



CHINA LAKE MOUNTAIN RESCUE GROUP

P.O. BOX 2037

RIDGECREST, CA 93555



CORINNA PETERSON - SEPTEMBER 11, 1956 - AUGUST 17, 1983

Corinna Peterson was killed when her car was caught in a flash flood on August 17. It seems impossible to admit the reality of her death. She was so vibrant and full of life. Corinna was only with the CLMRG for three years. During that time she earned the respect and admiration of all of us. She was so enthusiastic and excited about climbing and rescue activities. Corinna loved to climb and she was the catalyst that started many enjoyable trips.

Corinna advanced from an applicant member to rescue qualified in those three short years. She participated in thirty rescue operations. She was our representative on the Indian Wells Valley Emergency Services Council. She helped organize and teach the summer rock climbing classes. She was always eager to help when something was needed, from folding maps to climbing the face of Whitney on a rescue.

Time will dull the pain of our loss. However, those of us who were privileged to know Corinna will never forget her.

Contributions in Corinna's name can be sent to CLMRG, P.O. Box 2037, Ridgecrest, CA 93555. Checks should be made payable to the IVW American Red Cross Disaster Preparedness Fund.

Our friends and rescue colleagues will notice that Carl Heller is on the inactive list of our new call roster. Carl is seriously ill with cancer. All of us sincerely hope that he will be able to resume an active role. The CLMRG was started by Carl and we have depended greatly on his leadership and skill.

Carl, our thoughts and prayers are with you.

OPERATION REPORTS

NUMBER	DATE	WHAT	WHERE	LEADER
83-9	5/19/83	Rescue	Robber's Roost	Hinman

In the early evening of 19 May 1983, Steve Bresnahan, a 22 year old Naval Weapons Center sailor, became stranded while attempting to climb to the top of Robber's Roost (a rock outcropping west of Highway 14 and south of Highway 178). Robert Standard, who was with Bresnahan, drove to Inyokern and notified the Kern County Sheriff's Ridgecrest Substation. Sheriff, Sgt. Cooper, called CLMRG coordinator Sheila Rockwell at 2130 requesting immediate assistance. When Sheila called me,

I asked her to call out rock climbing members. Sgt. Cooper and Standard met us at the CLMRG hut, where we got the details of Bresnahan's predicament.

By 2300, ten CLMRG members, Sgt. Cooper and Standard had arrived at Robber's Roost. Bresnahan was located, with the aid of the Sheriff vehicle's spotlight, on the northwest side of the largest rock (400 foot high) which forms Robber's Roost. A 100 foot, moderate angle apron, which forms the base of the rock, is topped by a large ledge. Above this ledge is a steep face with large overhanging bowls covered with bat feces. Bresnahan was perched motionless in one of these bowls about 30 feet above the ledge. He was standing on small footholds with his upper body leaning into a small hole in which he was desperately hanging on. Bresnahan was complaining that his muscles were cramping and running out of the strength necessary to hang on.

I sent Bob Huey to immediately begin climbing up to Bresnahan to secure him as quickly as possible. Meanwhile, Adams, Mason and Peterson left to find a route to a position above Bresnahan. The Sheriff's spotlight offered a remarkably good view of the general area of the problem, while headlights were needed for details. Although low fifth class climbing led to the ledge, it was complicated by extremely loose, decomposed rock and a lack of adequate protection. Climbing above the ledge proved more difficult than estimated from the ground, as Huey fell three times, finally injuring his knee. I started up to assist Huey on a second rope using "friends" to strengthen his anchors as I climbed (he had none). The "friends" worked well as I was able to protect the difficult climbing above the ledge, all the time wondering why anyone would be climbing unroped 5.7 in cowboy boots on this loose rock, while looking at a 100 foot plus fall. The real kicker was that Bresnahan had hauled a loaded 22 caliber rifle up with him using a piece of kite string.

Zigzagging through the bowls, I reached a bowl 10 feet to the victim's left, where he had left his rifle. By this time, Adams, Mason and Peterson had managed to find a route in the dark to a location 100 feet above the victim. I communicated with them through Linda Finco using a radio on the ground. They lowered their rope, which hung four feet out from the wall due to the overhang. At this point, the victim could have been reached by rappelling down the rope from above, by ascending up the rope from the ledge, or by my continued climbing using the rope for an upper belay. Because the rope hung too far out from the victim for someone hanging on it to safely secure him, I decided to continue climbing. Unfortunately, I was unable to complete the move around the bulge between my bowl and the victim's bowl, because I did not want to disturb the unsecured victim who was using all the available holds. Furthermore, there was no place for protection and I was unable to take tension because the rope above ran out over the overhang. Hanging out on my right arm, I was able to use my left hand to place a sling around the victim's large belt who was on my right. I lengthened the sling and clipped it to a Prusik sling on the upper belay rope, and then moved to my bowl.

