

# 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

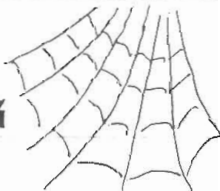
October 1975 Volume XI, Issue 10

Jim Fairchild, Editor  
Walt Walker, Publisher  
Rick Pohlers, Art

## Coming Events

12 November Board Meeting  
19 November Regular Meeting  
21-23 November Training  
26 November (Dec.) Board Meeting  
3 December Regular Meeting  
6 December Training

## from Old'en Days



### 10 YEARS AGO—

SAR — Jake Johnson and Art Bridge journeyed up to Mono County to work with the Sierra Madre Search and Rescue Team who were searching for a missing 80 year old man. Dave Martin and Walt Walker arrived a little late at March Air Force Base and stood at the end of the runway and watched the C119 airplane get airborne with the men who worked on the Mono search.

### 5 YEARS AGO—

We reported with sadness the death of Ed Henderson, a pilot employed for the summer by Western Helicopters of Rialto.

SAR — Two 16 year old boys were missing from the Hurkey Creek Campground. We searched all night and at about 0830 we received information via radio that the boys had walked back into the campground.

A young woman was reported missing from the Idyllwild area and it was suspected she might have taken drugs as she disrobed and disappeared into the forest. The old timers on the unit still talk about the naked lady search, because that was the way she was found late in the evening by RMRU.

A climber setting up a rappel to get off Tahquitz Rock was zapped by the ground current from a bolt of lightning. Other climbers in the area helped get the injured climber to the base of the rock just as Walt Walker arrived and gave the necessary first aid to a severe head wound. When the rest of the RMRU members responding arrived they carried him down to Humber Park.

• A young mentally retarded boy walked away from a campground in the San Bernardino mountains on a Saturday afternoon.

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 2)

## Sustaining Members

by Mike Daugherty



### Van Fund Gauge

As Walt Walker announced in the last newsletter, RMRU has begun a project. The team has now acquired too much specialized rescue gear to be carried safely in our rescue van. Thus, we are beginning a fund drive to obtain money for a new van which will be capable of carrying all our gear. The bulk of money donated to RMRU which is in excess of our operating costs will be applied to this fund. Progress toward this goal will be indicated in this column each month by the Van Fund Gauge which appears here for the first time this month.

I remember the original van fund drive which was completed five years ago. As I recall, the Van Fund Gauge was a regular feature of the newsletter for some time. However, this seems an auspicious month to begin a new drive as evidence by the long list of new and renewing members below:

#### New

Ray Martin Family  
Ms. Veronica Luna  
Ms. Elizabeth Meeh  
Mr. Eugene Baucom  
Ms. Barbara Brickman  
Ms. Carolyn Stanovich  
Mr. and Mrs. Clifford Rose  
Grace Lutheran Church, Men's Group (Banning)

#### Renewing

Mr. and Mrs. Robert O'Bier  
The 39'ers (Idyllwild)  
Mr. Carlos Serna  
Mr. Jim Fairchild  
Mr. Charles Wright  
Mr. Herbert Wilson  
Mr. and Mrs. Wilford Keith  
Mr. and Mrs. R.O. Ridenour  
\*Isaak Walton League (Idyllwild)  
Mr. and Mrs. J. Leroy Dooty  
Mr. and Mrs. Bob Dewees  
Mr. W.A. Neuhoff

\*Century Club Member (Donation of \$100 or more)

## 'from Olden Days' — continued from page 1

The San Bernardino County Sheriff called for assistance from California Region teams on Monday. RMRU participated with the other teams and the boy was found on Thursday dehydrated but otherwise in good condition.

On a Friday afternoon we were called to search for a 60 year old woman in the Elsinore area. While driving to the mission, Pete Carlson's VW van was struck by a city dumptruck. His van was tipped over and demolished. He was taken to the Lakeview Hospital where X-rays revealed he had a fractured pelvis. The mission ended very sadly when we found the missing woman in a flooded rock quarry, dead.

# Search and Rescue

7 SEPT., SUN. — RESCUE — No. 7521M  
Tahquitz Rock, San Jacinto Mtns.  
by John Dew

It was on a peaceful Sunday afternoon about 5 o'clock and most of the team was probably enjoying the quietness when the silence was broken by the ring of the telephone or by the shrill whistle of a pager. We were informed that there were calls for help coming from near the top of Tahquitz Rock just above Idyllwild. Our rescue van was at Walt Walker's (where some work was being done on it), which is about forty miles closer to Tahquitz Rock than its usual place in Riverside. This was a real advantage as it cut nearly an hour off the road time in getting help to those stranded on "the rock".

