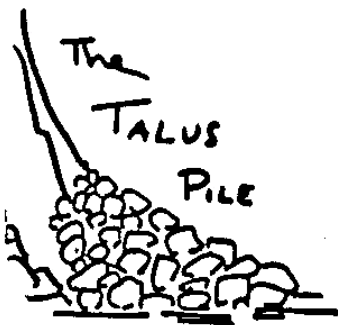


March 1995  
#95



CHINA LAKE MOUNTAIN RESCUE GROUP  
P.O. BOX 2037  
RIDGECREST, CA 93556

### SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

Mar 28-Apr 25	First Aid, Topic B (Tuesdays)	Rindt
April 1-2	Mt San Gorgonio	Hueber
April 10	Meeting/Tracking	Hueber/Dow/McCormick
April 15	SCMA	Myers
April 16	Climbing (local area)	Mitchell
April 21	Girl Scout Encampment	Schmierer
April 21-22	Olancha, SE couloir	Rindt
April 23	Climbing (local area)	Mitchell
April 28	Emergency Services "Earthquake"	Gray
April 29	Helitac Training	Ganger
April 30	Climbing (Local area)	Mitchell
May 5-7	Mt. Williamson	Sakai
May 8	Meeting/Stoves	Leiser/Burge,C/Antonsen
May 10	Stretcher Hut Night	Mitchell
May 13	Stretcher Practice-Great Falls Basin	Mitchell
May 14	Climbing (local area)	Mitchell
May 16-18	CPR	Mitchell
May 20	CRMRA Meeting	Myers
May 19-23	Mt. Shasta	Myers
May 27-29	Mt. Lyell & Maclure	Rockwell

## Operation Reports

**94-23 10/27/94 Search  
Ridgecrest Hinman**

CLMRG was contacted by concerned friends of 65-year-old Ridgecrest resident, Marilyn Viers, at 0700 on Thursday, 27 October. She and her car had been missing from her home since the previous Monday afternoon. Her friends, neighbors and husband (who was visiting family in Northern California) had been attempting to locate her by contacting all possible persons who might know of her whereabouts and looking at places she might be. The woman was considered to be stable and responsible so her sudden disappearance was a concern to many people. The Kern County Sheriff's Office had been notified of the missing woman on Wednesday.

I contacted Sgt. Garry Davis of the Sheriff's Office to determine the status of the case and offer CLMRG's services. He agreed to initiate a search even though he was concerned that we had very little information to direct the effort. Deputy Steve Sneed of the Ridgecrest substation was assigned to the case and was our local contact. Terry Mitchell coordinated the callout with assistance from Betty Meng.

A friend of the woman, Maurice Hamm, was going to fly his plane to unofficially search the local desert for her bright yellow automobile. He needed passengers to help, so Tom Stogsdill of CLMRG and another person joined him in the air search.

Base camp was organized at the CLMRG rescue hut. I was able to talk to Mrs. Viers' husband, Lyal, who had stopped in Wasco on his return trip from Northern California. He provided information including places she might go hiking and details about the car. I asked him to stop and call me an hour later in case we needed more information.

We decided to initially focus our efforts on three tasks before starting a search of the local desert area around Ridgecrest. One team (Finco and Antonsen) was sent to the woman's home to talk with neighbors and possibly identify shoe and tire prints. Two teams (Rockwell and Castro; Hueber and Breitenstein) were sent to search for her car along the major streets and in the parking lots of the major shopping areas of Ridgecrest. Three teams (A. Mitchell and Gray; Sakai and Jain; Dow and Martin) were sent to an area near her home where someone had seen an older woman walking on Monday.

Later TerHeun and Stenger arrived at base camp and helped Terry, who was operating the base radio. I organized and checked out leads.

A Sheriff's deputy later reported he had seen a yellow car parked between Walker Pass and Walker Pass Lodge while driving from Bakersfield that morning. Having completed their assignment at the Viers home, Finco and Antonsen drove to the Walker Pass area to investigate the yellow car sighting, but found nothing.