I debated what to do next. The sling around his belt was only as good as the strength of his belt and buckle. At best it could hold him and at worst I would direct his fall onto the ledge 30 feet below, instead of the ground. Bresnahan seemed calm and steady when I was near him and because it was too risky for me to try to secure him better, I did not. Fortunately, Stogsdill and Gleason soon reached the location above with a second rope, which was lowered to the victim's right where the overhang was not so great. Huey ascended up this rope from the ledge and immediately secured the victim to his ascender. I untied from my upper belay rope and Huey tied it around the victim's waist. A diaper sling was tied to the victim and he was lowered from above to the ledge below. Huey and I then descended to the ledge after unloading and lowering the rifle. The victim then did a belayed rappel to the ground, arriving there at 0200.

Bresnahan was extremely stiff and sore from remaining in one position, clinging to the rock for over five hours. He could barely walk and had to be assisted down the trail to the Sheriff's vehicle. We secured the operation and returned to the CLMRG hut by 0400. CLMRG members participating in the rescue and not previously mentioned are Bart Hine and Vern Anderson.

COMMENTS:

1. This problem was technically as difficult as anything we have ever practiced. Considering the fact that it was done at night, on extremely loose rock, and in an unfamiliar area and accomplished within three hours, is a credit to all concerned and the capability of our organization. Sheriff Sgt. Cooper (who is new to Ridgecrest Substation) was very impressed with our "professional performance".
2. A mix-up in communication caused some equipment including ropes to be left at the hut. This hampered things somewhat. Fortunately, Stogsdill had brought two of his own ropes. The rule of thumb is that on a technical operation each person should have a 150 foot climbing rope.
3. Adequate protection without "friends" was virtually impossible. The CLMRG should purchase two complete racks, since we cannot rely on individual members who own them to be present on an operation. Also, Huey should have had them with him when he initially went up.

83-10 5/28/83

Search/Recovery

Mt. Whitney

Stogsdill

Jim Randall of the Inyo Sheriff Posse called me at 1630, Saturday, 28 May asking if CLMRG could take on an operation on Mt. Whitney. The problem was an overdue hiker, incidentally a member of the Mammoth Mt. Rescue Team. Ray Ranger, 29 years old, of Mammoth had been hiking with a group of friends from Duck Pass near Mammoth on down to Mt. Whitney. On Wednesday, 25 May, Ray advised the rest of the trail weary group that he wanted to solo the Mountaineer's Route of Mt. Whitney before walking out. He would make the climb and hitchhike home on Thursday. The last sight anyone had of Ray was of him leaving his black backpack at Iceberg Lake and starting up the Mountaineer's route on his skis. When Ray didn't make it home on Thursday, members of the Mammoth Rescue team were alerted and came back on Friday to do a trail search. Even though several groups had climbed the same route after Ray, no one had seen him. As China Lake entered the picture, four days had passed and we were well into the Memorial Day weekend with most of our members out of town. Nevertheless, nine of us left for base camp at Lone Pine Airport the next morning in order to start a full scale search. In the meantime, Scott Air Force Base had been notified and had assigned the China Lake helicopter as mission support.

At 0700 the search got underway with Pat Elliott of Inyo Posse and me setting up the search plan and starting teams off into the field. The first team into the field was from Mammoth. One member of this team was Walter Ranger, Ray's brother. The two most pressing pieces of information that we needed were: (1) was Ray's backpack still at Iceberg Lake? And (2) had Ray signed the register on top of Whitney? The answer to these questions would dictate whether we searched up from Iceberg Lake or down. A team consisting of Bob Adams and Mike Wisecarver was put aboard the China Lake UH-1 helicopter with the intent of landing at Iceberg Lake to look for the black backpack. High wind and down drafts soon caused this mission to abort and the helicopter returned to base camp. During this first attempt though, the crew had spotted a lone hiker just north of Thor Peak and thought it was possibly our lost person.

Once again Bob Adams was loaded aboard the helicopter but this time with one of the group that had been hiking with Ray for the past 4 or 5 weeks, Lance Rowland. A note contained inside a used smoke flare was to be dropped containing instructions for the person if he was Ray. As the helo was flying this assignment, several people camped at Iceberg Lake pointed out to the crew a lone black backpack at the edge of the lake. This meant that Ray had not returned to pick up the pack and our search would be uphill from that point.

The most dangerous spot on the Mountaineer's Route is just beyond a saddle near the waterfalls that must be climbed before reaching the summit. A slip and fall here leads to a vertical wall and the Artic Lake area. Having been advised of this possibility, LCDR Buzz Massengale, pilot of the China Lake helicopter, flew down to the bottom of this wall. A body was seen lying in a snow field near the foot of the wall. The helo offloaded Adams and Rowland to confirm the find. It was indeed Ray. The time was 1010, about 3 hours after the search started.

