



CHINA LAKE MOUNTAIN RESCUE GROUP  
P.O. BOX 2037  
RIDGECREST  
CALIFORNIA  
93555

JANUARY 1977

#36

CALENDAR for February

(The Spring Calendar will be worked out at the February meeting)

- 4-7                    Winter Climb, North Palisade  
9                    Night Tracking Practice  
12-13                Snow and Ice Practice (proposed..for those team members who missed the Winter Climb) Preparation for the CLMRG portion of the Requalification Workshop coming later.  
  
14                    Meeting, 709-A Nimitz, CL      (Barbara Slates)  
  
19-21                Ski Hut Trip. Many difficulties and uncertainties.  
  
26-27                CRMRA member teams, Requalification Snow and Ice Workshop

DONORS

Mrs. Walter Dunham of Los Angeles, Grandmother, and Mrs. Hammond, Mother, of Steve Lester (the Mt Mills evacuation) sent us generous donations.

<u>1977 OFFICERS</u>	President	Ron Atkins	Secretary Fred Camphausen
	Vice Pres	Lee Lucas	Treasurer Janet Westbrook
	Member-at-Large	Bob Westbrook	

1977 COMMITTEES

QUALIFICATIONS

Bill Stronge (chrmn)  
Carl Heller  
Lee Lucas

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Dennis Burge (chrmn)  
Fred Camphausen  
Harry Garner  
Lee Lucas  
Al Jones  
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Bob Rockwell (chrmn)  
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Bob Fletcher - Communications

Dianne Lucas

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Dave Brown  
Fred Camphausen  
Carl Heller  
Bill Stronge

## FROM THE EDITOR'S MAIL

Liz:

(some time in November)

I'm looking forward to the article about the guy who fell 1,000 ft and came out without being badly broken up.

This reminds me of a story told to me last weekend by Herb Laeger, who witnessed a bad-looking fall.

The climber peeled off and chocks lifted out without slowing him down much. After a 90-ft free fall during which his body gracefully changed from a vertical to a horizontal attitude while also rotating 180 deg laterally, he hit only the back of his head on a ledge (90 ft down). There was a loud "SMACK" on this impact which was heard by other climbers in the vicinity. He then continued in a tumbling fall until he landed on a second ledge 300 ft below the first one.

A doctor in the party said "Don't hurry to get to him because he'll be dead." When he was reached he was unconscious, but when examined at the hospital, all they could find was a few bruises and he was released the next day.

CAMPY

OPERATION REPORTS

And so to the promised report....

76-31 Rescue, Whitney Trail, 7-8 November

Dennis Burge

On Sunday, Nov. 7, Robert (Rob) Yorke, 23, of Wilmington, Del. and 3 friends, Gary, Tim and Peter, were descending the trail after having spent the night on top of Mt. Whitney. Below Trail Crest the switchbacks were covered with firm snow so they were heading more directly down a snow slope with a fair number of rocks sticking out. They did not have ice axes. The snow didn't seem too hard so Rob and Gary tried sitting glissades with their heels digging in. Rob hit a firmer spot and lost control. He slid down 500-700' bouncing off many rocks on the way, before hanging up on one about 100' above the bottom of the snowfield. His friends hurried down to find him in considerable pain with a possible broken hip, injured shoulder and lower leg, and a possible concussion. They helped him into 2 sleeping bags, and after observing his condition for a while, Gary went out for help.

The Inyo County Sheriff's Office called the Inyo SAR Posse and a call was placed to NAF, China Lake, at about 1530 to see if there was any chance of a helo getting in before dark. LCDR Mike Rij decided there wasn't, but would be ready to fly at first light in the morning. At this point the Inyo Posse leader, Pat Elliot, asked LCDR Rij to relay the request for help to CLMRG. After a number of calls the message reached me. Pat and I agreed that we would hike up in the dark to have the subject ready for helo evacuation by 0700. At this time we didn't know his condition, and the information was that he had no overnight gear.

