

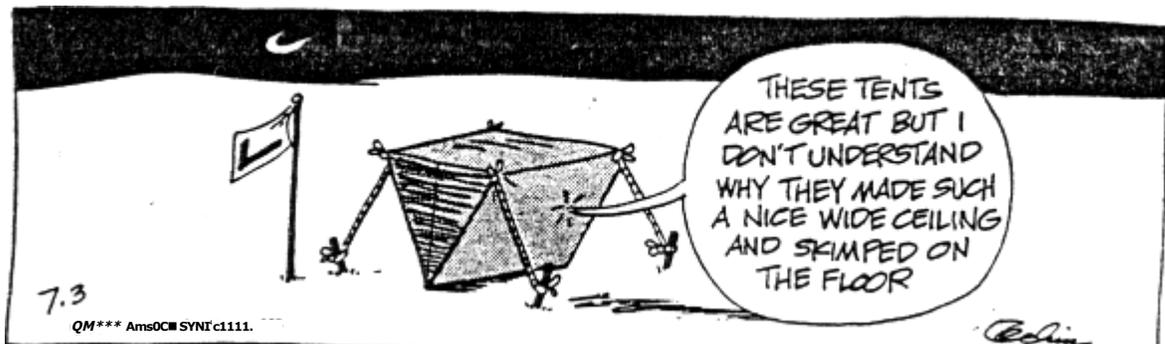
September 1987
#72

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

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

SEPTEMBER 8	Stretcher Class 1	Training Committee
SEPTEMBER 14	Meeting	J. Westbrook
SEPTEMBER 15	Stretcher Class 2	Training Committee
SEPTEMBER 19-20	Mt. Gabb	Renta
SEPTEMBER 22	Stretcher Class 3	Training Committee
SEPTEMBER 26	Bear Creek Spire	Lucas
SEPTEMBER 29	Stretcher Class 4	Training Committee
OCTOBER 3	Stretcher Practice	Training Committee
OCTOBER 5	Meeting	Rockwell
OCTOBER 10-12	Yosemite	Seibold
OCTOBER 24	CRMRA - Bay Area	Mitchell

CROCK By Rechin and Wilder



OPERATION REPORTS

87- 15 Mt. Whitney Area	6/21/87	Alert Hine
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At 0600 on 21 June I responded to a pager call from the Inyo County Sheriff's Office. A hang glider had last been reported just north of Mt. Whitney the previous day. Inyo county was initiating an air search and wanted to place CLMRG on alert.

Carol Burge started the call out while I requested a leader over the pager. Mike Mason responded and I passed the responsibility to him at 0638.

Deputy Oyster called me at 0840 to cancel the alert. The subject had just hitch hiked back to Lone Pine. He had landed somewhere in Nevada and it had taken him all night to return.

Other CLMRG members involved: Wyatt, Derrickson, Roseman, Harris, Ingle, Barbee, Ostermann and B. Westbrook.

87-16 Mt. Whitney	6/21/87	Rescue Mason
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For the second time today I responded to a pager call from Bart Hine looking for a leader. Two brothers. 25 year old Stan and 21 year old Craig Le Banthal from Placentia, were hypothermic on the summit of Mt. Whitney. The two men had apparently been attempting to set a new speed record from Badwater in Death Valley to the summit of Mt. Whitney. They had arrived on the summit around 1600. tired and cold with no gear between them and no energy to start down.

Sheila Rockwell began a call out and by 2115 an advance team consisting of Finco, Mitchell. Roseman and Harris was on its way to the Whitney trailhead. Derrickson, Ostermann. Seibold and I left shortly thereafter. During the transit to Lone Pine the advance team literally ran into a problem, in this case "a bull on the highway". Luckily no one in the vehicle was injured, just shaken up. Dan Harris' Jeep Cherokee, however - and the bull - took quite a beating. We stopped to check on Dan and his crew and to assess the problem. After some discussion. we shifted people and gear into another vehicle, rearranged the advance team and were on our way

again, leaving Dan behind with the Highway Patrol, a tow truck, and one dead bull.

Base camp was set up at Lone Pine Airport and the advance team, now consisting of Finco. Seibold, Ostermann, and Roseman, was on the trail at 2345 for a long night of hiking. A Park Service helo was scheduled to fly at 0600 to retrieve the victims unless it was determined that they were totally ambulatory.

