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John Dew, Editor — Kevin Walker, Publisher — Dona Towell, Artist

## Search and Rescue

### SEARCH

Mission No. 8405M

4-5 March, Sun.-Mon.

North Face,  
San Jacinto Mountains

By Mel Krug



It was just about 4:30 when the phone seemed to have a familiar ring to it. The call, two marines overdue in an attempt of the North Face of Mt. San Jacinto. When I arrived at the Snow Creek roadhead, I found

members preparing gear and waiting as Kevin was up in the helicopter. They were searching the North Face as quickly as possible as the sun was now down and daylight fading quickly. They stayed up until it was quite dark, in the hopes that a campfire would be spotted.

When Kevin and Brian returned, Kevin unloaded his gear and Brian left for Landells heliport. It was decided that since the pair was supposed to have been out Saturday evening, we would make our main attack from the top. Everyone moved around to the lower tram station, prepared for a winter search, loaded onto the tram car and were off (to our friends at the tram, thanks for staying open). Occasionally we are short handed, this was one of those times. Our search team to the summit consisted of Glenn Henderson, Rob Gardner, Cameron Robbins and myself. With packs on we went down the concrete walk to Long Valley and then started out for Mt. San Jacinto. We left behind in the tram station, Ops. Leader Jim Fairchild, Base Camp Ops. Mary Bowman, and two spare field members, Kevin and Joe Erickson.



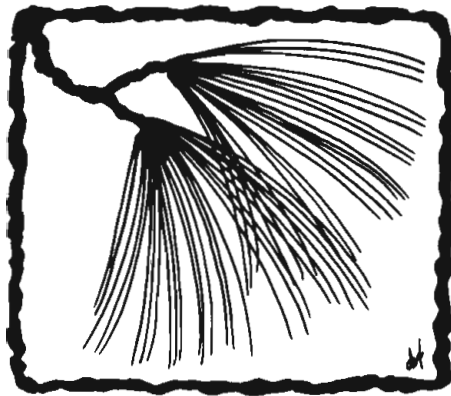
RMRU PHOTO BY JIM FAIRCHILD

PREPARING FOR THE COLD — RMRU members Glenn Henderson, Rob Gardner and Mel Krug prepare to go out into the near zero temperature to search for two missing marines.



RMRU PHOTO BY JIM FAIRCHILD

DOWN SAFE — Devron Anderson is interviewed as Kyle Klinglesmith talks with his wife Judy after they had spent two nights out in the cold on Mt. San Jacinto



It was a long night as we searched our way up through Tamarack Valley, up to Frank Miller Peak, and then on to the summit itself. To make things even more difficult, there were patches of ice that forced us to use crampons, and then on top of the near zero temp a wind of extreme proportion was blowing out of the north. We arrived at the summit close to 3:00 a.m. not finding a clue. We looked around on top for some time and finally decided to go inside the summit cabin and get a couple of hours of sleep. When morning arrived we awoke to Rob making an unusually large amount of strange sounds as he attempted to get out of his sleeping bag on the top bunk. And soon after we heard the welcome sound of air support making its way up the North Face. Brian was back with one of Landells

Jet Rangers.

We were just ready to start searching again when the radio came on with news that the pair had wandered into the Long Valley ranger station. After flying all members out, which was exciting in itself as the winds on the top were still quite strong, but Brian handled it in style, we went back to the tram and met the two men we had looked for. Because of their lack of gear, they had been much slower than they had planned, and also were unable to start a fire to signal the helicopter the night before. I could go on and on about what they should have done, but I won't. Just a word of advice, if you want to do the North Face, be sure you know exactly what you are doing, as our little mountain can get very big at certain times. • RMRU



## Familiarization

10-11 Mar., Sat.-Sun.  
P.C.T. — Palm Canyon,  
San Jacinto Mountains

By Larry Roland



Being an associate member, it had been several months since I'd been on a RMRU training. It was with great expectations that I looked forward to joining the team for this familiarization hike down Palm Canyon.

I had been down the canyon once before from Ribbonwood near Pinyon Flats and had missed another infamous RMRU attempt led by Ed Hill whose elaborate route finding took him out on a limb, literally, and ended when they were trying to climb through manzanita and redshank I was told was 15 feet off the ground. Lucked out that time! Was it really that tall, Ed? Nevertheless, I decided to take my chances and keep a close eye on Ed!

Pete Carlson, a RMRU member from Crestline, picked me up in Redlands Saturday at 6:15 a.m. so we could meet the gang at the Anza Turnoff in Garner Valley at 8 o'clock. We had arranged to leave our cars there under the watchful eye of the owner of the Backwoods Inn, and have Mary

Bowman, RMRU's chief communications specialist, transport us down the road to the Pacific Crest Trail still in Garner Valley. From there we planned to leisurely wind our way up to the Desert Divide Trail then down to Live Oak Spring for lunch.

It was a beautiful day and perfect temperature for hiking. Mary decided to walk along for a couple of miles and we enjoyed her company until she turned around when we stopped for our first break. She could have at least had a snack and shared a few jokes with us. You missed all the fun, Mary!

