

Volume XXII, Issue IV, April 1986

Rob Gardner, Editor — Kevin Walker, Publisher — Dona Halcrow, Artist

Search and Rescue

SEARCH

Mission No. 8614M

4 Apr., Sun.
Geology Tour Road
Joshua Tree National Monument

By Rob Gardner



The National Park Service (NPS) called upon the Mountain Rescue Association (MRA), including the **RMRU**, to assist in a search for a missing hiker, Phillip Cassadey, (age 25). Mr. Cassadey was last seen at 3:45 p.m. on Saturday near the base of Lost Horse Mountain. The search was initiated by NPS deploying hasty teams by 8:10 p.m. Saturday. There was a great concern that the hiker may have been in difficulty as he was a diabetic and he had left his insulin in his car.

The NPS had California Rescue Dog Association (CARDA) members with their search dogs, Joshua Tree Search and Rescue (JOSAR) members, and an El Toro Marine Base Search and Rescue helicopter searching through the night. The MRA members joined the search Sunday morning.

Shortly after MRA teams arrived it was discovered that Mr. Cassadey was not at Joshua Tree National Monument. Reportedly, upon returning from his hike he was unable to find either his vehicle or his friend. He did find a road and hitch-hiked a ride home. Apparently, it never occurred to Mr. Cassadey that anybody would be looking for him. He was found, sleeping, at his apartment in Riverside by his mother when she went there to obtain better scent articles for the search dogs. Mr.

Cassadey's mother immediately notified the NPS. • **RMRU**

Volunteer Man Hours — 60

EVACUATION

Mission No. 8615M

26-27 Apr., Sat.-Sun.
Lamb Canyon
Riverside County

By Jim Fairchild



Late Saturday afternoon, William S. Tru, Jr., age 53, of Hemet, was driving along Lamb Canyon Road south of Beaumont on his way home. Upon approaching the "Thirty Mile-an-Hour Curve," his car veered off the road, took out the sign indicating the speed, and plummeted over the edge. Three-hundred feet down the 45 degree angle slope, the car and Mr. Tru's body came to a stop. We heard during the mission that a lady witness proceeded to Hemet to call for help, and that fifteen Marines climbed down to the wreck. We do marvel there weren't serious injuries in the latter action. Before long the CHP arrived, we heard one officer went down and returned. The California Department of Forestry arrived, along with a number of San Jacinto Police. One each of the last two agencies went down, and were there when **RMRU** arrived.

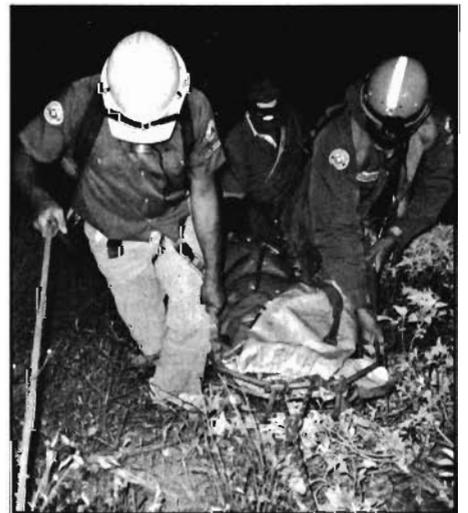
We were called about the time darkness fell. When the writer arrived there were two huge fire trucks, a large generator trailer providing power for brilliant lights that flooded the canyon below. CHP officers were keeping flares going and directing traffic. I found John Dew and Bruce Gahagan. We formulated a plan to get someone down for the recovery. Before long Dr. Ray Hussey, Jay Pion, Joe Erickson, and Henry Negrete were on hand.

We lowered Bruce and Joe with the litter, while Ray, Jay, and Henry prepared the mechanical advantage system for the haul back up. We were pleased to have used one of our six-hundred foot long static lines, because with the lower and the raise riggings we used the last foot. Down at the wreck Bruce took many

photos and then they placed the body in the bag and readied for the ascent. Instead of trees or rocks or pickets for anchors, we used the very convenient large hooks on the front bumpers of the huge fire trucks. With a ninety-degree angle from the truck at the canyon's edge, we ran the raise rigging sixty feet laterally to the second truck. After about six increments of pulling we had retrieved the body, Bruce, Joe, Ray, and Gil Carr. The latter had arrived a bit later, and had gone down with Joe and Ray when it was determined their help was needed. That left the fireman and policeman, and Gil was lowered to get them tied in for their raise. Glenn Henderson arrive during the later stages and suggested we use the upper truck to raise the last men. This worked quickly and well.