Meanwhile, Marty Hornig of the USFS, who was stationed at Trail Camp, had learned of the situation and began an ascent to the top with extra clothes and some food. He arrived on top at 0100 and reported that the victims were fine, could walk, and would start down at daybreak.

CLMRG continued to hike through the night and was approaching Trail Crest at 0715. Hornig and the victims had left the summit at 0630 and were also approaching Trail Crest. After meeting, we were to walk the victims out.

Ostermann and Roseman met Hornig and the victims and continued the descent. Both victims were able to walk. with Craig in better shape than Stan. The latter's motor skills were poor and this made for slow going down the snow- and ice-covered switchbacks. Craig moved right along, so Finco and Seibold accompanied him down to Trail Camp where they waited for Stan. The rescuers continually fed food and drink to both men to keep their energy level up. Slowly but surely Stan and Craig were shepherded to the trailhead and eventually to base camp. arriving at 1600.

Comments:

1. This operation was a good reminder that CLMRG is not invincible to accidents. We are lucky that no one was injured in Harris' vehicle. Three out of the four were wearing seatbelts. and they are convinced that without them, things would have been much worse. Remember, no matter what the urgency, drive smart!
2. I relied on others for a report of the victims' condition on the summit. The assessment was too optimistic. Stan was in far worse condition than reported and probably should have been flown out. Had CLMRG

been at the scene, a more conservative decision would probably have been made before the helo was cancelled.

3. It is important that field teams give accurate descriptions of a victim's condition so base camp personnel can evaluate this and make important decisions. In this case, the field teams were uncertain of the real 'cause of Stan's poor motor skills. Was he merely totally exhausted or was he physically or mentally handicapped? Both Craig and Stan pushed the field teams to let them walk out and not take breaks, though Stan was obviously not performing "normally". Our authority is limited in mountain SAR, but if we feel that someone is at risk, it is our responsibility to minimize that risk.

87-17	6/24-26/87	Search
Tuolumne Meadows		Lucas

We were called at 2355 on Wednesday, 24 June, for a search in the Tuolumne Meadows area of Yosemite National Park. This was a CRMRA call out by Steve Millenbach of the Sierra Madre SRT. Wyatt, assisted by B. Meng, found four more people who could meet at the hut by 0130 on the 25th: Renta, Mitchell, Walker and Silverman. I told Silverman to wait for a second team. We were asked to be at Tuolumne Meadows by 0530 for a briefing and field assignments.

The subject was 26 year old Larry Morgan, who was reported to be mentally retarded. Larry had been camping with his school group for several days in the Tuolumne Meadows area. He was last seen at 1800 on the 24th. Because of Larry's condition, Yosemite NP immediately started a search and had teams out all night.

We arrived at the Tuolumne Ranger Station at 0600. We formed into two teams and were flown out at 0830. Mitchell and I were to search upper and lower Cathedral Lakes and the trail back to Tuolumne Meadows. Renta and Walker were to cross over behind Cathedral Peak and search Budd Lake and the "trail" back to the Meadows.

We were helo'd to lower Cathedral Lake rather than Cathedral Pass, so Renta and Walker searched upper Cathedral Lake as well. We interviewed several people camping in the area, marked one possible track, and hiked out. On the way we met 40 to 50 backpackers. Everyone knew of the search going on.

Our next assignment was to check out some tracks found along the Dana fork above camp. These were eliminated

as being unlike those which Larry would have made.

The plan for Friday, the 26th, was to saturate the area within a mile or so of the Point Last Seen. Renta and Mitchell had a tracking assignment up the Dana fork and Parker Pass creek to Kuna Lake. Walker and I joined 11 marines from the Mountain Warfare Training Center, 9 people from the California Youth Authority, and 5 Explorer Search and Rescue scouts. We were to perform a close grid search of the area bounded by the Lyeil fork, the Dana fork, and the John Muir Trail. We formed three separate grid lines to cover the area east to west. This worked very well, minimizing the time lost in reforming our lines and turning the lines around.

We were into our second sweep when the news came at 1300 that Larry had been found near Johnson Peak, about three air miles from the PLS. Larry was tired and hungry and his clothing was in shreds, but he was in good shape. We returned to base, debriefed, and headed home about 2000.