We assembled a team of 8 and left the hut shortly after 1700. We met the Inyo team in Lone Pine and proceeded to Whitney Portal. We got organized and at 2000, Gary, 4 from Inyo, and the 8 of us started up the trail in the dark. The accident scene was at 12,700' which left us a 4,400' ascent. This proved to be a tiring climb for many people since they hadn't been to such an altitude for a couple of months.

The stretcher team reached the scene at 0100. The team consisted of Hank Snell, Terry Moore, and Ron Atkins. Bob was resting comfortably, feeling much better than he had in the afternoon. We decided to wait a few hours before....

continued

moving him, when more people would have arrived. Also, the Inyo Posse people told us there was a feasible helo landing site only a few hundred feet below. About 0400 we placed Rob in the stretcher with its snow skid cover. Using a figure-eight ring for security, we lowered it to the bottom of the snowfield. Several hundred feet of strenuous hand-carrying through the boulders then brought the stretcher to a possible helo site. We rested and waited for the sun's warmth.

Shortly before 0800 the Navy SAR Huey piloted by LCDR Rij arrived. The spot was not a particularly good one since it was composed of 12-18" rocks. The altitude was also a complicating factor. With some skillful flying Rij came in, and while he held partial power on the helo, the litter with Rob was loaded. He then made a second flight to take Dr. Wells of the Inyo Posse from Trail Camp down to Lone Pine, because the doctor was needed at the Bishop hospital.

The tired rescuers hiked the 6.5 miles back down to Whitney Portal. When they checked the Lone Pine hospital about 1300, they learned Rob had no broken bones and had already been discharged.

CLMRG members involved were: Burge, Harris, Atkins, Moore, Snell, Davis, T. Stogsdill, Gleeson; and Jones and Brown with the helo; in town, Lee and Dianne Lucas and Sheila Rockwell. Helo crewmen were G. Draper, R. Martino, and W. Rossi. Tim, Peter and Gary (Rob's friends) were of considerable assistance.

#### COMMENTS

1. The MRA radio connection in the helo worked well and allowed excellent communication.
2. LCDR Rij commented that on the second landing he would like have seen one person indicating the proposed landing site while everyone else stayed clear.
3. This rescue involved a rather strenuous hike. Are you keeping up with your aerobics, etc., so that if a similar operation occurs you will not hold up the group?
4. A note to coordinators and operation leaders:

The Public Information Office at NWC (Harry Parode or his assistant) would like us to inform them when we go out on an operation. He says he is nearly always around on weekends (Ph. 939-3511 or 375-5515).

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Annual First Aid Report

Janet Westbrook

Overall: Indian Wells Valley branch of the American Red Cross.  
19 instructors, 58 classes, 700 people

of which CLMRG accounts for 7 instructors and 29 of the courses. Reminder - everyone should strive for Advanced FA and the CLMRG voted to require ADV or EMT I for [all (?) members except trainee] by June 1977. There is an Advanced FA & EC Class every Wed 7-10 pm at Cerro Coso College, 12 Jan - May. Call Janet, and in April our 1/3 of the Advanced program-Advanced Review & Topic II. CPR classes will be offered somewhere in the valley every month - everyone should keep very current!

## 76-32 Search &amp; Recovery, Fourth Recess 28-29 Nov . . . . Carl Heller

Steve Lester, 29, of Alhambra went alone to climb Mt Mills after Hans Jorgenson turned back. Steve climbed the difficult face, turned back at the summit plateau, descended the icy face and after dark, one mile from camp fell 60 ft to instant death.

Hans and a non-climber Jon searched the cirque above Fourth Recess Lake Saturday morning, but didn't spot the blue clad body. Hans hiked out for help and ran into some bureaucratic problems. He told his problem in detail to a Mono deputy who considered it and referred him to an Inyo deputy who did the same, referring him to Fresno County, 350 miles away by road. Fresno took responsibility and asked L.A. County for Mountain Rescue help. Sierra Madre called China Lake at 2318 and suggested we take over for the CALMRA. A CALMRA callout got Cl 7, SM 2, and San Diego 8, June Lake 2 and Inyo 3 (they were surprised that an Inyo deputy hadn't called their team). Fresno could not get any helos from Scott or any rental, but finally Sacramento's OES got a National Guard helo from Fresno.