All through the mission representatives of the other agencies were helpful and cooperative. It was highly rewarding to see five agencies working together in their areas of expertise toward a common goal, tragic as it was.

Had there been a live subject down there with serious injuries, we would have called for a helicopter pick-up and



RMRU PHOTO BY GLENN HENDERSON

UP THE HILL — **RMRU** members Joe Erickson, Gil Carr, and Bruce Gahagan pull up the litter holding the body of William S. Tru, killed when his car went off Highway 74 in Lamb Canyon and tumbled nearly 600 feet to the canyon bottom.

evacuation, because the ride up the loose-rock slope might have been too bumpy.

Sometime after midnight we all drove off into the brisk night air, breathing deeply to rid our lungs of the flare and diesel smoke — this was one of the few operations we've conducted at the edge of a busy highway. • RMRU

Volunteer Man Hours — 63



Orientation

**5 Apr., Sat.
Skyline Trail
San Jacinto Mountains**

By Ed E. Tore



There was a great turnout of team members on a beautiful day for the April RMRU training. The team members began a hike from Long Valley (8500' elevation) to Palm Springs (200' elevation) via the age old Skyline Trail. The hike started at about 7:00 a.m. Saturday, April 5, 1986.

This training day offered exercises in many facets of Search and Rescue work as well as physical exercise. The trail is about eleven miles of rugged hiking. There is only one point near the trail where water is available (and there is no water in the summer).

The team started out onto the trail with ice axes in hand as they hiked across the snow and ice covered portion of the trail. Conditions were marginal for the use of crampons. As the team came to view points, orientation talks were given by Walt Walker. Landmarks were pointed out as the team hiked with Chino Canyon to the northwest and Tahquitz Canyon to the southeast. Many hikers have mistakenly dropped off of the Skyline trail into these difficult deep canyons which demand respect. (see story on Mission 8609M).

At about 9:30 a.m. a water break was taken and as the team members prepared to hike on it was discovered that Joe was missing, his pack remaining leaning on a large rock. Announcement was made that Joe was "missing" to allow for a mock-search as part of the training day. Bill Blaschko was appointed Operations Leader and a search was quickly in progress. Joe

was found nearby acting the role of victim of a serious fall. He was found near a large boulder, unconscious from head injury and with a broken leg. The training now went into a mock-rescue mode.

The mock-rescue was complicated by non-availability of special equipment. A cervical collar was available from Doc Blaschko's personal first aid kit. A splint for the broken leg was constructed with ice axes and webbing that individuals were carrying. A litter was made with a rope. Steve Bryant and Walt Walker demonstrated two different ways to construct rope litters. The acting victim continued to act out his role well, having every problem a victim may have in the circumstances.

The victim was raised in a rope litter and carried a short distance. The mock search and rescue then ended with a good critique.

The hike down the Skyline Trail was resumed. The sun was high and hot as the team was reaching lower (warmer) elevations. The afternoon was primarily hiking and interaction of team members. All team members were in Palm Springs by 7:00 p.m. and had a pizza pie dinner before dispersing in all directions to their homes and families in good spirits. • RMRU

Volunteer Man Hours — 210



RMRU PHOTOS BY JIM FAIRCHILD

SNOW TO DESERT — During the Skyline Trail familiarization, RMRU members literally went from icy conditions to desert-like terrain in a matter of minutes.

\$USTAINING MEMBERS

BY KEVIN WALKER

This is somewhat of an unusual column to write. It is both difficult and enjoyable at the same time. Let me explain. The difficult part is having to ask for your financial support from issue to issue. Even more so since our editor has put this publication back onto a rigid schedule. Believe me, I would much rather be hanging out over a cliff or trudging through a blizzard than have to pass the hat. The fun part is getting to see familiar faces, in the form of your continued support. For instance this time around we have added one new sustaining member, Mr. Eddie Ferlise, a man who we rescued last month. Thanks Eddie for your help in keeping RMRU in operation. As for the renewing I see the doctor who brought me into this world, a man who was a very important part of my scouting career, a student body who donates like clockwork, and my grandparents who are a big part of my life, a fellow

team member and the list goes on. The point I am making here is it is great to have you as sustaining members, and as friends.