The remainder of the day was spent sending in another team (Hine and Wisecarver) with ropes, a stretcher and other gear necessary to affect the body recovery. The body was brought out and the mission complete with the retrieval of rescue team members at 1650. China Lake members involved were Tom Stogsdill, leader, Bob Adams, Larry Gleason, Bart Hine, Andrew Mitchell, John Ayers, Linda Finco, Mike Wisecarver and Ken Amster. Special radio support was provided by Bob Fletcher and Larry Sires. Coordinator was Mary Wyatt.

83-11 7/2/83

Rescue

Upper Meysan Lake

Atkins

Shortly after lunch (1315) on Saturday, Carl received a call from Deputy Steven Long of the Inyo County Sheriff's office requesting that we assist the Inyo Team in the evacuation of a fallen climber above Upper Meysan Lake. Since it was my weekend, Carl called me to take the operation. I called Deputy Long to get the details. According to the reporting party, Mike Nenain, he and his partner Richard Taylor were spending a few days in the Meysan Canyon area climbing. Friday morning they were climbing a snow chute above Upper Meysan Lake. They were equipped with crampons, but not ice axes. Near the top of the chute, Richard slipped and fell. He tumbled and slid approximately 1000' down the chute, breaking his ankle in the process. Mike descended to his fallen companion, made sure he was safe, and then returned to their camp. He then returned to Richard's position with a tarp, and pulled Richard back to a reasonable camp site above the lake. He then reset their tent at this site, took Richard's boot off, put him in his sleeping bag in the tent, and gave him what comfort he could (he knew no First Aid). At first light, Mike walked out to Whitney Portals and notified the Sheriff of their need for assistance.

Deputy Long had already contacted Scott AFB. I called Lt. Freidrichsen, the weekend SAR pilot, on his beeper. He returned my call immediately, and said he had just been called and was going to NAF. I told him we would have an advanced team there within the hour, and after getting Mary Wyatt to start the call-out headed for the hut. When I arrived, Bob Huey and Tom Stogsdill were already there. Since I was hoping for a quick and simple helo evacuation, I immediately sent Bob and Tom to NAF. They were on their way within an hour of our first call. The second team consisting of myself, Howard Derrickson, Tom Sakai and Andy Mitchell, followed by car shortly thereafter.

Upon arriving at the Lone Pine airport at 1600, we learned from Bob McCoy, the Inyo Team Leader, that Tom Stogsdill was aboard the helo, and they were doing a recon flight over the area. Despite our attempts, we could not raise the helo. At about 1700 we saw the helo returning from the hills, and obviously heading toward the Lone Pine Hospital. Once again, we could not raise the helo by radio. Deputy Long had gone to the hospital, and he returned giving us the word that the helo crew and Tom had evacuated the victim.

As it turned out, the information supplied by the RP was quite accurate, and after finding the correct canyon the helo crew spotted the blue tent above Meysan Lake. They were able to land about 500 feet from the tent, and Tom and two of the crew carried out the evacuation after splinting the victim's injured leg. We secured base camp, and headed home in time (almost) for dinner on schedule.

83-12 7/10/83

Alert

South Lake

Adams

At 1615 Bob Karras (Inyo Sheriff's Posse) called Carol Burge saying that the Inyo team was conducting a body recovery in the vicinity of Treasure Lakes above South Lake. They may need help. Responding to the call were Adams (leader), D. Burge, Atkins, Mason, Wisecarver.

The alert was cancelled at 1830.

83-13 7/15/83 Search South Lake Stogsdill/Mason

From Stogsdill:

The call came in from Bob Garris of Inyo Posse at 0630 Saturday, 15 July, just about 5 minutes before I was about to leave for a weekend class trip to the Meysan Lakes. The information from Bob was an overdue hiker in the area between South Lake and Bishop Pass. I told Bob that an advance team would depart shortly and other members would follow. Six CLMRG members, Peterson, Hine, Finco, Mason, Woodward and I met at the hut at 0730 and headed for Bishop. The China Lake Navy helicopter with Massengale and Freidrichsen left at 0800 and was at Bishop when we arrived, already having been over flying the area, and deploying members of the Inyo Posse and Mammoth Search and Rescue Group into the South Lake basin and Dusy Basin areas. The victim brief was as follows:

48 year old male, 5'7", 130 lbs., Richard Williams, from Camarillo. Mr. Williams had a slight limp, wore glasses, had salt and pepper hair and beard. He entered the South Lake area on 6 July and was to be back at work by 11 July. He was last seen by several hikers in the Dusy Basin area and was confused as to the directions to return over Bishop Pass. The search on Saturday, 16 July, was in the area south of South Lake and north of Bishop Pass. All lakes and drainages were checked and all hikers were interrogated for clues or possible sightings. Teams were sent over Bishop Pass, over Jigsaw Pass and down into Dusy Basin.

