

# RMRU NEWSLETTER

PUBLISHED MONTHLY BY THE RIVERSIDE MOUNTAIN RESCUE UNIT, INC.  
A VOLUNTEER NON-PROFIT CORPORATION  
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MEMBER OF THE MOUNTAIN RESCUE ASSOCIATION

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Walt Walker, Editor

## Coming Events - - -

- 19 August, Annual Issac Walton League Benefit Breakfast, Idyllwild. 0800 - 1130.
- 24-26 August, Training.
- 12 September, Board Meeting at Quackenbush's.
- 26 September, Regular Meeting.
- 29-30 September, Training, Mock Mission.
- 10 October, Board Meeting.
- 24 October, Regular Meeting.
- 26-28 October, Training, Family Camp at Joshua Tree.

## Search and Rescue

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1 JULY, SUN. - FIRE STAND-BY - No. 7339M  
Camp Lackey, San Jacinto Mtns.  
by Jim Fairchild

A Fire Camp is quite a scene: hundreds of men being fed and equipped - then instructed and sent out to the lines; dozens of trucks, bulldozers and other heavy equipment coming and going; a busy cluster of planning, services, and communications centers; enormous quantities of tools, sleeping bags and other gear dispensed as needed; a Red Cross first aid station. Everyone was busy with his task. Except for Morris, Hill, Gillespie, and Fairchild, who were on stand-by for the day, ready to employ their skills in technical evacuation should a fire-fighter have a problem in difficult terrain. The huge fire had ravaged many thousands of acres across the entire lower half of the north slopes of the San Jacinto Mts. We watched from a rocky vantage point as the flames seared their way to within a quarter mile of the YMCA Camp. We had a spectacular show as fire-retardant bombers made many runs, coming within two-hundred yards of us.

Last night we left at dusk with the understanding that the unit could be quickly assembled at the Banning Airport should an emergency arise.

10 JULY, TUE. - SEARCH - No. 7340M  
North Face, Mt. San Jacinto  
by Pete Carlson

While driving the rescue van towards Snow Creek Road I tried to think of a plan for a search of the North Face of San Jacinto. First could we be sure the persons were on the face - second the need of a helicopter to search, check the summit register and see if the men had signed it, send teams up Snow creek, Falls creek and the Isthmus.

When I arrived at the roadhead I learned that Seg. Herring of the Sheriff's Department would be there in 20 minutes with some information. When Seg. Herring arrived we had 10 RMRU men. We had little information, two Marines were dropped off Friday night and were going to climb the North Face and go out the Tramway Sunday night. It was now Tuesday noon.

Gary Anderson and I left for the Tram to ride up and hike to the peak. The others set up base and waited for the helicopter. Gary and I found the Tram closed, so we called the top and asked if anyone had seen the men. No luck, so back to base.

Don Landells arrived and Ed Hill went up with him for a look at the face. After one hour Don needed fuel, so a 20 minute break in the search while he filled up. When they returned they checked the peak with no luck. They now started a search down the face towards our base camp. Around 1500 hours they set down on the Isthmus and gave some yells, they thought they heard a call from Falls canyon, but it only came once.

Ed stayed there and Don returned for more men. Art and Bernie went, then Gary and I. From this point Ed, Art, Bernie, and Gary started down the canyon. I waited and Don picked up two more men and put them in below our spot to check the canyon at a lower point. Don came back for me and we started a search from the air of the area. We decided to gain altitude and came down the canyon from the top. As we flew up towards a ridge to our east Don thought he saw something red.

We circled back, just some bushes with flowers. I looked up the ridge and there, two men on a huge boulder waving shirts and jumping around. Don saw them and we moved in close. It was the pair we were looking for. I motioned for them to stay put.

We called base as we looked for a helispot so Don could let me off. We tried several and Don said no good. Finally Don said he thought he could do a one runner touch down on the boulder the men were on. The top of the boulder was 5 by 3 feet, 15 feet straight down on two

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 2)

sides, a 45 degree slope leading to a 40 foot drop off on the third side, and the last side about a 25 degree slope. I stepped off and reached back to get my pack. This proved hard as the basket was at chest height to me. It took longer than it should but Don's great flying held the bird right in place. With the 40 lb. pack off, Don waved that he wanted the two men to get in then. They got in and Don flew back to base.

The story came out at base. The two men had started up the ridge from the desert floor on Saturday morning. They had 2 quarts of water each and ran out on Saturday night. With temperatures of 100 degrees plus and no water they could not hike, so they sat at the spot they were found for three days.

Don took on more fuel and came back in to pick up myself and the other three field teams. We were all glad the search was over so easily. Teams were just getting ready to go in all over the lower areas and Jim had just called for all MRA teams in Southern California. This could have been a long one, but once again the helicopter saved time, effort, and lives.