Comments:

1. The CRMRA turnout of 8 people was very poor. We need to get a better response, or cease advertising that we can field 30 people on any operation in California.
2. Once again our PT-400 was used as a base radio for all searchers on the MRA frequency. We should have taken a regular base radio and antenna for this purpose.
3. With over 130 people on the 25th and 175 on the 26th, the burden of planning, coordinating, and supporting this search was enormous. Yosemite NP provided excellent logistic support: briefing materials, food, transportation and shelter.
4. The process of signing in, briefing, and dispatching teams almost smothered base camp. The existing leadership structure of the SAR groups could have been utilized more fully to alleviate this problem. For example, group leaders could fill out T-cards on their teams, denoting skills and equipment. They could meet with the OL to quickly parcel out assignments. In the evening, the leaders could be involved in planning sessions and organizing for the following day.
5. During the search we were given three different descriptions of Larry's footgear. This may have caused base and field teams to focus on wrong tracks. A good rule to follow is that any set of lone tracks wandering away from the PLS needs to be investigated.

6. In retrospect, it was probably a mistake to utilize 27 people to do a grid search on Friday in lieu of sending hasty teams further out to such areas as Johnson Peak.

87-18 Bishop Pass	7/3/67	Alert Atkins
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When my phone rang at 2150 on Friday. I thought that this might be a repeat of my duty weekend last summer when I had three operations! The call came by way of CLPD Officer birch asking me to call Deputy Wilson of the ICSO. A 71 year old back-packer, Karl Phinehard, was just starting a 6 day trip over Bishop Pass into the Dusy Basin area. He had not made it over the pass to meet with the rest of his party, which had gone on ahead. When they back tracked, they didn't find him and contacted the sheriff. Deputy Wilson wanted us at Bishop at first light for deployment by helo into the search area. We planned a 0300 departure. At 2315 Wilson called saying that the subject had been located. Other CLMRG members responding were: Green, Hine, Huey, Mitchell and Leiser. C. Rockwell coordinated, with assistance from B. Meng.

87-19 Split Mountain	7/12/87	Rescue Finco
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The CLMRG summer class trip to Split Mountain was a success. All seven students and four instructors made it to the 14,055-foot summit. We were back down to base camp by 1400 and we were starting back for the trailhead at 1450.

At approximately 1530 a student, Bill Stratton, fell and injured his ankle. (Later it was determined that the ankle was broken and would need to be pinned to repair the break.) We were at the 9500 foot level and the vehicles were about 2 miles away at 6600 feet. Bill wanted to walk out, so his ankle was wrapped and all his gear was distributed among the others. It was decided to send one of the instructors with a student out to mobilize a team from the Inyo County Sheriffs Posse just in case Bill could not walk the full distance. (CLMRG was also notified and was assembling a team when the sheriff called them off on another operation. See #87-20.) Inyo decided to hike in in the morning with a horse for Bill to ride out on. However, back on the mountain, Bill was determined to get out on his own. With a walking stick and people to help him over the rough spots, Bill hiked out to the trailhead at 2330.

Other CLMRG members present on the trip: Stogsdill, Mitchell and Silverman. Special recognition needs to be given to the six students who also helped Bill hike out that night. Their attitude was we hiked up the mountain together, so we will hike down the mountain together". Those are six people I would not mind going with on future trips. They are Phil Wilson, Doug Speck, Sid Busch, Bill Turnbull, Mark Gowen and Ellen Schafhauser.

A special thanks also to the Suttons, owners of the Tinemaha Ranch. They offered their phone to Mitch and Doug, and opened the gates to their property to make the trailhead access easier. (Driving across their property saves about 40 minutes and the road is in better condition than the regular one.)

87-20 Mt. Whitney	7/12/87	Search Hinman
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CLMRG was at the hut mobilizing for the previous operation (#87-19) when Sgt. Dan Lucas of the Inyo County Sheriffs office called and diverted us to search for some overdue hikers on Mt. Whitney. He stated that the Inyo SAR team had six people who were able take a stretcher and wheel into the Split Mountain problem. He felt that they, together with the four CLMRG personnel and six students, could perform the carry out. This was at about 1830.

The overdue hikers consisted of a twenty-eight year old woman, Annette Jackson, and her eight year old son, Ryan. They were attempting to climb to the summit from the Portals in one day. They were last seen near Trail Crest at 1300, quite tired but still slowly hiking to the summit. Family members became concerned because of their fatigue and inexperience and their lack of proper weather protection, since it had been raining and hailing heavily that afternoon.

