

CHINA LAKE MOUNTAIN RESCUE GROUP

P.O. BOX 2037

RIDGECREST, CA 93555

January 1979

Jan 27-28	Trail or Cirque Peak	D. Burge
Feb 4	Paiute Monument	Anderson
12	Meeting at 945 Upjohn, R/C	Joy/Mason
16-19	Four Day Sierra Traverse	R. Westbrook
24	MRA Rock Workshop, Fossil Falls	Heller
25	Inyo Posse-China Lake SAR Leadership Coordination Problem	L. Lucas
26	Peru Slide Show, Burroughs Lecture Ctr.	
Mar 3-4	Eagle Mt., Brown Mt., Amargosa Opera	Camphausen
10-11	Ice Climb with June Lake Team	St. Denis
12	Meeting at 1108 Krista Ct., R/C	Lloyd/Renta
19	Sign Cutting Practice (5-7pm)	Harris
24-25	Palmer, Grapevine, Wahguyhe	L. Lucas
Tracking Practice - every Thursday, 11:30-12:30		Camphausen
Rock Climbing - every Sunday, 7am at NWC Main Gate		Heller

DONORS

Our thanks to the following people who have recently made donations to CLMRG:

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 Public Education Committee Ron Atkins
 First Aid Committee Fred Camphausen
 Equipment/Quartermaster Daryl Hinman

Summary of 1978 Operations Carl Heller

CLMRG was called 26 times in 1978, and 12 field operations resulted. This is a high ratio of calls to actual field work and is good from one viewpoint. The worst operations are those in which we are called a couple days late and know we are searching for a body. Nowadays, the authorities are alerting us early and there is a better chance of success.

Twelve field operations is a rather low number in relation to the early 70's. It is difficult to tell just why there are now fewer operations, but it is undoubtedly in part because there are now more SAR teams, more paid rangers and more helos available. The higher density of people outdoors could result in fewer being lost.

A worrisome aspect of fewer field operations is the loss of the valuable training which such operations give. To some extent this has been equalized by more operations near home, where the percentage of transit time is low. Only the Yosemite operation involved a long auto trip.

The data for this annual report comes from the operation reports of leaders and coordinators. All leaders and some coordinators should make out reports for all operations, including alerts, in order to keep our data correct.

Summary of 1978 Operations Data

Operation Type		Location		Victim Type	
Alerts	13	Inyo Co.	10	Backpackers	17
Searches	6	Kern Co.	7	Climbers	4
Rescues/Recovery	5	Tulare Co.	3	Skiers	3
SARs	1	Riverside Co.	3	Fliers	2
Mobilizations	1	Los Angeles Co	1	Hikers	2
	26	Tuolumne	1	Picnickers	2
		Yosemite	1	Hunters	2
				Auto users	2
				Motorcyclist	1
				Runaway boy	1
					36

List of 1978 Operations

If	Date	Type	County	Victim	Result	Ldr/Coord
1	1-3	A _b	Kern	Hikers(4)	Safe	Atkins
2*	1-16	S _b	Kern	Fliers(2)	Crash	Turner/CAP
2	1-17	R _a	Tulare	Flier	Recovery	Buffum/?
3	1-16	A _a	Riverside	Hikers	OK	Atkins
4	1-30	A _a	Inyo	Backpackers	Out late	Lucas
5	3-17	A	LA	Skier	No report	Lucas/Atkins
6	3-20	A _a	Inyo(Mt Tom)	Climbers(Mt Tom)	OK	Heller/Burge
7	3-26	M _a	Tulare(Crag Pk)	Climbers	OK	Heller/Rockwell
8	4-7	A _b	Riverside	Backpackers	No report	Heller/Camphausen
9	5-20	S _a	Tuolumne	Lost boy	Found	Lucas/Harris
10	7-2	A _a	Inyo (Bristlecones)		OK	Harris
11	7-22,25	S _a	Yosemite NP		Not found	Lucas/Harris
12	7-29	A _a	Inyo (Aberdeen)	Hikers (2)	OK	Lucas
13	8-20	A	Riverside(Whitewater)	Hikers	No report	Heller
14	7-8	A _a	Kern	Motorcyclist	OK	Westbrook
15	7-27	A	Inyo (Whitney)	Hiker	OK	Westbrook
16	9-1	A _a	Kern	Mine victim	IWVSAR	Camphausen
17	9-4	S _a	Inyo (Black Lake)	Backpacker	Found	Landau/Camphausen
18	9-5	R	Inyo (Trail Camp)	Backpackers-4	Dead-2 Saved -2	Westbrook/Rockwell
19	9-6	R ^a	Inyo (Lamarck)	Backpackers(2)	Dead-2	Burge/Burge
20	10-30	S	Kern(China Lake)	Runaway	Not found	Buffum
21	10-31	R ^a	Inyo (Trail Camp)	Fallen hiker	Rescued	Green/Burge
22	11-8	S	Inyo(Ash Crk)	Overdue Hunter	Safe	Heller/Burge
23	11-24	A ^b	Kern	Auto users	Safe	Heller
24	12-17	SAR ^{b,a}	Kern (Spanish Needles)	Climber	Rescued	Green/Lucas
25	12-19	R ^b	Tulare/Inyo	Auto users	Rescued-5	Heller/Rockwell