We can say thank you, but I think that you know just how important you are, just by reading the articles in the newsletter and being a part of an extremely important operation. We are always trying to improve ourselves and our equipment, and of course gear does wear out and/or need maintenance, so for that we ask for your help. The need is still there, for our help and for yours.

MARCH — APRIL

New —

Eddie Ferlise

Renewing —

James G. Mead, M.D.

*Circle City Hospital

M/M Bert Leithold

M/M Clifford Lundquist

M/M H. C. Baumeister

El Camino Real Student Body

United Way Donors:

Barbara Brickamn

Karolyn Stanovich

Bernie McIlvoy

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

Notice!

The RMRU Newsletter is published 12 times per year 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 \$25 or more to:

Riverside Mountain Rescue Unit
Post Office Box 5444
Riverside, California 92517

Letters to the Editor . . .

Dear "RMRU Rob"

I want to express the thanks of all of the boys (and parents) of Rancho Mirage Cub Pack 79 Den 2 for your wonderfully informative and interesting talk that you presented on March 8, 1986. I thought that you would be glad to know that the boys all had a wonderful and safe hike to Magnesia Falls. I was amazed to see that almost every boy had each and every item with him that you said would be important to take on a hike.

We combined the hike into a mini nature walk and rock climbing expedition as we pointed out floral and animal wonders right under their noses. We safely ascended and descended the first thirty foot falls to enjoy lunch in a secluded canyon with a pond. We also want you to know that we had the boys "police" the canyon of previous visitors' trash. The day was safe, educational, and lots of fun. Thank you for your expertise in providing the Den with proper hiking guidelines.

I am enclosing a small donation to support the RMRU's wonderful efforts and results.

Sincerely,
Ron Partelow, Den 2

Excerpts of letter regarding Mission No. 8611M

. . . to let you know how I'm doing.

Three problems have persisted. My muscle fatigue was so bad Monday I had to crawl to the bathroom . . . my weight loss hit ten pounds . . . frostbite has kept my toes and heals numb.

In a later letter I'll send both a donation and a rescued person's viewpoint of how well the rescue was conducted. I'll also enclose a list of my mistakes and successes. Perhaps we can all learn from the incident.

. . . Robert (Mendoza — DPR) handled the situation professionally (when he found me), as you all did, and needless to say you all have my respect for both the work you do and how proficiently you do it. For what it's worth Search and Rescue people have risen to the top of my list of favorite people.

Regards,
Eddie Ferlise



A New Commander for the Banning Station

The Riverside County Sheriff has assigned a new commander to the Banning Station, from which most of our search and rescue missions in the San Jacinto Mountains are handled. Moving up to Captain as of the first of the year is Larry Smith. Capt. Smith is no newcomer to search and rescue, as we have worked with him through the Indio Station, which was his last assignment. With the year off to a busy start, the Captain has been out with us numerous times getting to know members, and to help us with the operation. We are looking forward to a bright and successful future.

Welcome aboard, Captain!

The Eagle's Nest



By
Cliff D.
Weller

Well, I've been soaring around at medium altitudes lately pondering the problems, including a fatality, that occurred over the past few months in the San Jacinto Mountain range. The fall and winter weather can be most unpredictable. In a matter of hours, or less, a clear crisp day can become a below freezing nightmare. In the night temperatures can drop below zero degrees Fahrenheit. Now that's enough to make one get his feathers ruffled. Loss of life can be prevented by taking heed to that big number one rule . . . be prepared.

In the winter one wants to stay warm. Remember, cooling off is easy while warming up takes work. When out in the cold the number one task is to keep warm and avoid HYPOTHERMIA.

HYPOTHERMIA: *A decrease in core body temperature to a level at which normal muscular and brain functions are impaired. Most deaths due to exposure or exhaustion are primarily due to hypothermia.*

Hypothermia occurs most rapidly in a cold, wet, windy environment, which removes body heat rapidly. Exposed skin is a main source of heat loss. An uncovered head or bare hands may account for as much as fifty percent of the total body heat loss when the temperature is below 40°F. Heat loss, especially from wet skin, is substantially increased by wind. Heavy exercise increases heat loss by increased evaporation from the lungs and from sweating.