The decision was made later Saturday afternoon to expand the search with a region callout. Teams from Sierra Madre, San Mateo and Bay Area joined the already fielded teams on Sunday, 17 July, to expand the search into Dusy and the Palisade Basin areas. The Civil Air Patrol and Park Service helicopter were flying ground support missions as well as the China Lake helicopter and crew.

Several sets of tracks were found leading over Knapsack Pass and Thunderbolt Pass into the Palisade Basin. Along with possible track direction, the last known contacts were once again interviewed by phone on Sunday night (two of which were located, by chance, at the Cowboy Bar and Restaurant in Jackson, Wyoming). All information confirmed our judgment on search area and direction.

Monday morning brought in more members from the already fielded teams; also 4 WOOF teams were to start a dog search of the South Lake area. Tracks were discovered by a Forest Service helo with a team from Sierra Madre in a drainage out of the Barret Lakes area toward Deer Meadow. The tracks were followed down the rough boulder and snow drainage through brush and water to a point just above Deer Meadow where they were lost in the dense brush near the John Muir trail

in Deer Meadow along the Palisade Creek. The search area was concentrated in that area to establish direction of travel and possible location of the victim on Tuesday, 19 July.

Mason continues:

Tuesday morning proved once again to be as busy as the 3 previous days. Teams were scattered from South Lake through Dusy Basin, Palisade Basin, and down to the John Muir Trail at Deer Meadow. Two China Lake teams (Mason, Hine) and (Joy, Amster) were placed in two prime locations. Base had tried to insert both China Lake teams Monday afternoon but the helo's attempts could not overcome the high winds that were blowing over the crest below Bishop Pass.

At 0900 Mason and Hine were dropped off at Lake 11672 by the Forest Service helo to search the drainage down to Deer Meadow. From there we were to hike down the John Muir Trail and rendezvous with the rest of the teams who had searched other drainages. If no sign of the victim was seen, we were to be air lifted back to base and call it quits.

Joy and Amster's assignment was to search a drainage down to Little Pete Meadow and then to be flown out from that point. All went well, but no signs of the victim were found. We all met at Grouse Meadows at 1630 hours as planned and were soon flown back to base at Bishop. When all teams were in, a debriefing was held by Jim Randall to determine if everyone had any last chance ideas or questions. All teams felt they had covered their areas well and were convinced that if Richard was in the area, he was in hiding. Alternatively, he could be halfway to Fresno by now. The search was abandoned, but the story has a happy ending. (See LA Times story following). Coordinator was Mary Wyatt.

83-14 7/23/83 Transit Baja California Lucas

Overdue climber. Found.

83-15 7/27/83 Rescue Mt. Langley Lucas/Renta

Jim Randall of the Inyo County Search and Rescue Posse called at 0940 Wednesday (7/27) morning to ask if CLMRG could handle an operation on Mt. Langley. Chris Storms had hiked out to the Lone Pine substation to report his friend David Keefe of Lakeside CA, overdue on a hike up Old Army Pass. David had left his brother Tory and Chris at their camp on Cottonwood Lake 5 midafternoon on Tuesday and had not returned by daylight Wednesday. Cries for help that sounded like David were coming from the direction of Mt. Langley.

An immediate callout yielded 10 CLMRG members (later four more committed but were not needed). The advance team led by Mike Renta went to NAF to get a helo ride. The second team drove to Lone Pine, followed by a third team.

Inyo Deputy Jim Jones and Tom Stogsdill of CLMRG, after many phone calls, got a mission number from OES, then Scott AFB ok'd the China Lake helo. Both the first and second teams arrived at Lone Pine at 1300. A reconnaissance flight using the Forest Service contract helo located David on the cliffs above Lake 6. Mike Renta, Rod Willer, Bart Hine, and Corinna Peterson were transported to the ridge above David to affect a rescue.

The helo landed at 13,400 feet altitude on the top of the cliffs. Ascertaining that David was not hurt except for some minor scrapes on the hands, the team began the descent to David's location, approximately 400 feet lower. Climbing was mostly third class with a 30 foot rappel at the end. David was assisted up the rappelled section (about class 5.3), thence to the top of the cliffs. He was flown out to Lone Pine airport at 1900 and then reunited with Tory at Lake 5. CLMRG enjoyed supper on the Sheriff and returned home at 2300. CLMRG field members: Renta, Peterson, Willer, Hine, Derrickson, Mitchell, Wisecarver, Finco, Ostermann and L. Lucas. CLMRC intown coordinator/callout: Stogsdill, Wyatt, S. Rockwell. Commitments: Joy, Maddox, Howell, and Rogers. CLMRG manhours: 171, NWC excused: 58, CLMRG vehicle miles: 570.