By the time the advance team arrived at the Portals at 2100, word had been received that the mother and son were coming down the trail. The estimate was that they were no more than a couple of miles away at that point. Three CLMRG members walked up the trail to meet them and returned within a half hour with the tired - but okay - mother and son.

When the ICSO was notified of the subjects' safe return, they informed us that our help would not be needed for the Split Mountain carry out, since the injured student was to be transported by horse the next morning. CLMRG was home by 2330.

Other participants: R.Rockwell, Hine, Huey, Adams, Roseman, Ingle, Wisecarver, Roberts and Walker. S. Rockwell coordinated, with Braun assisting.

Tuesday morning they were outside their tent when the helo flew over. Guessing that they were the subjects of a search, they waved but were not spotted. They then packed up and hiked out.

87-21 Palisade Glacier	7/21/87	Search Huey
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Three climbers from the Canoga Park area, who had planned to climb the U Notch and perhaps some nearby peaks, were reported overdue on Monday, 20 July. At 2030 the Inyo team requested CLMRG assistance for a search on the 21st. Helicopter support was arranged for 0700 and we were asked to be at Glacier Lodge by that time.

A Navy helo from Lemoore searched the ridgeline and glacier area from 0800 to 0930 with no sightings except for a tent that did not match the color of the subjects' tent. No people were seen.

At 0940 the first Forest Service helo flight transported two CLMRG members to Sam Mack Meadow. Other teams were ready to be flown to the glacier area. At Sam Mack Meadow, however, it was discovered from other climbers that the subjects had just passed through on their way down the trail.

Upon arrival at the trailhead the subjects gave the following account of their travails: They had hiked to the area above Sam Mack Meadow on Saturday, and on Sunday left to climb the U Notch, and then return home. However, upon viewing the route, they decided instead to climb Clyde Couloir. Two of the three were inexperienced and had neglected to bring the additional ropes that they had promised, and had no ice gear. When they arrived at the summit snow field the two were not willing to attempt the traverse over to the U Notch, and instead insisted on climbing as a rope of three UP 3 pitches of class 5.5. This made them very late, and they bivouacked 60 feet below the summit of North Pal.

Monday morning they were hypothermic and again had difficulty judging the easiest route. They climbed a 5.7 pitch to the top, and then descended to the U Notch on rappel. They rappelled the entire chute, cutting bollards to anchor their rope. This activity took most of the day.

They were exhausted upon their arrival at the glacier, and spent the next eight hours wandering in the dark before finding their camp.

Other CLMRG members participating included Green, Finco, Sakai, Mitchell, D. Burge, Roberts, Silverman, Van Verst, Cunningham, Wyatt, B. and R. Meng, and Fletcher.

Comments:

1. Based upon the report of the subjects' planned activity and the equipment they were to have taken with them, it was assumed that a technical rescue would be required. Therefore an early decision was made not to send personnel up the trail on foot unless lack of helicopter support made it necessary.
2. The reporting party gave the wrong color for the subjects' tent. Had the color been correct, the Lemoore helicopter crew would probably have investigated their sighting, which would have concluded the operation a few hours earlier.
3. The Lemoore helicopter was limited in its usefulness since: the pilot and crew were unfamiliar with area; they were unwilling to send a civilian observer; and they were not authorized to transport any search personnel unless it was a life or death situation.
4. The Forest Service helicopter was available and could perform as needed. This would have been invaluable had a technical rescue been required.

87-22 Mt. Whitney	7/27-29/87	Rescue Finco
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My pager went off at 1745 on Monday, 27 July. The request was from the Inyo County dispatcher: a climber had suffered a broken leg on the East Face of Mt. Whitney. I initiated the call out, first for technical climbers for an advance team, then the rest of the roster. We were to meet at 1830.

I arrived at the hut along with Green, Hine, Huey, Sakai, Mitchell, Gleason, Roseman, Harris and Roberts. The NWC helo was available for transportation directly to the Whitney area, and Green, Hine and Huey left with technical climbing gear for the airfield. The rest of us

took the remainder of the gear and started the drive to Lone Pine airport to set up base camp.