The first three to arrive with the van quickly assessed the situation, talked to the sheriff's deputy, located the subjects on the rock via field glasses, donned their packs and started the hard climb. When these first three were approximately one quarter of the way up, others began arriving and were told by radio what gear they would need to bring.

Upon arriving at the top of the rock, the first group attempted to establish voice contact, but because of the wind, were unable to do so.

Anchors were set up and Walt went over the edge and down about 75 feet before voice contact could be established. By this time, other team members were arriving, darkness had completely engulfed "the rock", and the remainder of the operation was affected by flashlight.

We found two young men had become stranded because of a sudden heavy rainstorm and, they told us, about twenty minutes of hail. They were exactly 300 feet from the top and the wet and cold from the rain and the hail were intensified by the wind which was blowing around the top few hundred feet of the rock. The

stranded climbers were helped to the top by RMRU members after Pete Carlson had rappled the whole way down to them to be sure they were tied in to a safety line and that there were no injuries.

When Pete got to them, he found that they were cold, wet, hungry and thirsty, but other than that, in good shape.

The team hiked them out by way of the trail on the back side of the rock, arriving at the sheriff's unit at Humber Park at approximately midnight.

A rescue team went home happy because there were no injuries and the mission was completely successful.



First, I would like to thank RMRU members, their wives and friends for their sympathy upon the death of my mother. I would also like to thank everyone for the memoriums in her name to the Lung Association of Riverside County. She was a great supporter of RMRU and was always interested and concerned about the people

RMRU was rescuing.

Recently Jim Fairchild and I met with U.S.F.S. and during the meeting we asked if use of the wilderness had declined. We found out the people are using the wilderness at the same rate as last year, but they are either more knowledgeable, or more safety conscious or just plain lucky. RMRU's mission load is down about 40% from the last few years. When discussing this with other rescue teams we find they are experiencing the same lull as RMRU. We in mountain rescue, who have worked for so many years on safety education, sincerely hope that it is beginning to pay off. We are the first ones who would like to see us 'go out of business' because of a lack of need for our services. It will never come to that I'm sure, but we can always hope.

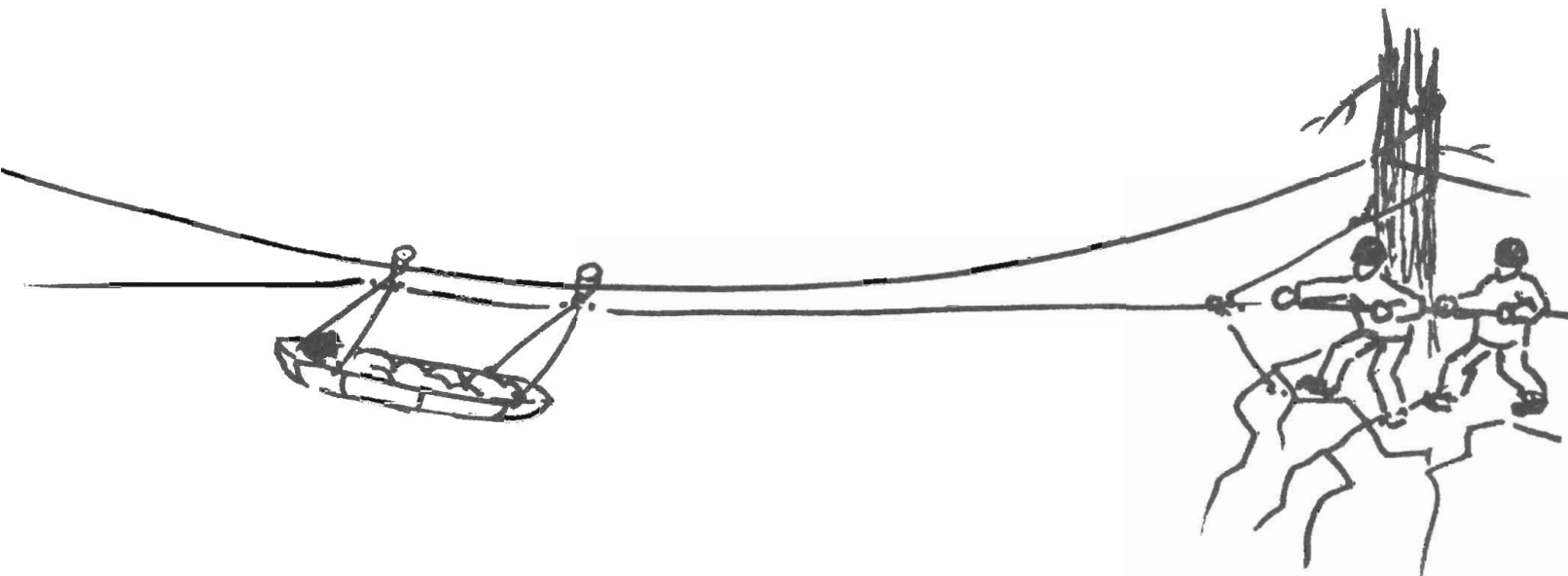
Just a reminder to all RMRU members, winter is on the way. Now is the time to check your tire chains, anti-freeze, battery, crampons, ice axe, wool sweaters, parkas and put that new coat of varnish on the old snowshoes. Let's be ready for that first cold night out.