Part III/Friday, August 5, 1983

This Lost-Backpacker Story Has a Happy Ending

By Earl Gustkey, Times Staff Writer

There's a happy ending to the story of Richard Williams, the Carmarillo welder who disappeared on a Sierra backpacking trip last month.

An Inyo County search-and-rescue team looked for William, for five days in the Bishop Pass area before giving up July 20. The worst was feared.

However, Williams showed up at a Kings Canyon National ark ranger station July 26, more or less safe and sound, the search effort involved 71 people, 2,155 man and dog hours (dog teams were used) and a \$550-an-hour helicopter that spent 54 search hours in the air.

Williams had parked his pickup truck July 6 at the South Lake trailhead, near Bishop and headed out on a solo five-day backpack-fishing trip to Dusy Basin area.

It turned out to be a 17 day trip.

66tweed out to be a 17-day trip. Williams, an experienced backpacker who had hiked once before to Dusy Basin, became lost on his way out. In a phone interview, here's how he described it:

After camping my first night at Long Lake, I went over Bishop Pass the following day and into the lower Dusy Basin area. On the morning of the ninth, I headed back out, back over Bishop Pass.

I didn't realize it at the time; but I wasn't going back over Bishop Pass. The terrain there is rolling and rocky, and I walked up all day without realizing I was going in another direction. It was starting to get dark when I reached the top of what I thought was Bishop Pass. I learned later it was Knapsack Pass.

"I saw a row of trees I hadn't seen coming in and that

gave me pause, but I didn't think I was lost. I camped there that night

"The next morning, the bottom of that ridge, I didn't see the footbridge I'd crossed before going up Bishop Pass, and I knew I was lost. But I wasn't worried because I figured the trail I was on would eventually get me out.

"Well; I was two days in there, in Palisade Basin, and out of food. I walked along what I later learned was the middle, fork of the Kings River, looking for a spot to cross

I found a spot where sandbars had the stream split in four sections. I thought I could wade it. I got over two of them but the third was deeper and faster than I'd thought.

"In the middle of it, I started to fall and lose my glasses at the same time. There was a bush nearby and it was either lunge for the bush and let the glasses go or fall into the current. I lunged, grabbed the bush, and lost my glasses. After that, I couldn't read my map.

"When I hauled myself out, I found I'd also sprained my ankle. Within an hour, I not only couldn't stand, I couldn't even touch it. I lay there for two days, crawling around eating pine nuts and flower petals.

"By then, I was certain someone was looking for me. I laid out my yellow plastic tube tent in a clear area, figuring someone would surely see it from the air, I could see a helicopter on the horizon, but it never came over where I was.

"On the third day, I could walk on my ankle. I started following the stream and came to a trail where a sign said it led to Simpson Meadow.

"Later, I came face to face with a guy (backpacker David Siracuse, Huntington Beach) on the trail. He said! 'Hey, another crazy person!'

"The first thing I said, was: 'Could you spare a granola bar? All I've eaten for three days is pine nuts and flower petals!!'

"Well, we set up camp right there. He got out his little stove and cooked dinner for me. I ate it so fast I didn't see what it was.

"After that, he stayed with me for three days. I was limping so bad, I couldn't go fast.

"We headed for a ranger station that was on the map. The ranger was a young lady, Judy Zucker. She walked up to me and said, 'Richard Williams! You are quite a 'famous person!' She had a radio, and got out word I was OK.

"A helicopter came for me and took me to the park office. The first to greet me were my sons. It was a warm reunion, believe me."

Williams was asked what lessons he'd learned. "My mistake was not concentrating after going over Bishop Pass," he said. "I should have been studying the terrain, I don't think I once looked behind me, coming down. When you're alone in the mountains, you should be looking at your topo map all the time, always being aware of exactly where you are.

"A lot of people say 'Never backpack alone.' But sometimes it just works out that way. My sons say they want to go on a trip with me, but if it works out at the last minute that they can't I'll go alone. "But I'll sure pay more attention to where I am next time."

COMMENTS:

Renta's team did not take a radio: a mistake.

Contact with the Lone Pine airport could be made through the Inyo repeaters. This made having the new Wilson radio and the new standard base radio very important. Otherwise, radio communication with base camp would have been impossible.

83-16 7/28/83

Search

Yosemite NP

Renta

July 27th dawned bright and promised to be a nice day. Chris Melgard had driven to Yosemite Valley to hike to the top of Half Dome, starting about 0600. He never returned.