a=Joint MRA operation; b= Joint non-MRA operation

Public Education Committee - 1978 Annual Report

Bob Rockwell

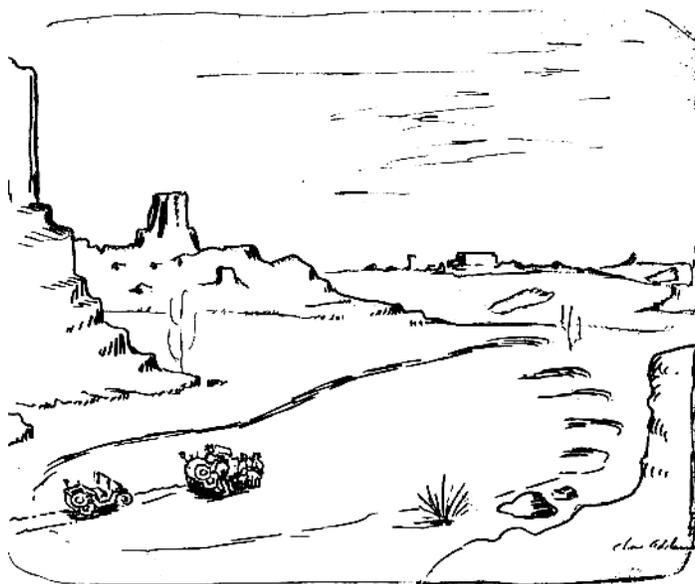
The Public Education Committee arranged for 19 programs on outdoor safety during 1978, reaching as estimated 743 residents of Southern California. Audiences included children and youths in Boy and Girl Scout troops; church and grammar school children; and adult groups.

Twenty-seven members of CLMRG helped give these programs, expending a total of 239 manhours. The survival and lost child shows continued to be popular. The two movies, "By Nature's Rules" and "Thermal Wilderness", have by now, been shown so many times that we had to purchase new copies of each. Last year we had more than the usual number of requests for a program on "What does CLMRG do?". The interest in this topic continues, and a slide show on the subject needs to be put together.

Again, about half of our programs were given to the kindergarten through high school age groups. We should give thought to a safety and survival slide show expressly made for this rather broad category. We have discussed this for some time and the need remains. Hopefully, next year's P.E. Committee will be more successful than we have been at meeting these specific needs.

1978 PUBLIC EDUCATION EVENTS

Date	Group or Event	# People	Program	CLMRG Manhours
1-9	Boy Scouts	25	Hypothermia film	3
1-19	Kiwanis	45	"What CLMRG Does"	2
1-25	United Way of IWV	40	Represent CLMRG at dinner	4
2-21	Seventh Day Adventists	15	Hypothermia film	2
2-27	Trona EMT Class	20	Heat, cold films	2
3-8	Parents Without Partners	17	"Not Getting Lost"	1
3-20	Girl Scouts	100	Bouldering	60
5-1	Richmond Second Grade	30	Lost Kids	1
5-9	Fire Rescue class	6	Stretcher practice	2
5-13	Armed Forces Day	200	Demonstration and display	21
5-20	Kern Co. Sheriff's Seminar	75	Bouldering	15
6-6	Las Flores Kindergarten	30	Safety	2
6-14	Maturango Museum class	34	Safety	2
6-15	Cub Scouts	85	Water play at NAF Pool	22



" Well, I don't see any point in looking any farther. It was probably just one of those wild rumors."

