

Volume XXV, Issue I, January 1989

SEARCH & RESCUE

CALL

Mission No. 8901C

3 Jan., Tues.
Palm Canyon,
San Jacinto Mountains

The RMRU was called for a mission in Palm Canyon, south of Palm Springs, but the mission was cancelled. • RMRU

CALL

Mission No. 8902C

4 Jan., Wed.
Mammoth,
Sierra Nevada Mountains

The RMRU was called for a mission in the Mammoth area, Sierra Nevada Mountains, but the mission was cancelled. • RMRU

RESCUE

Mission No. 8903M

22-23 Jan., Sun.-Mon.
North Mountain,
Near San Jacinto

The RMRU was called for the rescue of two stranded hikers on North Mountain, north of the town of San Jacinto. On Sunday afternoon 4 people drove to the top of North Mountain. The three women in the group decided to hike to the bottom. Midway, two of the women became stranded on a ledge, while the third woman was able to complete her hike to the bottom. Here she met up with the fourth person in the party, and they called the Sheriff's Department.

Team members from RMRU were able to locate the two stranded women, and when they reached them on the ledge, they were found to be in good enough condition to continue their hike, with help. Everyone in the party reached the bottom of the mountain at about 7 am Monday morning. • RMRU

TRAINING

TRAINING

Winter Shakedown

7-8 Jan., Sat.-Sun.
Shangri-La area,
Mt. San Jacinto

By *Dona Halcrow*

As my alarm went off at 4:00 am on a very cold January morning, it occurred to me that maybe I should be doubting by own sanity. But then I decided that I wasn't crazy — just a normal rescue team member.

Winter shakedown is the training where we are usually in the first real cold and snow of the year. This is a chance to check out our equipment, to try out new, and repair or replace old. Everyone gets their first taste of winter camping for the season.

At 6:30 in the morning we were starting down the sidewalk from the upper station of the Palm Springs Aerial Tramway, to Long Valley. Some members had gone up the tramway the night before and would meet us in Shangri-La. With a very heavy pack (for me), we hadn't gone very far before the first casualty — a broken strap

on my snowshoes. Bending over to fix it, with frozen fingers, and trying not to tip over with the pack on was quite a trick. A minor and temporary fix and we were on our way again.

In the course of a mile and a half walk my troublesome snowshoes stopped me at least two more times, but we finally arrived at Shangri-La. As we started setting up camp, a light snowstorm started to blow in, and a light wind chilled things off considerably. After camp was set up, some of us snowshoed to Mt. San Jacinto, some just in the local area of the camp, and some members started to build a snow cave.

The temperature continued to fall, although the snow let up. We all retired to our tents to change into dry clothing, and to try out the joys of cooking in a tent (don't anyone move!). We then settled in for a very cold night.

Since I really didn't have heavy enough clothing for this kind of cold, I was really uncomfortable, and got very little sleep that night. The next morning was sunny, and as soon as the sun hit the tents, it started to warm up. We later heard from the tramway personnel that their thermometers at the tram had registered a low of 14° during the night.

A good training, with a reminder that although we usually don't get those low temperatures, it's still very possible — especially in storm conditions, and it's best to be prepared. • RMRU



RMRU PHOTO BY DONA HALCROW

SNOW CAVE — From left to right, RMRU members Greg Sullivan, Alan Ewert, Joe Erickson, Bill Blaschko and Victor Caro construct a shelter for a very chilly night.