

Volume XXV, Issue II, February 1989

## SEARCH & RESCUE

### SEARCH

**Mission No. 8904M**

**20 Feb., Mon.  
Corona hills**

RMRU was called very early on Monday morning for a search for an overdue airplane, with ten people on board.

Members met at Corona fire station to learn that the Cessna 410 had left Las Vegas Sunday morning in poor weather with a destination of John Wayne Airport in Orange County. The nine family members and pilot had planned an outing at Disneyland. A search was initiated when they did not reach their destination.

The hills and canyons that made up the search area to the south of Corona are extremely steep, brushy and rugged. It was felt that a helicopter was needed and Dorcey Wingo arrived from Hiser Helicopters in Corona in a Hughes 500. The weather had been heavy fog earlier, and now at first light was starting to break up. As we briefed Dorcey, and waited for the weather to clear, we were amazed to hear over the radio that the plane had been spotted by a news helicopter, crashed into the side of a very steep hillside with definitely no survivors.

Because of the ruggedness of the area, RMRU was used to take charge of the crash site — to oversee all helicopter and technical operations, and to help the coroner remove the bodies. RMRU members and essential gear was transported to the scene amid the hazards of remnants of fog and the buzzing of news helicopters.

Once the FAA and NTSB investigators had finished their initial investigation, RMRU members helped the coroner with the truly dreadful task of locating and removing the five children, their parents, their aunt and uncle and the pilot from the wreckage. The body bags were then sling-loaded out by Dorcey, and then all team members and other personnel were flown out.

The mission was completed about four o'clock in the afternoon, and everyone headed for home. • RMRU

### CALL

**Mission No. 8905C**

**26 Feb., Sun.  
Mission Creek**

The RMRU was called to a mission in Mission Creek, but was cancelled. • RMRU

### CALL

**Mission No. 8906C**

**26 Feb., Sun.  
Thomas Mountain**

The RMRU was called to a mission on Thomas Mountain, but was cancelled.

• RMRU

The entire group headed up the trail, as well as we could follow it in the snow, until around 12:30 P.M. when the snow started to get deep and soft enough to require the use of snowshoes. Since Pat had none and Joe had to be back home by that evening, the two decided to head back while the rest of us continued off trail straight up the South Fork drainage and arrived at South Fork Meadows by 4:30 P.M. At that point, it was snowing moderately with wind gusts between 30 and 40 MPH, so the first good sites we ran on to became that evenings camp. There we sat in our tents weathering the wind and snow which the next day we found to have been in excess of 60-70 MPH.

At 8:00 A.M. Sunday, the storm had begun to break and after breakfast, we ventured up to just north of Dry Lake where Alan had us trench in the snow and demonstrated the technique used to determine the safety of various snow packs in avalanche prone areas. The snow was too fresh and soft for any worthwhile ice axe work, yet we did simulate technique.

After heading back to camp and packing up, we all made our way down the drainage with good speed except for the problem Greg had with one of the snowshoes purchased from Bud White. The entire toe piece disconnected and thanks to J.R.'s foresight to bring a roll of strapping tape, we got the boot strapped in well enough to get back to the cars by about 1:30 P.M. Sunday afternoon. That was that pair of snowshoes last trip! • RMRU

## TRAINING

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**Snow & Ice**

**3-5 Feb., Fri.-Sun.  
Little Draw,  
Mt. San Geronio**

*By Greg Sullivan*

Friday evening Alan Ewert, Bill Blaschko and Victor Caro hiked in to the bottom of Little Draw just above the end of Poop-out Hill Road and camped for the night. Pat Tillman came in late Friday night and camped about half way up Poop-out Hill Road. It snowed lightly that night but a real storm was due in Saturday afternoon. Joe Erickson, J.R. Muretet and Greg Sullivan met at the parking spot early Saturday morning and met up with Pat and the rest of the group by 8:30 A.M. About then it had begun to snow at a steady pace but still lightly.