

**CHINA LAKE MOUNTAIN RESCUE GROUP
P. O. BOH 2037
RIDGECREST, CR 93555**

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

OCTOBER 18	Advanced First Aid Class Begins	Gleason
OCTOBER 20	Sign-Cutting Practice	Mitchell
OCTOBER 23	Rock Skills Seminar - Aid Climbing	Hinman
OCTOBER 28-30	The Guardian Angels, Zion NP	Rockwell
NOVEMBER 5	30th Anniversary Banquet	Carriage Inn
NOVEMBER 11-13	Mts. Abbott, Gabb and Mills	Rockwell
NOVEMBER 14	Meeting	Huey
NOVEMBER 16	Stretcher Hut Night	Huey Hinman
NOVEMBER 20	Stretcher Practice - Fossil Falls	Mitchell
NOVEMBER 29	CPR Class Begins	Rockwell
DECEMBER 3/4	Ubehebe Peak	Stogsdill
DECEMBER 8	ELT Practice	Silverman
DECEMBER 10-11	Red Rocks, Nevada	Mitchell
DECEMBER 12	Meeting	Rockwell
DECEMBER 13	Winter Shelters Lecture	Westbrook
DECEMBER 16	CLMRG Christmas Party	

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*"Live your life each day as you would climb a mountain.
An occasional glance toward the summit keeps the goal
in mind. Climb slowly, steadily . . . the view from the
summit will serve as a fitting climax for the journey."*

- Harold V. Melchert

SEARCH AND RESCUE OPERATIONS

88-18 8/12-15/88
Silver Plume, Colorado

Search
Finco

We were contacted at 1400 on Wednesday, 10 August, by Dick Sale of Sierra Madre SRT. Colorado MRA was requesting assistance from California MRA for a search. Arrangements for an aircraft to fly the California teams from Norton AFB to Colorado's Buckley Airfield were being pursued. The search terrain was described as boulders and fallen trees on slopes of 45 degrees. The weather was sunny with afternoon thunder-showers.

Carol VanVerst got seven others to go: Renta, Mitchell, Gleason, Roseman, McDowell, R. Walker and Cunningham. Finally, on Thursday afternoon, we learned that a C-130 would be available the following morning. Mary Schmierer was now the coordinator.

Driving to Norton on Friday the 12th, at 0700 we joined teams from Riverside, San Diego, San Dimas, Malibu, Altadena, Montrose and Los Padres, which brought the California contingent to 41. We took off at 1000, stopped in New Mexico to pick up seven more MRA members, and arrived at Buckley Airfield at 1400.

Buses from the Colorado Army National Guard drove us to base camp in the town of Silver Plume by 1600. Hunter Holloway and Charley Shimanski of the Alpine Rescue Team greeted us and outlined the problem.

Keith Reinhard, a 49 year-old sportswriter for a Chicago area paper, had been missing since 1700 on Sunday, 7 August. He had stopped at a store to buy a soda and told the storekeeper he was going to climb Pendleton Mountain, and return in time for dinner. He wore jeans, a T-shirt, a flannel shirt and tennis shoes. He did not return.

The Alpine Rescue Team initiated the search effort. Colorado had over eighty people searching the Pendleton Mountain area, covering a 2 mile by 6 mile grid. They were getting tired after four days, so were glad to see help from California arrive.

On Friday morning tragedy occurred, as a Civil Air Patrol pilot was killed and his passenger seriously

injured when their plane crashed while searching just west of Pendleton Mountain. The subsequent rescue and recovery took a lot out of the rescue members.

After the briefing, California operations leader Walt Walker met with the Colorado OL and other planners to decide on a search plan for the next day. The rest of us went to the food wagon to have a hot dinner, set up by the Salvation Army. The Salvation Army would be providing food for our entire stay.

