue.

Another team made up of Jim "Admiral Hornblower" Fairchild and new guy Ray "Dr. Ghoul" Hussey were put out higher up the ridge. The last team made up of Bernie McIlvoy and new guy Curtis Pontynen was put out even higher. It was a good game plan that covered a large area. If anyone was about they could not only see us (with bright orange shirts) but hear us as well. The only response we got was the howl of the wind. No sign of anyone.

Meanwhile, back at base, the General had deployed another team to check out a trail leading up to the ridge. That team was led by Mel "Captain Chaos" Krug along with Rob "Squeaky" Gardner and Mark "Here's the Beef" Rhodes. They too found nothing.

By this time it was getting to be mid afternoon and we were running out of leads to search. Also people were showing up in droves. Even Pete Carlson showed up for his one mission of the year he does. Glad you could make it Pete, we really needed you. So General Grump made the command decision to pull the plug after consulting with the sheriff.

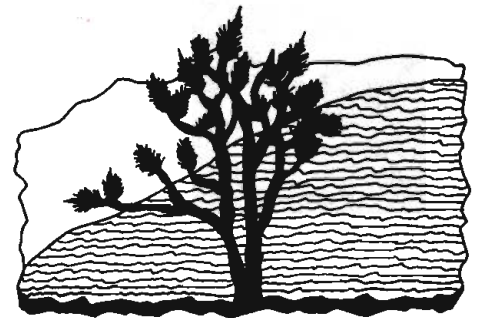
So Don once again fired up the 'ol chopper to pick up the field teams. The Col. and I were first to be picked up. To help Don get an idea of wind direction and

speed we lit a smoke signal. Since these are old flares, one needs to hit them on a rock to get them going. Unbeknownst to me, sparks shot out along with the smoke and set some grass under the rock on fire.

So here we are guiding Don in, when we notice the smoke is working too well. Don about fell out of his helicopter with hysterical laughter as he fanned the flames with his blades. Col. Klutz and I somehow managed to put out the blaze despite Don's help.

(ED. NOTE: For this outstanding act Major Disaster was given RMRU's highest award for a distinguishing act in the field, THE GREEN WEENIE! Congratulations Major).

So as the sun began to set, we gathered at the local greasy spoon for our traditional post mission meal and all agreed that the NINJAS had sucked us in again. • RMRU



### SEARCH

Mission No. 8427M

18-21 Oct., Thurs.-Sun.  
Indian Cove Camp,  
Joshua Tree National Monument

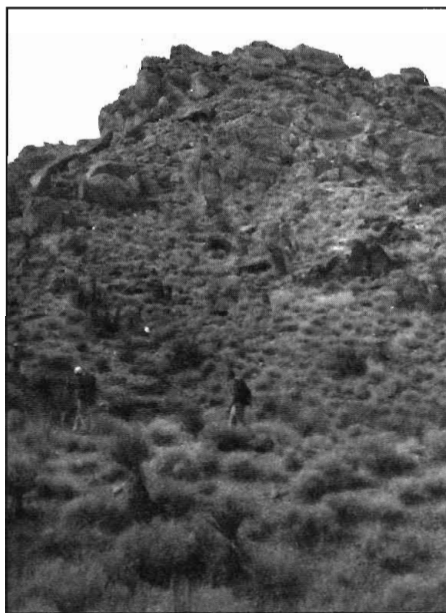
By Kevin Walker



This article is particularly hard for me as I have a two year old daughter. I will be brief, as going into detail would not change the outcome. It was early evening when the call came. I was working late on a very important job. The call was for a missing three year old girl. That hit home. Normally I would have had to say no because of the work I was in the middle of, but not when it came to a little girl.