The teams at the sighting of the "older woman" found some tracks and tire prints. They were unable to follow the tracks and needed more information about the woman's shoes and car's tires to verify them. One team was sent to her home to gather information about her shoes upon the arrival of her husband. The other two teams were sent to investigate areas around her home where she normally walks.

Stogsdill returned to base camp after the air search had stopped. They had searched a large area to the west and south of Ridgecrest including Walker Pass where the woman had hiked in the past. We began organizing more air search aircraft through the Kern County Sheriff's Aero squadron.

At about 1200, as Lyal Viers was driving north on Hwy 14, he saw his wife, Marilyn, and another man driving south in her car. Both stopped and after talking, drove to their home. Mitchell reported their arrival and the search was terminated.

The man in Marilyn's car was Lyal's cousin from France. The cousin had arrived unexpected at the airport in LA on Monday. Marilyn had driven to LA to bring him back to Ridgecrest. His luggage was lost by the airline so they stayed the night in LA. After getting the luggage on Tuesday, they started the drive home, but had car problems in Lancaster. They spent the night there and started home on Wednesday. They decided to go see Mount Whitney and drove past Ridgecrest to Lone Pine, where they spent the night. They were in the process of driving from Lone Pine past Ridgecrest to the airport in

Bakersfield, when they passed Lyal. During this entire episode, Mrs. Viers neglected to inform anyone of her whereabouts.

Our teams returned to base camp and the operation was secured at 1430.

**94-24 10/30/94 Incident**  
**Owens Peak Green**

Eight CLMRG members went on our "regular" Sunday rock climbing trip to Owens Ridge. However, only seven wanted to rock climb and one (Carol Burge) wanted to climb Owens Peak. At the trail head we agreed to be back at the cars by 1500.

By 1520, all the rock climbers were back, but Carol was not there. At 1600 we put a plan in motion to locate the "victim". Four of the rock climbers (Hinman, Myers, Breitenstein & Jain) started up towards Owens Peak. Two others (Mitchell & Hueber) drove back to Ridgecrest to alert a coordinator of a potential search and to get a radio net established. I stayed at the trail head.

At 1800, Hueber arrived back at the trail head with the CLMRG Jeep. He said that Carol was at Brady's on Highway 395. She had taken the wrong side of the ridge and had gone down Grapevine Canyon instead of Indian Wells Canyon. She had called Sheila Rockwell and Sheila had called on the pager to say that Carol was OK and that she was at Brady's. This left us with the dilemma of how to call back the hasty team. We flashed headlights, honked horns and even hiked around to different vantage points to try and signal with headlamps. All this without success. At shortly after 1900, the hasty team showed up at the trail head. Debbie Breitenstein had her pager with her and had heard Sheila's message.

This would have ended the situation, but our "faithful" Jeep decided not to start. It was parked in the middle of the road above the trail head. This was the closest spot that allowed radio contact with Roger Meng who was running China Lake Base from his home. Fortunately, we were able to push it off to the side enough that Daryl could drive his truck past it. We piled six people in his truck and headed out. By 2100 all of us were safely home.

The Jeep was rescued by a KCSO authorized wrecker a couple days later. Bob Rockwell went with them to help with the salvage job.

There are more than a couple lessons in this story:

First: Even though Owens Peak is a very easy one day hike, it is possible to get in trouble.

Second: The pager is a means of communication that few of us appreciate. I had intentionally left mine home because I would not be able to respond in a timely fashion to a callout. Sheila was thinking smart when she took a chance that someone on the hill would hear the pager. Sheila also was making sure that a radio net was being established. She asked Tom Roseman to go to the hut and fire up the base radio there in addition to Roger Meng's at-home rig. And, Debbie deserves a merit badge for having her pager with her. If she had not heard the message that Carol was OK it would have taken several hours longer to close out this incident.

