



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

93555

JANUARY 1978

#39

CALENDAR for February

- 4-5 Owens Peak to Spanish Needle traverse, with bivouac
- 11-12 Open
- 13 (Monday) Regular meeting at Burge's, 624 Randall
- 18-20 Trans-Sierra Ski and Climb (even snowshoe)

NEW OFFICERS FOR CLMRG

President	Frank Buffum
Vice President	Fred Camphausen
Secretary	Tom Stogsdill
Treasurer	Janet Westbrook
Member at Large	Ron Atkins

DONORS

During recent issues, we have been remiss in listing names of those people who have made donations directly to the CLMRG. (We find it impossible to list those who give through the United Way, although we are aware that many give to our organization through those channels). Thanks from the China Lake Mountain Rescue Group to everyone who has given either cash or materials, time or effort.

During December 1977, we received donations from these following:

Fred Bode, Clifton Chandler, Tom Chapman, Russ Huse, and Robert Trousdale.

Wall Street Journal

DRY SOLUTION: The Japanese have a powdered alcohol that makes a cocktail when mixed with water. The U. S. Treasury recently had to devise a way to tax this "dry" alcohol as the law refers only to liquids. Agency experts decided the tax will be based on the alcohol content of the liquid created when the powder is dissolved in a specified amount of water. However, the product isn't sold here, yet.

No Comment?



Tulare Deputy Alan Montgomery called us Monday a.m. He wanted trackers for a deer hunter missing since 9 a.m. the day before, near Osa Meadows on the Kern Plateau. Joann called the roster, while Jones went to the hut to coordinate.

An advance team of Campy, Moore and myself left the hut at 1220. We reached the Black Rock Ranger station where we were briefed. Second team of Atkins, Joy and Lloyd was to follow within half an hour. Atkins was to set up a relay at Bald Mountain to furnish communications with field teams, base camp and the hut back at China Lake.

Situation: David Franklin, 37, of Hesperia had gone deer hunting with several others Sunday morning. They split up at 1730 agreeing to meet at 1030 at Osa Meadows. When Franklin failed to show up, the others searched unsuccessfully, although they did find tracks. They contacted the Tulare Sheriff's office on Sunday night.

Since Franklin was unfamiliar with the area and carried no map or compass, we guessed that he had become disoriented and headed in the wrong direction. From where he was last seen, the most likely deviations were north or west, into the Nine-Mile Creek drainage. Montgomery had sent to USFS horsemen to cover the Nine-Mile Creek trail as far as Kern flat. He wanted us to try tracking.

We decided not to wait for Atkins' team as planned, and left word at the ranger station. We went on to Osa Meadows to put a tracking team at the tracks. By 4:20 p.m., Campy and Terry were on the tracks with an excellent description. Just then we received word that the horsemen had found a note, on the bridge over Nine-Mile Creek above Kern Flat. Dave Franklin had written that he had come to the bridge at 7 a.m. and would head downstream. The horsemen followed the trail down to the trail Junction at Kern Flat to check the forks. Franklin had stayed with the creek, heading for Pyle's camp. The track description was radioed to the horsemen for confirmation. A short time later the horsemen called in to base, saying they had found Franklin in good shape. They would take him to Jordan Hot Springs for the night, and reunite him with his family the next day.

We were no longer needed, but I needed to turn around the people who were coming up from China Lake. Finally, Atkins' team arrived (They had been delayed over an hour with ignition problems with their car). Atkins went to Bald Mountain to radio the hut. Harris, Burge, and Anderson had not yet left. Our return to China Lake was uneventful.

COMMENTS 1. To activate us, Montgomery had called several team leaders who were not in. Rockwell's office mate called me. This by-passed a possible breakdown in the alert system. Calling the China Lake Police is usually a faster way to reach us.

2. With Jones as Intown Coordinator at the hut, I could get ready in time to join the advance team. He coordinated calling, readied gear, notified NAF of possible need for helo, and briefed the 2nd team. He could have coordinated a Region callout.

3. Campy was skipped in the initial callout because Joann questioned his recovery from frostbite. As a general rule: call the member and let him decide if he wants to go.

4. From past operations on the Kern plateau we knew communications would be a problem. A base camp near Osa Meadows, relay at Bald Mountain, and coordinator at the hut. It was a good plan but car trouble interfered, and I had no backup plan.

