

December 1985
#63

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

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

DECEMBER 7-8	Mt. Gould	Derrickson
DECEMBER 9	Meeting	Adams/Amster
DECEMBER 11	Night Stretcher Practice	Training Committee
DECEMBER 14-15	Mammoth Pass Ski Tour	Amster
DECEMBER 19	Al's Hill Christmas Party	J. Westbrook
DECEMBER 21-22	Owens Ridge Rock Climbing	Mason
DECEMBER 28-JANUARY 1	Palisades Winter Extravaganza	B. Rockwell
JANUARY 5	Whitney Portal Ice Climb	Mason
JANUARY 11-12	University Peak	Atkins
JANUARY 13	Meeting	VanVerst/Bonbright
JANUARY 18-19	Eagle, Brown, Schaub	Lucas
JANUARY 25-26	Onion Valley Winter Experience	Mitchell
FEBRUARY 1-2	Nine Mile Ski Tour	Adams
FEBRUARY 8-9	Telescope Peak	Amster
FEBRUARY 10	Meeting	Finco
FEBRUARY 15-17	Some High Sierra Peak	B. Rockwell
FEBRUARY 22-23	Lee Vining Ice Climbing	Finco



Merry Christmas

OPERATION REPORTS

85-20 9/16-18/85 Search San Gabriel Mountains Renta

On Monday, 16 September, at 2200 hours I received a call from Arnold Gaffrey of the Sierra Madre Search and Rescue Team requesting our help in a search for Benjamin King, age 56, of Los Angeles. When King had failed to return from a short hike, the L.A. County Sheriff's Department was notified.

Eight members of CLMRG responded to the call: Renta, Mason, Sakai, Amster, Mitchell, Harris, Castro and Deruiter. Wyatt, S. Rockwell and Westbrook handled the call out.

We arrived at the Red Box Ranger Station base camp at 0630 hours on the 17th. We were briefed and formed into teams of two, and paired with two searchers from Los Angeles County MRA teams who were familiar with the area.

Deruiter and I went up the Colby Canyon trail with two members from Sierra Madre. We finished our assignment without finding any trace of King. We were then heloed to the top of Mt. Lawlor and searched the west ridge, again with negative results.

Mason and Castro, and two members of Sylmar, were heloed into the Josephine/Strawberry Peak saddle and searched the area to the north to the trail to Colby Ranch. Mason and Mitchell then searched the road from Mt. Disappointment back to base camp. No sign of King was found.

Sakai and Harris, with two members of Los Padres, were flown to Josephine Saddle, searching the east ridge of Strawberry Peak. They found two half-full water bottles in separate locations.

Amster and Mitchell were heloed to the summit of Strawberry Peak. They searched the third class route to the peak on the west side and proceeded to walk around the summit.

At 1800 hours almost everyone was back in base when a pack was found about 1 /3 mile south of Strawberry Peak. Keys fitting King's car were found in the pack.

The next day, 18 September, all field personnel were heloed to a spot near where the pack was found, to conduct a line search starting at peak 5521. Shortly after the search started King's body was found about 600 yards from his pack. A subsequent autopsy revealed that King had died from a heart attack.

Comments:

1. King probably would not have been found by ground teams alone. The five helicopters played a large part in the discovery of King's body, finding his pack the day before. Searching from a helo is usually ineffective at best, but proved to be very useful in this type of terrain (steep open hillsides, with short brush).
2. The San Gabriel Mountains are very steep and loose and most of the exposed rock breaks easily. Hardhats, seat harnesses and ropes are a must for any search in these mountains.

3. Just because our coordinators tell you its "only" a search, don't be fooled. We could have used more technical gear. Remember, we have a Group list of required gear for each type of operation, which takes into consideration unexpected needs which are known to occur from time to time.

85-21 9/19/85 Search Randsburg Area Huey

For the third time since December of 1984, we participated in a search for Howard Tovarsky. Howard had disappeared while on a hunting trip in the desert, and his car had been abandoned in a parking lot in Mojave. In an attempt to close the case, the Kern County Sheriff requested that we search around a mine near Randsburg where the victim's vehicle was believed to have been sighted, while IWV SAR searched the mine itself.

CLMRG members performed a line search in a perimeter 200 yards around the mine, finding no evidence. IWV found nothing in the mine.

