

CHINA LAKE MOUNTAIN RESCUE GROUP
P.O. BOX 5773
CHINA LAKE, CALIFORNIA 93555

EDITOR: DIANNE LUCAS

OCTOBER 1973 #24

CALENDAR

- October 20-22 Yosemite Valley -- rock climbing, hiking, etc. (The "etc." includes attempts at keeping your food away from the hungry bears!) Bill Stronge (375-9239) is the coordinator.
- October 23/24 Tracking practice -- either day, take your pick -- at 1645. Location is on map distributed at October meeting. If you don't have a copy, see Lee Lucas or Roland Robbins.
- October 27-28 Kearsarge Pinnacles (west of Kearsarge Pass). For more information, call Bob Joy, at 375-8171.
- November 3-4 Mt. Corcoran via Tuttle Creek -- Class 2 or 3. Carl Heller is in charge (446-6237).
- November 10-11 Dubois or Boundary and Montgomery. Fred Camphausen (446-5643) will have the details.
- November 12 Meeting at Rockwell's, 607 Randall, Ridgecrest, 7:30 p.m.
- November 15-18 Cerro de la Encantada, Baja California -- Class 3+. Talk to Don Peterson (446-3159) for more information.
- November 17-18 National MRA Meeting, in Seattle. Lee Lucas (446-2387) will have details on this.
- November 26 Training in compass use -- will be organized by Harry Garner (446-2168).
- November 17 Stretcher practice at Owens Ridge, coordinated by Bill Stronge (375-9239). Day (Saturday or Sunday) to be announced.
- December 1 Rock climbing on Five Fingers. Bob Rockwell (375-2532) will organize.
- December 8-9 Dry Mtn. and Ubehebe Pk., in Death Valley -- Class 2. For more information, talk to Barb Slates (446-6658).
- December 10 Meeting at Warschauer's, 200 B Mitscher, 7:30 p.m.
- December 15 Nichols Pk. (Walker Pass area). Class 1? It seemed fitting that Jim Nichols should organize this trip. Try reaching him at 446-2042.

OPERATIONS

#7315 Ecology Project, Cirque Peak, 16 June Lee Lucas

Thursday, 14 June, I got a call from Carl Heller. "It's your weekend so I'm giving this to you. You'd rather ride a helicopter to Cirque Peak than sit around home anyhow, wouldn't you?" Thus began a unique "operation" in CLMRG history. I called Alan Schmeier of the Bay Area Chapter of the Sierra Club to get the following background:

Blinded in a winter storm seven years ago, two Navy fliers had smashed into the south ridge of Cirque Peak. Rescuers removed the bodies, but could not salvage the wreckage, which was strewn for hundreds of yards along the ridge. In 1972 Sierra Club volunteers had gathered and bagged the wreckage, and now they were going back to airlift it down to Lone Pine. Col. Dean Wright had generously arranged for an Army Chinook helicopter from Edwards AFB to assist in the salvage operation. Major Crews, the pilot, was willing to stop for us on the way to Lone Pine.

With the prospect of a ride in the Chinook and the chance for some high-altitude conditioning, ten of us (Bottka, Anderson, Craig, Matthews, Charlton, Hirschy, Johnson, Dinger, Doug Warschauer and I) went. Woodman and Rockwell also volunteered, but I asked them to stay in town for a possible second call.

The operation went as planned. Since this was our first experience with a Chinook, I would like to make the following comments:

- a) The Chinook is huge and powerful, but very noisy -- ear protectors are almost essential.
- b) The two rotors counter-rotate to balance torque. The front rotor dips low enough to slice your head off. The rear rotor, however, is mounted high. Always embark and debark a Chinook from the rear ramp.

Editor's note: The Talus Pile did not receive a written report on the next operation; however, a short summary will be given on the basis of information obtained orally.

