

# 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

Volume XII, Issue 12, December 1976

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## Search and Rescue



### SEARCH

**Mission No. 7645A**

**27 Dec., Mon.**

**Deep Canyon**

**Santa Rosa Mountains**

Late in the evening RMRU received a call from the Indio station of the Riverside County Sheriff's Department requesting help to search for a 57 year old father and his 40 year old son who were overdue from a hike in Deep Canyon. Before the team arrived, the pair had hiked out.

■ RMRU

### SEARCH

**Mission No. 7646A**

**29 Dec., Wed.**

**Fisherman's Camp**

**Cleveland National Forest**

On 29 December 1976 RMRU was alerted to Elsinore substation where eight teenagers were reported missing. Thirty-six 4-H members had gone hiking out of Fisherman's Camp area twenty miles south of Elsinore. All but eight returned at the appointed time.

The whole team assembled at the Elsinore substation at about 1900 hours (7 p.m.) and were informed that the Sheriff near Fisherman's Camp thought he had made voice contact with the missing subjects. We were to wait until he called in

### RESCUE

**Mission No. 7647M**

**30 Dec., Thurs.**

**Mt. Whitney**

**Sierra Nevada Mountains**

*By Ed Hill*

The call interrupted a busy Thursday at work. We were asked to supply a team of experienced snow and ice men for a technical rescue on Mount Whitney. We agreed to meet at Pete Carlson's house, and I drove home in the rain to organize my gear.

While packing, Al Andrews, our rescue coordinator, called and said that there was a big accident on highway 60 in Riverside. He recommended that I take back roads to Petes. The driving conditions were as bad as I have ever seen them with driving rain and fog all the way to

again. Being away from his unit, he was out of radio contact.

After waiting approximately an hour and no contact, we determined we would roll in that direction thinking that should the Sheriff need us, we would be closer and if indeed he had heard them and was able to locate them and get them back to the road, we could always turn around.

When we were about a mile from Fisherman's Camp, we received word that the eight teenagers had safely hiked out of the canyons. ■ RMRU

Riverside. Once in Riverside, I found that the city had torn up a number of roads for storm drains which added to the difficulties.

At Pete's house, I found the rest of our team: Pete Carlson, Larry Brown, Larry Roland, and Jim Fairchild. We decided to drive up in two cars since we had a lot of gear with us.

As we drove North, we found ourselves driving out of the storm. The sun was shining in the Owens Valley even though it looked cold and windy. There were heavy clouds on the Sierra crest, but it looked like a helicopter could operate below the crest. When we were about twenty minutes from the Lone Pine airport, we started hearing radio traffic from the mission. We learned that a team was with the injured climber and his companion and that a helicopter was landing at Trail Camp to fly the injured man to the hospital.

Arriving at Lone Pine Airport, we talked to the base camp operator and learned that one of the climbers had been hurt on the slabs just above Trail Camp. He had been flown out and his companion would be walked out along with the rescue teams. He also told us about a second storm that would arrive the next day. Since the operation was nearly over, we went into town to eat before the long drive home.

The lull in the storms was fortunate for both the injured man and ourselves. He was able to be evacuated quickly, and we were spared a long, cold litter evacuation. ■ RMRU

# \$USTAINING MEMBERS —

BY MIKE DAUGHERTY

It's been quiet in the rescue business- or at least it had been when last I spoke with one of the active members. Those things have a way of changing. Idyllwild has been cold but dry and between Christmas and New Years it wasn't even cold. It was downright balmy. Accordingly, the San Jacinto mountains were well populated by hikers. Then, on the 30th of December, the first storm in a long while dumped a good deal of very wet snow on the massif. It's the kind of weather in which it is exceedingly hard to stay dry. Once wet, it is even harder to stay warm. The elements are present and hypothermia is a real possibility- even

here in tropical southern California. Yielding to an imperfectly forgotten urge, I put on my parka and boots, left the warmth of the roaring fire and trudged through the freezing slush to the Humber Park roadhead. There in Thursday's last light I watched the white silence fall on three lonely parked cars. The silence was beautiful but I couldn't help wondering..... It's a wonder that RMRU isn't busier than it is.

