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Search and Rescue

SEARCH

Mission No. 8329M

2-3 September, Fri.-Sat.
San Jacinto Mountains

By Bill Blaschko



The phone rang just at 11:30 P.M. And of course the only reason for a phone call like that is **RMRU**. The team assembled at Humber Park for a search for Tina Warren, age 16, of Huntington Beach. It seems that her grandmother had left Tina at the trailhead for the Southridge trail to Tahquitz Peak, two days earlier. Her plan was to hike solo in the Tahquitz area and then return after a day to Humber Park. That left quite a bit of mountain to search.

Anyway teams were formed, and we set up the devil slide to the saddle. From there we would search in teams of two. Tahquitz Valley, Skunk Cabbage, the Angels Glide trail, Willow Creek, and of course Caramba at the top of Tahquitz Canyon would be checked as quick as a team could reach it. As we hiked towards the saddle we talked about error in hiking solo, especially since Tina did not know the mountain well. As we approached the saddle Kevin came up with the idea to check with the rangers at Long Valley below the tram. Luckily for us, especially my team since we were assigned to go to Caramba, news came back from base that Tina was sleeping behind the Long Valley Ranger station. With that we made a 180 and headed back to my home in Idyllwild where everyone could get some sleep before going out to Lamb Canyon for a search (see 8330M). • **RMRU**

SEARCH

Mission No. 8330M

4 September, Sun.
Lamb Canyon
Southwest of Beaumont

By Rob Gardner



After a successful all night mission most SAR personnel like to catch some sleep. **RMRU** however, is trained to ask for more! When Rescue 8329 (see article) ended the team sacked-out at about 4:00 a.m. At 5:30 a.m. it was up and ready to go on Mission 8330.

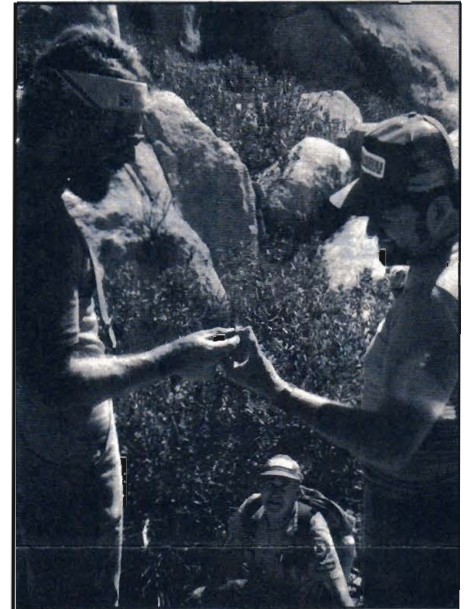
There had already been a commitment to the Riverside Sheriff's Office, Banning Station, to start an early morning sweep in the Lamb Canyon area, at the foothills of the San Jacinto Mountains.

The Mission was to locate the remains of a young woman who allegedly was murdered and then raped. The confessed perpetrator told law-enforcement authorities details of the bizarre homicide, including the approximate location of the crime, and where the body of the victim was left. The perpetrator is in custody, out-of-state, for other murders. Having admitted to scores of murders, many had already been confirmed. The Sheriff's Office believed the confession story to this murder to be valid. By use of maps and details obtained from the alleged perpetrator investigators had narrowed the region of the crime down to about one square mile.

Due to the dangers of the terrain the Sheriff's Office had only conducted a superficial search for the victims body, and then contacted the **RMRU** for completion of a more thorough search.

Clue Number one was to look for a flat-topped boulder among a field of hundreds of huge look alike boulders.

Clue Number two was to find a woman's name which the alleged perpetrator wrote on the face of a boulder with spray paint, with the assistance of the homicide victim, over a year ago. As one might guess, there were names and symbols painted on many of the boulders.



RMRU PHOTO BY JIM FAIRCHILD

WHAT IS IT? — **RMRU** members Mel Krug and Walt Walker enjoy a light hearted moment after locating an animal bone fragment as fellow member John Dew looks on.

Captain Canova of the Banning Sheriff's Station (RSO) was present during the entire search. There was a good turnout of **RMRU** personnel, most of the men being held captive from the over-due hiker search (8329) completed just a few hours prior to this mission. The men paired off and searched the area, checking crevices, tops and bottoms of boulders, ravines, and drainage ditches.

The team was in good spirits, considering the hot temperatures and that most of the men had only gathered one or two hours of sleep in the past thirty-six hour period. It should be noted that Kevin Walker was especially chipper climbing about the boulders. Kevin had fallen asleep while talking and in the middle of his sentence when the team laid down for the 4:00 a.m. snooze just prior to this Mission.

The search continued for most of the day and was thorough. Numerous small mammal bones were found, however, no evidence of the homicide victim was located. The Sheriff's investigation continues. • **RMRU**



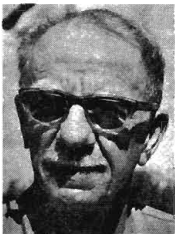
TRAINING

Familiarization

10-11 September, Sat.-Sun.

San Jacinto Mountains

By Bud White



John Dew paid me a great compliment in asking me in December to write up the September training. (I have trouble remembering what I left the room for).

Nevertheless the September training was a 2 fold plan. One to familiarize the newer members with the high country of the Mt. San Jacinto State Park and two to socialize with the State Park personnel at Round Valley.

The team met at the Seven Pines trail to the Deer Spring trail, thence south to the junction with the Strawberry Cienega trail. After lunch on a ridge that offered a great view of Suicide and Tahquitz we hiked up Strawberry Cienega to the peak trail, through Williams Cienega to Wellmans Divide and then down to Round Valley.

