

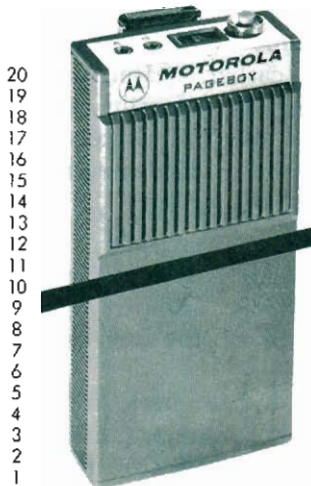
RMRU NEWSLETTER

PUBLISHED MONTHLY BY THE RIVERSIDE MOUNTAIN RESCUE UNIT, INC.
A VOLUNTEER NON-PROFIT CORPORATION
P. O. BOX 5444, RIVERSIDE, CALIFORNIA 92507
MEMBER OF THE MOUNTAIN RESCUE ASSOCIATION

Volume IX, Issue 5, May 1973

Walt Walker, Editor

Pager Fund



The Road Runner

sez- by Pres. Jim Fairchild

While our spring so far this year is cool and cloudy, we should soon experience some quite warm days. Until the end of May our mountains can still be the scene of wintry storms which can rage during a genuine hot spell at low elevations. A search could easily see us starting in one environment and before long entering the other. We have been vigorously instructed by "on-the-job" training during several variable snowstorms on actual missions this year, so are ready for that, but are we ready in our mental and material preparedness for the shift to the extreme of hot weather?

Having heard a lot about the mission for the butterfly collector, I feel as though I had been on it, but this was the first real mission I've missed, this year. It seems like the classical operation: nighttime call; well meaning but erroneous initial information; teams deployed in many directions in a search for tracks and possible contact with subject; the short pre-dawn bivouac; better information during the morning; contact by voice; use of helicopter to locate; diagnosis and first aid; technical evacuation methods to get the subject to the bird; the flight to the hospital. All this with a backdrop of the spectacular North Face of Mt. San Jacinto with its snow-covered gullies, and the immediate terrain ablaze with flowering shrubs and annuals.

At a recent first aid class of Art Bridge's one of the students told of a skiing accident wherein his partner sustained a spiral fracture of the tibia. He arose after his fall and walked toward his friend, he was told to sit down and was examined, his leg was splinted, he was taken to a hospital where the X-ray showed the fracture. Now get this! At the time of the fall, during walking, examination and splinting, at the hospital, during casting and recovery he **never** felt any kind of pain. How remarkable that his friend had the good sense to splint! How many of us knowledgeable and experienced first aiders would have? The limb was splinted on the information that it "felt funny right after the fall."

Sustaining Members

by Al Andrews

Since last month our sustaining members have made it possible for us to order two more pagers – this brings the system total to nine with the goal still twenty units. Again this month we want to remind our sustaining members to renew their memberships early making it possible for us to complete our Pager system by early summer (June).

A sincere thank you to the following new sustaining members:

Mr. & Mrs. Jacob Wiens
Mr. Milton Bailey
Mr. H. M. Wilson
Miss Penny Vazquez
Mr. Carlos H. Serna

and renewing sustaining members:

Mr. & Mrs. R. O. Ridenour
Mrs. Esther Briggs
Rubidoux Grange No. 611 Inc.
Mr. & Mrs. Wynlow Swick
Mr. William F. Zauche
Mr. C. Clifford
Mr. James L. Shockley
Mr. David Melendez
Mr. John F. Gilbert
Mr. Wayne A. Ford
Mr. John Chappell, II
Mr. & Mrs. Mike Daugherty
Mr. & Mrs. Bernie McIlvoy

Coming Events - - -

- 09 May, Board Meeting
 - 16 May, Regular Meeting
 - 18 - 20 May, Training
 - 13 June, Board Meeting
 - 20 June, Regular Meeting
 - 23 - 24 June, Training
-

Search and Rescue

4 & 5 APR., WED. & THUR. - RESCUE - No. 7320M
Falls and Snow Creek, base of Mt. San Jacinto
by Tom Mortensen

The mission really started when Jim Haney, age 54, an avid butterfly collector, left the caretakers cabin on Snow Creek at 8:00 a.m. Wednesday, April 4. Seven hours later after stalking his elusive prey up a precipitous canyon wall on Falls Creek he slipped and fell. Thirty feet later the abrupt stop severely lacerated his head and broke his pelvis.