We arrived at 2030 hours. The helicopter landed shortly thereafter with the advance team still aboard. The pilot, Maj. Leuking, was unable to land due to darkness. However, the crew would spend the night in Lone Pine and be available at first light to fly people in. It was decided to send a ground team in immediately just in case something happened with the helicopter. Huey, Sakai, Mitchell and Roseman packed up to begin the hike up the North Fork of Lone Pine Creek to East Face Lake and the start of the East Face Route on Mt. Whitney.

The helicopter and crew took Green and Hine to East Face Lake at 0545. Two more members (Derrickson and Walker) arrived and were flown in next with the stretcher and ropes. Finally, Gleason and Harris went in with more gear.

The ground team was at the start of the East Face Route at 0618 and reached the victim by 0830, followed shortly by Green and Hine.

Hummie Mann and Sean Collinsworth had gotten off route in descending to Long Ledge. They realized their mistake, so Sean retreated and started to belay Hummie back. Part way up, Hummie's handhold pulled and a "refrigerator sized" rock peeled from the face. The boulder tore his jacket and smashed his leg, and continued down the mountain. Sean lowered Hummie back down to a ledge where they yelled for help. People at East Face Lake heard their yells and descended to Lone Pine.

Green and Mitchell determined that there was a serious injury in the area of the knee, but since the pulse in his ankle was strong and any slight movement to his leg was very painful, they decided not to move the leg until he needed to be put into the stretcher for evacuation.

A possible helicopter pickup point, which had been used in the past, was about forty feet higher. The helo crew came in to take a look. However, Maj. Leuking decided that the hover required to load the victim or short haul him was beyond the helo's performance capabilities at that altitude.

The Forest Service helo out of Independence arrived to help shuttle people and more gear to East Face Lake. They would also be able to make pickups there. It was decided to call for more technical people to help set the

many lowering systems that would be required to get Hummie down the 1500 feet to the lake. The Sheriff was also looking into the availability of a helicopter with the capabilities to pick the victim up from the ledge. The hazards of rockfall on the long ramp of the Washboard and the Tyrolean that would be required to get across the First Tower Traverse, made pursuing a helicopter worthwhile.

Hummie was raised up to the ledge where the pickup point was located. Hine decided to keep Hummie in that location until all of the anchors and lowerings were set on the route. This would make the lowerings go more smoothly and minimize the number of people on the route during the process.

More CLMRG personnel - Hinman, Renta, DeRuitter and Seibold - arrived that afternoon. After shuttling extra food, gear and water to those on the face, the Forest Service helicopter brought them up. Their task would be to set up the Tyrolean at the Tower Traverse.

Three people from the Inyo Posse and four from the Sierra Madre SRI arrived later that afternoon. They were shuttled in, together Roberts from CLMRG, to set up the section from the notch below the Tower Traverse down to East Face Lake.

Sgt. Dan Lucas had been unavailable earlier, but was now in base camp. He received a call from Scott AFB saying that a CH-47 would arrive at 0530 the following morning. Even with that news the teams continued to fix the route in case this helicopter would not be able to make the pickup. Green and Sean hiked down to the lake so they could fly out that afternoon.

The CH-47, from the California National Guard in Stockton, arrived at 0545 on the 20th. The pilots (Capt. Kent Daring and CW3 David foal) were briefed. Green went with them to show them the location. They flew into the area and successfully picked Hummie up from the ledge. All personnel began to clear gear off the face and hike down to the lake.

Hummie was down to the airport by 0712 and was taken by ambulance to Southern Inyo Hospital. The CH-47 made one more trip to the lake, loaded all 21 people and gear on board and flew to Lone Pine airport at 1350.

Also participating from CLMRG: Aigner (Coordinator) and Brubaker (HAM).

87-23	7/28/07	Alert
Mt. Whitney Trail		Lucas

About 1115 on Tuesday, 28 July, CLMRG member Frank Buffum told me that a legally blind co-worker, Greg Showman, was overdue from a hike up the Whitney Trail. Greg and three others had left. Sunday morning and planned to return Monday night. I got Nancy Aigner, who was already the In-Town Coordinator for Operation #87-22, to start an Alert and also advised Sgt. Reid, ICSO, of the situation.

At 1230 one of Greg's companions called work to say that the three others would be coming out a day late. We stayed on Alert until word was received about 1710 that Greg was out and OK.