* * *

CHICKEN FEATHERS, cries the Customs Service in a crackdown on down.

A long-promised move against mislabeling of imported down-filled jackets, sleeping bags and the like has turned up a host of retailers with too many chicken feathers in their down, say Customs men. If an item is labeled "down filled," it must contain no less than 70% goose or duck down and not more than 20% chicken feathers; the remainder can be made up of various fibers. U.S. apparel makers and the Customs Service say many "down-filled" items, especially from Taiwan, Korea and Hong Kong, contain 50% or more chicken feathers.

Sears, Roebuck & Co., the only retailer so far disclosing voluntarily any involvement with mislabeled down imports, earlier this month pulled all down-filled products from its shelves for testing. Says a Sears spokesman, "If any of the items didn't meet government labeling regulations, new labels were attached." Sears didn't say how much of its merchandise passed the down test.

Duck and goose down are very effective insulators but cost apparel makers up to \$35 a pound. Chicken feathers cost \$3 to \$5 a pound, are much less effective.

* * *

 1978 INDIVIDUAL PARTICIPATION

Name	Public Education		Operations		
	Calls Responded To	Hours	Calls Responded To	Field Operations	Hours
Anderson	2	8	5	2	28
Atkins	2	13	5	1	17.5
Brown	1	6	12	6	124.5
Buffum	1	2	7	4	48.5
C. Burge	0	0	9	0	21
D. Burge	2	6	7	5	64
Camphausen	2	3	6	2	13
Cote	1	2	4	1	15
Fletcher	0	0	3	3	12
H. Garner	1	6	0	0	0
J. Garner	1	6	0	0	0
Gleeson	1	2	3	2	69
Green	1	6	9	4	55
Harris	2	44	13	6	117
Heller	1	6	14	4	59.5
Hunt	0	0	2	1	23
Joy	1	2	4	2	30
Landau	2	9	2	1	17
LLoyd	2	9	7	4	60
D. Lucas	3	20	8	3	56
L. Lucas	4	43	11	2	87.5
Mason	0	0	3	3	77
Moore	0	0	9	3	29.5
Osterman	1	2	4	2	24
Renta	2	8	4	3	44
B. Rockwell	6	17	1	0	1
S. Rockwell	2	4	9	0	9
St. Denis	2	7	4	2	16
Sires	0	0	1	1	14
Slates	0	0	5	0	9
Snell	1	2	6	4	54.5
Stogsdill	1	2	5	3	28
Stronge	0	0	3	0	16
Swanson	0	0	1	1	22
Turner	0	0	1	0	4
Walters	1	4	3	2	33
B. Westbrook	2	4	9	2	36
		<hr/>		<hr/>	
	Total	243		Total	1172

OPERATION REPORTS

#7820 Search, 30 October "B" Mountain, China Lake Frank Buffum

On 30 October 1978, China Lake Police Department requested our help in searching for John Sherwood - a missing 15-year old from China Lake. John had received a concussion on 3 October and had been missing from home since 7 October. There were reports that he had periodically been seen around town - the last time at a ball game on 29 October. His father was concerned for his safety. On the night of 27 October, we received a call from his father who believed John might be in the B Mountain-Lone Butte area. The father had found an abandoned mine shaft, which he wanted to check out. We contacted the IWV Mine Search and Rescue Team and they did this with no evidence that John had been there. Over the weekend, 28-29 October, an ex-girlfriend told of a cave she and John had gone to several years ago. Mr. Sherwood wanted to find this cave. A CLMRG tracking team was assembled (Lucas, Camphausen, Anderson, Stogsdill, Renta, and Buffum) at the request of the China Lake Police Department (Capt. Pearia and Sgt. Truesdale). Tracking and searching of numerous rock shelters on B Mountain and the adjoining gullies, failed to turn up any evidence of the boy or recent activity on the hill. The girl could not find the cave. Towards the end of the afternoon, we got a rain and decided that from the lack of evidence and tracks there was little likelihood the boy was in this area.

