



# RMRU

## Fresh Tracks

August/September 2003

The Newsletter of Riverside Mountain Rescue Unit



Memories-Snow survey for Idyllwild Water Districts.



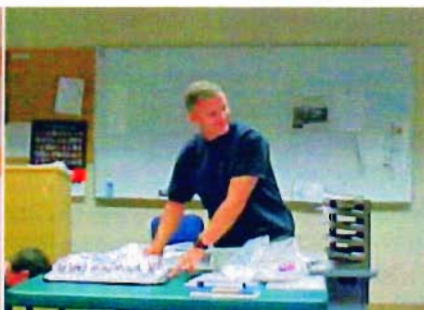
▲ Pancake pictures by Rick Maschek. Folks enjoying breakfast and support from Sheriff's ▼ office. Members cooking and enjoying breakfast prior to serving supporters for RMRU.



▲ Kudos to our President. We see presidents receiving or giving awards [see below] but many times they are the first to arrive and the last to leave. Above Kirk was helping with the clean up at the MRA conference by mopping the mess hall floor. It isn't all glory !!!



President Kirk Cloyd presents both **Will Carlson** and **Gene Baune** with their Respective MRA Patches



Welcome back from Iraq cake cut by Gene Baune. He was overseas 3 mos.



4th of July Parade held in Idyllwild with (A) Wheel Litter (B) Sheriffs Black and White and (C) the White Rescue Truck

## **Mission #08 4/11/2003 By: William Carlson** ***When Everything Right...Goes Wrong***



As usual I was out in the middle of nowhere at least one hour from my rescue gear when I got the call. I quickly told my friend that we had to start hiking back from our climbing trip. About one hour later I got to my house and put together all of my gear and threw it into the car.

Three hours after I received the call I arrived at the Black Mountain Trail Head and started asking what was going on. Jim Fairchild briefed me and said we had a horseback rider lost up in the high country. If what the man was telling us over the cell phone was right he was probably right at the trail junction of Marion Mountain Trail and the Deer Springs Trail. We all got in our cars and regrouped at the Seven Pines trail head.

Around 22:30 a team of four including myself, Kirk Cloyd, Travis Henderson, and Brad Scott headed up the Seven Pines trail to search the area he was describing. We hiked at what one could consider a fast pace and gave some shouts every five minutes. At about 01:30 in the morning we began to encounter some snow and it became impossible to find the trail. Through some amount of skill and luck we managed to find a small impression in the snow that was the trail. Really it was hit and miss the rest of the way.

Around 03:30 we were all exhausted and knew we were close so we gave some more shouts and settled in for a few hours of sleep hoping to find the missing man in the morning. "Hey you guys...you need to get up and find him." That is what we woke up to at 07:00 and if any of you know, Glenn's voice is not the best thing to wake up to in the morning. We ate a few little snacks and began searching again. We wandered around for a few minutes and found what we thought was the trail. While Kirk, Travis, and Brad looked at a map I took a quick run up to a high point and gave a yell. To our amazement we got a response.

"Over here" is what we heard. Kirk yelled back and told the man to stay where you are we will come to you. I radioed to base and regrouped with the rest of the team and we headed up to where we heard the voice. After about five minutes we were to him and asked him how he was. He was ok but he wasn't sure about his horses. After a few minutes we were to his horses and we sat down and discussed what the plan was going to be.

We decided that we would hike the man and his horses out. We heated water for the horses and gave them food. Soon after Glen and Rick arrived and helped us get food and water to the horses. The horseman's name was Gary and he was glad to see us. He told us all about what had happened and how he ended up where he was. From everything we heard from Gary he had done everything right. He stayed put and didn't move around. He kept himself safe, and in the end we actually found him on the trail. It just goes to show that even when you do everything right things can still go wrong.

After we ate breakfast we began the hike back down the Deer Springs Trail. It was a great hike and the horses made good company. They like to follow the leader so no matter how fast I hiked they were right there nipping at my heels. Eventually we reached the parking lot and all regrouped and discussed the mission over lunch at La Casitas in Idyllwild. Another success for the record books! Members present: Glen Henderson, Travis Henderson, Brad Scott, Kirk Cloyd, Rick Mascheck, Terry Greenstein, Jim Fairchild and William Carlson.

## **Mission 09 04/25-26/2003 By Jeri Sanchez**



The fact that Marvin Matsumoto was found alive is quite an amazing story.

Riverside Mountain Rescue Team members were called to Joshua Tree National Park to assist in the search for Marvin Matsumoto. On Monday April 22, 2003 Marvin was reported missing. On Wed. night April 24th, RMRU was called to help the National Park Service and San Bernardino Rescue teams. Thursday we searched most of the day and early evening. No sign. On Friday things were looking grim. The Park Service and San Bernardino Sheriff Dept. organized the search and gave us, Will Carlson, Kirk Cloyd, and (me) Jeri Sanchez, our assignment. We had been searching all morning with a search dog team and returned to base camp around 10:30 AM. We were ready for our next assignment.