Wake up was at 0430 on Saturday the 13th. The eight from China Lake were divided into four two-man teams. Our assignments were to start just to the east of Pendleton Mountain at approximately 9100 ft. and search up to the ridge by 1100. The terrain was heavily wooded (aspens and pines) with loam, moss and undergrowth - and steep. Everyone learned real quickly which trees you could pull on and which ones would pop out of the ground with a light tug. It was an interesting challenge negotiating fourth class woods.

Our next assignment was to search down the other side of the ridge, heading south to a dirt road. Keeping the same two-man teams, we swept the mountainside. On the road we met up with three members from the San Diego team who had just finished their assignment.

When we checked in with base, they informed us that a truck would take all of us to a landing zone for a Chinook helicopter ride to the next assignment. From the LZ we were flown to peak 12491, southwest of Pendleton Mountain. On top we split up and began searching east. Peak 12491 is just a short distance from Pendleton Mountain, and there was a chance that Reinhard may have continued in our direction, and descended.

The eight from China Lake and three from San Diego finished their assignments around 1500, and vehicles arrived to drive us back to base. On the way one vehicle, with five CLMRG members and one from San Diego, was put on standby to stay in the area because some other searchers were feeling ill. Finally, everyone had returned to base camp. Our last team was out of the field by 1930. No clues as to the location of Reinhard had *been* found.

On Sunday, wake-up was at 0545. The plan was to line search the north side of Pendleton Mountain. All teams were given a section to sweep up and then an adjoining section to sweep down. Our assignment spanned approximately 9100 to 9800 ft. After finishing our sweep we were given two similar assignments in other areas of the mountain. Again nothing was found.

The operation was secured at 1800.

The California teams were up at 0500 on Monday the 15th. The Salvation Army food wagon drove to Georgetown to feed us breakfast. We arrived at Buckley Airfield around 0730, left there on a C-130 at 1030, landed at Norton at 1230, and were home by 1500.

88-19	8/18-19/88	Transit Hinman
Santa Rosa Mountains		

While camping with their family in the Santa Rosa Mountains south of Palm Desert, Thomas and Joshua Tree went on a planned short hike at midday on Thursday, 18 August. Late that afternoon, the family contacted the Riverside County Sheriff's Office when the teenage boys had not returned. Because Riverside MRU was unable to field sufficient personnel for the search, a CRMRA call out was initiated. CLMRG was notified at 2045 by Dick Sale of Sierra Madre SRT.

Early Friday morning Roseman, Wilson and I made the 200 mile drive to the search base camp. Within 5 minutes of our 0730 arrival, the two missing boys were located by searchers in the field. The boys were in good condition. We returned and secured the operation at 1230.

The call out was handled by S. Rockwell, J. Westbrook and C. VanVerst.

88-20	9/20/88	Alert Finco
Mt. Whitney		

A call came over the pager at 1430 on Tuesday, 20 September, requesting CLMRG for a search on Mt. Whitney. I contacted Sgt. Reed of the Inyo County Sheriff's Office and he said that Bob Gwizilla and Charles Allen had been climbing Mt. Whitney from Trail Camp. Somewhere along the way they got separated, and when Bob didn't return to Trail Camp, Charles reported him missing. Marty Hornig

of the Forest Service hiked to the summit and found Bob's name in the register.

The Park Service was searching the back side of Mt. Whitney from Crabtree Meadows to the summit. Sgt. Reed said he would give us more information when we arrived in Lone Pine. He also informed me that it was snowing on the summit, and raining in Lone Pine.

Mary Schmierer was the coordinator and started the call out at 1440. Twenty minutes later, Sgt. Reed called back to say that Bob had hiked out.

Others committing: Green, Hinman, Stogsdill, Huey, Hine, Lucas, Mason, Mitchell, D. Burge, DeRuiter, Castro, and Wilson. C. Burge and S. Rockwell assisted.