Third: Two of us on this trip have ham radios. Neither one brought his radio. If both radios had been there we would have had communication with Ridgecrest and with the hasty team. One radio there would have saved a lot of time and effort.

**94-25 12/15-16/94 Search**  
**Tehachapi Finco**

Our annual Christmas party was interrupted by a page from Marty Williamson with the Kern County Sheriff. CLMRG was requested to assist in an on-going search in the Tehachapi area. The sheriff wanted CLMRG at basecamp at 0600. The weather was cold, and the terrain was mountainous with snow and mud. Betty Meng coordinated the callout.

Eight members met at the hut at 0330. We arrived at basecamp shortly after 0600. We were briefed on what had happened. Javier Perez, 17 years old, and some friends cut school on Wednesday, 14 December, to go play in the snow near Mountain Park. Javier and his friends hiked about ten minutes up and over a hill from their car. Javier's hands started to get cold, so he told his friends he would hike back to the car to get his gloves. Javier never got back to the car. His friends reported him missing at 1500.

Tehachapi SAR started to track Javier at 1800. Javier's tracks showed that he had been suckered down into a side canyon away from his vehicle. Teams tracked Javier for more than 7 miles through miserable weather (rain, snow, wind, and freezing temperatures) and up and down drainages and over mountainous terrain. Javier's line-of-travel did not make sense. He walked right by housing areas, and never stopped to ask for help. Javier was spotted Thursday out on an archery range, but hiked off before the foreman was able to catch up with him. Both nights Javier was out, lights from homes were visible to him, but he just kept hiking. Javier was tracked to the area of Cummings Mountain. During the night on Thursday, teams lost Javier's tracks at around the 5500 ft level. All field teams were brought back into base by early morning.

A helicopter from Los Angeles County flew the area early Friday morning using a FLIR to try to locate Javier. Although the helicopter crew was unable to locate Javier, they did notice footprints on the west shoulder of Cummings Mountain, but were not able to identify them as being Javier's. The plan was to insert CLMRG teams into the field by helicopter. However, a warning light came on in the helicopter forcing it to be grounded. LA County would send another helicopter, but it would be a couple of hours. Base decided to insert the first CLMRG teams by four wheel drive vehicle. Tom Stogsdill, Arun Jain, Bob Rockwell, and Mike Myers were driven to the vicinity of the last tracks of Javier.

The teams radioed base that they did find tracks which were fairly fresh, and followed them to a saddle on Cummings Mountain (near the area where the helo had spotted foot prints). The tracks dropped down into Cedar Canyon. Stogsdill and Jain (Team 2) needed to stay on top of the ridge to maintain communications with basecamp and relay for Rockwell and Myers (Team 1), who descended into the canyon. Team 3 (Hine and Breitenstein) were heloed into an area at the lower end of Cedar Canyon. Their assignment was to cut for Javier's tracks and to establish a containment area.

After a couple hours of tracking, Team 1 radioed they had lost Javier's track in the canyon. Team 3 radioed that they felt (with a confidence of approximately 85%) that Javier had not crossed below them in the canyon. The helicopter pilot flying the area thought he saw tracks in the canyon near a fence line at approximately the 6100 ft level. Team 1 hiked to this area. Base proceeded to get other field teams into the area where the tracks were last seen, to cut roads in the vicinity and establish a containment area.

After cutting for tracks in the area of Javier's last known tracks along the fence line, Team I found his tracks heading back down the drainage. This area was densely packed with scrub oak. As Team I worked their way through and around the brush, a faint cry was heard. Around 1300, Team 2 radioed that Team I had found Javier. He was cold, tired, thirsty and hungry, and he was suffering from frostbite on his feet. Javier was given extra clothing and a little food and water. It was decided that the best way to extricate Javier was a hoist evacuation into a helicopter. Air Five from Los Angeles was requested. Myers and Rockwell carried Javier to a better location for the helicopter evacuation.