Rush Kittle and I planned the action under supervision of Lt Chet Lonegan \* from Fresno who brought two SAR deputies. We put a radio relay at Mono Pass and search teams from the summit of Mt Mills to the cirque above the lake. Many tracks but no find on Sunday. Search teams slept in the Recess that night. Monday we concentrated teams on the tracks over Snow lake, the cirque, and below the Recess along Mono Creek. Camphausen, Landau and Hunt found the body on the cirque before 0900. Moore and three San Diagans (Wehbring, Ellison, Beckenfield \*) got a stretcher by airdrop and moved it down and across the frozen lake.

\* these names are loosely translated

## COMMENTS:

1. Operating through a radio relay is quite difficult, but with good people like Bob Pfeil and Roger Hayton of Inyo we did quite well.
2. The CALMRA teams operated well together and we used nearly everyone who came.
3. Once again radio communication with the helo was a problem. All people getting into a helo should put on a headset when available. A good arrangement is for one man to wear the MRA headset and another the helo headset. When necessary the MRA man can take the helo headset to inform the pilot of ground developments. Pilots want to keep their own helmets on and so cannot use our headset.
4. Tracking did not work to find this victim. Sierra granite with only sparse snow must be class 5 or 6 tracking to judge from the results.

## ADDITIONAL COMMENT....Campy

Binoculars were responsible for finding this subject. His body was located high on a ledge such that it could only be seen from certain directions, and not at all without the binoculars. Even at 8 power it appeared only as a "possible" until we approached more closely to check it out. At our closest point, short of making the climb to the subject's ledge, it was still tough to be sure with the unaided eye.

(continued....)

Comments.. continued:

From this experience I feel that we all should recognize the potential value of including a small pair of binoculars with the normal personal gear during a search.

76-33 29 Nov Alert for overdue hikers Mt Whitney, Inyo County  
No of members: 7 Total Man hrs: 4 NWC Excused Man Hrs: 0

76-34 Evacuation 2 injured climbers at Trail Camp 30 Dec Fred Camphausen

After climbing Mt Whitney, Steve Nichols and Matt Marshall reached Trail Crest at 1530 hrs on 29 December and began their descent of the snow chute leading down toward Trail Camp. They were not equipped with ice axes or crampons and they elected to descend the crusted snow in a seated glissade. At some point both men lost control and they sustained injuries during their sliding fall. Nichols was lacerated on the forehead and became nauseated and ataxic. Marshall was injured in the right lower leg. They walked to Trail Camp and the accident was reported at 1930 hrs in Lone Pine by another climber.

I received the alert call from Fred Henke at 2200 hrs. Inyo County Sheriff's Posse personnel had planned on a helicopter evacuation at dawn but worsening weather indicated the need for a reinforced ground team. The second call came at 0500 hrs. Nine CLMRG members carrying two stretchers and wheels left the Portal at 0930 hrs. It had been snowing since midnight and a seven-man follow-up team was thus mobilized to assist in the expected long carry-out. Additional assistance was requested from the Sierra Madre, San Diego, and Riverside teams.

A rewarming station was established at Mirror Lake. Eight men continued toward Trail Camp but one was detached to join two Inyo SAR personnel accompanying the ambulatory victim Nichols (forehead injury) down the trail. When the advance team reached the camp at 1545 hrs the weather had become momentarily clear with reduced wind. Bob McCoy of Inyo SAR had prepared for the White Mountain helicopter to land on the frozen lake. The helicopter arrived at 1600 hrs and Marshall (leg injury) was placed aboard and flown to the hospital at Lone Pine. The follow-up team had in the meantime reached Mirror Lake to assist if a carry-out was needed. About 25 additional personnel from the three other Region teams were en route.

Operation statistics: CLMRG advance team: Heller, Jones, Campy, Atkins, Joy, Mason, Snell, Garner, Landau. Follow-up team: Lucas, Buffum, Davis, Lloyd, Renta, Miller, C. Rodgers (IWVSAR). Local coordinator: Barb Slates. Total effort: 301 man hours.