CLMRG involvement in the search started at 2100 hours on Thursday, July 28. Don Harris was called by Dick Sales of Sierra Madre Search and Rescue who requested our help. Since Don was not able to leave immediately, I took the operation. A callout by Mary Wyatt turned up 11 other CLMRG members who could go: Stogsdill, Brown, Willer, Gleason, Woodworth, Geyer, Joy, Hine, Sakai, Finco and Ostermann. We met at the hut at 2300 hours for the long drive, arriving in Yosemite at 0700 the next morning. We were briefed at 0800 and the first CLMRG teams were placed in the field in Little Yosemite Valley (LYV) around 1000.

CLMRG was assigned the search area bordered by the Merced Lake trail and the Half Dome trail, with other teams searching the Mt. Broderick and Liberty Cap area. Dog teams from CARDA and WOOF searched the trails starting at Happy Isles.

While the search was in progress, the Park Service decided that the teams operating in LYV would stay the night, so Dan Delanges of the Park Service and I were helo'd along with everyone's packs and other equipment into LYV to set up camp and debrief the field teams as they reported in.

Stogsdill had found isolated footprints in the area between Half Dome and the Merced Lake trail. One of the dogs had reacted slightly to an area at the north east side of Half Dome but was unable to continue due to Class 3 terrain. This and other information was passed into base camp in Yosemite Valley where the assignments for the next day's search would be made.

The search assignments for July 30 put most of our resources in the Lost Lake area of the previous day's search. In addition, Stogsdill, Hine and Brown were assigned to attempt following yesterday's tracks. Other teams were assigned additional likely search areas.

At 1100 hours the helicopter spotted Chris Melgard's body at the bottom of Vernal Falls on the east side of the Merced River. He had apparently fallen 600-800 feet from the cliffs above. The body was recovered shortly thereafter.

Most of the CLMRG team decided to stay over for an ascent of Half Dome the next day, while those who were helo'd out were treated to a nice steak dinner, courtesy of the Park Service.

Manhours: 614 Vehicle Miles: 2440

COMMENT:

Saturday's search in the Lost Lake area had six dog teams, paired with trackers. This put a lot of people in a relatively small area, producing what might be called a "sparse line search". I'm not sure whether the dogs or the trackers could work effectively in this situation.

83-17 8/5/83 Alert Mulky Meadows Westbrook

The call came to Bob Rockwell at 0730 Thursday morning from Jim Randall, Inyo Posse. Would CLMRG go on alert for 2 overdue Forest Rangers? The 2 were part of a party hiking out of Mulky Meadows and had not returned to the pickup point by night fall.

The operation was called off about 0930 when the Forest Service helo spotted and picked up the two rangers.

83-18 8/5/83 Transit Quincy Huey

Al Green received the initial call from Arnold Gaffery of Sierra Madre SRT at 1100 on Thursday, Aug 5. Arnold initiated a Regional call-out to search for a missing 10 year old boy who had been lost for a week in the mountains near Quincy, CA. An all-out search was to begin on Saturday, Aug 5 at 0600 and continue throughout the weekend. Al referred the call to Bob Huey who had the duty weekend. A team comprised of Bob Huey, Andy Mitchell, Bob Sinclair Greg Rogers, and Wayne Geyer was assembled. The team departed from the hut at 1330 on Friday, but the mission was aborted by the time they reached Bishop, since the child had been found (alive) at approximately 1500. Coordinator was Mary Wyatt.

83-19 8/7/83 Transit Whitney Huey

Sheila Rockwell received a call from Inyo County Sheriff, Jim Randall, at approximately 0330 on Sunday, 7 August. Jim reported that two climbers were stuck on Mt. Whitney "below the scars". They were thought to be o.k., and one was reported to be "experienced". He requested that a team be available at daylight. Point of contact was to be Sgt. Goodrich. Based on this information a call went out for technical personnel.

Sgt. Goodrich was contacted. According to the reporting party, two friends were doing some "cross-country climbing" on the north rim of Mt. Whitney and were due back at night fall. He had seen two flashlights signaling and had gone for help. The party had a quart of water, some munchies, light climbing gear, and light clothing. One of the climbers was reported as an experienced climber with the Sierra Madre Search and Rescue Unit (his name was not on the Sierra Madre roster that I had). Sgt. Goodrich was to personally talk to the RP at 0600 at the Portals.

Since all of the information suggested that the two men were stuck on Mt. Whitney, the decision was made to call additional team members and the China Lake helicopter.

Team members left the hut at 0515. The helo was to have a recall at 0600 and depart between 0630 and 0700. Upon arrival at the Lone Pine airport Sgt. Goodrich told us that the two men had walked out and were asleep at the Portals. They

had not been on Mt. Whitney, but on a ridge near the Portals. Their signals to their friend at the bottom were to indicate that they were going back up the way they had come and walk down the back-side of the ridge at night.