88-21	9/22/88	Search Renta
Sequoia National Park		

On 12 September Wolfe Kirson left the Sawtooth trail head in the Mineral King area of Sequoia National Park. His plans were to go over Sawtooth Pass, continue into Lost Canyon where he was to meet some friends, and return on the 16th to the Sawtooth trail head. Wolfe, 20 years old, had been backpacking for eight years in Southern California but this was his first trip in the Mineral King area. At about 1600 hours Wolfe met another backpacker near Lower Monarch Lake west of the pass. This was the last anyone had contact with him.

He was reported overdue on 18 September and a search was started on the 19th. The search progressed slowly over the next two days because of low clouds and snow. A call for assistance was made to CRMRA on the afternoon of the 21st; Doug Speck and I responded.

We left Ridgecrest at 0030 on 22 September, arriving at the Ash Mountain base camp at 0430. We got an hour of sleep before breakfast and were briefed at 0645. Our assignment was to search the area east of Sawtooth Pass to Cyclamen Lake. We left base camp for the 28 mile, 1.5 hour drive to the Mineral King helo LZ, then were flown to Sawtooth Ridge west of the pass at 1045.

After looking over our search area with binoculars, we descended. At 1145 another team sweeping the ridge from Sawtooth Pass to the top of Sawtooth Peak spotted Wolfe's body 100 to 150 feet below the ridgeline above Columbine Lake.

Doug and I arrived at the body about 20 minutes later, finding ranger Rob Hayden already there.

After Park Service investigator Tom Tschohl finished documenting the accident we placed the victim into a body bag and then into a hovering helo for transport back to base camp.

We walked to an LZ and were flown back to Mineral King at 1545. After debriefing at the base camp we started the drive home, arriving in Ridgecrest at 2215.

S. Rockwell coordinated, Finco assisted.

88-22	1 0/3/88	Search
San Jacinto Mountains		Finco

Daryl Hinman received a call (Dick Sale, SMSRT again) around 0015 on 3 October, for a search for an 11 year-old boy lost in the Camp Lackey area in the San Jacinto Mountains. Daryl then called over the pager for an operations leader. While I was trying to figure out if that call was a dream or not, Daryl called again. I accepted the operation and called Janet Westbrook to coordinate. She was assisted by Mary Schmierer.

Huey, Gleason, McDowell, Seibold and I met at the hut at 0200 and left at 0215. We arrived at base camp near Camp Lackey at 0615.

In the briefing we were told that Clifford Wright and his grandfather had been out hunting. On Sunday, 2 October, the grandfather told Clifford to sit on a rock and wait while the grandfather walked a couple hundred yards away. (They had done the exact same thing on Saturday, except that the grandfather had not hiked as far away.)

At 0900 the grandfather returned and did not see Clifford. He reported hearing "Grandpa, Grandpa" being shouted in the distance. The grandfather

fired three shots and then heard a single shot, which he assumed to be Clifford's since this was the communication system they had agreed to use in case they became separated. The grandfather repeated the gun shots, but said that Clifford's single shot response seemed to be getting further and further away.

Riverside MRU began a search that afternoon. They had searched a perimeter trying to set up a boundary on Clifford's direction of travel. They had a good track description and had located Clifford's tracks wandering around the Camp Lackey area. The search teams on Monday were assigned a wider perimeter, again trying to cut for Clifford's prints and isolate the area.

CLMRG was assigned a drainage to search, and then contour around and intersect a trail leading back to Camp Lackey. Part way down the drainage we were put on hold. The San Diego team on a ridge nearby had found Clifford's tracks and were determining the direction of travel. They radioed to base camp the direction the tracks appeared to be going.