Javier, Rockwell and Myers were hoisted from that location. The helicopter then picked up Team 3, who was hiking to Team I's location to help with the extrication. Team 2 was heloed out also. Everyone was back in base by 1440. CLMRG arrived back in Ridgecrest at 1640. CLMRG members participating: Finco, Stogsdill, Hine, Rockwell, Myers, Jain, Breitenstein, and Ganger. Coordinator: B. Meng.

Comments:

1. The GPS units were a definite asset. Javier's last known tracks were located on the basecamp map by elevation contours and approximation of terrain features. However, the first GPS readings from the teams taken to the last known tracks, placed the field teams over a mile away from the location marked on the basecamp map. When Javier was located, the GPS coordinates (along with mirrors in the field) helped the helo easily locate the position. So, although the field members had no idea where they were on the map (they only had partial quads so the UTM grids were not on their maps), base was well aware of everyone's location.
2. When partial quads are used, the UTM grid should be on the partial quad. If the grid is drawn on the original quad, then the copies of the partial quads will have the grid and only the UTM coordinates will have to be added.
3. CLMRG found Javier Perez. However if it had not been for the superb tracking by the other Kern

County teams, the outcome could have been different. Kern County teams from Tehachapi, Frazier Park, Desert and Bakersfield tracked Javier for over 7 miles in miserable weather and difficult terrain. CLMRG tracked Javier the last 2 miles in nice weather, although the terrain remained difficult. It was a definite team effort by Kern County field teams and the helicopters from Los Angeles County.

**95-1          1/28/95          Alert**  
**San Bernardino County    Finco**

At around 1920 on Saturday evening, the San Bernardino County Sheriff requested our assistance in the continuing search for a snow boarder who got caught in an avalanche earlier in the week. The search would be on Sunday only and would be a fine probe search for the subject. Betty Meng coordinated the call out, assisted by Carol Pappas. I told Betty to call everyone on the roster and gave her a list of equipment that each person would need. At 2100, Betty reported that she was not able to get anyone to commit to the operation, but that she had left messages with quite a few people. At 2100, I called Sgt. Garry Davis and told him we could not field a team. He said he would call OES with that news. Fifteen minutes later Betty called that Robby Dow had committed, but we did not reverse the no-go decision.. Epilogue: The fine probe search did not find the subject. At the March 4th MRA Rock Workshop, it was reported that the subject had been found by search dogs later in February when the snow had melted enough to allow the dogs to get a scent. The subject was buried at least 18 feet below the surface of the snow - which means probing would not have found him right after the avalanche. The coroner stated that it appears the subject died within minutes after coming to a stop in the avalanche due to massive internal injuries.

**95-2          2/12/95          Alert**  
**Mt San Jacinto          Finco**

Arnold Gaffrey from Sierra Madre paged CLMRG at 1545 on Sunday, 12 February. The page came through garbled on Mitchell's pager, so he called to see if I had gotten it; however, I did not have my pager turned on. Mitch could not take the operation, so I returned the call to Arnold. Riverside Mountain Rescue asked Sierra Madre to alert CLMRG and other MRA teams for a possible search. The search was for hikers last seen in an avalanched area on Mt. San Jacinto. The hikers were climbing San Jacinto by a steep snow and ice route - Snow Creek. The area had recently avalanched and the hikers were overdue. It was feared they may have been caught in the avalanche. The alert was canceled just prior to my call to Arnold. The hikers were located and were OK.

**95-3          2/14/95          Transit**  
**Mt Pinos          Tom Roseman**

I received a call from A. Mitchell shortly after 0900 Tuesday morning. Mitch was looking for an operation leader, having received a call from Sgt. Garry Davis directly. Mitch could not go due to work commitments. One call to Betty Meng secured a coordinator, and I broadcast a page to provide early notification. Terry Mitchell assisted as telephoner. Seven people responded and we left the hut at 1100.