William was very interested in getting our team WAY out there, which made me run through reasons I shouldn't go with 2 young mountain climbers. We were sent to an area that was going to be difficult to get to. Will Carlson is an 18-year-old High school student from Arrowhead, who ditched school to be at the search. Will has 6 years experience rock climbing and was our self-appointed team leader.

We were lucky enough to travel across the designated heliport, William was determined we needed a helicopter ride; he went to ask about getting us to our location. There were no helicopters available. We started on our way. However, within 2 minutes a helicopter flew in, and it was the Riverside County Sheriff Helicopter. The same team we trained with 3 weeks

ago. Now why did I lighten my pack and take out my helicopter equipment, stupid me. They took pity on us and loaded us into their helicopter and were nice enough to lend me a helmet. The terrain would not allow the pilot to drop us very close to our search area so he put us in about a mile from where we were to begin our search. Kirk and I got out our GPS systems, now, where was that "ON" button. I bragged about how I won the SAR City GPS contest a few years back, as I was trying to remember how to plot the "goto" coordinates, hmmmmmm??. My mind questioned, when was the last time I used this thing? **[NOTE: SEE ARTICLE ON UTM LATER IN THIS ISSUE]** .

We all agreed where we needed to get to and inputted the numbers; however, we ended up about 1/4 mile north of where we wanted to be. How could that be? I couldn't recheck my GPS because it had taken a header out of my chest pack and bounced off a boulder, ouch! Taking another look at the map and Kirk's remaining GPS, we reevaluated our location and plotted a plan to get to our search area. I was trying to find a flat route, (not likely) Will decided we needed to go up this steep drainage, oh goody. "Spiderman", Will, was at the lead as I continually questioned whether this route was logical because there was no way that a 60-year-old man would be climbing in this difficult terrain. (which later turned out to be true, he was crawling not climbing). We climbed through boulder crevasses on our hands and knees; we lifted and pulled each other through high and steep areas (well, OK, Kirk and Will mainly were helping me). Our goal was to get to the top where we were going to start our search. I secretly hoped, OK ....I was complaining a lot, that it would flatten out after we got to the top. As we were near the top, I made another comment (there were many) about how there is no way a 60-year-old with no previous climbing experience would be in this area.

After saying that, I, without much force, called out Marvin's name. And that's when we heard Marvin call back, Kirk and I, in shock, stood staring at each other, for a few seconds, our thoughts racing, was that another searcher playing a trick on us??. Kirk called out again, and Marvin responded. Will yelled out, "we got him!!" My thought was, "that is Marvin" and he was within 30 feet of us. We all hit a new adrenaline high and scrambled over huge boulders to get around to where we could see him. He was lying on his side down at the bottom of a 12-foot drop. I was able to slide down one side and jump into the hole, while "Spiderman", jumping boulders at a single bound went up to try and make radio contact. I sat with Marvin at the bottom of that hole assessing his injuries and being totally amazed that we found him. He was ALIVE!! And he was able to talk with me. After a few sips of water he asked about his son. I reassured him that his family was fine and waiting for him. We provided first aid until a helicopter brought more medical supplies. Marvin was very cold and dehydrated (5 days with no water will do that to you). We put our jackets over him, started an IV to get fluids going in, and splinted his badly bruised and injured ankle. He had a head injury and was scraped up pretty bad, but overall, I told Marvin he looked really good, and he was a lucky man.

Only 2 rescue workers would fit in the hole with Marvin and the next challenge was getting him up to a point where the helicopter could lift him. San Bernardino Sheriff Paramedic "Tim" from the rescue helicopter and I worked on getting Marvin into a scoop device he would lay on before we could place him into the litter. Kirk and Will had set up a pulley system. We had asked for more technical rescue support. It was going to be difficult for them to get there in a timely manner, and we sure weren't waiting around for them. We packaged Marvin. That was the first time I had to splint an ankle while laying on my stomach, working with only a few inches of clearance, trying not to tangle the duck tape or get sand all over it. (Remind me to test for that on the next emergency responder course.)

We had to move Marvin through a hole to get him turned around so we could lift him up vertically. But when it came time to lift him, Marvin's medical condition deteriorated rapidly. The color of his skin turned ashen gray, and his body was getting limp, he could no longer respond to verbal commands to open his eyes. We were having difficulty getting the metal litter over the granite wall; it was sticking on a lip. Kirk and Will pulled and Tim and I pushed. The thing was stuck, and Marvin did not look good. Tim wanted me to get up on top and help them pull, as I tried to find a way to get back up I wondered, "How the heck did I get down here?? Luckily, the TV news cut off before showing the world I couldn't get up there. Will and Kirk were able to overcome the difficulty and Marvin popped up to the surface. Marvin's condition improved when Will took the bottom of the litter and held it up to improve blood flow to Marvin's vital organs. Then we made sure Marvin was secure for his helicopter ride and off they went to Desert hospital.