But, I digress. Our thanks to the following Sustaining Members who renewed their memberships in December.


- Mr. Howard M. Loy
- M/M John Moore
- \*Virginia Gidcumb
- \*Dr. and Mrs. Thomas Gillen
- Ramona Flinchpaugh
- Allan and Hulda Rau
- \*David Crimi

\**Century Club* member,  
donation of \$100 or more.

while climbing. The rescuer this time was RMRU member Jim Fairchild, who rappelled down to the victim and secured him to a line from above. The rescuee was then hauled to the top and escorted around to Lunch Rock, where he was met by RMRU team doctor Norm Mellor. It was decided to bring the injured man on down to the Sky Yacht for treatment. Norm's wife, Maggie, had been our base camp operator during this mission and her daughters had prepared a tremendous roast beef dinner for us. The Mellor family did themselves more than proud that night.

Sustaining Members chairman, Al Andrews, wrote about the following new members: Mr. Steve Greer, Mr. Don Swanson, Mr. David Westheimer, Mr. John Pollock and Mr. & Mrs. Wynlow L. Swick. He also thanked the following renewing members: Mr. & Mrs. G. W. Gardner, Mr. & Mrs. R. A. Dewees, Little Lake Parents Club, Idyllwild Property Owners Association, Dr. & Mrs. Paul Trotta, Mr. & Mrs. B. E. Harris, Keldon Paper Company and Mr. & Mrs. M. Hefferlin.

On the last page was a photograph of RMRU's new wheeled litter which since has become beloved by RMRU members and famous by its gentle ride to injured people. •RMRU



from  
**Old'en Days**  
by Walt Walker

DECEMBER

Ten years ago—

The best of holiday greetings was expressed from all RMRU members.

It was noted that there had been 23 missions with 1700 manhours in 1966. Also noted, that there had been 17 missions with 495 hours in 1965.

Five years ago—

A search written up by RMRU member Jack Schnurr recounted our search for a 54 year old man who had become lost while on a hike from the Palm Springs Aerial Tram to Idyllwild. When he had realized he was lost, he stopped hiking and built a small fire to stay warm by. Pete

Carlson and Jack found the man in the camping area at Laws camp. He was in good condition and hiked out with the team members to Humber Park.

RMRU member Steve Bryant wrote up a search for a man wanted for questioning in regards to an embezzlement. We searched the area where equipment of his had been found. Some of the members descended Tahquitz Canyon. Nothing was found.

The next mission was written up by RMRU member Mike Daugherty. In the way, that only Mike can write, he described (complete with a lexicon of rescue venacular) the rescue of two men from the cliffs above the Whitewater fish hatchery.

While training at Jumbo Rocks in Joshua Tree National Monument, we were informed that two Scouts were hung up on a shelf, high above the ground. Hank Schmel (the writer) was assigned to be base camp operator and Mike Daugherty grabbed all the glory when he almost single handedly rescued the two boys from their precarious position.

Off to Tahquitz Rock was the name of the game for a rescue of a man who had dislocated his shoulder



## Helitac

**4 Dec., Sat.  
Western Helicopters  
Rialto, California**

We, the members of RMRU would once again thank Western Helicopters, Inc. for providing a supercharged 47 Bell and a turbine Hughes 500C and two pilots for annual Helitac training. This training, in and around helicopters is probably one of the most important sessions that we

have all year. Most of the time, when helicopters are needed in a mountain rescue situation, it becomes dangerous both for the pilot and the mountaineers working with the chopper. The more we of RMRU can become familiar with helicopters, the safer it is for everyone concerned. •RMRU

# THANK YOU!

## Again, Western!



RMRU PHOTO BY KEVIN WALKER