5. For future reference, a tenuous communications system exists, linking together:

- a. Black Rock Ranger Station (FS radio)
 - b. Bald Mountain fire tower (FS radio)
 - c. Chimney Peak BLM STATION (radio, telephone)
 - d. USFS office, Kernville (radio, telephone)
 - e. Deputy Montgomery's patrol car (radio)
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ANNUAL REPORT, 1977, Public Education Committee Bob Rockwell

The Public Education Committee arranged for 29 programs on outdoor safety during 1977, reaching an estimated 1405 residents of Southern California. Audiences included children and youths in Boy and Girl Scout troops; 4H, church and grammar school children; and college classes. Presentations were also given to EMT classes, 4-wheel drive clubs and the annual Kern County Sheriff's SAR seminar.

20 members of CLMRG helped give these programs, expending a total of 281 man-hours. The Survival and the Lost Child shows continued to be the most popular. The two movies (By Nature's Rules and Thermal Wilderness) have by now been shown so many times that they are in need of replacement. A new category of request this year, or perhaps of more than usual interest, was for programs on "What does CLMRG do?". A slide show on this topic needs to be put together, and in fact has been discussed for some time.

Over half our programs were given to "kids" - from kindergarten age through high school. We should give thought to a safety and survival slide show made expressly for this rather broad category. Again, this has been discussed before and the need still remains.

Hopefully, next year's P.E. Committee can meet these specific needs.

The Life/Honorary Member issue was finally resolved, with rules being approved at the March meeting. (An individual believed to have given significant service to CLMRG is nominated by a member, voted on, and given an award consisting of a life subscription to the Talus Pile, letter of notification, and a certificate). Ten persons were elected Life Members of CLMRG:

- | | |
|---------------|----------------|
| Russ Huse | Sam van Gundy |
| John Ohl | Bernie Sword |
| Ray van Aken | Tom Chapman |
| George Barnes | George O'Grady |
| Jim Nichols | Jack Pipa |

(Sustaining Members may be designated Life Subscribers for continuing contributions, at the discretion of the Public Education Committee). The persons designated were:

- | | |
|------------------------|-------------------------|
| Wally and Ruth Gerhart | Stan and Alberta Cox |
| Robert Could | Stan and Lolette Dalbec |
| Cliff Chandler | Beth Henry |
| Don Talmadge | |

Rather than the certificate for Life Membership, it was decided to present them with a framed photograph of Mt. Whitney beside a CLMRG shoulder patch. Due entirely to the efforts and urging of Janet Westbrook, the layout was decided on, materials ordered, and presentations made before the yearend. Janet deserves a big vote of thanks for all the time she spent on this project.

Bob Rockwell,

Permission was given CLMPG to use the official Navy Photo

1977 Public Education programs/presentations

NAME	NUMBER OF TIMES	MANHOURS	NAME	NO. OF TIMES	MANHOURS
J. Westbrook	13	21	Heller	1	3
Atkins	4	13	B. Westbrook	1	4
L. Lucas	3	8	D. Burge	1	4 1/2
Camphausen	3	20	Davis	1	34 1/2
Harris	3	55 1/2	Mason	1	14
B. Rockwell	2	13	Stogsdill	1	4 1/2
Buffum	2	7 1/2	Walters	1	6 1/2
Anderson	2	4	St. Denis	1	6 1/2
Brown	2	11 1/2	C. Burge	1	6 1/2
Dixon	2	43	D. Lucas	1	1

OPERATIONS

Search University Peak 12-13 November

Carl Heller

Advance Team Report

Deputy Cooper came down from Olancha to Fossil Falls, where we were practicing, to start this operation. Phoning from Little Lake we arranged a helo pickup at Cinder Road. Lee and Dianne Lucas and Dennis Burge took my car north from there to the Onion Valley base camp; Brown, Walters, St. Denis and I flew with Ben Adams. We searched for about one hour sighting one possible red jacket between boulders at University Pass. Ben couldn't land at the pass, but let us off at 12,000' on the west ridge just after sunset.

We climbed to 13,300 finding multiple tracks but nothing of which we could be certain.

Dave and Mike went to the summit finding no signature by Richard Robinson. Gene and I set up the Light Dimension tents. We radioed our news to Independence and tried to eat and sleep, difficult after the abrupt elevation change.

We rose early and Gene and I went to the summit visually searching the North Face. We circled the summit looking for tracks in the coarse sand and patches of snow. Helos were searching the mountain and the trails in Sequoia Park. Mike and Gene headed to descend the North Face while Dave and I went to University Pass. At the pass we got the message that Robinson had been found at Rae Lakes. Shortly thereafter Dale Hahn picked us up at 12,200' with a 4'hover, in the University Pass Saddle.