Participants were: Mason, Finco, Derrickson, Bonbright, Barbee, Hinman, VanVerst, Sherman, Sakai, Ingle, Dan Harris, Silverman and me. Coordinator was Wyatt.

85-22 9/23/85 Search Mt. Whitney Huey

At 1045 hours we received a call (via the pager system) from the Inyo County Sheriff's Office, requesting assistance in locating 3 people in two separate parties overdue from the north fork of Lone Pine Creek, east of Mt. Whitney. Carol Burge coordinated the call out. Green, Renta, Hine, Mason, Sakai, Seibold, Castro and I mobilized at 1220 hours. Helicopter support had been arranged with China Lake and Sequoia National Park.

On arrival at Lone Pine we found that one party had hiked out, but that two people who had gone in to climb the Whitney East Face had not returned. The climbers had been due at work that morning. One was reportedly an experienced climber who "was never late".

Teams were sent up the north fork route and the Whitney trail. A third team was airlifted by the China Lake helo to reconnoiter the north fork drainage, East Face Lake, the climbing routes on Mt. Whitney, and the Arctic Lake region. No one was observed in the area. While the reconnaissance team was preparing to land at East Face Lake, word came from the Forest Service that the missing party had been met on the Whitney trail by a ranger. They had spent the previous night on the East Face, climbed to the top that morning, and were on their way out.

85-23 10/5-6/85 Search Tuolumne Meadows Renta

CLMRG received a call at 2030 hours on 5 October, asking us to participate in a search at Tuolumne Meadows for a lost eight year old girl, Sheri Guerrant. Wyatt, with assistance from Hine and S. Harris, began a team call out. Four others - Mitchell, Dan Harris, J. TerHeun and Hill responded. We left the but at 2320 hours.

Arriving at the Tuolumne Meadows Ranger Station, we were informed that Sheri had left the family campsite at 1600 hours on the 5th to get a jacket from the car, 150 feet away. After 15 minutes her family began looking for her. Her missing jacket signified that she had reached the car. The Park Rangers began a hasty search of the area. Hikers and campers were queried and a possible shoe print was found at a picnic site used earlier that day.

When we arrived at 0400 hours, search teams already in the field included search dogs, Park Rangers, and June Lake Search and Rescue. I decided we should get some sleep before going into the field.

We awoke a little after 0630. I remained in base to help in planning the search strategy. At about 0715 hours two of us were sent up in the Park Service helo to view the search area. After returning, we were briefed on the morning's plans. Base camp staff consisting of me, a member of June Lake SAR, a member of ESAR and a Park Ranger then started planning for the afternoon.

At 0730 our field personnel were teamed with members from Sierra Madre, Malibu and Altadena, and began a line search near the campground. It started to rain. Other teams were sent to Lyell Canyon, Rafferty Creek and the other campground sites and buildings.

At 1035 the helo found Sheri in a small clearing, 1/2 mile southeast of her campground. She was waving and jumping up and down, "like she was in an aerobics class". The helo landed, picked her up and brought her back to base. She was no worse for wear from her night out.

We left base at about 1130. The rain turned to snow as we approached Tioga Pass. We arrived in Ridgecrest at 1630.

Comments:

1. It's a good idea to take a PT-400 and the omnidirectional base antenna on any operation in Yosemite. In the three operations there this year the PT-400 has been used once as a base camp radio and twice in remote camps.
2. Once again, operation leaders should check the equipment of our less experienced personnel. One of the Trainees came up a little short on clothing. This time it was not a serious problem because the rest of us were able to make up the deficiency, but it might not work out so well next time.

85/24 10/11/85 Search San Gabriel Mountains Renta

As surely as the autumnal equinox and the leaves on the trees turn gold, hunters will go into the field and each year at least one will get lost.

This year the autumn ritual was played out near the Kratka Ridge Ski Area in the San Gabriel mountains north of Los Angeles. On Wednesday, October 9th, Roger Hart, 28, of Bellflower was hunting with his brother. They split up, Roger intending to leave the Angeles Crest Highway and go around the south side of the peak containing the Kratka Ridge ski lift. He was then to rejoin the road and meet his brother. At the appointed time, Roger failed to show up.

Los Angeles County Sheriffs personnel began searching on Thursday, together with MRA teams from the L. A. area. At 0830 on Friday, CLMRG was called by Sierra Madre to assist. The call out was started by Hinman, C. Burge and Braun. Castro, J. TerHeun and I responded.