Obviously we were in a good mood and enjoying the beautiful vistas across the valley and the winding trail, pinons and live oaks and several very impressive rock pinnacles and slabs. A small seep formed a pool in the shade of trees and became another rest stop that we would savor and hesitate to leave. We all moved fast, however, because of someone upwind. Joel Erickson would have been a prime suspect but he was home with Pneumonia (that's what he called her anyway). That left Mel Krug, another semi-pro prankster who had set a rapid pace all morning, for good reason we know now! It was time to leave anyway.

We soon gained the saddle where the Desert Divide Trail intersects and headed down toward a delightful little nook called Live Oak Spring named after the tight cluster of live oaks with a massive granddaddy live oak right in the center. It was lunch time, of course, and everyone selected his spot under the oaks beside the spring and small meadow. Rob Gardner, a social worker from Indio, was trying to write a last minute report, but not having much luck due to all the ruckus caused by Mel who discovered his gourmet fish had leaked all over his patagonia shirt. It was

dubbed the "patatunia" and prompted numerous fish and tuna jokes that kept us all laughing all weekend.

We had to get going again if we were going to make it to Palm Canyon and its shimmering pools for camp. Kevin Walker led now since he had recently been there and knew the way. We naturally lost the trail but Kevin claimed that he could have found the way out if it had been dark since that was when he had been there. Four hours later, several dozen ticks and mucho



RMRU PHOTO BY JIM FAIRCHILD

**PALMS TO PINES** — This is what RMRU members saw as they neared the end of their hike down Palm Canyon. From the pine trees of Garner Valley to the Palms of the Indian Visitor Center, it was a very interesting and enjoyable hike.

manzanita we made it back on the trail following Jim Fairchild who said, "There's a stream right over there." Fortunately, we had all filled our water bottles some time back at a small creek because the only stream over there came from cows splashing over rocks.

We gave up on getting to Palm Canyon that night and settled for a cow pasture with more "chips" than you could count beside the "stream over there." I almost had Kevin convinced he should cook his steak over "chips" like the early pioneers, but he chickened out at the last minute. As usual, the campfire, gourmet meals, and esprit de corps were superb. The stars could nearly knock your eyes out, and I fell asleep wondering what all I'd missed the past few months that I couldn't be on trainings.

The crow of the California Quail was my alarm. I like Quail. Besides being extremely tasty, they too sleep in, waiting for the sun to come up and warm things up before stirring. The smell of sizzling bacon brought me to my senses and I got up trying to figure out the best approach to ensure snagging a couple of pieces. After standing around awhile, they took pity on me and we were off to another great day.

It wasn't long until we had reached Palm Canyon proper and began the longer-than-I-remembered march out of the canyon to Hermit's Bench. Occasionally we'd find a suitable pool, or unsuitable if you prefer, as a la naturel was the fashion of the day. Descending steadily toward the Indian Center at Hermit's Bench, we encountered increasing numbers of day visitors to the pools and cool palms lining the lower end of Palm Canyon. Moments later we met John Dew and Mary again for our car shuttle back to the top of the mountain. Don Ricker, another associate member, had rounded out this perfect sized group of eight which combined with the spirit of Palm Canyon added up to be one of the most enjoyable RMRU trainings in my experience. • RMRU



RMRU PHOTO BY JIM FAIRCHILD

WOULD YOU TRUST THESE BOYS? — For lack of anything better to do, RMRU members Pete (tourist) Carlson, Larry (the sheik) Roland, Rob (squeecker) Gardner, Don (shy) Ricker, Kevin (which way is up) Walker, Mel (patatunia) Krug, and Bill (mobile home pack) Blaschko paused for the camera after gathering up these trail signs that previous hikers found the need to tear down.

## \$USTAINING MEMBERS

BY KEVIN WALKER

It just never fails, no matter how good my intentions are, I always seem to let the good, old newsletter come last. It is not right, and I do apologize for it. As in any volunteer organization there is a core group who handle bookwork, public relations, newsletter, etc., and ours is no different. I ask you to bear with us during periods of no mailings. Please take your time to look through this latest mailing. After a period of light rescue activity, we are back to normal if you could call it that, with rescues nearly every week. When that happens everything gets prioritized, work, team business, and family included. That brings me to another important point, that being family. Most important to me, is my wife Patrice and daughter Bridgett. If we are at a family gathering, out on the town, or just relaxing at home, when the call comes I just get up and go, leaving my loved ones behind to do whatever, ALONE. And also to the wives and families of the closest most trusted friends I have, thank you for allowing your men to go out and do what

they do, for it takes a family's support to make this team work. To everyone who supports this team we call RMRU, I say thank you.

### MARCH — JUNE

#### New—

- Rolling Homes Mobile Park
- John Podolsky
- \*Vivian Roush
- Nuviev School Science Camp Fund
- \*Stanley & Pearl Lonberger
- Dr. & Mrs. Dale Huseboe
- M/M Howard Haering
- M/M Weston Robinson
- \*M/M Norman Greene

#### Renewing—

- M/M Bert Leithold
- \*M/M Kenneth Andrews
- Dr. & Mrs. Dale Huseboe
- \*Hemet Noontimers Lions Club
- Hazel Berglund
- \*Circle City Hospital
- \*Kiwanis — Uptown Riverside
- \*Dr. Robert Johnson
- \*Banning Womans Club

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