WOW. We stood on that granite rock in total amazement watching the helicopter fly off. We made a big group hug, shook hands and patted each other on the back. Then it was silent. The buzz of the helicopters was gone, we were out of radio contact, and we were faced with the fact that we still had to hike ALL the way out of here!!.

Spiderman went up to check out the possibility of going up and over the boulders. Kirk and I sat back and wondered why we weren't in better shape. All the time hoping we didn't have to climb up any more boulders. Luckily, Will determined that

"up" did not look good, we were going out the same way we came in, oh goody. Going down meant we would have a longer walk out, but easier than climbing. And after all, Will had to conserve energy he had a 24-hour bike race the next day. We walked, crawled, shimmed and jumped down to get off that wonderland of rocks. I was glad to see a nice flat trail even though it was sand and 50,000 miles out of our way.

We made it out to the Boy Scout trail and walked along in disbelief at Marvin's amazing luck and ours as we watched a picturesque sunset. We recounted the chain of events that led us to Marvin: an unexpected helicopter ride to an area still a mile away from our search area, one wrong number inputted into a GPS taking us about 1/4 mile north of where we were suppose to be. Then tracking up a steep boulder filled wash to even get into our search area. Talking about how there was no way a 60-year old man would be in this area, then calling out his name with no expectation. (Remember that when you're searching in the wrong place.) We will never forget those few seconds of disbelief and shock when he answered back.

We were able to visit Marvin in the hospital a week after the rescue, and he is recovering well. His body temperature was 86 degrees on admission, he was severely dehydrated and he had sustained a fractured right ankle and a compression fracture in his lumbar spine. He was in kidney failure, which was reversed fairly quickly. His doctor said it was a miracle he survived.

William took a group out to the area where Marvin was found and they backtracked and were able to follow Marvin's footprints (backwards). Marvin had fallen into a cave system under the huge boulders, there were drag marks where he crawled along in the dark. There were pools of standing water within a few feet of where he passed, but because of his head injury, he never saw them or doesn't remember. His first question to us was "How far off the trail was I??" Will told him "about 100 ft". The miracle was both finding him alive and finding him at all. I think I'll have my helmet with me next time, you just never know when you be flyin high!

**Mission #10      05/04/2003    By Gwenda Yates**



At 17:00 we were called out by the Sheriffs Department to find an overdue hiker in the Humber Park area. Glenn Henderson was the operations leader. He and Debbiy Riegle were driving to the Humber Park, while Dana Potts and Rick Maschek were heading to the Palm Springs Tram to begin the search from that side. Darrell Bell and Phil Thompson were going to run base camp when they arrived at Humber Park. The subject walked out as Debbiy, Darrell, and Phil arrived on scene. An abort page was sent to all who were in route. RMRU Members Present: Darrell Bell, William Carlson, Jim Fairchild, Glenn Henderson, Angie James, Rick Maschek, Dana Potts, Debbiy Riegle, Phil Thompson.

**Mission # 11      05/10/03 Dr-03130028    By Phil Thompson**



About 13:30 a climber came into Idyllwild fire station to report a climbing accident had happened on suicide rock. Because of the location (about 15 minutes from the road) Idyllwild fire dispatched units to the location and at the same time called out RMRU.

RMRU sent a member to the Fire Station to get more information about what may be needed for the rescue. When the RMRU member got to the fire station a miscommunication happened when the RMRU member was told that one climber had suffered a broken ankle and that Idyllwild Fire had the situation handled. At about 15:30 RMRU received another call for assistance and was told they had a second climber with a broken leg. RMRU was called out. Ralph Hoetger and I got to the site at about 15:45. As I found that one subject with a compound fracture of the leg had all ready been taken out and the second subject was in a litter being brought out I canceled our RMRU people that where in route to the location. It should be noted that the climbers where very experienced and after taken the fall on the rock where both climbers suffered broken legs (one was a compound fracture) they where able to self rescue themselves to the base of the rock hundreds of feet below. RMRU Members Present: Kirk Cloyd, Glenn Henderson, Travis Henderson, Rick Maschek, Dana Potts, Bruce Sanny, Brad Scott, Phil Thompson and Dave Webb.