Committing were: Buffum, D. Burge, Castro, Cunningham and me.

87-24	8/6-8/87	Search
Yosemite NP		Finco

The CLPD contacted Bob Huey around 2200 hours on Thursday, 6 August, concerning a search west of Tuolumne Meadows in Yosemite NP. Huey called Coordinator Mary Wyatt, who in her infinite wisdom tracked me down. She gave me the telephone number for more information, and started the call out at 2245.

The subject was 20 year old Samuel Johnson Ma. Sam and two friends had hiked into the Ten Lakes area and camped at Heart Lake. On Wednesday, the 5th, they packed up and started to hike out. The three decided to space themselves at half hour intervals so that they would all get back to the road at approximately the same time. (The slowest one left first, followed by the next slowest, and then Sam). Sam's two friends made it back to the road and waited for him. When he didn't show up they reported him missing.

McDowell was the only other member who could leave immediately, and three more could go the next afternoon. I called the Park Service and told them of the situation, but they advised me that they were desperate for people. So McDowell and I met at the hut at 0045 and left for the White Wolf Ranger Station. Stogsdill would organize the people going later.

We were assigned to go to the PLS to try to determine the victim's track and direction of travel. Although the PLS had been roped off, the area was still heavily travelled and we were not able to determine a definite track. We, together with Mahler of BAMRU, hiked the trail back to the Tioga Road, checking out all possible

areas that Sam may have gotten off the trail by mistake.

At 1600 the call came that Sam had been found and he was in good condition.

At the debriefing, Sam told us he tried to take a short-cut Wednesday afternoon. On Thursday he tried to find his way back to the lake, and on Friday he decided to just stay in one place and wait for a helicopter or someone to find him. From his descriptions, John Dill figures that Sam climbed up towards Colby Mountain and then down to the Muir Gorge, then part way back up the drainage before he finally decided to wait for help.

The Park Service provided dinner and then we headed home. We arrived at 0100 on Saturday.

Stogsdill, Mitchell and B. Westbrook had left Ridgecrest at 1500 on Friday. Upon arrival in Lone Pine they called ahead and found out that Sam had been found, so they returned to Ridgecrest.

87-25	8/15/87	Alert
Mt. Whitney Area		Green

At 1400 on 15 August we were placed on Alert by the ICSO for a possible rescue in the North Fork drainage of Lone Pine Creek. A climber was spotted, apparently stranded, on the side of a wall in the vicinity of Lower Boy Scout Lake.

The Alert was cancelled half an hour later. The "climber" turned out to be a tree. Committing were Renta, Harris and Jones. Aigner coordinated.

87-26	9/4-7/87	Alert
Mt. Dana		Hinman

On Friday, 4 September, the entire CRMRA was advised by Yosemite NP that there was a greater than normal chance that we would be needed over the next few days. Park personnel were very busy fighting forest fires, and they felt that they could not respond adequately in case of a SAP emergency. Also, since several of CLMRG would be on the annual climbing trip to Tuolumne Meadows, we would be in a prime location to react quickly.

Sure enough, on Sunday we were alerted for a climber with a broken leg on Third Pillar of Mt. Dana. Upon reaching the Ranger Station, we heard that the injured climber had been rescued with the aid of a helicopter.

Members responding: Hinman, Green, Mason, Seibold, Roseman and J. Westbrook (Coordinator).

I answered Sat. Dan Lucas' pager call at 1535 on Saturday, 5 September. A vehicle had gone over a 450 foot cliff at Father Crowley Point, on SR 190 between Oiancha and Death Valley. There were two victims: one dead, one injured. The Inyo County Posse was responding, but since multiple-pitch technical raisings were expected. Dan requested additional help.

Because of the annual Group climbing trip to Tuolumne Meadows, only three others could go. We mobilized at the hut and were on our way at 1620.

At 1300 we reached the reported vicinity of the accident, but it was now deserted. Driving a few miles further we encountered Deputy Larry Freshour in the process of interviewing the Panamint Springs restaurant

owner. The latter had been the first to reach the accident site around 1400 that afternoon.

Tire marks indicated that a pickup truck had accelerated for about 100 feet in the Crowley Point parking lot, directly toward and over the nearly vertical cliff. Being airborne for most of the descent, it was remarkable that the driver was still alive. There was no second victim.