A 48-year-old man and his 10-year-old daughter had been reported missing the previous day when they failed to return from a frolic in the snow. They were last seen around 1400 when temperatures were dropping and it was snowing heavily. Teams from Ventura County and the Frazier Park team searched through the night, using several tracked vehicles among other resources. Helicopters were used as the weather began to clear in the afternoon, and the subjects were spotted from the air around 1300. The helicopter crew noticed marks where a toboggan had been dragged across dirt breaks in the snow. The subjects were OK, but cold and tired. We arrived on scene as people were packing up to leave, so we got a few details and headed home. Sgt. Davis had tried to contact us via the cellular phone, but although it was on, it never rang.

CLMRG members were: Roseman, Sakai, Florian, Jain, McCormick, Myers, Dow, B. Meng and T. Mitchell.

**95-4          2/27-28/95          Incident**

## **Pear Lake Hut      Roseman**

Five members were on a scheduled trip to the Pear Lake region of the Sequoia National Park, when Bill Ferguson fractured his left fibula just above the ankle. The injury occurred on an open slope about 500 ft west of the Pear Lake Hut at approximately 3:00PM on the 27th of February. Werner and I were watching Bill telemark down the slope that we had just skied down, when he took a tumble. We asked Bill if he was OK when he stopped sliding about 50 ft from us. He replied "No, I think I broke my leg." I went to the hut to get help and splinting material while Werner ministered to Bill. While I was gone, Werner did an excellent job of splinting Bill's leg with two ski poles and Bill's 'skins'. We used some 'horse wrap' to reinforce the job and Bill was able to self-propel himself down the hill to a position about 200 feet from the hut. Now reinforced by Steve, we used Carol's space blanket to drag Bill the rest of the way to the hut. Using the radio supplied by the park service, I was able to contact the park dispatcher. Due to the impending darkness and the fact the Bill was stable, Lemoore was scheduled to pick him up by helicopter the next morning. The Lemoore crew was on site by 0830, and lifted off around 0930 to transport Bill to Valley Medical Center in Fresno. We packed up and headed out at 1030. After debriefing a park ranger at Lodgepole Visitors Center at 1330, Steve and I drove to Fresno to pick up Bill and take him home to Ridgecrest, arriving home around 2030. Participating members were C. Burge, Ferguson, Florian, Hueber and Roseman.

\* \* \* \* \*

### 1995 Officers and Committee Chairs

President	Andrew Mitchell
Vice-President	Tom Sakai
Treasurer	Robbie Dow
Secretary	Debbie Breitenstein

MRA Representative	Mike Myers
Equipment	Mike Myers
Training	Dave Ganger
First aid	Dianne Rindt
Public Education	Mary Schmierer
Talus Pile	Carol Burge
Sheriff's Committee	Andrew Mitchell
Summer Class	Linda Finco
Qualifications Committee	Al Green
	Tom Roseman
	Tom Stogsdill

[Tom Stogsdill announced his resignation from CLMRG in March. Daryl Hinman was elected to replace him on the Q.C.]

<b>DONORS</b>
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CLMRG deeply appreciates recent donations from the following friends, several of whom have been loyal supporters of the group for many years.

Lyal and Marilyn Viers  
William and Lois Adamsen  
Nicholas and Lisa Bottka  
T.M. and Virginia Stirling  
John Olley  
Clifton Chandler

John and Marilyn Wick  
 Bryson and Barbara Ann VanGundy  
 Janet Hammond  
 Sierra Peaks Section of the Sierra Club  
 High Desert Classic Mountain Bike Race

<b>1994 Annual Reports</b>
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Summary of Operations - Al Green

Total Operations	25
Rescues	4
Recoveries	0
Searches	8
Alerts	4
Transits	4
Incidents	4
Mobilizations	1