**mission #12      05/27/2003    By Glenn Henderson**



The pager went off at 23:00 on Saturday night May 24th. The call was for an 11 year old Boy Scout, Scott Brown, with an acute asthma attack. His troop was camped at Fisherman's camp in the Tanaja Falls area of the Cleveland National Forest. When we arrived at the trailhead we found many California Department of Forestry fire trucks, forestry trucks, and a waiting ambulance. We were told that about 12 CDF firefighters were hiking in and we were to assist them in the carry out if possible. Team members Dana Potts, Travis Henderson, Kirk Cloyd, Deano Esades, and myself loaded up our packs and started down the trail with our wheeled litter. Jim Fairchild, Darrell Bell and FNG Gwenda Yates covered base camp. Since there were so many SAR personnel in the field the decision was made to turn Rick Maschek around since he was driving in from Victorville. We reached Fisherman's camp at 03:00 and found that the CDF personnel had just left and had headed out a shorter trail to the road. We could see them above us on the ridge- line. We caught up to them and found that they had a litter but no wheel so we took our wheel and attached it to their litter and started hiking out again. Every one took turns helping with the litter so the hike out was not too bad. We arrived at the road at 05:30 where we met the ambulance; fire trucks, Darrell Bell and team member Will Carlson to take us back to the original trail head. After putting our gear away everyone decided they were too tired to go to breakfast so we all went home to get some sleep and wait for the next call out. Everyone except Deano who had to be on duty at 07:00 with the Pachanga Fire Department. Sorry Deano.

**Mission #13      06/26/2003      Urban search for young man [9 yr old]      missing over night for Hemet PD.**  
**Aborted.**

**Mission #14      06/29/2003      By Travis Henderson**



We got the call for an injured climber on Tahquitz Rock. Debbiy Riegle was the first to arrive on scene and I arrived shortly after. When we got to Humber Park we found out that the fire department had already gotten to the victim. Other climbers had already gotten the subject down and splinted his badly broken leg and the fire department had packaged him into the litter. The fire fighters were calling on the Sheriff's helicopter to winch the climber out in the litter but the pilot said they would not do a winch operation without RMRU on scene to make sure the patient was safe and secure.

So Debbiy and I set out on the climber's trail heading up to the base of Tahquitz Rock. When we arrived we heard on the radio that several other RMRU members had arrived. We told them to stay behind to bring up gear in the event we couldn't use the helicopter and had to haul the patient out. Fortunately Debbiy recognized that, though he was in a lot of pain, the patient could stand with couple of shoulders to lean on. This was important since he could then be winched out using his climbing harness instead of the litter. The patient may not have realized it but this was a far better means of evacuating him since he would be able to get into the helicopter. When a victim is lifted up in the litter there is no way to get them inside the helicopter and they have to hang outside in the litter during the entire windy, loud flight. So by using the climber's own harness it was possible for him to be brought inside the helicopter and buckled in.

After the helicopter had left with the patient securely inside we gave each other the usual high fives then returned the litter back to its normal place at the bottom of Tahquitz Rock to be used for the next climbing accident. Then we headed back down the trail to Humber Park. But the day wouldn't end until we were all eating lunch at our favorite post-mission restaurant, La Casita.

**Mission #15      07/02/2003      SR 243 & Black Mt. Woman suffering heat exhaustion. Aborted.**

**Mission #16      07/09/2003      By Glenn Henderson**



On Wednesday, July 9, 09:30 we received a call that a 14 year old girl was missing in the hills south of Hemet. This is about 5 minutes from my house so I was the first on scene to gather more information. Deputies on scene said that the girl was depressed, had left a suicide note, taken a few of her books, a Samurai sword, and was suspected to be in the hills south of her home in Hemet. Her family reported that she liked to hike there to be alone and to draw. As other members arrived we started searching the trails into the hills. It was extremely hot, 105°, with no shade anywhere except where large rocks created caves of shade. There is not a lot of places or caves to be able to get out of the sun so we quickly tried to check anywhere that might afford cover. The area is quite large so the Sheriff's helicopter and a fixed wing started searching also. The Sheriff's off road unit with their Quad motorcycle also helped us. Due to the heat we

called all field teams in at noon to rehydrate and eat some lunch. At 12:30 deputies told us that the subjects younger brother knew of some caves that his sister liked to frequent when she went into the hills. With that information I had him lead Angie James and myself to these caves.

Unfortunately they were caves that we had spotted and checked earlier in the day. As we were returning to base the call came for all field teams to return to base. Sheriff detectives had developed more information leading them to believe that she may be a runaway. The search was called off at 15:00. Members on scene were Travis Henderson, Angie James, Rick Maschek, Terry Greenstein, Jim Fairchild, Will Carlson, Darrell Bell, and Phil Thompson.