Team members included Bob Huey, Al Green, Bob Westbrook, Frank Buffum, Rod Willer, Andy Mitchell, Paul Woodworth, Wayne Geyer, and HAM Operator Bob Fletcher.

LESSONS LEARNED:

Since the information about the men's exact location and condition was sketchy, and there was no reported injury, more information should have been collected from the RP prior to calling-out the helicopter. Since the mission was beginning at first light there was plenty of time to determine the exact situation and call a helo.

The Standard Base Radio can be used from the hut to make contact on the Inyo frequency with the Inyo County Sheriff. The Standard Base can also be placed in a vehicle and pick up the Inyo Sheriff from Little Lake.

83-20 8/7/83 Rescue Mt. Sill Huey

The Inyo County Sheriff called at 2100 hours on Sunday, 7 Aug, and reported two injured climbers in a snow gully at approximately 13,000 ft. on Mt. Sill. Another climber had heard cries for help and had made voice contact with the two people, and then had hiked to Glacier Lodge to report the incident. A China Lake helicopter requested for the following morning, and 7 CLMRG members drove to Big Pine. The team arrived at Big Pine at 0100 on 9 August and met Pat Elliott with other members of the Inyo Team who had spoken to the RP. Due to a forecast of rain through Tuesday, a decision was made to immediately hike in to the climbers. Corinna Peterson led an advanced team consisting of Bart Hine and Chris Ostermann, with the mission of providing comfort and first aid to the victims and establishing radio contact. Bob Huey led a team consisting of Howard Derrickson, Andy Mitchell and Linda Finco, carrying a stretcher and technical gear. Both teams hiked until approximately 0900 in pouring rain.

The weather broke and a helo carried Al Green and Rod Willer to the Palisade Glacier at 1015. They arrived at the victims at 1200. They found that a park ranger had spent the night with the victims and had made them comfortable with hot drinks and a sleeping bag. **One** victim (Gloria Ryan from Menlo Park) had a broken leg above the shoe line, while her partner (Roger Bourka from La Canada) was unharmed. Both had climbed Mt. Sill on Saturday and were descending when Gloria fell approximately 300 ft down a third/fourth class snow chute, and had miraculously been stopped by the rock wall. Gloria's leg was splinted with an ice axe and pad.

The two advance teams were picked up and flown to the site of the evacuation. Gloria was then placed in the stretcher and lowered over a 50 ft lip of the bergschrund and down 300 ft on the glacier. From that point she was carried along a 1/4 mile traverse of the glacier to the point where the helicopter could land. Enroute to the LZ the group encountered a hail storm and rain, which delayed the helo for about two hours. The victim and her partner were picked up at 1600 and taken to the Bishop hospital, and the CLMRG was lifted out by 1700. Coordinator was Mary Wyatt.

LESSONS LEARNED:

1. If the weather in fact is too bad for helo assistance, then advanced teams should be sent into the field. However, hiking through the night in unfamiliar terrain did not lend to speedy assist of the victims. Neither advanced ground team would have reached the victims by 1200 due to fatigue and difficulty in finding the way at night.
2. Although the advanced teams went into the field with the belief that there probably would not be helicopter assistance, some members were not equipped for a stay over a second night in inclement weather, or equipped for a change into dry clothes. Those who wore wool and polypropylene were fine, those with blue jeans and cotton (even though covered by Goretex) were in trouble.
3. Having a back up team (even of two) was very helpful, since they were able to bring a wheel for a stretcher in case of a ground evacuation, and were ready to go in with the helo.

83-21 8/25

Rescue

Mt. Whitney

Westbrook

The weekend duty roster is working too well as I received a call from Deputy Steve Long of Inyo County at 2000 Wednesday evening. A female hiker, Kate Chemfak of Berkeley, had broken her ankle on the switchback just below Trail Crest on the Whitney trail. The weather was good and a ranger from Sequoia/King NP would be at the scene in a few hours.

Deputy Long called Scott AFB for a mission number and if possible a military helicopter. I called Mary Wyatt to start a team callout and then alerted the NWC OOD. After an unsuccessful attempt to reach Buzz Massengale to see if we could send a team with the China Lake helo, Deputy Long called to say that the China Lake helo was down but either Edwards AFB or the Forest Service would meet us at the Lone Pine Airport at 0630 Thursday morning.

The nine CLMRG team members arrived at 0630 at the Lone Pine Airport. Deputy Long and Clark Trowell of the Inyo Posse arrived a few minutes later. Radio contact with the ranger at the accident scene confirmed the victim's condition as good, but with a probable broken ankle.

