



**CHINA LAKE MOUNTAIN  
RESCUE GROUP**

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Editor, E. Anderson*

August 1970 #7

**CALENDAR**

August 8-9 Postponed trip to Junction Peak; still Dennis Burge as organizer

August 8 One day trip from Carroll Creek roadhead, for walking (no peak-baggers this trip). Front gate, 6 am.

August 15-16 Whitney climb...and see Bob Joy, 446-2248, or 2441

August 17 Postponed meeting, at Westbrook's. Come early to swim

August 29-30 Into the Palisades with Al. Green, 446-2491, or 2771

Sept. 5,6,7 Over. Shepherd Pass to try for Keith, Versteeg, Trojan, Williamson (and as I remember that trail, God Bless You All). Call Roman Motyka for organization plans, 446-2824, or 2844

Sept. 14 Meeting at McEwans'

Sept. 19-20 Thor...must be rock-climbing, since the organizer is Bill Stronge, at 446-3289, or 2206

**FINANCES . •• Roman Motyka**

**ASSESSMENTS!!!** At the June meeting of CLMRG a \$5.00 assessment was unanimously voted, to help defray costs of a new GE radio. Personnel of the MRC who have not as yet paid their assessment, and other interested parties, can send their contributions and/or assessment payments to:

Roman J. Motyka Code 3041 (or 1228 Hornet, China Lake)

No major expenditures during June and July.

**DONORS:** Nick Bottka 1 Berlin 31/Germany

Fred Camphausen, 45A Stroop, CL

August 1970 page 2 OPERATIONS  
Owens Peak, Southeast Ridge            Tim Pearia

On June 21, Jon Barber and Tim Pearia were attempting a new route below The Block on Owens Ridge. Tim was leading the second pitch and had stopped to rest, placing a pin to hold on to. The pin pulled and Tim fell 40 feet pulling one more pin. The fall knocked him unconscious and he received assorted scrapes and bruises.

His injuries would have been much greater had he not been wearing a hard hat. Another factor was the 100° weather which drains much of your strength. Although he was able to be walked out, if his injuries had been any worse it would have been difficult pointing out that it is a good practice to climb with no fewer than three people.

Jon's performance during this incident was outstanding. He lowered his injured partner to safety, descended an overhanging face under conditions that would have been difficult without the stress of the accident, and single-handed got Tim safely to the car and on to the hospital.

Having made a hasty retreat, much equipment was left at the scene. Carl Heller and Al Green set out to retrieve it the next morning. While Jumaring up the rope to remove gear left at the anchor, it became clear that the rope had not been secured properly and dropped Green to the ground. This emphasizes the point that anchors, knots, and gear should be double-checked. In this case the injury was not serious but over greater exposure could have been.

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Whitney Trail Operation, July 11, 12 . . . . Dennis Burge

About 9 pm the call came from Sgt. Walizer of the Inyo County Sheriff's Department that a hiker had been stricken with severe abdominal pains at about 13,000 feet on the Whitney Trail. This had happened near 1 p.m. this same day, and reports from other hikers were that his condition was quite bad but that his friends would try to get him down to Trail Camp at 12,000. Jim Nichols, Don Peterson, Tim Pearia, Bob Rockwell, Joe McIntire and I assembled at the hut, and with the assistance of Bill Stronge and Liz Anderson in preparing equipment we were off by 9:45. We drove to Lone Pine with thoughts of appendicitis, a long hike, and a long carry.

We met Dave Kruger and Jay Pennick of the Eastern Sierra Group at the Forest Service office in Lone Pine. They had an oxygen tank mounted on a pack and were ready to go, so we set off for Whitney Portal arriving there about 11:30 pm. Arrangements had been made for a helicopter to leave Lone Pine at first light. While we were preparing our equipment, we noticed a slight commotion around a carryall at the trailhead. When we investigated we were quite surprised to find that the victim had just arrived after recovering considerably and being aided down the trail by his friends.

His name was Kurt Pruhska (sp?). As a Hungarian Freedom Fighter he had received some severe abdominal and head wounds, and these areas had acted up under the effort of climbing. He had been examined by a passing doctor who reassured him that nothing serious was wrong. His friends had to go back up the trail to take care of their scout

continuing..Mt. Whitney...

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group, and turned him over to our care. He was still a little incoherent and in some pain. We had difficulty in trying to locate his family, who were supposed to be waiting, at the hospital. Finally, after much discussion when his family was not there, he declined to enter the hospital. After calling the sheriff, we turned him over to the local deputy who would take him to his family back at the Whitney Portal campground. We arrived home about 3 a.m., some 6 hours after the original call.

While this operation did not amount to anything in a mountain rescue sense, it points out some problems you may run into on an operation. In addition to the confusion at the hospital, we wondered what would have happened if we had gotten to the road head 1.5 minutes later after his friends had already driven him down to Lone Pine. We would have had no reason for not going on up the trail for 4 or 5 hours, until out arranged radio-check at 4 a.m.

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Gems from the world of literature!

"Now," said the Rabbit, "this is a search and I've organized it."

"Organized it. Which means, well, it's what you do to a search when you don't all look in the same place at once." — A. A. Milne

Search for John Wirt (25-26 July) •• Carl Heller

This took place in Yosemite Park alongside the Snow Creek trail from the Tioga Pass road into the Valley on Saturday and Sunday. Members of MRA were assembled outside the Tioga entrance in preparation for a stretcher-lowering test of the Bay Area Mountain Rescue Group. A ranger approached and asked whether we were the rescue teams who were going to search for the lost hiker. It turned out that we were!