COMMENTS:

1. The accident occurred on the same snow slope that was the scene of a fatality in September and another climber injury in November. The most recent victims carried no packs or other gear, and could have been in worse trouble if the storm had arrived while they were still high on the mountain.
2. The advance team was a "bash team" which carried along with the rescue equipment only bivouac gear and minimum personal essentials. This concept worked well in that it permitted the earliest feasible support to be brought to the victim. In answer to a question I was later asked, the follow-up team carried heavier loads which included clothing and shelter to support the advance team if this became necessary.

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76-35 Dec 30      Rescue incident, 3 hikers altitude sick  
                  Whitney Trail, Inyo Co,  
No. of Members: 2    Man Hrs: 6    NWC Excused Man Hrs: 0

\* \* \* \* \*

77-01      Search, missing backpackers      Bill Stronge

On Jan 3 the Inyo County Sheriff's Posse requested a team to assist in the search for two missing backpackers. A long overdue, first winter storm had been raging for four days when Ron Atkins, Terry Moore and I arrived in Bishop. Temperatures were near -18°C with high winds that night. About 40 cm of snow had fallen. Clear weather the next morning allowed the White Mountain helo to fly and Sharon Grassmueck (22) was found walking out at North Lake. Her companion, Steve Shepherd (23) died of exposure the previous night within a mile of the trailhead. They had planned a 6-day loop trip; going in at Piute Pass, over Muir Pass, and out at Bishop Pass.

This operation was somewhat tentative in that experienced winter backpackers should be prepared to "hole up" for many days, making schedules quite subject to the weather. Consequently, limited manpower was used on this search. The operation was smoothly coordinated by Bob McCoy of Bishop.

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## Operational Participation 1976

Lee Lucas

The numbers reported below give a rough idea of members' activity on actual operations. Not included are the hours spent on training, public education, equipment, first aid, administration, etc. HOURS are the total hours spent on CLMRG operations. TOTAL OPS are the total number of operations, including 'commitments' for ALERTS that didn't go. FIELD OPS are the number of RESCUES/RECOVERIES and SEARCHES, not including TRANSITS or ALERTS, on which the member went. The first column is ordered on HOURS. The second column is ordered on TOTAL OPS. It is this second column that determines the ordering on the Call Roster of SUPPORT members and TRAINEES. Any errors in these records should be reported to the Qualifications Committee.

	<u>Hours</u>		Total	Field	Hours
Brown	290	Brown	16	11	290
Moore	240	Heller	15	8	196
Heller	196	Moore	14	10	240
Lucas	142	Lucas	11	6	142
Green	132	Jones	11	5	62
Snell	131	Davis	11	4	68
Landau	128	Snell	10	6	131
Hunt	120	Landau	9	6	128
Burge	114	Harris	9	6	78
Mason	112	Camphausen	8	5	100
Joy	108	Green	8	4	132
Walters	101	Hirsch	8	4	40
Camphausen	100	Stronge	8	2	92
Stronge	92	Burge	7	5	114
Atkins	82	Joy	7	5	108
Harris	78	Hunt	7	4	120
Stogsdill B	77	Mason	7	4	112
Davis	68	Atkins	7	4	82
Jones	62	Westb000k	7	3	47
Gleeson	58	Gleeson	6	3	58
Stogsdill T	57	Stogsdill T	6	3	57
Westbrook	47	Walters	5	3	101
Garner	44	Garner	4	3	44
Hirsch	40	Lloyd	4	2	30
Rockwell	38	Buffum	4	1	20
Robbins	36	Robbins	3	1	36
Woodman	30	Woodman	3	1	30
Lloyd	30	Stogsdill B	2	2	77
Renta	30	Renta	2	2	30
Buffum	20	Rockwell	2	1	38
Miller J	18	Miller J	1	1	18
Schultz	12	Schultz	1	1	12
Anderson	2	Anderson	1	0	2