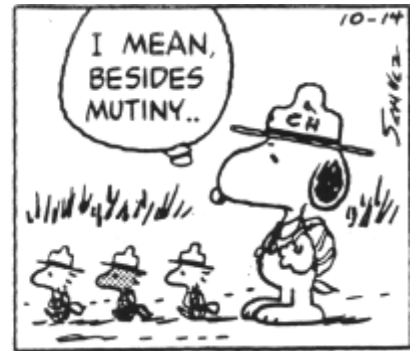
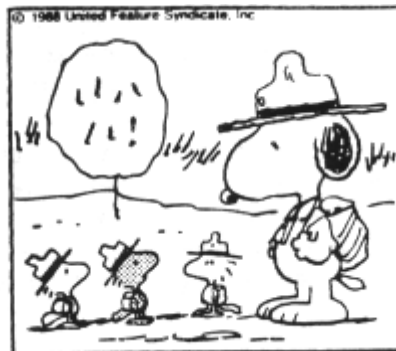
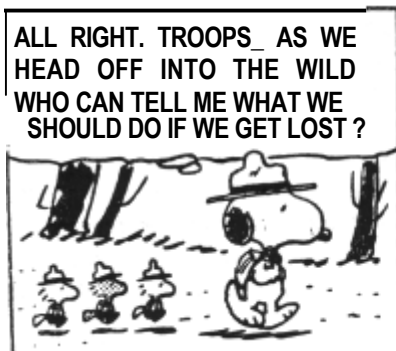
The San Bernardino County Sheriff's helicopter overflew the area and spotted the boy about three hundred feet below the San Diego team. The helicopter was able to land near Clifford's location and pick him up. All the teams were back in base camp by 1100.

Clifford said he left the area where his grandfather had told him to stay because he saw a four-point buck. He called to his grandfather and then followed the buck. He fired back in response to his grandfather's shots, but he was still following the buck. Clifford knew he was lost but he kept hiking, trying to find the *deer*.

The Riverside County Sheriff treated us to lunch in Banning and gassed up our vehicles. We left for home and arrived in Ridgecrest at 1600.

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PEANUTS By Schulz



Ray Warren Van Aken
14 May 1928 - 5 September 1988

Ray Van Aken was a charter member of the China Lake Mountain Rescue Group, and was active until 1970. He grew up in Los Angeles and learned his rock climbing skills at Stoney Point in the 1940s. Ray is remembered for bringing advanced rock climbing techniques into the early group of mountaineers who comprised the fledgling CLMRG in 1957. He had climbed at Tahquitz, the Canadian Rockies, the Alps, and of course the Sierra Nevada.

He was an expert aeronautical engineer, earning his bachelor's and master's degrees from the University of Southern California. Perhaps his most widely publicized contribution in this field was as the primary advisor to the Budweiser rocket-propelled vehicle program which first broke the speed of sound for land vehicles a few years ago. He worked at the Naval Weapons Center, China Lake, from 1951 until his death from cancer last month.

Ray had many interests besides climbing and aerodynamics, and as an excellent magician, was always in demand at public events. He was a member of Sigma Xi, the American Society of Mechanical Engineers, the Research Society of America and the American Institute of Aeronautical Engineers. He was a lifetime member of the Sierra Club, the Alpine Club of Canada, the Academy of Magical Arts, the Maturango Museum and as noted later, the China Lake Mountain Rescue Group.

He was a former president of the Ridgecrest Community Hospital board of directors and of the Desert Area Family Counseling Service. He served on the United Fund board of directors. He held a commercial pilot's license with land and sea, instrument, and glider ratings.

Ray was instrumental in getting United Way support for CLMRG and continued to support and publicize our Group after he became inactive.

At our last anniversary banquet, the 25th, Ray was one of the featured speakers. He entertained us all with his humor, his reminiscences about climbing in earlier days, and his rope tricks.

For his contributions to CLMRG Ray was one of ten people given an Honorary Life Membership in 1977 when that category was first created. There have been only five additional such awards since then.

He is missed.

PAST TRAINING EVENTS

6 Aug: Traverse from Contact Pass to Glacier Notch. Hinman, BRockwell, Sakai & SWalker did this class 3 (well..., son of cl 3) ridge, going over Temple Crag and Mt. Gayley in a long day. One rappel needed.

10 Aug, 13 Sept & 4 Oct: Step by Step Tracking. Green, Stogsdill, Finco, Renta, Sakai, Gleason, Harris, SWalker & Jones got in one practice; Hinman, Hine, Mitchell & Cunningham, two.