Comments:

1. It is important for the public and authorities to know that our services are free, but we cannot help unless requested. This is an answer to people in the community who know of our existence and wonder why we aren't doing something, especially when local folks are involved.
2. Main value of this operation to CLMRG was the opportunity to meet and work with the China Lake Police Department.
3. Again, value of search and tracking in establishing that a victim was not in a given area was shown.

#7821 Rescue, 1 November Trail Camp, Inyo Co. Al Green

CLMRG was put on alert Tuesday, 10/31/78. Bud Clayton from the Inyo Co. Sheriff's Posse had called Don Harris and asked to have a team ready in case they needed help in the rescue of an injured hiker near Trail Crest.

At 0815 the next day, Don called me and said that they wanted four people. I agreed to be the Operation leader. A call to Carol Burge, who became the coordinator and a call to NAF asking for helicopter support, started things moving. A series of phone calls followed. The situation as it came into focus was: Inyo now wanted 8 people; NAF would fly us and shuttle in as far as possible. The weather report was not encouraging - i.e. snowing and near zero visibility. We were to take extra warm clothes, sleeping bag and a stretcher prepared to carry the victim out.

The first four, Green, Buffum, Stogsdill and Snell, at the hut went to NAF and were in the Lemoore helicopter (Angel 1), ready for take-off at 1010. The next four, Burge, Brown, Renta and Lloyd, also went to NAF to be flown to Lone Pine in a fixed wing a/c - a U-9. The first team set up our MRA radio (PT-400 with headset and clip-on antenna), in the helicopter, and made sure that the crew chief could use it. We attempted to contact the Inyo team as the helicopter probed around the Portals. Neither attempt was successful and we were landed at a wide spot in the road below the Portals.

A sheriff's vehicle was there and we got an update on the victim's condition - frozen feet and hands, concussion and probable hypothermia. This information, along with a request to shuttle the next team of four up from the Lone Pine

Airport was radioed to Angel 1.

We started hiking the snow covered trail at about 12:15 with the second team 30 minutes behind. At roughly 1430, I started hearing Angel 1 asking for directions, stating that they were starting from the point where we had unloaded below the Portals.. After what seemed like hours, the familiar and hoped for sound echoed up the canyon through the misty clouds. Somehow, between radio transmissions from three locations and some far out flying, the helicopter reached and evacuated the victim.

As a response to a letter from me, the helo pilot, LTCDR L.G. Tande, called me and gave us a view from their side. The first attempt to come up the canyon, had them up the N. Fork of Lone Pine Creek. Turning around and retreating from that canyon was tricky. The second shot was correct. They were directed by our radios. There was some confusion, because three MRA radios were responding: One in the Lone Pine Lake area, one near Mirror Lake and one at Trail Camp. These radios did not always identify themselves by location. The reason probably was that they could not hear anyone but "Angel 1" and thought no one else was trying to direct the helicopter. Fortunately, I could hear the Trail Camp team (but not the one at Lone Pine Lake) and made a real effort to clarify my location and the locations of the Trail Camp broadcasts.

The crew chief had his helmet off and was talking to us and relaying to the pilot. They were about 1/16 mile from the victim site when they spotted the victim and rescuers. A packed down circle of snow was very helpful for a landing spot. The blowing snow at 50 ft hover caused Tande to lose all visual reference. His crew chief talked him down to the landing spot - probably while hanging out over a skid. Tande said that he would not have been able to perform that rescue without the experienced crew on board. His crew consisted of Copilot Lt.D.M. Truax, Crew Chief AEC B.C. Revels and Crewman AD1 C.O. Pennington.

As usual there are things that we could have done differently and better. We needed a base camp with radio contact with the field teams. Inyo was able to communicate occasionally on their sheriff's frequency. This provided the victim condition report, but did not help with the helicopter or our field teams who had only the MRA frequency. Our base radio has worked very well from Lone Pine Airport and would have taken all the confusion out of the ground to air communications. We should have sent a vehicle with the radio to Lone Pine.