**Mission #17**      **07/13/2003**      3 over due Mountain bikers on      Coyote Canyon Road. Aborted.

**Mission #18**      **08/11/2003**      By Dave Webb



Monday Aug. 11 2003 a little after 10:00 p.m. the page went out to report to the Palm Spring's Aerial Tramway. After making a quick call into work I checked with my wife then called in that I was on my way. I got to the base of the tram about 2315 to find that Jim Fairchild was already on the scene soon Darrell Bell, Eugene Baune, and Glenn Henderson joined us. It wasn't long before we realized that this maybe all the help that was coming. This mission would have to be done with a team of five. The information we got from the mission briefing was that two 38 yr. Old male left the upper tram earlier that afternoon for a 3 mile hike, no food, no water, no map or compass. They had a cell phone and used it to call for help. Their last known position was at Caramba Overlook, six and a half miles away.

By now it was coming up on midnight and we decided to grab the tram and head to the top. Once we got there we were able to regain contact with the subjects instructing them to stay put, to turn on and off their cell phone when we told them to so as to save their battery. The only real problem we had was that we couldn't get clear information out of these guy's on what direction they might have headed once they left Caramba. We knew it would take several hours' to get to them, so we told them to relax and we were on our way. At this point it was 0030 and we decided to hit the trail. Gene and myself would go in as team 1, while Glenn would follow in behind and perch himself high on a nearby ridge and spend the night acting as a human relay station while Darrell and Jim would handle base of operations. Gene did a fantastic job the entire mission working his G.P.S. and it wasn't long that we were on the trail he was able to report that we were making 2.7 miles an hour, not the greatest speed but it was good steady progress. At 0300 we made it to Caramba Overlook only to continue being frustrated by not being able to get a clear understanding on which way to go from here. We knew they didn't go east down the canyon, or go west up the canyon. The question of the hour was did they go north or south? We headed north up toward a ridge but stopped about two-thirds the way up after again getting confusing reports on which way they went after leaving Caramba. We were now getting the impression that they might have gone south. (Later we would find that they had indeed gone north.) We descended back to Caramba it was now 0430 and we were beat, we radioed in that we would make a bivi for the night and asked for a 0600 wake up call.

At 06:00 sharp the radio came to life, team one this as RMRU base do you copy? The hunt was on again. After regaining contact with the subjects we found that at first light they had continued moving, not good! Gene called in to request the help of the R.C.S.D Aviation Unit then we gathered our gear and headed south up toward the landing zone known as Caramba South. We made it to the south ridge and headed west staying on the ridge to the point we could look down on Law's Camp blowing whistles and yelling the whole way but to no avail. We started to realize that they were nowhere near and had to have gone north of Caramba. It was now about 0915 and Star 92 was on the scene but we had a problem we could hear them but they couldn't hear us. We worked our way back to Caramba South where Star 92 made visual contact with us circled around then landed. A deputy got out and gave us one of their radios so that we could now communicate and we were going to play a big game of hot and cold. Then we ran into the next problem, Gene couldn't get a signal on his cell phone so that we could talk directly with the subjects and Star 92. So we had base call the subjects then radio that information to Gene who was standing right by me and then I could almost instantly radio that information to Star. Once they were in the air again we instructed them to head north and in less than 10 minutes the pilot radioed, we have visual contact. Everyone was thrilled but the job was only half complete the search was over but the rescue now had to begin. We waited patiently to see what would happen next, and then came the word. The subject's were in an area that Star 92 couldn't safely land so they were on their way back to the L.Z. to pick up one Unit member, we would have to do a hoist extraction. Gene and I looked at each other and there really wasn't much said, even thou Gene had just recently gotten back from Afghanistan and had lots of experience in helicopters I had the most resent training with the aviation unit in performing this type of rescue. Soon Star 92 was back on the ground at Caramba South and we got our game plan down. They would drop me down with a full body harness, access the situation, suit one person up and get them into the helicopter. They would then fly them to the P.S.A.T. parking lot, return and do it again. It went like clock work before long

on a remote part of the mountain signing, "We are the champions". But the moment was short lived soon Star 92 was again over head and lowering the steel cable on last time for me.

After refueling at the Palm Springs International Airport they flew me back to the tramway parking lot then took off once again to go get my buddy Gene. About 1100 Tuesday morning Gene was back, some 13 hrs. after it had started, it was over. The subjects were embarrassed but really glad to be out. While everyone else headed to the Sizzler in Banning to eat and celebrate, I was exhausted after along laborious and tedious night followed by a few hours of pure adrenaline I just wanted to go home and sleep. Which I did for the next 14 hrs. , It was over.



#### **A MAY TRAINING DAY by Jim Fairchild**

At our membership meeting May 7th. six of us signed-up for the loop hike announced by the. training committee -- a fine opportunity to walk around on the west and south sides of Mt. San Jacinto.

Saturday morning. May 10th. temperature about 29 deg. F. I left Humber Park and walked down the pavement to the Climber's Trail that ascends to the base of Suicide rock. Ninety minutes earlier than the rest of the group was scheduled to arrive gave me a chance to reach Suicide Rook (no suicide planned) and climb around its base to the notch and trail to the north without unduly delaying others. Turns out the "others" were Pete Carlson, long—time RMRU member and friend. We made voice contact and continued the walk, realizing our teammates had other plans.