With the assistance of an automobile wrecker winch, the man was brought back up to the parking lot. He was transported to the hospital, still alive but in very serious condition.

The ICSO dispatcher had tried to "turn us off" at 1700, but we were by then out of radio contact. We departed for home at 1850 and arrived an hour and a half later.

Members responding: Adams, D. Burge, Buffum and me. S. Rockwell coordinated, with B. Meng assisting.

PAST OPERATIONS

Readers may recall the unsuccessful search last February for skier Robert Simmons (#87-2). In early August Robert's body was found, in his sleeping bag, and recovered by divers from a remote lake. The supposition is that he bivouacked on the frozen lake in a storm, did not survive, and his body sank into the lake after the spring thaw.

EDITORS CORNER

The summer party was most enjoyable for all. Special thanks go to Chairman Mike Mason and his committee. it was well planned, down to appropriate gifts for the winners of the exciting jumar contest! Seventy people were in attendance. We had many guests attending this year. We were happy to see many "old" familiar faces among the guests, along with new helicopter crew members and the new Daily Independent reporter. That is the main reason we have the annual party - to thank our many friends interested in CLMRG.

Recently I thought back to the CLMRG treasury when Bob and I first joined. If a particularly "glum" treasurer's report was given, the next order of business was to pass the hat. That is how the Group survived in the early years. Now, thanks to the United Way and our many friends, we don't have to do that anymore.

DONOR'S CORNER

We would like to express our deep appreciation to longtime friends Stan and Lolette Dalbec, who once again left a generous check for us at the annual party. Thank you!

*Why do men climb mountains?
Perhaps it is going where
no one has gone before, or
seeing what few have seen.
Pitting your skill strength.
and courage against
the mightiest foe, nature.
The satisfaction of standing atop
a rocky peak in the heavens.
Winning but not conquering
climbing but not changing.
The challenge - - - the beauty
the mountains - - - the climb*

- Jack Webb

Last February we reported the passing of Kermith Ross, a founding member of the China Lake Mountain Rescue group. The following excerpt, taken from the 1987 issue of the American Alpine Journal, provides additional insight into Kermith's life.

KERMITH F. ROSS
1910-1986

Kermith Ross, known to some friends as "Lefty", died of cancer on December 23 in Denver. He began climbing about 1948, in Colorado, and also climbed extensively in Wyoming and California. He participated in expeditions to Canada, Alaska, Peru, Ecuador, and Mexico. Among climbers he will be especially remembered as a member of the group which made the first ascent of the east ridge of Mount Logan in 1957, and as a member of an American expedition to the Cordillera Blanca of Peru in 1959. On that trip he made with others the second ascent of Tocllaraju, the third ascent of Chinchey, and a new route on Pucaranra. He also took part in several probable first winter ascents in Colorado and Wyoming, including Sunlight, Windom, and Fremont; and he climbed all of the fourteen-thousand-foot peaks in Colorado.

Born in Missouri in 1910, he was a patent attorney by profession. He received his law degree from Georgetown University, after an undergraduate degree in chemistry at Kirksville, Missouri. During World War II he was an ordnance officer in the navy, and also taught swimming and gymnastics. His back flips, somersaults and dives were a treat to watch. He remained in the Naval Reserve for years and retired with the rank of Commander. After the war he worked for General Motors, at Los Alamos on the Manhattan Project, at NASA, and at China Lake, California, for the Navy. He retired from the law after many years as a partner in a private Denver firm. Never married, he is survived by one sister, Mae Belt of Atlanta, Missouri.

An inveterate traveler whether at work or leisure, Kermith's sojourns also included wildlife watching in Canada, trekking to the base of Everest, mountaineering in New Zealand, and touring Europe and China. He liked to fish, usually kept camera at hand, and shared his experiences with a wide circle of friends on return. He had a tremendous sense of humor, with an endless supply of jokes, and a trip with him was always enjoyable. It was also unusually safe. In our 40 years of shared mountaineering, I know of no serious accident ever happening to a party with which he was climbing. He combined a good nature with great endurance and good technical ability. Those who climbed with him will always remember him with fondness.

DON MARK

*"Who climbs with toil, wheresoe'er
Shall find wings waiting there."*

- Henry Beeching

"My doctor told me that jogging
could add years to my life. He was
right. I feel 10 years older already."

- Milton Berle



From The China Lake
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