Why was all this necessary? Jim McCallister, a 30 year old cab driver from San Francisco, decided to continue his climb of Mt. Whitney in spite of three companions turning back. This happened near Trail Crest on Monday, 10-30 Jim fell and spent the night on the switchbacks. The next day, one of his friends, who had heard him yelling, took a sleeping bag up to him and went out for help. Jim spent another night on the switchbacks. On Wednesday morning, Greg Elliot and Bob Karras, from the Inyo team, arrived and managed to get Jim down to Trail Camp (he could not walk). The helicopter picked him and the two companions up on Wednesday afternoon. Jim was taken to the Lone Pine Hospital and transferred via the Loma Linda helicopter-ambulance to Loma Linda.

#7322 Search, 8-9 November 78 Ash Creek, Inyo Co. Carl Heller

Bud Clayton of Bishop, phoned at 2110 to ask us to handle a lost hunter search on Ash Creek, north of Olancha. The reporting party, (RP), Bob Pershetti, had expressed fear that Dick Muldoon, of Olancha, had fallen on the precipitous hillside where they had been bear hunting. Due to this report, (indirectly to us), we decided to drive north Wednesday night and get more information at the site, particularly since the RP had gone back into the area.

We got a briefing from Dick Muldoon's wife, Janice, at the Ranch Cafe in Olancho and went to the roadhead. Dennis Burge, Terry Moore and Chris Osterman went up canyon to get more information from Bob Pershetti and Dick's sons. They had been unsuccessful in their searching, although Dick was presumed alive since shots had been heard.

Dennis' team slept for a few hours, until dawn, and then started searching. Larry Sires was in radio contact with Bob Fletcher and considering the rough territory, which Dennis thought would be had for helos, we asked for another team. We had an offer, through OES, of the Lemoore helo, but held that on standby. Mike Mason, Greg Cote and Dianne Lucas started up canyon to help search, while Bob Joy and I stayed to carry the stretcher in if needed.

At 0710, Dennis and Terry sighted someone above them and at 0724, we knew Dick Muldoon was safe and mobile. He had found himself stranded at dusk, and decided to bivouac. I cancelled the helo and tried to cancel our team which, unfortunately was already in transit. We all met at the Ranch Cafe for coffee and a critique.

Notes:

1. The Ham radio teams proved useful, particularly since Larry Sires was also able to operate our MRA radio.
2. We brought three portable radios and when one proved out of order, wished we had another. Always bring one more than you plan to use.

Operation leader: Carl Heller Coordinator: Carol Burge

#7823	Alert, 24 November 78	Kern Co., (Car Over)	Heller
#7824	Search and Rescue, 17 December 78	Kern Co., Spanish Needle	Al Green

I received the call at 11:41 on Sunday from the China Lake police dispatcher. A Mike Riseley had reported a man with a broken leg on Spanish Needle. Mike was at Mom and Pop's Truck Stop in Pearsonville. I called Lee Lucas and asked him to get a telephoner and have people come to the hut as soon as possible. Lee also was to call Mike Riseley back for any additional information and to check on a helicopter. I swept my VW parts up and somehow got the garage door closed. Stronge was already at the hut when I arrived and was preparing gear for the operation. He didn't realize then that he would be there, providing radio communication, until 4 am the next day. A team of eight (Green, Joy, Burge, Atkins, Buffum, Harris, Dianne Lucas and Brown), left the hut at 12:30 to pick up Mike Riseley at Pearsonville. The discussion with Mike confirmed our intention to go in via Lamont Meadows.

The accident had happened about 1400 on Saturday. Mike's father, Frank Riseley, a 45 year old M.D., had fallen and broken his lower leg near the boot top. Four members of the party had hiked back to their vehicle in Lamont Meadow, to go for help, while Mike stayed with his father. Sunday morning, Mike went to the saddle north of Spanish Needle, where the four were supposed to have left a sleeping bag and food. Finding none, he went out the Sand Canyon direction for help. This was a wise move because the others had stranded their vehicle and were walking out.

On the way in, via the Lamont Meadow jeep trail, in Joy's Toyota, we made radio contact with the Kern Valley team, who were responding to the four, who had made it out to Isabella. Kern Valley provided some fantastic 4-wheeling to get our first team of eight and Heller's team (Walters, Gleeson and Lloyd) farther up the meadow than I had dreamed possible. There was about a foot of snow covering the entire area.