In order to avoid hypothermia keep warm by use of proper clothing that will create good insulation for the body. Layers of clothing (wool or polypropylene) are recommended, rather than one heavy parka. As a person moves about he can remove a layer of clothing if he begins to perspire. Remember, you want to stay dry. Put on warm clothing or raingear before you get cold or wet. Keep your body core warm by:

- staying dry,
- creating good insulation,
- absorbing heat from the environment, when possible,
- generating heat through metabolism.

If you are unable to stay warm and dry, seek shelter. Get out of the rain and/or wind. For generation of heat your body needs fuel. Food is fuel. Fatty foods, glucose, and protein are all important fuel foods.

When heat loss exceeds heat gain and the condition continues hypothermia will eventually result. As body core temperature drops from 98.6°F to about 97°F violent shivering will increase to a point of being uncontrollable. This is the first major warning of the onset of hypothermia. As core temperature continues to drop, more symptoms occur — lethargic attitude, slurred speech, stumbling, poor judgement, incoherence.

Body heat loss occurs by:

- Radiation — Loss of body heat from uncovered surfaces, especially the head and neck.
- Convection — Warm air carried away from the skin by wind and replaced by cold air.
- Evaporation — Heat loss from sweating and from the lungs (increases as exercise increases).
- Conduction — Heat taken away from the body when the body makes contact with something cold, such as cold water, snow, metal ice-axe handle, or cold ground surface.

Prevention of hypothermia is primarily accomplished by awareness and preparedness. Hypothermia can rapidly go to a serious stage. On any trip, including a day hike, where sudden weather changes may occur or nights are cold (you may end up out at night) carry clothing adequate to protect as much skin surface as possible (how much exposed skin does an Eagle have?).

Be alert to early symptoms of hypothermia in yourself or others. The interval from the onset of hypothermia symptoms to collapse may be as short

as one hour. Watch for shivering, slurred speech, and stumbling. In deteriorating weather retreat or bivouac before symptoms of hypothermia appear. Adequate water and food intake are essential. Food replenishes body energy stores to maintain continual heat production (easily digestible food should be carried for emergency rations).

When hypothermia does occur minimize further heat loss:

- Remove any wet clothing and replace with dry clothing,
- Give the person some quickly absorbed high energy foods,
- Give the person some warm (not hot) liquids,
- Get the person into shelter,
- Have the person move around a little,
- Provide insulation from the elements, including insulation from the ground,
- Consider putting the hypothermic person into a sleeping bag with a second person with normal body temperature, to provide warmth. An alternate to a second person would be placement of hot water bottles in the sleeping bag near the person.

People in deep hypothermia may need medical attention and treatment with intravenous fluids, heart monitoring, assisting respiration, and other special treatment. When to rewarm a person in deep hypothermia is controversial. Don't let anyone in your group get past the earliest of symptoms without stopping and taking action to warm him or her.

Be prepared to keep warm in cold, wet, and windy weather, and keep warm. And remember . . .

IF YOUR FEET GET COLD —
PUT ON YOUR HAT.



Board of Directors for the Fiscal Year of May 1, 1986 — April 30, 1987



Walt Walker
TREASURER



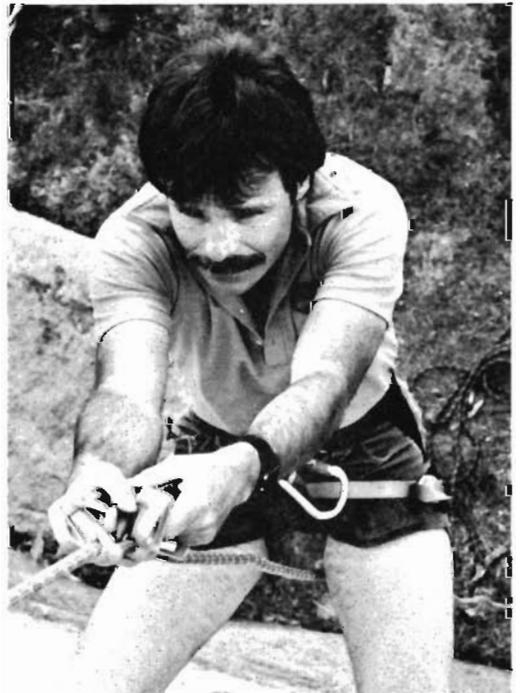
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