The Forest Service helo arrived at Lone Pine at 0645 and would take Al Green and Bob Adams to a landing site near Discovery Pinnacle. At 0830 Al requested that the CLMRG breakdown stretcher and wheels be sent up with 3 more CLMRG members (the Forest Service stretcher could not be used in the rough terrain). By 1000 the victim was in the stretcher and the team took approximately 1 hour to carry the victim to the helo landing site. Ten minutes later, Kate was at the Lone Pine Hospital.

A stop to refuel, one more trip to Discovery Pinnacle and everyone was back at the airport by 1230.

The Inyo Sheriff treated us to lunch at the Ice Cream Parlor and we got back to the hut about 1500 hours, tired, but satisfied.

The cast of the drama included Bob Westbrook (leader), Al Green, Bob Adams, Tom Stogsdill, Andy Mitchell, Bart Hine, Linda Finco, Howard Derrickson, and Paul Woodworth (CLMRG); Steve Long, Inyo Sheriff office, Clark Trowell, Inyo Posse, Tom Archer, helo pilot, Harold Brown, Vic Hernandez, helo crew chief/crew and the ranger at Crabtree Meadows.

83-22 9/1 Rescue Golden Trout Lake Hinman

Scott Folger, age 34, was on the second day of a five day backpacking trip with four other people, when he began to experience severe altitude sickness. His symptoms, which were headache and nausea, had begun that morning of 1 September. By the time an off-duty forest ranger happened by his camp at North Golden Trout Lake in the afternoon, he was unable to stand up and had extreme vomiting. The ranger radioed out requesting immediate helo evacuation.

CLMRG was notified of the situation at 1630. Deputy Steve Long of the Inyo County Sheriff's Department and I decided that helo assistance would not be appropriate because of the late hour and the nature of the problem. The advance team of Adams and Atkins left the hut at 1830, and the backup team consisting of Renta, Wisecarver, Amster, Woodworth, Geyer and Fletcher followed half an hour later.

The advance team was on the trail by 2100 and reached the victim by 2245. By that time the victim had recovered completely. The victim, Adams and Atkins began the descent to the roadhead, joining the backup team along the way. We reached the roadhead at 0115 and delivered the victim safely to his car. CLMRG was home by 0500. Sheila Rockwell coordinated the operation from China Lake.

COMMENTS:

1. In talking to the victim and others present it was apparent that his condition had been severe and was considered a medical emergency. He had driven from sea level, made a one day ascent to the 11,500 foot altitude the previous day and had no sleep the night before.
2. The advance team carried the small oxygen system in preparation of relieving his condition and the backup team carried the stretcher and wheel in preparation of his evacuation to a lower altitude.
3. Communication between Fletcher and Deputy Long at the Onion Valley roadhead and both teams was good.

83-23 9/4 Alert Bishop Creek Mason

Jim Randall, Inyo County, called at 1800 on 9/4/83 and asked that we go on alert for an injured hiker. Mary Wyatt and Sheila Rockwell called the roster. Members committing to go were: Mike Mason (leader), D. Burge, Harris, Buffum, B. Westbrook, Willer, Amster, Ayers, and D. Sherman.

Jim called back at 1905. Apparently the Park Service had picked up the hiker the day before (9/3/83). He had torn a ligament while crossing a stream.

DONOR'S CORNER

CLMRG received a generous donation from the family of Corinna Peterson. At the September meeting the membership voted to purchase a multi-channel base station radio in her memory. A memorial plaque will be placed on this much-needed item of rescue equipment.

Our thanks also again go to Jack and Dana Lyons for their continued financial support.

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CLMRG'S 25th ANNIVERSARY!

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 5, 1983

Clancey's Claim Co.
1661 N. Triangle Dr.
Ridgecrest, CA

Cocktails 6:00 p.m.
Dinner 7:00 p.m.
Dinners \$8-\$11
(Fish, Chicken, Steak)

For reservations contact:

Carol Van Verst
528 E. California Blvd.
Ridgecrest, CA 93555
(619) 375-2769

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PUBLIC EDUCATION: "HUG A TREE"

Children will be instructed to "hug a tree" this year by members of CLMRG's public education committee. The program encourages children to take responsibility for themselves while outdoors and teaches survival skills for those lost.

The program was developed by Ab Taylor, a retired border patrolman from San Diego. CLMRG purchased the slides and rights to the "Hug a Tree" program last spring.

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SCHEDULE

Oct 8-10	Yosemite	Renta
Oct 15-16	Stretcher Practice-Owens Ridge	Atkins
Oct 17	Meeting, 330 S. Rancho	Huey

Winter schedule will be approved at the October meeting. See you there!

The China Lake Mountain Rescue Group's
25th anniversary celebration
will be dedicated to
its founder

Dr. Carl Heller

for his 25 years of exemplary service.

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