Operations by Month

January	0
February	1
March	2
April	2
May	2
June	3
July	3
August	5
September	2
October	4
November	0
December	1

Requesting Agencies

Inyo County	11
Kern County	7
Mono County	2
Sequoia Nat'l Park	2
Los Angeles County	1
Riverside County	1
Tulare County	1

Total of 24 Victims

OK	9
Injured	11
Not found	2
Dead	2

Average # CLMRG Members/Operation: 8.4

Total person hours	1,888
NAWCWD excused	391 hours
Total vehicle miles	5,994

\* \* \*

### **Public Education - Mary Schmierer**

CLMRG participated in the following public education activities during 1994:

18 "Hug a Tree" presentations to local schools, day care centers and scouts.

Three First Aid demonstrations to local schools Girl Scout Science Seminar - map, compass and GPS demonstration.

Annual Summer Mountaineering and Mountaineering Safety class for the community

Map and compass demonstration to Valley Riders (equestrian group).

Girl Scout Mojave Primitive Encampment - (Tyrolean traverse and mountain safety)

Rappelling demonstrations for Boy Scouts Emergency Services Exhibition (static display)

Winter camping presentation to Boy Scout Masters

Mountain and hiking safety presentations to Naval Air Warfare Center (NAWC) China Lake, Branch Dental Clinic, NAWC Youth Center students, US Post Office (Ridgecrest, Palmdale, Lancaster), Carrie Ovall Child Care Center, Indian Wells Gem and Mineral Society, James Monroe Junior High, Groves Elementary School.

Jumaring demonstrations at Desert Empire Fair, NAWC Youth Center Summer Program.

Expedition mountaineering and glacier climbing presentation to Monroe Jr. High

Total CLMRG person hours: 292

Total presentation hours: 65

Total attendees: 4227 + (number of people viewing Emergency Services Exhibition and Desert Empire Fair demo unknown)

### **Equipment - Werner Hueber**

In January we started with a long and ambitious list of projects. The major ones were clean up of the hut, inventory of the maps and purchase of new maps, painting of the hut, purchase of equipment and of course maintenance of the jeep. We accomplished most of the tasks with the exception of the hut painting which is a major job. We left this to our friends on the 1995 committee.

The major purchases were: Ropes, titanium brake bars, more GPS units (now we can't get lost and base camp will know exactly where we are).

A source of constant frustration was the reliability of the jeep. It required a lot of maintenance and it broke down on several occasions. Fortunately, it never impacted our operations.

We wrote an Equipment Use Policy which was reviewed and approved by the Leaders. It specifies the number of the various items and how many must remain in the hut so they are available for operations. Most of the equipment is also available for scheduled training and group events and a few items are available for private use by members.

### **First Aid - Dianne Rindt**

1. Reformatting of CLMRG Wilderness First Aid Course. The replacement of the American Red Cross Advanced First Aid and Emergency Care course with the new Emergency Response course caused CLMRG to reformat the course we had been teaching for several years. The old CLMRG course was a modular version of the ARC Advanced course, updated and expanded to include additional material, particularly skills related to wilderness first aid. The new Red Cross course is excellent (although it still doesn't entirely meet our wilderness provider needs). The catch is that the requirements to qualify to teach this course--at least six consecutive weekend trips to Lancaster--have so far been prohibitive for members of a team who must also spend time on mountaineering and other types of training. As an interim measure, the CLMRG First Aid committee has formulated our own course, using Red Cross teaching materials as well as wilderness- specific references, which we believe will satisfy the requirements for our operations. The course is divided into two modules, or "topics", which are alternated every six months. Some of the basic material is repeated each time, with other material covered in only one of the topics. The Red Cross Community First Aid and Safety (i.e. "standard")

course has been included as part of the new course, to ensure that those members who formerly had Advanced certification are at least certified at the Standard level as their Advanced certificates expire.