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26 JULY, THUR. - SEARCH - No. 7341M  
Alta Loma, San Bernardino County  
By Art Bridge

At six o'clock in the morning a neighbor knocked on my door, asking for help in finding his daughter who had been missing since seven o'clock the evening before. The girl had apparently taken eighteen "reds", then, frightened, had called the local fire department and the local law enforcement agency. Because the girl was eighteen, and legally an adult, no further action was taken by the sheriff beyond listing her as a "missing person." The family and friends had searched through the night unsuccessfully.

It was apparent that a dog should be called, and I asked the Sierra Madre Mountain Rescue Team to help. I also called for some help from RMRU, and was able to get together a few local members to help on foot, as well as some local people, including some horsemen to employ if the dog should fail.

By nine o'clock, it was obvious the dog would be unable to track the girl; we realized later that he had really been working well. At this point, I advised the father to hire a helicopter from Western, which he did; and Jack Smith arrived promptly. I assigned Pete Carlson (RMRU) to him as an observer, and asked him to thoroughly cover a couple of hundred acres of lemon groves around the girl's home.

In the meantime, the team members on foot and a number of local people, both afoot and on horses, were combing the whole neighborhood.

Approximately thirty minutes after the helicopter started, the girl walked in to her home. Jack's very low and slow search pattern in the bird had aroused her, due to the noise and the rush of air.

It turned out that the dog had back-tracked her at one point to a spot where she had climbed out of a car she had entered earlier. At another place where RMRU trackers had picked up her footprints, the dog had again tracked her to where she had entered the car - the dog was trailing her in reverse!

It turned out to be a minor search, but with a happy ending. The effort was well spent: had she been sleeping in the direct sun on this day which reached a maximum of 104 degrees, a few more hours in finding her could well have resulted in very serious if not fatal results.



## The Road Runner

sez - by Pres. Jim Fairchild

Probably the greatest hazard an injured person faces is improper handling following the injury. We can recall two deaths and several instances of injury made worse because inadequately trained people got to the victims before the rescue unit arrived. When a rescue unit is called to carry out a mission involving injured people, it is grossly unfair to the victims and that rescue unit to permit inadequately trained people to initiate procedures prematurely. If you, the reader, are a person in authority who may call for a rescue unit, be absolutely certain that anyone other than a rescue team man reaches the victim is, to your personal knowledge, capable of rendering proper first aid. Seriously injured people must not just be rushed to the hospital, their condition must be stabilized, then every precaution taken to ensure that during transportation they may be attended. Talk this over with a physician if you have any doubts.

RMRU is accustomed to answering any emergency call from the wilderness. Now we ask our Sustaining Members to heed this emergency call regarding money. During the past two months we've received \$50.00 in contributions. Our monthly phone bill averages \$65.00, our monthly van gasoline bill runs about \$30.00 and we just paid the \$200.00 insurance premium on the van. The replacement and maintenance of other equipment far exceeds \$50.00 a month. This is a sampling of our monthly expenses - we need \$500.00 a month to get by. Our Pageboy system is stymied at twelve units; we were about to replace ropes but cannot; we were about to complete our technical hardware selection but cannot; we need to re-align the van's front wheels but cannot. Already we're making long distance phone calls for unit business on our own bills. Nevertheless, we're still rolling on missions without hesitation. We understand that our brother rescue units are experiencing the same drought. We have faith that by the time you read this the trend will have reversed spectacularly - it has before.

# TRAINING



ED HILL 'ON RAPPEL', PHOTOGRAPHED BY MIKE DAUGHERTY

favorite wines, and desert - I forget what it was.

The whole affair was enjoyed on the Mellors' new sun deck, a huge porch that accommodated the group and afforded the finest view in the finest setting in the area.



During the practice sessions Mike Dougherty captured, on film, Bud White and an unidentified RMRU member in the litter being lowered using the same techniques that the team uses on actual missions.

## *Sustaining Members*

by Mike Dougherty

28 JULY, SAT. - TECHNICAL and POTLUCK DINNER  
by Jim Fairchild

Way around on the northeast side of Suicide Rock above Idyllwild there's an area of steep slabs where a rescue team can divide into halves and set up anchors and rigging for a day of practice with litter evacuation techniques. We went up there and did just that. Both teams worked everyone several times on lowers and a few lifts. During lunch there was a lot of high-angle friction climbing for fun and practice. It was a day of instructing the newer men on the fundamentals of technical evacuation. We all agreed it was a valuable and needed session - on real cliffs using real "victims."

A thousand feet in elevation below there were other endeavors at Norm and Maggis' Sky Yacht. Preparations were being made for our annual wives' Potluck Supper. Hank Schmel led the effort, having earlier in the month assigned a variety of dishes of the German type. He was cooking five species of sausages and Sauerbratten (spelling?).

Meanwhile, back on the rock, we must have sensed the feast below, for restlessness set in before 1600. We wrapped up all the ropes and other stuff and zoomed down for showers and . . . .

A convivial meal! Besides the aforementioned meats there was a great selection of potato salads, finger salads,

NO DONATIONS  
THIS  
MONTH