Clear sky, calm air; perfect biking temperature, beautiful views, water in streams, continuous conversation - the joy of hiking at its best. We both were quite pleased to re-familiarize with trails and terrain not recently frequented.

The tortoise and the hare re-supplied with water at Marion creek stream, then walked down to the junction of the Deer Springs Trail and Suicide Rock Trail. Now began the nearly two miles and two thousand feet of elevation gain to the Strawberry Cienega Trail. Along the way are huge manzanita shrubs and magnificent pines, along with varying looks at Tahquitz Rook and Peak to the southeast. I remembered but failed to mention to Pete the large pine tree where we found three young children one winter long ago.

At last, the junction we walked over to the area where there's a campsite and ate some lunch. We were now meeting hikers, most of them P.T.C.zers (I call them) hiking from Mexico to Canada. They are always very interesting as they share their experiences. Most of them have just been to Nomad Ventures mountain shop in Idyllwild to replace gear that is too heavy or non-fitting.

Our trail, from the junction to Strawberry Cienega and thence to the Wellman's Divide Trail, skirts the south slope of Marion Mountain. We were delighted to find flowing water at the Cienega and re-filled canteens. I drank a quart without treating, and so far have not been treated to any malady.

The Wellman's Divide Trail for about a half-mile was snow-covered. Surprisingly our footing was more slippery than I've ever encountered even after three-quarters of a century of slogging about on snow (not all the time, of course). Finally, we emerged onto southern exposure of the Angel's Glide portion of our route and enjoyed the descent to Saddle Junction at about 8100 foot elevation. Now, only two-and-one-half miles of descent remained - still scenic-- still a very enjoyable walk.

During our time together on the mountain Pete and I almost constantly re-lived and re-counted the many missions we had participated in everywhere we gazed. Further, we look forward very eagerly to the next one.

## Report of the MRA Conference held in Idyllwild



The Mountain Rescue Associations spring conference/meeting was hosted by RMRU June 13-15 this year. The Conference was held at Buckhorn Camp in Idyllwild. The MRA has a spring conference every year to meet, talk about new innovations or review old ones, attend classes concerning mountain rescue, and to hold the business meeting.

This year we had a new event called "Show and Tell", where teams brought some of their gear or new ideas to share with other teams. Rocky Henderson, Portland Mountain Rescue, brought a new concept on packaging systems that we are going to try to add to our own equipment. The classes ranged from strength and weaknesses of snow and ice anchors, child abduction, global positioning systems, field taping of ankles and knees, and helitac classes put on by our Riverside Sheriffs Aviation Unit.

Another new event this year was the MRA Olympics. In the individual event contestants had to jumpr up a freestanding rope, ring a bell at the top and change over to a rappel back to the bottom. Gene Yore, Seattle Mountain Rescue, won the men's event and Anna Thompson, Marin County SAR, won the women's event. They both won an Eagle Creek travel backpack. Sterling Rope who donated the contest ropes and prizes for the winning team members sponsored the team events. In this event teams were given a GPS coordinate to go to, package the patient, do a short lower and return to the starting line with their patient, all team members and all their gear. Tacoma Mountain Rescue easily won this event and backed up their trash talking before the event. GREAT WORK TACOMA! Each member of the winning team received a rope from Sterling. All teams and regions need to focus and keep Tacoma from a repeat next year!

Our guest speaker on Friday night was Jim Donini. For the past 40 years, Jim has been crisscrossing the globe in search of true adventure. With dozens of first ascents to his name – from Alaska to Patagonia to the Himalayas – Jim is a unique blend of traditional ethics and new age technical skills. He presented a slide narrative of some of his more daring and spectacular climbs. It was a truly riveting evening. RMRU would also like to thank Montrail shoes for sponsoring Jim at our conference.

I believe that everyone in attendance Saturday night would agree that the highlight of the conference was our keynote speaker, Beck Weathers, of the 1996 Mt. Everest Expedition. From the moment he began speaking, talking of how he started climbing Everest, to the terrible events of May 10, 1996, no one missed a word of his odyssey. Dr. Weathers made you feel and know what it was like to be there and to survive impossible odds. Dr. Weathers, RMRU and the MRA cannot thank you enough for your time and for letting us share your experiences and innermost feelings with us. Thank You.

All in all the conference was a great success. We want to thank those that helped our conference. The Riverside Sheriff's Department, Chief Dye, Captain Nichols, Deputy Kim Judge and the Aviation Unit. Buckhorn camp Director Tom Unwin and his staff did a great job in helping in everyway they could. We thank all of our classroom presenters for all their time and effort. Everyone raved about all the classes. Gene Yore and Gwenda Yates for their tireless effort in working with our sponsors and vendors. And last but certainly not least, RMRU and the MRA want to thank all of our vendors for without your help the conference would not have been a great success. There were so many that we have listed the vendors at the end of this report. To all, please take the time to read this lengthy list and visit these vendors whenever possible.