2. First Aid and CPR courses taught in 1994. CLMRG instructors taught several first aid (see item 1 above) and CPR courses for CLMRG members during 1994. Topic A of the CLMRG first aid course was taught in April, with 12 members completing the five-evening course. Topic B was taught in October, again with 12 members. Another four members completed the Standard First Aid segment only. Four ARC Professional CPR courses were taught during 1994, to a total of 30 CLMRG members.

3. Equipment. A second extrication device (KED) and a second Sager traction splint were purchased, along with additional cervical collars. Some equipment in the victim bag was replaced, such as new polypro underwear and a more protective bivy bag.

4. EMT recertification. EMTs may now satisfy their recertification requirement through continuing education credits (CEUs) in Kern County. The first aid committee has initiated discussion with Kern County to have certain wilderness-related training included on the list of approved training to help fulfill this requirement.

\* \* \*

### **Training - Mike Renta**

There were 43 training events scheduled by the training committee this past year with a total participation of 729 person-hours. Two events were canceled. On the average, over seven people participated in each event. The event with the largest number of participants was a tracking practice with 19 participants. The event with the most number of person-hours was a winter skills/bivy training event with 102 person-hours. Most of the training events were one hour in length, but the longest was 17 hours (winter skills/bivy training). The most often held event involved tracking with 12 events and 112 person-hours, followed by stretcher practices with 10 events and 320 person-hours of participation.

Training events with other agencies are not included in this report since they are covered by the MRA and Sheriff's Committees.

### **Letters**

Re op# 94-23

To Daryl Hinman - My very special thanks to you and the professional efforts of the Mountain Rescue Group. We have lived here 27 years and have personally known many members of the group. It is always a comfort to know about the activities of the many volunteers that give of themselves. Please express our gratitude to all those who are "there for others". - Lyal and Marilyn Viers

\* \* \*

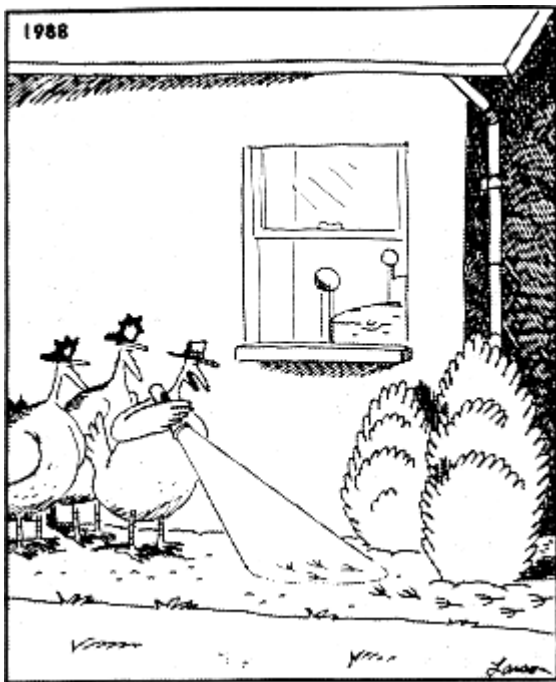
On being a statistic...[ op # 94-24] I could claim I just wanted to give the group a little unexpected training exercise, but the reality was that ending up on the wrong side of Owens Peak was entirely accidental. Did I feel stupid? Oh yes. But also comforted by the knowledge that if I couldn't find myself, CLMRG certainly would and wouldn't waste any time doing it either. Nevertheless, I was startled when I called in from Brady's to head off any plans for a search to find it already in full swing. This group is efficient! So from an embarrassed and very grateful "victim" - sorry for your trouble everyone and thank you very much. - Carol

\*\*\*\*\*

The Talus Pile is edited by Carol Burge



'SOMETIMES THEY FALL. THAT'S WHEN THEY LEARN HOW TO YODEL.'



"Aha! The victim's footprints! Course, we all leave tracks like this."