Mike Riseley was to guide us to his father. Considering the snow, 100 ft visibility, approaching darkness and the fact that no trail markers were left, he did a good job. However, we did have trouble in finding the victim. We were really beginning to worry and finally at about 1600, decided we were too low and had traversed too far south. Radio contact sent Burge, Harris and Brown up the chute they happened to be in, while we went up ours and Heller was asked to traverse across the top. Burge's team was a little behind us and Heller was back near the saddle north of the peak. Fortunately, Dave Brown found Riseley in their chute at about 1700. The fact that our group has had several trips to Spanish Needle over the past few years, helped considerably in finding our way.

The next two hours were spent trying to make Frank Riseley as comfortable as possible. An air splint was placed on his leg; he was fed some of Dave's food and placed in the Stokes litter inside our rescue sleeping bag. Riseley is 6 ft tall and weighs 210 #, so he barely fit in our sleeping bag. At 1900 we started down the long descent, over talus which varied from treacherous to seemingly impassable. The snow changed to sleet, then rain, as we descended. Westbrook, Moore, Mason, St. Denis, Hunt and a couple of IWV members were extremely welcome as they came up from Sand Canyon to assist. Farther down, more IWV team members, led by Sam Wyatt, helped us out. A team of three from Inyo Co., along with our Snell and Ostermann were ready to come up and assist, but were saved by our unpredicted "rapid" progress - it only took eight hours. We really appreciated the assistance and back up provided by the other teams.

Comments: 1. Mike Riseley said that getting a response from his call to the sheriff's office took more than two hours. The China Lake dispatcher logged their first call in at 11:33 and got us at 11:41. I have attempted to trace the delay with no specific success, but hopefully when the next accident occurs in our local mountains, we will be called immediately.

2. Radio contact via 155.160 to the Kern Valley team was unexpected and helpful. We should remember their capability for radio communications as well as their expertise with vehicles.

3. Equipment problems did arise. Ropes did not get in to the initial lowering site. The canvas bottom was left at the hut (my fault). A tarp to cover the sleeping bag is needed. We used Dianne's bivvy tarp. Our stretcher took an awful beating and is virtually demolished. Perhaps we should get a breakdown, fiberglass sled type.

4. I'm sorry about the poor coverage in the Daily Independent. It is necessary to let them know as soon as possible for a complete and accurate story. Our coordinator should try to remember to initiate the contact.

The following comments are from Lee Lucas.

5. The situation was complicated by the two requests for assistance going to separate substations. Green should have told Stronge of their contact with Kern Valley as soon as possible.

6. Green did not brief Deputy Clark sufficiently before the team left Pearsonville.

7. The cooperation from the Rescue Coordination Center (RCC)-Scott AFB and from Lemoore was really great. The helo from Edwards was arranged for by the sheriff's office.

8. The agreement between RCC-Scott AFB and the State of California calls for Scott to refer our request to OES, who in turn refer it to the appropriate sheriff. This takes time. That's why I (Lee) called Lemoore directly. Official authorization for MRA to initiate a helo request would certainly save time.

Highlights of CRMRA Region Meeting held at Cerro Coso College on 13 January 79

Liz Anderson

Qualifications - Associate membership was discussed. It was decided to retain it, as is.

Membership - Saddleback accepted as associate member. LA County ESD was accepted as a non-certified, ex-officio member.

Test dates - Saddleback rock test - March 17, 1979 at Fish Canyon.
Malibu search test - April 22 - location undecided

Joint operations - Adopted draft 4 of the JOINT OPERATIONS PROCEDURES with minor changes. (Lee Lucas was in charge of draft 4)

Workshop at Fossil Falls - Ten teams are committed to attend a rock workshop at Fossil Falls on 24 February. It will be hosted by China Lake.

Next region meeting - 12 May 79 Inyo and June Lake will host it - location undecided.

New Year's Day on North Palisade

Bob Rockwell

The Mountain: North Palisade, at 14,242 feet, stands approximately 15 miles west of the Owens Valley town of Big Pine. In his climbers' guide, Hervey Voge notes that although there are higher or more massive peaks in the Sierra Nevada, none are of bolder or more rugged relief, or more beautifully alpine in character. The Sierra's largest glacier nestles against North Palisade's northeastern flank.