Lee Lucas report: Robinson had climbed from Pothole Lake. Faced with darkness he elected to descend south face of the peak. Tried crossing back over the next day, got into Kearsarge lakes basin. Became disoriented and ended up on Muir trail over Glenn pass into Sixty/Rae Lakes basin. Spent first night in Center basin, second south of Glenn pass. Had fires both nights.

Carol Burge should receive a special award for writing lists by the telephone, and driving all over Ridgecrest/China Lake to collect winter gear for the people who left directly from Little Lake.

Commercial:	For sale, Sierra West Cagoule, never used
	Size: medium; color: blue
Dianne Lucas	375-5694 (h)
	939-3032 (w)

77- Search Ridgecrest Environs 23 Nov (?) Bob Rockwell
At approximately 1635 hours Greg Nichols, 15, of Ridgecrest, rolled his car on College Heights Blvd about 1 mile north of the Cerro Coso College. Blood in the vehicle indicated that Greg was injured, but when the police arrived he could not be found.

CLMRG was called by the Ridgecrest Police around 1835 hours. Because of the close proximity and time-critical nature of the problem, we assembled at the accident site rather than at our equipment hut. One person brought the radios.

The first of our people arrived around 1915 to find the search area criss-crossed by many well-meaning volunteers in 4 WD vehicles and on foot. The wrecked vehicle had been hauled away, further adding to the 'noise' that our trackers would have to contend with in finding and following Greg's trail.

Working with personnel from the IWV Search and Rescue Team, we identified tracks with some probability of being made by the subject of our search. As evidence mounted that Greg was not seriously injured and had left the general area, the Ridgecrest Police suspended the operation around 1945. We requested permission (granted) for CLMRG to continue searching for a couple of hours, as a semi-exercise for our trackers and strategists.

One-half hour later, Greg turned up at the El Dorado Motel, some 3 miles away. At that time we had three teams on positive tracks and were beginning a sequence of leap-frog maneuvers intended to save time in reaching him.

A radio description of Greg's footwear verified that we were indeed on the correct tracks which, given sufficient time, would have led to him.

All personnel were home by 2100 hours. Manhours, 28. Personnel: L. Lucas, Rockwell, Westbrook, Jones, Camphausen, Harris, Anderson, Brown, Joy, Stogsdill, Garner, Robbins, Holden, Turbett.

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SEARCH PRACTICE 19 December

Lee Lucas

Realistic! was the way to describe this mock search. We knew it would begin with a team callout sometime Monday evening, and involve someone lost somewhere near "B" Mountain. The call came at 1720, resulting in lots of cold suppers. The operation log summarizes what happened.

1720 Call from Officer Bebee, China Lake Police, for girl (12) lost on "B" Mountain. Reported by Carl Heller who is at the scene with 2 police officers.

1725 Coordinators begin calling team members.

Practice..continued..

1740 Advance team leaves hut to interview Heller and coordinate with police.
They learn that Heller and Pam Slates became separated near the top,
while descending.

1755 Second team (trackers) leaves hut.

1820 Main group joins advance team. Sets up base camp, briefs team leaders.

1850 Five teams in field. Three are cutting perimeters; one is tracking uphill;
one is to try tracking downhill from the top. Trackers confirm they are on
Pam's tracks going uphill.

1950 Sixth team cutting perimeter near base finds what appear to be Pam's tracks
going to adjoining road only to disappear where a car has turned around.

2010 Via ham radio phone patch, base contacts mother who reports Pam is safe at
home.
Base opens Heller's note (plan: to be opened at 2015 if subject not found).
It says that Pam is 200 yards to east of top, weak, cold and with facial cut.
Base debates whether to tell field teams or let them continue; decides to
wait.

2034 #16 has tracks near top heading east and down.

2047 #16 has found subject. Base calls exercise. Requests all teams return.

2115 Critique convenes at Heller's.

COMMENTS

(1) Very quick response. Advance team was on way only 20 minutes after first
alert. (2) Organization and communications went well. Things happened in parallel
so there were few delays. (3) Search plan was sound. Most contingencies were covered.
Team assignments made good use of personnel. (4) Realistic practice with police
involved at scene, and ham radio link to hut phone. We tried calling our team
physicians but neither was at home. (5) Critique was valuable. Brought out several
points for improvement. (6) Perhaps a better base camp logbook, including briefing
reports as well as radio log, would help correct some errors of omission noted
below.