We left the but at 1110 hours and arrived at the Buckhorn Flats base camp at 1400. There we were informed that yellow rainwear believed to belong to the victim had been found in Bear Canyon south of the ski area. Searchers also heard three gunshots from the same area when a helo flew near that location. The plan was to place three teams into the canyon, including CLMRG, probably to spend the night.

At 1550 the helo arrived and began to lift us in one at a time. As we flew through a saddle east of the ski area, Bear Canyon dropped quickly away, along with our stomachs. We were flown in to a clearing in the stream bed at the 3800 foot level. There we immediately found boot prints that could have belonged to Roger. We were searching the area for additional sign when we heard over the radio that Roger had walked out to Highway 39 to the east, and made contact with a searcher acting as radio relay. Roger was hungry and almost out of bullets, but otherwise OK.

We were flown out of the canyon and returned home at 2030 hours.

DONOR'S CORNER, ETC.

We recently received a donation in the name of The Eastern California Museum in Independence, made by Elizabeth Anderson. Liz is still an active member of CLMRG. For friends of Liz, as well as those often passing through Independence, I quote parts of her accompanying letter.

As I have been sorting through my accumulation of 28 years, records relating to mountaineering and to rescue operations are being turned over to the Museum. A number of Norman Clyde's photographs and some of his equipment are on display at the Museum. I hope that with what I pass along it will become a nucleus of a collection on mountaineering in the Sierra Nevada. My file of Talus Pile should be a start.

I checked over the annual records. Certainly enough operations occur in Inyo County to make storing information (for research) reasonable.

Being a member of CLMRG has been an important part of my life. Thanks to everyone who has been a part of it, with me!"



Elizabeth h Anderson

EDITORS CORNER

The Talus Pile was originally conceived as an avenue of communication and permanent record vehicle for CLMRG. It is sent to Honorary Members, county sheriffs, other search and rescue groups, etc., and to donors. For donors, a small contribution will keep the Talus Pile coming for another year, while larger amounts guarantee it for longer periods of time. (Donations all go into the CLMRG treasury to support search and rescue operations, but there is of course some expense associated with the newsletter.) We do not notify people who are being dropped from the mailing list.

Sheila Rockwell



"Wilt you stop complaining You're the one who didn't want separate vacations."

Two Views

PERCEPTION OF RISK*

Perception of risk varies widely among different groups of people. The following list gives 30 sources of risk, ranked according to actuarial estimates of annual contributions to numbers of deaths in the United States. Also shown is the *perception* of risk, as reflected in surveys of three groups: (1) The League of Women Voters, (2) college students, and (3) business and professional club members.

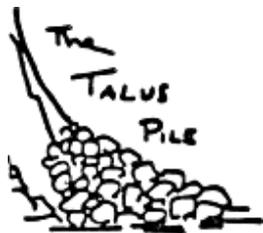
Rank	Source	Annual No. of Deaths	Perceived Rank of Source for Group No:		
			(1)	(2)	(3)
1	Smoking	150,000	4	3	4
2	Alcohol	100,000	6	7	5
3	Motor Vehicles	50,000	2	5	3
4	Handguns	17,000	3	2	1
5	Electric Power	14,000	18	19	19
6	Motorcycles	3,000	5	6	2
7	Swimming	3,000	19	30	17
8	Surgery	2,800	10	11	9
9	X-Rays	2,300	22	17	24
10	Railroads	1,950	24	23	20
11	General Aviation	1,300	7	15	11
12	Large Construction	1,000	12	14	13
13	Bicycles	1,000	16	24	14
14	Hunting	800	13	18	10
15	Home Appliances	200	29	27	27
16	Fire Fighting	195	11	10	6
17	Police Work	160	8	8	7
18	Contraceptives	150	20	9	22
19	Commercial Aviation	130	17	16	18
20	Nuclear Power	100	1	1	8
21	Mountain Climbing	30	15	22	12
22	Power Mowers	24	27	28	25
23	Scholastic Football	23	23	26	21
24	Skiing	18	21	25	16
25	Vaccinations	10	30	29	29
26	Food Coloring	<1	26	20	30
27	Food Preservatives	<1	25	12	28
28	Pesticides	<1	9	4	15
29	Prescription Antibiotics	<1	28	21	26
30	Spray Cans	<1	14	13	23

FAMILY CIRCLE



"I wish you wouldn't worry about me so, Mom!"

*Scientific American, February, 1982



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