The caretaker reported Jim as overdue to the Sheriffs office at 8:30 p.m. By 11:00 p.m. fourteen team members were in the field, with Walt Walker as operations leader and Pete Carlson at base. One search team concentrated on the open field area between lower Snow and Falls creeks, which seemed to be a logical place to catch butterflies. Another team headed up Snow Creek, and a third team searched along the isthmus trail. After five hours of fruitless searching everybody bivouacked until sunrise.

At 6:00 a.m. a team continued up Snow Creek and six of us started up Falls Creek. After a difficult hike over slick water polished granite, passed cold deep pools and several waterfalls, we came to the lowest of a 700 foot series of formidable falls guarded by a forest of poison oak. The canyon walls at this point were spectacular, towering above us for 800 nearly vertical feet.

In some sand at the base of the falls were fresh tracks made by new vibrams. We had seen no tracks farther down Falls Creek, and these did not lead around the falls. Anyway we had been told last night that Jim was wearing "ripple" soled boots. Apparently someone else had been hiking in this

canyon recently by himself. We had drawn a blank. The team in Snow Creek had found nothing either, except another team.

The search had moved back down to the open fields where we expected to find Jim the victim of a coronary or snake bite.

Don Landells had flown in with his chopper at 8:00 a.m. and as always was a tremendous help in the search and at 9:00 a.m. the Sierra Madre Search and Rescue Team was asked to assist in the search with their Bloodhounds.

At 11:00 a.m. the team received information from the victims family that we should have had twelve hours earlier. Jim often hunted a rare butterfly in the canyons, plus he was an experienced hiker and was wearing vibram soled boots. The search strategy did a 180 degree turn.

Don immediately flew six team members into the less precipitous east side of Falls Creek. Within minutes Bernie McIlvoy and Gary Gillespie heard a faint voice that was "definitely human" coming from the western wall of the canyon, but no one could be seen.

Don and I flew back into the canyon. We checked out every nook and cranny on the wall, and finally spotted Jim some 200 feet from the top. He was sitting behind a large boulder in a blood stained shirt, and pointed to his broken left hip.

Don set me down on top and then picked up Bernic, Dan MacIntosh and Dr. Ray Castilonia (one of RMRU's three doctors) who rappelled down to Jim. Within an hour enough people and equipment had been shuttled up by the chopper for a technical evacuation. The victim was carefully raised in a litter up a 120 foot wall with Pete Lampson of Sierra Madre and Bob Claybrook, pulling more than their share. Jim was then flown to Desert Hospital in Palm Springs.

The mission was over. The team members had worked smoothly and efficiently with each other, never grumbling about the hard work and long hours. I'm a new member, and in the past few months I've learned that RMRU is more than just a rescue team, its a brotherhood and I'm sure glad to be a part of it.

APRIL TRAINING, San Gorgonio
28 APR., SAT. - RESCUE - No. 7322
by Pete Carlson

Normally our winter training comes in Feb., but this hasn't been a normal year. So far 18 actual missions, two in white out snow conditions and this brings winter training in April.

I went in on Friday morning at 1100, the trail to South Fork Meadows was nice and hard. From there to the Little Draw it was hard snow with 2 to 6 inches of soft top. With my "character building"

pack it took 3½ hours to get to our traditional camping site. Shortly after I arrived Rick Quackenbush, Tom Mortensen, and Gary Gillespie arrived also. We set up camp, started cooking dinner, and melting snow for water. About 1800 Dan MacIntosh arrived and joined us for dinner, then a small campfire and some stories before bed at 2030.

Morning came incredibly early as the sun hit us at 0515, but we did not get up till 0700. Breakfast was with a dark blue sky above and a warm sun reflecting off the hard snow. Then, on with waterproof pants and jackets, crampons, sun cream, and dark glasses.

At 0830 we started the short walk to the hard snow slopes. After a lecture on ice axe arrests we all began to practice. Everyone helped everyone else pointing out good and bad points as we slid down feet first on our backs, head first on stomachs, and then head first on our backs. But this is just the beginning, now we took turns spinning each other around and then coming down with no ice axe and having a "good friend" hand it to each of us.

After 2 hours of this we decided to go up higher on steeper and harder snow. We climbed another 400 feet and found excellent conditions for practice. We all agreed the practice down lower helped up high on the harder snow. We went through the same procedure as earlier down below. Then Dan went off without his ice axe and Gary handed it to him as he went flying by at a good speed. A yell as Dan caught a crampon point in the snow and spun sideways. Dan took a long time to stop and when he did he did not get up but called for help. We all slid down to Dan and found him pointing to his left ankle. We placed ice axes under each arm so he would not slide any farther and then examined his ankle. It did not look broken and Dan was not in much pain any more, so we put a rope on Dan and lowered him down to the bottom of the slope and carried him 100 yards back to camp.