#7317 Rescue, Mt. San Emigdio, 8 July

John Kane (40) and Steve and Bobby Craig (14 and 11) of San Pedro had become stranded on a steep, loose slope in Cloudburst Canyon, Mt. San Emigdio, in the southwest corner of Kern County, while prospecting for gold. Evidently the trio had heard a signal from the boys' father, who had become separated and had returned to the cars above. Thinking the sound came from below, they descended further, until they were unable to move either up or down. Panic may have been a factor in their inability to continue their descent to the stream 200' below.

CLMRG was called by the Kern County Sheriff's Department at 0200 on 8 July. Personnel from Southern Kern Rescue had been unable to reach the stranded group, due to the loose condition of the terrain. Operation Leader Bottka, along with Rockwell, Woodman, Buffum, Brown and Harris, left for the scene by car, while Green, Stronge and Sweatt waited for daybreak and a helicopter ride with Lt. Macidull and crew.

The three victims were assisted the remainder of the way into the drainage, then about 2.5 miles downstream to a road, with ropes being used to get past several waterfalls. Luckily the drainage, usually dry at this time of the year, contained water, for the rescuers' two canteens apiece were quickly consumed.

#7318 Recovery, Carson Peak, 13 July

Al Green

We were put on alert for a search on Thursday afternoon by Undersheriff Martin Strelneck of Mono County. At 2000 we received the confirming call to meet at the Rush Creek Power Station early Friday morning. Lee Lucas, Peter Woodman, and Doug and Jeff Warschauer elected to drive up that evening, and the rest of us (Green, Stronge, Jones, Brown, Zenor, Moore, Atkins and Robbins) drove up in the middle of the night. We were met at 0545 by Deputy Al Tronaas, who took us to the restaurant at Silver Lake for breakfast, compliments of the Sheriff, and a briefing. The tram which was to take us most of the way to the search camp would not be available until 0800. So at 0730 we straggled into base camp. There we met Harley Wilmot, who was coordinating the search. Reshuffling teams and planning assignments took just enough time for word to come in that the June Lakes SAR Team had located the victim.

Ira Soule from San Pedro had apparently tried to climb Carson Peak via a very treacherous chute. His fall was fatal. We took the stretcher and went up to assist in the evacuation. Bill Stronge and Peter Woodman went on up to the accident site and helped with the two-pitch lowering out of the chute. A brake system and four men on the stretcher quickly moved the stretcher down the steep talus below the chute. Fortunately, a helicopter was available to make a pick-up from the first flat area. Lunch at the Silver Lake Cafe was again on the Sheriff.

Comments: It was helpful for us to receive an early alert call. The call out and mobilization are easier when some time to plan is available.

Sheriff Evans and his department were extremely cooperative and gracious. A hot meal is seldom appreciated more. But beyond that, the ability to cut through red tape to replace equipment and to have Peter Woodman's injury treated was pleasantly surprising. Peter got hit on the forearm with a rock while going up the chute to the victim. Dr. Eckert at Mammoth treated him; Peter received five stitches and assurance that no bones were broken.

#7319 Rescue, Lundy Canyon, 23 July

Al Green

In many respects this operation was similar to the previous one. Same general area, same call out information in general same competent people to work with. However, the differences are significant. Most important, of course, is that a live victim (Dennis Edwall from Thousand Oaks) was successfully located and evacuated.

Dennis had elected to wait on the ridge connecting Excelsior Mountain with Shepherd Crest while the rest of his party of four climbed the high point of the crest. He had become fatigued, and the other climbers were to return the same way and would rejoin him. But Dennis, for unspecified reasons, did not wait for his three companions. Not only did he not wait, but he went down the wrong canyon, fell, and broke his leg. This all happened Saturday afternoon. The three companions searched the terrain back to their base camp Saturday evening. More searching Sunday morning while one man went out to alert the authorities. The June Lakes SAR Team and the Bridgeport team were called in. We were called Sunday night to help Monday. The victim was located shortly after we got into the field. The Huey from China Lake spotted the victim about 0900. Searchers had already gotten to him that morning, but they had no radio, so the helicopter spotting saved many hours. Over thirty people were in the field searching.

The rest of the story involves many details of directing teams to the scene and the tedious process of carrying out a stretcher over steep, cruddy terrain. Unfortunately the Huey developed a problem, and the evacuation was entirely on foot. This was hard on the victim, but makes us appreciate helicopters more than ever.

continued . .