Walt Walker, Mary Bowman, John Dew and the teams guest for the weekend, Chief Ralph Woodworth of the Riverside County Sheriff's office traveled up from Humber Park and met us in Round Valley. We had a delightful social hour with the two State Park aides, Judy and Jonathan. Sorry that the State Park Ranger couldn't join us. Manfred Knak was vacationing in Europe and Rick Brown was

having eye problems (Rick is fully recovered from his surgery).

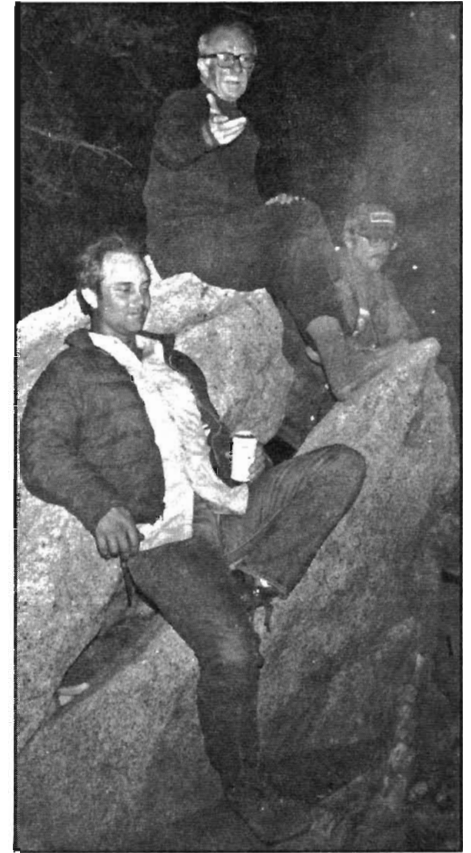
The traditional Burrito dinner was tremendous as always followed by a special campfire. Special in that the tram was shut down for maintenance and there was just us, four of the State Park aides, and a hearty group of L.A. Chapter Sierra Clubbers who were camped at Tamarak. Their leader came over to the campfire but I think our sea stories were a bit much and he just up and left.

This current group of Rescue team members is really a serious, dedicated bunch. We couldn't get a lantern light bouldering session going regardless.

On Sunday we split into three groups. One returned to Humber via the regular trail. One took the trail to the peak and then down to the Seven Pines trail head and the third group accompanied me cross country up to the Saddle between Jean and San Jacinto. We did San Jacinto, Jean, by-passed Marion, went to Hidden Springs and back to the Seven Pines parking lot. I talked Chief Woodworth into going with this cross country group and he really did great.

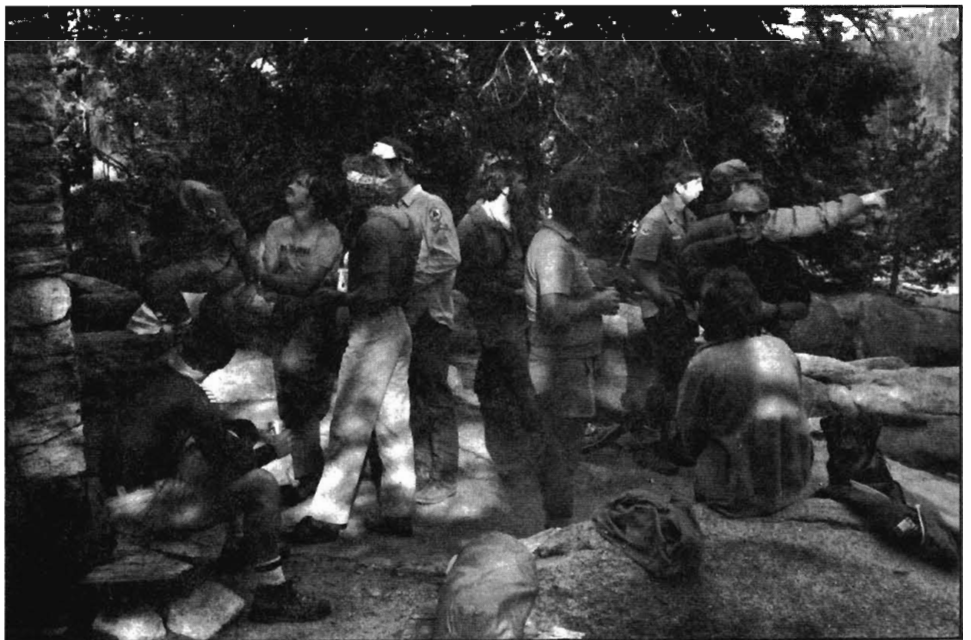
We found Deer Springs is closed as a campground and also the Tamarak Trail to the peak because they are sensitive areas. Deer Springs doesn't meet the campsite requirements and Tamarak is a "fawning area."

As trainings go it was routine yet memorable because the mountain was lush, new friends were made and old ones reaffirmed. • RMRU



RMRU PHOTO BY JIM FAIRCHILD

TALL TALES — Associate RMRU member and teller of war stories, Bud White entertains fellow members with tales of old.



RMRU PHOTO BY JIM FAIRCHILD

FELLOWSHIP — RMRU members share something very special with each other, that being themselves. This years trip to Round Valley and dinner with our friends at the State Park was even more enjoyable, in that Riverside County Sheriff's Department Chief Ralph Woodworth joined RMRU in its familiarization trip on the mountain.