Bob Claybrook arrived in time to help on the carry back to camp where we placed Dan on a sleeping bag and elevated his leg. The ankle was greatly swollen and it became obvious that Dan would have to be evacuated. We decided the best way was a helicopter so we looked for a helispot. We found a good spot that needed a little work, but there would be lots of time for that later.

We ate a quick lunch and Bob and I went for help while the rest worked on the helispot. At 1200 we met Jim Fairchild coming in and told him what had happened. Jim continued in as we went out. After 1 hour and a 4 mile hike plus a 2500 foot drop we reached the cars.

We drove to a phone and called Al Andrews. Al got Western Helicopters and said for us to meet them in 1 hour at Rialto. So down the mountain we went as some one is calling to bring a radio to the airport. Meanwhile Al received a rescue call for a climber on

Tahquitz Rock, so Rich Morris's girl friend, Anne, brought the radio. Bob decided to go to Tahquitz Rock so only I would fly back.

With a radio and full tank of fuel, Roy Cox of Western and I flew towards the Little Draw. While in route we heard that only 3 RMRU members had been reached so far and so we decided we would fly everyone out and drive to the rescue. The helispot had been made into a 15 by 15 foot platform outlined in dead trees. We landed and loaded Dan into the bird and flew down to just below the cars on the road. With Roy and I on each side we carried Dan over to a rock and sat him down. Roy flew back up for more people and gear. Next out were 5 Kelty Packs each close to 60 lbs., then Tom and Gary and last come Jim and Rich.

We could no longer talk to the rescue truck, so I took a radio and went to a phone while the others got ready to go and got Dan into a car to go to the hospital. I found out that climbers on the rock had got the rescue done, so I told the others to take their time. We met at the phone and talked of the events of the day. Training ended a day early, but in the rescue business you can take no chances and when someone is hurt we have to go even though there was an excellent chance the climbers could do it.

At this writing it has been determined Dan had a spiral fracture of the tibia, dislocated tibia, and torn ligaments of the left ankle. He has had surgery and will be in the hospital for 5 days, after that a cast for 10 to 14 weeks. Dan plans on staying active even in a cast helping where he can when needed. Get well quick, Dan.

28 APR., SAT. — RESCUE — No. 7323
Tahquitz Rock — Idyllwild
By Richard Morris

It was a smoggy Riverside day. I would have preferred to have been with the team training on Mt. San Gorgonio but some last minute problems forced me to stay in the lowlands. At 1400 Al Andrews called to tell me that team member Dan MacIntosh, who had that near fatal fall in Tahquitz Canyon last spring, had injured his ankle during ice axe arrest practice in the Little Draw. Dan, despite his bad luck, is one of the ablest and most dedicated members on our team.

Al instructed me to get the van and proceed to Western Helicopters in Rialto in order to equip the evacuation bird for Dan with a RMRU radio. When I arrived at Fire Station No. 3 I learned that the Sheriff's office had requested our assistance in evacuating an injured climber from Tahquitz Rock. Since several team members who weren't on the training had started to roll I decided to start up the mountain immediately. My girlfriend, Anne, who

had given me a ride to the firehouse kindly delivered the chopper radio to Pete Carlson at Miro Airfield.

Upon arriving at Humber Park I learned from Sgt. Herring and Deputy Duncan that Jon Engers, a high school student from Riverside, had fallen while climbing the Vampire route. As the lead climber with one companion he had advanced 65 feet out on the first pitch and was placing his first piton when he slipped on some ice and fell head over heels. His partner and belayer was unable to hold the fall letting Jon fall almost 120 feet. Fortunately the rope snagged a tree thus preventing certain tragedy. The partner managed to reach him, give first aid, and find some other climbers to render assistance in lowering Jon from the rock.

By the time team members Art Bridge, Jack Schnurr, Bob Claybrook, Ray Castilonia, M.D., and Norm Mellor, M.D. arrived the victim had been carried down most of the way to the parking lot. The team assisted with the last few hundred yards of the carry out after which Dr. Mellor and another physician gave Jon an examination and additional first aid.

Jon's injuries did not appear to be as serious as might be expected from such a fall. His fellow climbers did an excellent job getting him to safety. RMRU was there, ready to provide its skill and experience. However, this time things worked out well without us.



The above photograph was not received by the RMRU Newsletter until the first three pages of this issue had been printed. It was taken by an RMRU member and was used in the Riverside Press-Enterprise.

The photograph, shot in Falls Canyon, shows the injured Jim Haney secured into a Stokes litter. He was being lifted up the canyon wall by rescue team members. The job was not easy, as evidenced by the steepness of the canyon wall.