**Red Feather, Metolius, Eagle Creek, Sprit Creations, Black Diamond, Yates Gear, Thermo Pad, Mountain Gear, Montrail, Altrec, Camelbak, Crazy Creek, Maurice Carrie Wines Co., Acapulco Restaurants, Maglite, Richmoor, Patagonia, Columbia Sports Wear, Parana, Bison Designs, Wilderness Medical, Sterling Rope, Kahtoola, Thomas Markus, MSR / Cascade Designs, Lee And Associates, Maptech, Mountain Gear, Brunton, Pondaray, Outdoor Research, Princeton Tec, Marcus N. Rice, Sherpa Snowshoes, Kelty, Montrail, Cloudveil, Lowe Alpine, Ortovox, Kahtolla, Liberty Mountain, Blue Water Ropes, Petzl, Polartec, Frito Lay, Miller Brewing, Pepsi Cola, Dryers Ice Cream, Coke, Intercraft (frames), Arbor Wear, Dalhgren Socks, Adventure Medical, Clif Bar and Search Gear.**

## Hiking Safety Tips

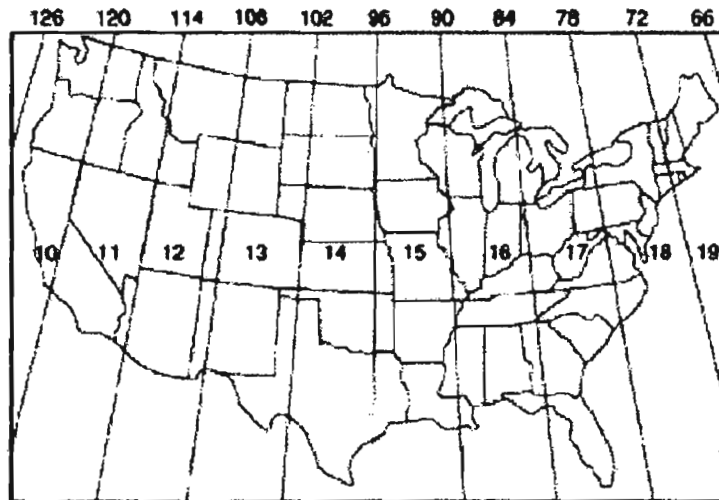
**What exactly is a Distress Beacon?" or known also as a "PLB".**

A Distress Beacon is a small electronic device that helps rescue authorities find you in a life-threatening situation. There are 3 types: 'EPIRBs' used in the marine world, 'ELTs' in the aviation world, and 'PLBs' used by bushwalkers, 4 wheel drivers and other adventurers on land. PLB's = Personal Distress Beacon.

Cell phones just won't work in many areas and PLBs provide the most reliable means for someone in trouble in the back country to call for help. You must also have some means of providing the person on the other end of the cell phone call with a location in order for it to be of value, and that's not always possible, especially for those seeking help because they are lost. Cell phones are also not waterproof, have limited battery life and are not nearly as abuse resistant as PLBs. The carriage of an emergency location beacon is strongly encouraged for use where life-threatening emergencies may occur, to pinpoint location and to indicate by activation of the beacon that an emergency exists. It is important for the users of this equipment to understand that it should only be used in a life-threatening emergency or as a last resort. The beacons are simply alerting devices used to locate positions using satellites to find the transmission source when the beacon is activated. It is not possible to transmit voice or speech on emergency location beacons.

## The Universal Transverse Mercator Grid

The National Imagery and Mapping Agency (NIMA) (formerly the Defense Mapping Agency) adopted a special grid for military use throughout the world called the Universal Transverse Mercator (UTM) grid. In this grid, the world is divided into 60 north-south zones, each covering a strip 6° wide in longitude. These zones are numbered consecutively beginning with Zone 1, between 180° and 174° west longitude, and progressing eastward to Zone 60, between 174° and 180° east longitude. Thus, the conterminous 48 States are covered by 10 zones, from Zone 10 on the west coast through Zone 19 in New England (fig. 1). In each zone, coordinates are measured north and east in meters. (One meter equals 39.37 inches, or slightly more than 1 yard.) The northing values are measured continuously from zero at the Equator, in a northerly direction. To avoid negative numbers for locations south of the Equator, NIMA's cartographers assigned the Equator an arbitrary false northing value of 10,000,000 meters. A central meridian through the middle of each 6° zone is assigned an easting value of 500,000 meters. Grid values to the west of this central meridian are less than 500,000; to the east, more than 500,000.