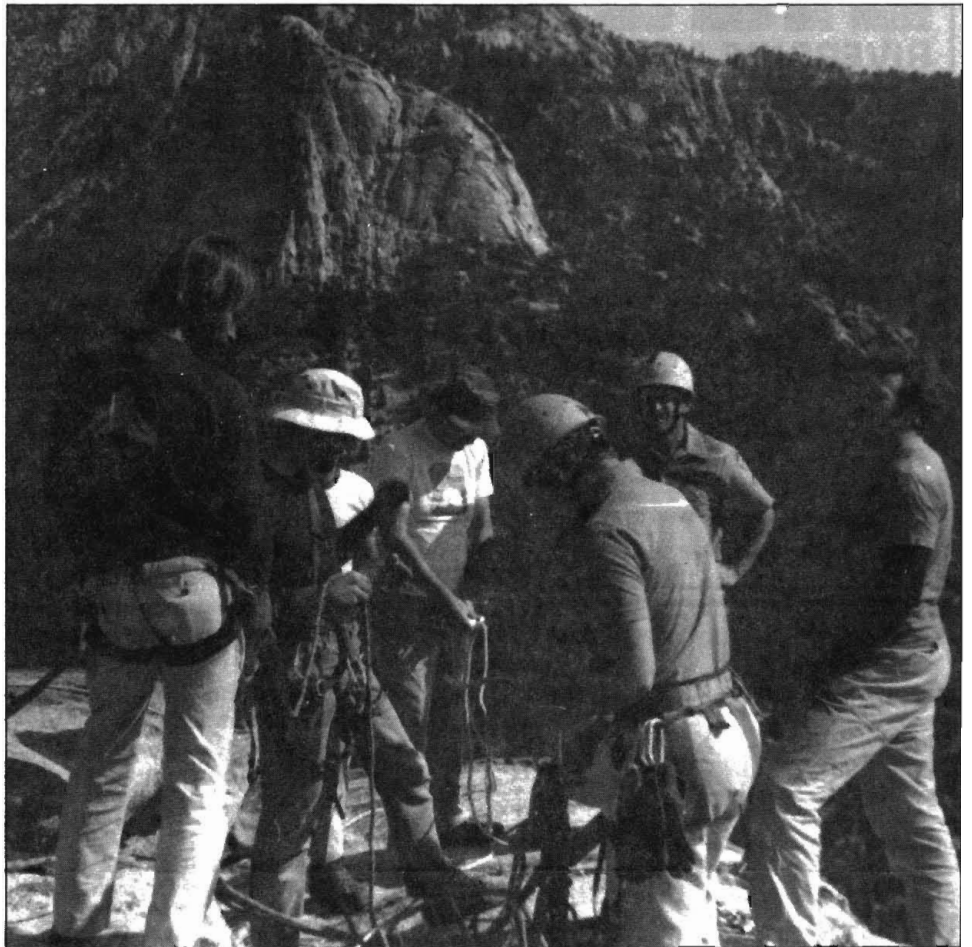
We responded to the Indian Cove ranger station where we found ranger Tom Patterson in charge of the search operation along with the San Bernardino County Sheriff. After information was gathered, RMRU along with Sierra Madre were put into the field. We searched through the entire night only finding a few tracks that looked like that of the description of little Laura Bradbury. Friday morning came and still nothing. As the day went on more and more teams arrived. Everyone worked through the day and into the cold evening. As some slept, others worked in the night. This went on through Sunday night.

I don't know what else to say. We tried, Sierra Madre, China Lake, San Diego, Altadena, San Dimas, Malibu, Inyo, Montrose, Silmar, Los Padres, and even as far away as the Bay Area Mountain Rescue Unit tried. Over 100 MRA personnel and that plus more from all of the San Bernardino groups, and all of the National Monument personnel. Men and women working side by side trying to find a beautiful little three year old. To the family of little Laura our thoughts are with you as you continue the search for your daughter. God be with you. • RMRU



RMRU PHOTO BY JIM FAIRCHILD

**SEARCHING** — RMRU and Sierra Madre search teams seemed dwarfed by the terrain in the search for Laura Bradbury, at Joshua Tree National Monument.



RMRU PHOTO BY JIM FAIRCHILD

**ON THE ROCK** — RMRU members Dave Ezell, Bill Blaschko, Rob Gardner (hidden), Walt Walker, Kevin Walker, Ray Hussey and Mark Rhoads practice preparing the litter for a horizontal lower over the edge of Suicide Rock.

# TRAINING

## Technical

**6-7 Oct., Sat.-Sun.  
Suicide Rock,  
San Jacinto Mountains**

*By Cameron Robbins*



About twelve of us met bright and early Saturday at Norm and Maggie Mellor's cabin in Idyllwild. Because of bad weather in July, technical training had been postponed until October.

Gear was off loaded from the vans and the gang loaded packs already too heavy with items needed to spend the

night out. But we still managed, and were soon hiking up towards Suicide Rock. Because it was fall conditions the rock would not be crowded with climbers. When we reached the rock the group was split into two groups. Each group set up systems for lowering and raising. Even though we were at the base of the rock it was good practice to just set up the systems. After that was completed we hiked up to the top and had an enjoyable lunch in the sunshine. In the afternoon we set up to rescue mock-injured member Randy Iwasuik. Bill Blaschko was put in charge, and quickly made assignments for setting up anchors, rigging the litter, edge roller placements, lowering rigging, and a mechanical advantage. Kevin was sent over to retrieve Randy along with the help of Joe. Enough time was left to do one more raise before evening came to the mountains. All present had good meals and conversation about new and old times abound. Sunday was spent doing more of the same, and all too soon the time came to pack up and start back to Norm's. In all a very good weekend of technical practice. • RMRU