Lundy Canyon Rescue, Continued . .

Participating from CLMRG were Green, Stronge, Lucas, Wick, Camphausen, Woodman, Jones, Brown, Harris, Garner, Doug Warschauer, O'Handley, Moore, Jeff Warschauer, and Robbins.

#7321 Search, White Wolf, 14 September Dennis Burge

We received a call at 0500 that a 6-year-old boy was lost from the White Wolf campground in Yosemite National Park. The boy, John Pages of North Hollywood, had been lost about 1600 on the 13th. The rangers had searched all evening and were now calling out the MRA teams.

At about 0800 we arrived at base camp and most of the group immediately set off with one of the rangers to see if tracks could be picked up in one of the most likely areas. During the next couple of hours more MRA teams arrived and went out on assignments. Many tracks were picked up, but a clear picture of John's route had not yet developed when one of the teams called in to report that the boy was approaching with some hikers. This was at 1115. The hikers had contacted John next to a stream, just over a mile from camp, about 30 minutes before. Aside from having had a somewhat frightening night, he was in good shape.

Members taking part in this search were: Burge, Lucas, Peterson, Joy, Jones, Brown, Harris, Warschauer, Atkins, Moore, and Johnson.

Two comments:

1. Several crews reported positive identification of Vibram tracks as being those of the lost boy. This was done by comparison with tracks pointed out by the boy's father as being John's. When compared with the boy's boots, these tracks were found to be about 2" too long. Someone should have been suspicious about such large tracks for a 6-year-old.

2. There should be only one base camp radio. Having 2 or 3 leads to messages not getting to the right people. Also, incomplete logs sometimes result, making it hard to determine a complete picture of the operation.

A Tracking Lesson from the Border Patrol

Thirteen CLMRG members--and a prospective member--spent the weekend of September 8-9 near the Mexican border getting filled in on the basics of the "Step-by-step" method of tracking. They were instructed, of course, by Albert "Ab" Taylor, patrol agent in charge of the U.S. Border Patrol at El Cajon, along with five other Border Patrol agents.

The China Lakers were tremendously impressed with just how much time, practice, knowledge, and--perhaps most important--patience, is involved in successful tracking. Convinced that the ability to find and follow the tracks of a lost person is a valuable skill, they have been practicing tracking techniques in after-work sessions twice a week in preparation for a second lesson from the Border Patrol.

Those who attended the training were Lee Lucas, Bob Westbrook, Don Peterson, Elizabeth Anderson, Fred Camphausen, Peter Woodman, Dave Brown, Harry Garner, Don Harris, Doug Warschauer, Jeff Warschauer, Roland Robbins, Janet Westbrook and Ralph Rohret.

A "group orientation was recently held to introduce other interested members to step-by-step tracking. The practice was attended by Green, Burge, Nichols, Joy, O'Handley, Matthews, and candidates Boyle, Dixon and Tanner.

Helirescue Update Lee Lucas

Mechanical problems with the Huey postponed helicopter training between CLMRG team leaders and NAF pilots and crewmen. Instead, Carl Heller displayed some of our gear and talked about problems on the ground. Then Col. Jack Pipa talked about problems in the air. Col. Pipa's remarks are summarized below, so that all CLMRG members can profit from them.

Pilot: The pilot's decision on power available is final. If the charts say it can't be done, don't argue. Everything else is negotiable.

Crewchief: In the cargo area the crewchief is the boss. Listen for his instructions--and follow them! Especially when something unusual (like loss of power) happens.

Rescue Personnel (in helo): Know the weight of your gear. Stow your gear under seats. Don't mess up or move the crewchief's gear--he has it where he wants it. Talk to the pilot. Let him know what you want. Suggest alternative routes and procedures.

Rescue Personnel (on ground): Give wind indication every time helo attempts landing or hover. If a crash appears imminent, hit the ground. Don't run--flying shrapnel from the rotor blades will hit you.