I phoned Peter Thompson, the ranger in charge of rescues and searches. He wanted us to assemble for a briefing the next morning down in the Valley. However most of us thought we could be well employed that afternoon searching along the probable route of the lost John Wirt. Thompson suggested the West side of the Snow Creek trail.

We had 14 people and started down the trail on the crest between Snow and Tenaya canyons at 1400. We searched for tracks on both sides for 2 miles of flat crest. It seemed possible that he had wandered East into Tenaya canyon but we had been assigned the West drainage into Snow Creek. We split into 3 teams to search the hillside into Snow Creek. Assembling on the creek we continued down the stream along the 2 trails, but not in the creek bed. Where the creek and trail drop over the edge into the deep canyon under Half Dome. We searched possible "shortcuts" he might have taken off the trail and reached the bottom around 4000' at 1900.

We camped in Campground 9 along with the other organized youth groups. It would be interesting to know whether the kids, bears or bloodhounds were most disturbed that night. The night didn't last long, since at 0545 we assembled at the Visitor Center for a briefing by Peter Thompson. It turned out that we were to make an "official" search of the same area as yesterday. Suggestions that the Tenaya drainage was as likely place to look as Snow Creek were not appreciated. We therefore searched along the Snow Creek trail again, but with about 30 people. One team had an enjoyable descent of the 3000' Valley wall alongside Snow Creek using only one rappel.

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It was again suggested to Ranger Thompson that the Tenaya Creek drainage should be searched by at least one team looking for tracks and for the victim. We volunteered to remain over Monday for this search. This offer was turned down quite definitely, so, after a dinner at Curry's provided by the Park Service, we left for home, reaching China Lake at 0100 Monday.

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Search for 10-year-old boy north of San Francisco . . . (Staff!)  
(Trying to get the Talus Pile reports typed by a deadline is trick enough, but trying to get the reports from the fellows who are just back from operations is worse. Giving up on trying to get hold of Operation Leaders or members of the team, we'll just print a paragraph of bits-and-pieces fresh off the grapevine).

The call came in from Bay Area MRU at 0040 the morning of July 30. A 4-man team (Nichols, Motyka, Peterson, Wick) were recruited from the call list and around 1330, an Air Force C-97 landed at NAF to pick them up. The search for a 10-year-old boy was already several days old.

The Teams from the Bay Area, China Lake, Sierra Madre, San Diego, and Las Padres joined searchers who had been looking through dense underbrush for several days. Sunday morning the search was terminated, and the China Lake team was returned to NAF around 6 in the afternoon.

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SAFETY EDUCATION Liz Anderson

Janet and Bob Westbrook have worked out a 35 minute slide show on Map-reading, and have shown it to one group. It was planned to explain maps and compass-work to groups of any age.

NWC Safety Department will have the MRA movie BY NATURE'S RULE, the week of September 7. This is the film on hypothermia, built in the Northwest. If you know of groups who would be interested in seeing this movie, let us know.

PRESIDENT'S CORNER . Frank Buffum

We have received a copy of SEARCH METHODS & PROCEDURES, by Ray Neal, former president of MRA and a member of the Arizona mountain rescue. CLMRG considers this the best discussion of these problems that we have seen, .and plans to adopt it for the first draft of the chapter in our manual-in-conception. It covers 1) search methods and procedures from several angles, 2) field organization, 3) base camp organization, 4) tips for searching, 5) missing aircraft searches 6) procedures when victims are found.

NATIONAL OFFICERS OF MRA....elected at the June meeting, at Aspen, Colorado. President...Dave Moore, Alpine Rescue Team, Evergreen, Colorado Vice President..Paul Williams, Seattle Rescue Council Secretary-Treasurer..Mike Multer, San Diego Mountain Rescue Team Executive-Secretary...Vance Yost, formerly Altadena Mountain Rescue Squad

## TRAINING COMMITTEE REPORT

Dennis Burge

We tried something new this year, and gave a course to introduce people to the basics of wilderness travel. This was contained in a series of 3 lectures on hiking and camping, equipment, and safety precautions. A one-day climb of Trail Peak was a conditioner and a map-reading practice. There was also a short introduction to the techniques of mountain climbing. This was followed by an overnight hike to climb Carillon Peak or Mt. Russell. This trip seemed to be much enjoyed by the participants, in spite of their dismay at how strenuous off-trail travel with a heavy pack can seem. Eighteen people satisfactorily completed the course requirements and were awarded certificates. Three or four of these along with about 10 others are continuing with our rock-climbing instruction.

Janet Westbrook has been working with a kit from Frostline, and for \$25 and some 15 hours of work has a down parka. Janet says it is not difficult, that the directions are clearcut, and she's certain it is a very practical way to acquire what would otherwise be an expensive parka.

## FIRST AID CLASSES

Desert Campus of Bakersfield JC is offering both Beginning and Advanced.

Beginning will be taught the first 9 weeks of the Fall semester, one course in day classes, and another in night classes. Janet Westbrook will teach the day class.

Advanced will be taught the 2nd 9 weeks of the Fall semester, beginning November 16. It will be taught by the CLMRG instructors.

Registration for both of these should be taken care of during Open Registration on September 1, 3, and 4, at the College office.

Likely Advanced Review will be taught in the Spring semester.

The editor has been reading along in a book of Proverbs (civilian type). How about this one:

"He who sees a need and waits to be asked for help is as unkind as if he had refused it."  
Dante said that...

Or.. "Once you have missed the first buttonhole, you'll never manage to button up."