20-21 Aug: Mt. Whitney. Up the East Face Fresh Air Traverse (cl 5.4): Finco, Adams, Wisecarver & SWalker. Up the Mountaineer's Route (cl 3): Green, Silverman, Cunningham, Schafhauser, Sakai, Roseman & DeRuiter, the latter three as a day climb. A couple of late starters (begging for anonymity) got caught by a storm on the face, didn't get out until Monday.

27-28 Aug: Mt. Goddard Insanity. This tenth annual event (35 miles, class 3, 6 passes, 9600 feet elevation gain, with a goal of 24 hours) consumed 27 hours and 4 climbers this time: BRockwell, Hine, Roseman & Alan Bishop. Tried a new route: big mistake. Silverman was stricken by an attack of good sense and turned back at Echo Col. Wait'll next year!!

27 Aug: Thor Pk. Green & Atkins (in, spite of his sore back) did the north (Pinnacle Ridge) side.

Sept (several nights): Hut work. This wasn't training, but it sure helped out. Refurbishing the newly acquired second half of our rescue but occupied many hours. Huey was the big chief, assisted by little chiefs Mason, Mitchell, RWalker and R&B Meng. Indians were Green, Stogsdill, Hine, Hinman, Finco, CBurge, Cunningham & SWalker.

3-5 Sept: Tuolumne Meadows. Hinman, Finco, Renta, CBurge, JWestbrook, Schmierer, Roseman, McDowell, DeRuiter, Castro, SWalker, Seibold, Ostermann, Schafhauser, and 12 guests went. Daryl submitted 2 pages of details, which are best summarized by noting that 137 pitches were climbed ranging from cl 5.5 to 5.11b. Plus Mt. Hoffman and Cathedral Peak.

5 Sept: Owens Ridge. Stogsdill, Mitchell & Leiser chimneyed up the Double Chimney (5.2), and the Cracked Crack (5.2).

6-27 Sept (Wednesdays): Topics in Stretcher Handling. Several members attended. Leiser, Speck & Kit Antonsen participated in all four sessions, so got credit for one "real" stretcher practice.

8 Sept: Critical Incident Stress Management. Stogsdill & Katie Mechtenberg (Desert Counseling Clinic) conducted this seminar, designed primarily to help the rescuer who has suffered emotional trauma in, for example, body recoveries, unsuccessful searches, etc. Green, BRockwell, Finco, Mitchell, DBurge, DeRuiter, Leiser, Silverman, Buffum, Ostermann, SWalker, Schafhauser & Speck were there.

10.11 Sept: Mt. Humphreys. This nice class 4 peak was climbed via the south couloir and southeast ridge by BRockwell, Leiser, Buffum, Silverman & Schafhauser. Dave, throw your #L!!@ 5! stove away!

11 Sept: Owens Ridge. Green & SWalker slipped up on Banana Jam (5.5).

17.18 Sept: Matterhorn Peak. Hinman & BRockwell climbed the north arête (5.5), and met east couloir (cl 3) climbers Renta, Speck & Kit Antonsen on the summit. Leiser went for beer.

18 Sept: Owens Ridge. Mason & SWalker ascended El Centro (5.5), while Green, Atkins & Jim Rodosevich did Arriba (5.6). Word is, they couldn't resist Mexican food for dinner afterwards.

24-25 Sept: Mt Whitney. Huey, Hine & Kit Antonsen were turned back 200 feet short of the summit, by snow/ice on the Mountaineer's Route.

2 Oct: Owens Ridge. Green & Kit Antonsen climbed 3/4 Slabs (5.3).

5 Oct: Tahquitz. Hinman, Castro, Silverman, Schafhauser, Speck & Werner Hueber, plus 8 guests, played around. Lots of climbs, but none pure enough to qualify toward the CLMRG annual requirement.