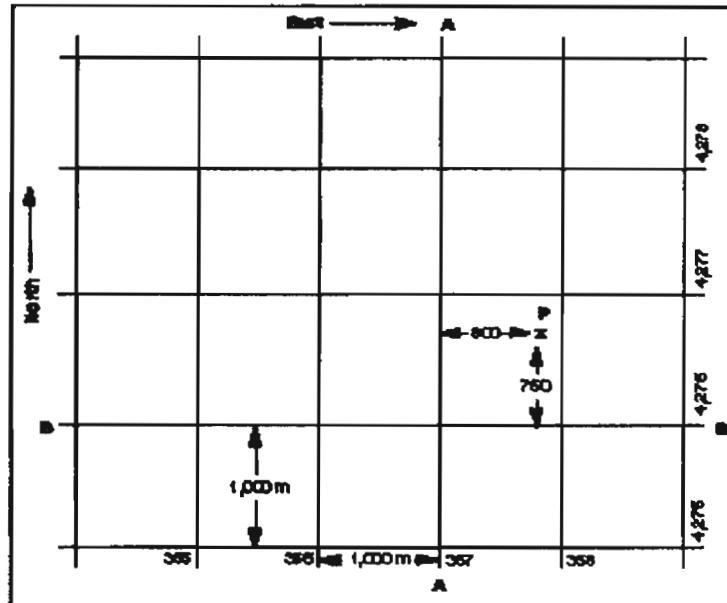
**Figure 1. The Universal Transverse Mercator grid that covers the conterminous 48 United States comprises 10 zones—from Zone 10 on the west coast through Zone 19 in New England.**

Note: Hikers should know and use UTM on their personal "GPS" units.

Virtually all NIMA-produced topographic maps and many aeronautical charts show the UTM grid lines.

## Determining a UTM Grid Value for a Map Point

The UTM grid is shown on all quadrangle maps prepared by the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS). On 7.5-minute quadrangle maps (1:24,000 and 1:25,000 scale) and 15-minute quadrangle maps (1:50,000, 1:62,500, and standard-edition 1:63,360 scales), the UTM grid lines are indicated at intervals of 1,000 meters, either by blue ticks in the margins of the map or with full grid lines. The 1,000-meter value of the ticks is shown for every tick or grid line. In addition, the actual meter value is shown for ticks nearest the southeast and northwest corners of the map. Provisional maps at 1:63,360 scale show full UTM grids at 5,000-meter intervals.



**Figure 2.** The grid value of line A-A is 357,000 meters east. The grid value of line B-B is 4,276,000 meters north. Point P is 800 meters east and 750 meters north of the grid lines; therefore, the grid coordinates of point P are north 4,276,750 and east 357,800.

To use the UTM grid, you can place a transparent grid overlay on the map to subdivide the grid, or you can draw lines on the map connecting corresponding ticks on opposite edges. The distances can be measured in meters at the map scale between any map point and the nearest grid lines to the south and west. The northing of the point is the value of the nearest grid line south of it plus its distance north of that line; its easting is the value of the nearest grid line west of it plus its distance east of that line (see fig. 2).

On maps at 1:100,000 and 1:250,000 scale, a full UTM grid is shown at intervals of 10,000 meters and is numbered and used in the same way.

### Information

For information on USGS products and services, call 1-888-ASK-USGS, use the Ask.USGS fax service, which is available 24 hours a day at 703-648-4888, or visit the general interest publications Web site on mapping, geography, and related topics at [mac.usgs.gov/mac/isb/pubs/pubslists/index.html](http://mac.usgs.gov/mac/isb/pubs/pubslists/index.html).

For additional information, visit the [ask.usgs.gov](http://ask.usgs.gov) Web site or the USGS home page at [www.usgs.gov](http://www.usgs.gov).

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Please send your  
donation with application to:

Attn: RMRU Box  
C/O Riverside Sheriffs Office  
43950 Acacia Street  
Hemet, California 92544



◀ Dr. Beck Weathers, speaker, with many RMRU team members.

From Dr. Beck Weathers book "Left for Dead". Great Speaker for the MRA June meeting.



"...if I fell down I was going to get up. And if I fell down again, I was going to get up and keep moving until I either hit that camp, couldn't get up at all, or walked off the face of that mountain."

*Dr. Beck Weathers*



▲ Some of the sponsors of the MRA meeting. ▲ Kirk Cloyd, President and Glenn Henderson honored for Host and Chairman of the MRA meeting. MRA Honor Guard perform- - - - -▲



Three tables of "Silent Auction" or items from the raffle table that attendees were looking over. Several folks happy!



Left Mr. Jim Donini Right Mr. Beck Weathers . . . MRA meeting speakers.



Mission #12. Cleveland National Forest where Boy Scout suffering Asthma attack to be carried out by Fire Fighters and RMRU team. See Story inside.