History: North Pal, as it is affectionately called, was first ascended 75 years ago on July 25, 1903, when Joseph LeConte, James Hutchinson and James Moffitt climbed it via the southwest couloir. This delicate third class route is still the easiest way to the summit on an otherwise class four (or higher) mountain.

The famous mountaineer, Norman Clyde, lived the latter half of his life in the shadow of North Pal, near Big Pine (when he wasn't climbing). Clyde has more first ascents and solo climbs in the Sierra than anyone else, and it is easy to conclude from his writings that North Palisade was one of his favorite mountains. Of the dozen or so routes up the peak, he was the first on three of them.

The first winter ascent was achieved by David Brower and Fred Kelley on March 17, 1940. While all ascents of North Pal are meaningful because of the difficulty of the mountain, those in winter are particularly cherished. It is for this reason that several of us have aspired to such a climb in recent years.

Our Attempt: In order to have maximum daylight, we have always timed our efforts for the last weekend of winter. And always. we have been repulsed by storms. This year we decided in favor of early winter, hoping that the shorter days might be offset by more settled weather conditions. Thus our party, consisting of Arold Green, Mont Hubbard and myself, left the Glacier Lodge roadhead on the morning of December 30. After two days of snowshoeing in the



"Why didn't you think of that before we left base camp?"

extremely soft powder snow, we pitched our tent at 12,500 feet on the Palisade Glacier. Hot buttered rum and pineapple cheesecake helped lull us to sleep that night.

The next morning dawned beautifully clear and calm. Almost 1500 feet higher on the skyline, North Pal's famous and aptly named "U-Notch" awaited our footsteps. The bergschrund is easily surmounted at this time of the year and step-kicking up the 45° snow slopes to the U-Notch was straightforward and only moderately strenuous. It was already noon when we reached the U-Notch. Our chosen route now called for ascending the steep 200 foot, class 5 exit directly to the summit ridge, thence a scramble to the summit itself. While the wind was relatively low by winter standards, the extreme air temperatures and snow, which had collected in cracks and holds, made the climbing conditions severe. All went well, however, and we reached the summit a couple of hours later. We took a few pictures. Now, to open the register box, write down our names, and "Hey, anybody know the date?".... "I think it's New Year's Day!".... "Well, whattayaknow!"....

Three rappels took us back to the U-Notch, then an uneventful descent to camp, stumbling back in the dark. As we prepared for the coming subzero evening temperatures, we thought of our friends and families who had celebrated the traditional promise of a beginning new year, in more traditional fashion, and at more traditional elevations.

Epilogue: North Palisade has been climbed many times. And it has been climbed in winter. But somehow, ascending it on New Year's Day made the experience extra special for us and what more fitting way to enjoy special occasions for people who truly love the mountains than by being intimately close to mountains.

B Mountain Happy Hour I and II

On December 22, 1978, CLMRG plus friends, relatives and dogs, celebrated the first annual B Mountain Happy Hour, by climbing the mountain, planting a pine tree on top and toasting it with appropriate beverages. Festivities were continued with pizza and beer and "Christmassy" slides at Rockwell's -partly to celebrate everyone's successful descent from the mountain.

Within a week, the warm glow of this successful venture began to cool as the needles, then the branches and finally the bark of our little pine tree were gobbled by the residents of B Mountain.

Undaunted, on January 22, a somewhat smaller group of revelers climbed our favorite peak, pulled up and cast aside the bare stick with its roots, then planted, toasted and enclosed in wire mesh another lush little pine tree. Two days later, only the needles poking through the wire had been nibbled. So if you're going up B Mountain, please take the CLMRG pine tree a drink - maybe we can hold a 4th of July picnic under it.

All this silva cultural activity was skillfully organized by Bob Rockwell and Lee Lucas.

The Talus Pile is published approximately every two months. Articles, classified ads, cartoons, etc. are welcome and may be sent to the Editor, Carol Burge, 624 Randall, Ridgecrest, CA, 93555 or NWC code 3175.