Errors: (1) Second team should have been larger to get more done before main group
arrived. People were milling around in base too long, waiting to be briefed and
moved out. (2) Base camp was too close to tracks; restless searchers tramp-
led some evidence. Advance team should have asked police to park patrol car
across road down from the tracks. (3) Team with initial assignment to go to the
top (last known position of the subject) and to try tracking downhill got diverted
and never reached the top. Search could have been 30 minutes shorter had they
completed their assignment. (4) Some information snafus: interviewers did not
pin Heller down exactly on where they were and direction they were heading when he
last saw Pam. Team leader briefing was rushed. (5) Operation Leader forgot to
brief Assistant OL who missed team leader briefing. Partly to blame for (3).

Recommendations for future training: (1) Check field teams to see if they have
enough extra clothing and first aid gear to treat subject. (2) Have subject go
outside expected initial perimeter cut, making redeployment of field teams
necessary.

continued..

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Search practice personnel: Heller, L, Stronge, Green, R Westbrook, Burge, Lucas Campy, Harris, Atkins, Brown,, Walters, H Garner, St Denis, Moore, Mason Renta, Swanson, Osterman, Lloyd,

Hams: Fletcher, Brubaker, Tipler

Coordinators: S Rockwell and J Garner

Special thanks to China Lake Police Lt Mike Moore and Officer Gary Brown.

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Operation 77- Great Falls Basin Rescue 7 December Heller

The USC-UCLA game was interrupted at 1905 by a phone call from Ernie Semesky of the Southern Inyo SAR Squad. Some teenagers were stranded in the falls -he was going to check and would radio his wife who would phone me. I made a few phone calls to mobilize a team, dressed and phoned Mrs Semesky to give her the hut number. We had 12 people and got off when the confirming phone call came.

Semesky was at the roadhead, with good news. The teenagers were in voice contact and were ok. We took the trail above the falls and made two rappels to the youngsters. Everyone wanted to go, but Harris, Camphausen, Landau and I were enough. We put seats on the boys and lowered them under tension down the lower two falls which were dry this time.

Bob Lopex' family from Trona were waiting. Erich Hogger was visiting from La Verne. They had been tempted by the old water pipes as usual. The pipes are easy to slide down and impossible to climb. Hopefully BLM will remove the pipes sometime soon, but I hope they leave some rappel anchors, since some people may still manage to get stranded.

Great Falls Basin Familiarization 10 December Bob Rockwell

The canyon draining Great Falls Basin, approximately 7 miles north of Trona, has been the scene of several rescues. Hikers travel down canyon, sliding on ancient iron water pipes or climbing/jumping past the numerous dry or not-so-dry waterfalls. Without ropes, a point is reached where the hikers can no longer descend (40' overhanging waterfall) or retreat up the smooth water-polished walls.

I have been on 3 rescues in the canyon, but always at night. Several others had never seen the canyon outside of headlamp range. So this daytime trip came about, with Lee Lucas, Atkins, Holden and Lloyd.

4.5 miles past Trona High School, or 0.2 miles past the Valley Wells monument, turn left on a dirt road. 3.3 miles to the mouth of GF canyon. At a non-rescue pace, this took 50 minutes from downtown Ridgecrest.

A trail on the south rim shortly encounters old iron pipe that leads to the canyon proper in 20 minutes. Probably the best entry to the canyon floor is a

please turn..

(talk about a cliff-hanger!) continue..

125 foot rappel using the pipe as anchor. Alternatively, traverse to the floor higher up (Class 2) and a 40' free rappel down the 7th waterfall leads to the same spot. This latter course has the advantage that the entire trip then requires only a single 150' rope. The remaining descent is described below. All rappels are vertical or overhanging. Anchors **are** plentiful on old water pipes and bolts.

Falls	Rappel Distance	Comments
6th	15'	can be downclimbed
5th	20	can be downclimbed
4th	45	can slide down pipe
3rd	40	
2nd	40	ends in shallow pool
1st		bypass on north side

LETTERS

Dear Editors:

This past January, while on a backpacking vacation in the High Sierras, my son Steve Sheppard and a friend, Jeri Grassmeuck, were beset by a blizzard. Despite their relative familiarity with these mountains, circumstances developed that resulted in the loss of all Jeri's toes from frostbite and my son's life from hypothermia, or exposure to the cold.

In order to prevent this tragedy from striking others, and thus to give meaning to Steve's death, I have been searching for a proper memorial for my son. This search led me to purchase two copies of a film designed to educate hikers to the dangers of hypothermia and to develop an awareness of the symptoms of its onset.