8.10 Oct: Yosemite Valley! 13 members (Hinman, Hine, Huey, Renta, Mason, Westbrook, Schmierer, Mitchell, McDowell, Leiser, Silverman, Ostermann & Speck) and 28 others enjoyed the warm weather on this annual trip. Significant events included 6 people ascending Royal Arches, and several others hiking to the top of Half Dome. Thanks to John Dill for arranging campsites, and for dropping by for discussions on hardware safety.

10 Oct: Owens Ridge. SWalker & Buffum climbed 3/4 Slabs (5.3), Sakai & Gleason boogied up Banana Jam (5.5), and Green, Adams, Atkins and Werner Hueber jammed up Boogie Left (5.5).

DONOR'S CORNER

We received a number of very generous donations recently. Many thanks to Milton and Patricia Peters (see Operation 88-16), John Wick (CLMRG member during the '70s), and Harvey Nelson (who resigned last month due to time constraints - hurry back, Harv!). And of course from perennial donors and good friends Stan and Lolette Dalbec, and Maxine Scheibner (see Operation 82-20). The Sierra Peaks Section of the Sierra Club (Angeles Chapter) sent a check and letter stating that they "recently adopted the policy of making an annual donation to your rescue organization in recognition of and appreciation for the service you make available to our members and to others."

To all of our donors, be assured that your generosity is deeply appreciated. As always, these funds go toward operational expenses, in direct support of our search and rescue missions.

SUMMER PARTY

The CLMRG Summer Party is held primarily to honor the people and agencies with whom we work, and our donors and others who help us out in various ways. Ron Leiser was head of the committee which put it all together, and it was held again in the Rockwells' back yard. Due to the hard work by Ron and all of his helpers, it was once again a roaring success. Even the thundershower that came just as everyone sat down to eat could not dampen enthusiasm. In Ron's words: "There was a lot of good food, a great slide show, and the exciting Jumar contest was won by Daryl Hinman!"

Lost and Found: remaining after the party were a few serving spoons, and someone left behind a necklace with a cross. Owners can contact Bob or Sheila.

30th ANNIVERSARY BANQUET

Everyone is reminded that the banquet celebrating the 30th anniversary of the founding of the China Lake Mountain Rescue Group will be held at the Carriage Inn on Saturday, November 5. Featured speakers will include Sgt. Dan Lucas of the Inyo County Sheriffs Office and our own Frank Buffum and Russ Huse, plus some exciting surprises! Please RSVP now to Mike Renta if you haven't done so already.

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Mike Renta asks:

What happens when you cross a mountain climber with a mountain?

Nothing; it's an illegal operation. Cross is a vector product, and the mountain climber is a scaler.

(Ask Mike to explain)

Tom and Mitch were hiking when they spotted mountain lion staring at them. Tom froze in his tracks, but Mitch sat down on a rock, tore off his climbing boots, pulled a pair of running shoes from his rucksack and hurriedly began to put them on. _____

For crying out loud, Mitch, you can't outrun a mountain lion!" Tom hissed.

"I don't have to," shrugged Mitch. "I just have to outrun you!"

Extracted from Jonathan Waterman's
summary of the 1988 climbing season
on Denali, reported in *Climbing* :

As for notable rescues, in late May, the highest winch rescue in North America was performed by a military Chinook helicopter from 18,200 feet on the Cassin Ridge. Upon descent to Talkeetna, it was found that there was nothing wrong with the Korean victim! A week later, the two Koreans who had clipped the earlier "victim" onto the cable also pleaded for a rescue; one of the pair was paralyzed with a rare high-altitude illness. The very same winching mission was successfully performed again for these two climbers, from the very same elevation, at considerable risk to both ground teams and helicopter crews.

As a postscript, in 1986 one of these winched victims, Lee, had been rescued from 19,600 feet on the Cassin Ridge during an equally daring mission by Vern Tejas (see *Climbing* no. 108). At presstime, no one knows if Lee will try again, but three strikes, and he's out of the Park

— Jonathan Waterman



From The China Lake
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