Rescue Personnel (in horse collar): Let horse collar touch the ground to discharge static electricity before grabbing it. Buckle in--you can slip out otherwise. Hang like a sack of potatoes--don't try to help yourself into the helo. You may accidentally hit the guillotine switch just inside the cargo door. When inside, sit down and buckle seat belt before getting out of the horse collar.

Ed. Note: Don Harris has compiled a list of all major items of group equipment and their weights.

About our Members . . .

Three new members have joined us. They are:

Jeff Warschauer	64 Fuller St., Waban, Mass.	
Lori Nicholson	124 Coral Sea, China Lake	446-2009
Michael Hasting	314 Desert Candles, Ridgecrest	375-5673

Jeff, son of member Doug Warschauer, was on the Search Team and participated in several operations this summer, before returning to school near Boston. Lori is presently on the Search Team.

A new call roster is out, reflecting numerous other changes--in addresses, new NWC codes, people going away to school, etc.

Bill Sweatt, our Vice President, has left for Arizona State, in Tucson, where he will work on a Masters Degree in Optical Science. He plans to return to China Lake sometime next summer. In the meantime, we hear he has found another "B Mountain" to run up and down!

At the September meeting, Allen Jones was elected to step into Bill's shoes as Vice President for the rest of the year. And, no doubt because of the fine job he did on the summer classes and trips, Al was also appointed by President Rockwell to replace Bill as Training Committee Chairman. Ron Atkins was added to the Training Committee to bring it back to 5 members.

Two of our members are now officers of the California Region, Mountain Rescue Association. Lee Lucas is now Vice-President, and Elizabeth Anderson serves as Secretary-Treasurer.

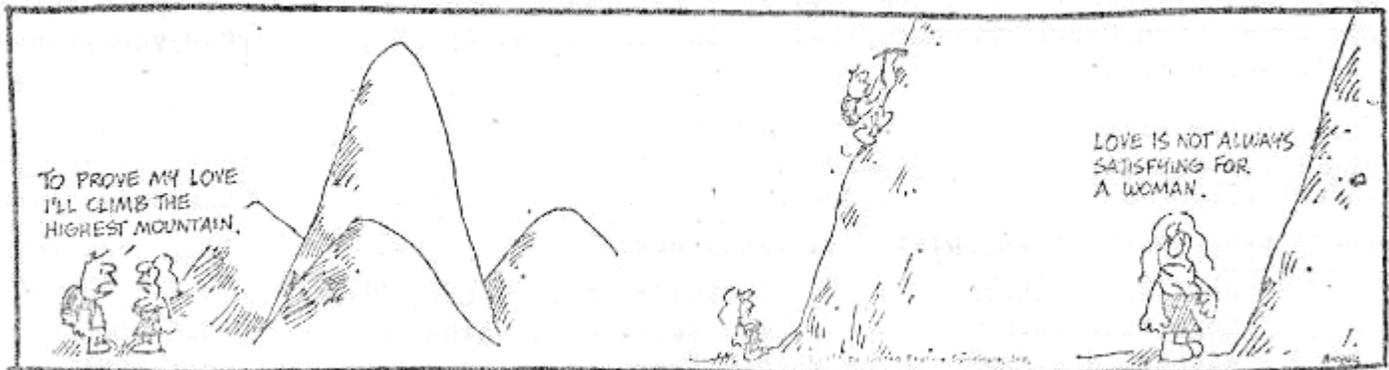
Members of CLMRG were saddened to learn of the death of Terry Greer, a member of the Southern Kern County Search and Rescue Team. Terry was killed while searching for a drowning victim. A check, representing donations from the members, has been forwarded to Mrs. Linda Greer.

FINANCES Doug Warschauer

The search for John Pages near White Wolf campground on Yosemite involved over 1900 miles of driving because of the distance from China Lake and the number of cars sent. This reduced our total balance to \$99.24 (in addition to our emergency fund), as of the end of September.

We received our quarterly United Way allotment early in October, and we thank member Don Peterson for his donation.

Fred & Others



S.F. Sunday Examiner & Chronicle, Sunday Punch, March 4, 1973