This film, *By Nature's Rules*, was produced by Jim Lawless. It is a 22 minute color dramatization of a day trip that nearly led to the death of one of the participants from hypothermia. The film describes the four stages of this condition, delineates preventive methods and first aid following the onset. It is widely used by Search and Rescue Teams, by the Sierra Club and by other outdoor groups. Because of its excellence copies are always in demand.

SOUTHERN SIERRAN
NOV. 1977

I have placed one of the two copies in the Altadena Public Library so that it will be available to local groups. Another copy will be distributed by the Orange County Sierra Club (714-639-6666). Brochures are available to be distributed at each location.

For Southern California people, hiking is a favorite sport. But we live in a Lotus Land and are not prepared for the life-endangering conditions that commonly arise with rain, wind, snow and cold.

If you are in any way connected with groups that are involved in the outdoors, please avail yourselves of this fine film . . . it may save a life.
Betty Sheppard

78- Evacuation, plane crash 18 January 1978 Frank Buffum

Rev. and Mrs. Eugene Royal, of Ridgecrest, left Inyokern for Fresno in a light plane at 0845 the morning of 16 January 1978. They did not arrive at Fresno, and bad weather had developed over the Sierras. Late in the day, CAP ground crews drove various open roads using DF equipment attempting to detect the plane's ELT signals, but to no avail. The much more efficient use of the DF gear from aircraft had not been possible due to the storm that was continuing over the mountains.

Coming to work on the morning of 17 January 1978, I first heard of the CAP operation to locate the downed plane. Though CLMRG was then on alert to support a Riverside operation, I called the CAP coordinator (Capt. Stark), and told him we were willing and ready to help if needed. Later in the day, CLMRG members who had responded for the, by then canceled, Riverside search were kept on alert for this operation.

At 2000 on 17 January, Tulare County Deputy Alan E. Montgomery (in Kernville) called me and said that just at sundown ELT signals had been detected near Horse Meadow (about 10 mi from Kernville) by a helo with DF gear, and asked if CLMRG could help. We were to request NWC's helo and have a CLMRG crew on standby to respond if needed to aid the H-3 helo search operations, which were to resume the next morning. CLMRG was also to have a ground crew on standby in the event the crashed plane was located, but bad weather precluded an air rescue. I was operation leader with the four-man helo standby team at NAF. Bill Stronge was back-up operation leader for the additional eight members on alert.

The morning of 18 January was clear, but clouds soon began to build up over the mountains. A storm was expected in by evening. A C-130 "cover" plane and two H-3 helos from the Air National Guard in Hayward arrived to resume search operations northeast of Kernville. At 1040 we were radioed that the downed plane had been located, that an H-3 would attempt to pick up the survivor, and for us to take off and go in with our team to recover the remaining deceased victim. The H-3 picked up Rev. Royal and took him to the Ridgecrest Hospital just after noon.

The NWC helo, piloted by CDR Jim Ehl, took Carl Heller, Dennis Burge, Al Green, and I to Kernville Airport to pick up Deputy Montgomery. The Deputy, Al, and I were landed in a meadow, at 8,100 feet, about one-half mile from the crash site, at 8,500 feet and one and one-half miles east of Cannell Meadow Guard Station. The snow was several feet deep and required snow shoes. We got off with full winter gear in the event we could not be gotten out. We showshoed uphill through the forest using compass bearings, prior tracks, and helo beaconing to get to the wreck. The plane had crashed head-on into the mountain--it was partially covered with snow and difficult to see, especially among the big trees. Small emergency SAR radios given to us to stay in contact with the helo were difficult to understand. We switched to our ground FM-air PT 400 with headset link and had excellent communications. After the Deputy's inspection, we removed the victim from the right front seat of the plane. We used the break-down stretcher and then pulled this about 30 yards over the snow to a small clearing. The NWC helo hovered over this clearing and made five hoists to get the stretcher and us out. We used the horse collar--the hoist was about 75 feet. After a stop at Kernville, we returned to NAF at 1600.

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Return to:

Editor's CUBBYHOLE - - - - ANDERSON

With this last paragraph for Issue #39 of the TALUS PILE, I'll no longer be the Editor. Carol Burge has said she would like to take over as Editor, and I can't see anything wrong with that suggestion!

It has been fun...browbeating the Op Ldrs for their Op Reports, and puzzling over handwriting, and trying to keep an eye out for egregious errors ...I sort of hate to give up all that Power. But it will be nice to get the TALUS PILE in the mail, all new and neat and clean. Goodby, you readers..and Hello, Carol!