—Pres. Walt

The *RMRU Newsletter* is published monthly by the Riverside Mountain Rescue Unit, Inc. It is intended primarily to inform the regular and sustaining members.

If you would like to receive the newsletter on a regular basis, and at the same time become a sustaining member, send your tax deductible donation of \$10 or more to:

Riverside Mountain Rescue Unit, Inc.  
P. O. Box 5444  
Riverside, Calif. 92507



# TRAINING

27 SEPT., SAT. — TECHNICAL  
by Larry Roland

Consistent with the current economic condition, Mountain Search and Rescue has also experienced a very unique and unexplainable slump. Of course, we're not disappointed, but it does have some serious implications. Primarily it means that the team is in the field less which could lead to some relaxedness on the part of the team and possibly catch us unprepared in that inevitable future emergency. Team training then becomes increasingly important. As a result this month's *mock mission* training was purposely designed to keep us alert and ready.

Our instructions were to be at the Strawberry Creek Bridge near Isomats Idyllwild at 0800 sharp. All other information was classified.

Upon arriving we were shown a prepared informant's Sheet and told that all members over four years on the team could only take orders. That didn't leave many people with much experience in running a mission. Obviously, we were going to have fun and learn a lot.

After settling down and choosing our base camp operator and operations leader a search was organized. Four teams of three men were sent to the area where the two victims were last seen to search for tracks and other signs that may lead to their condition and location. Tracks were picked up immediately, however, following them soon became laborious if not impossible due to the deep pine needle duff surrounding the area.

Strategies are often necessary in searching and can save time. One method is to set up perimeters that the victims would most likely stay within. These are based on topography of the terrain. For example, rivers or steep rock walls would likely limit one's travel. With this in mind the teams were dispatched in different directions to try and intersect the victims trail further up the line. Two teams were assigned the ridge just west of Strawberry Creek; one team was to contour SE around the ridge and into the creek while one team stayed with the tracks. It wasn't long until good tracks were located

on the ridge; one big and one small pair of tracks matching the description we were given.

Although tracking was still somewhat difficult, due to the efforts of the victims to leave few signs, the ridge party very quickly came upon the victims located across the creek on a ledge approximately 60 feet above the stream bed. Initial observations revealed severe head injuries, paralysis and shock to one victim while the other suffered from hypothermia. They were both treated immediately by first aid measures and plans were quickly laid as to how to best rescue them.

My team was the closest one to base camp, so we were sent back for all the gear; two 300 foot ropes, 3 150's, complete technical bags, wheel litter, back board and hot oxygen system. When we arrived the details had been worked out and Bernie McIlvoy, our Chief Technical expert, briefed us on the procedure; a Tyrolean Traverse.

This particular method is often used when it is necessary to evacuate one across an abyss or as an alternative to lowering a victim, transporting and raising him again on the opposite side.

Work was quickly underway to establish a fixed line across the gorge and rig a mechanical advantage so that we could control the tension. The litter was prepared, belay lines were attached from each end to opposite sides of the canyon for safety and the system was inspected. The green light was given and the victim was eased off the ledge in the litter and slowly pulled across the line high above the creek. Safely on solid rock again the victims were released, commended for their bravery and invited to join us for lunch while we critiqued the whole episode.

Several suggestions were made about the overall operation which, of course, were very enlightening to those of us who have had little experience in running an operation. Several new ideas were spawned that may some day be worked out and incorporated into the technical design and, of course, we all reviewed many of the little details that go into a mission. Hopefully, we won't have any serious accidents to respond to in the near future, but if we do, hopefully we will be alert and better prepared as a result of training consistently.