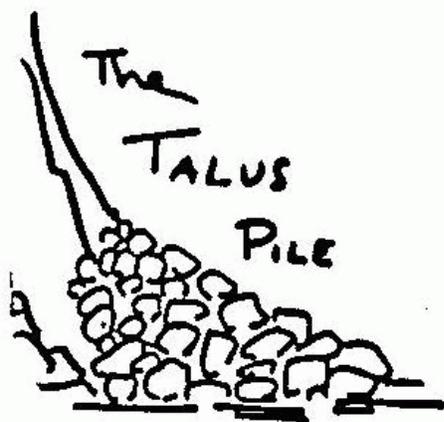


June 1991  
#86



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

**SCHEDULE OF EVENTS**

June 11- July 13	Summer Class Tues & Weds	Leiser/Stogsdill
June 29-30	Summer Class Day Trips	Leiser/Stogsdill
July 4-7	Evolution Basin	Rockwell
July 8	Meeting	Rockwell/Hueber/Atkins
July 13-14	Summer Class Overnight Trips	Leiser/Stogsdill
July 20-21	Mt Whitney/Keeler Needle	Green
July 24	Summer Class Party	Leiser
July 27-28	Indian Rock/Mt Baxter	Ostermann
Aug 3-11	Wyoming Adventure (Devil's Tower)	Green
Aug 3	Mt Whitney - Mountaineers Route	Mitchell
Aug 10-11	Arrow Peak	D. Burge
Aug 12	Meeting	Gray/Renta/Sakai
Aug 17-18	Palisades	Ostermann
Aug 24-25	Mt. Humphreys	Renta
Aug 26	CLMRG Annual Party	Atkins
Aug 31-Sep 2	Tuolumne Meadows	Hinman
September 3	Mini Stretcher Practice	Training Committee
September 7- 8	Mt Langley	Leiser
September 9	Meeting	Buffum/ D. Lucas/ Roseman
September 10	Mini Stretcher Practice	Training Committee
September 11-12	CPR	Green

## Operation Reports

**91-1 1/9-14/91  
Mariposa**

**Search  
Mitchell**

On Wednesday, 1/9/91, at 1635, my pager went off. It was Sierra Madre wanting China Lake to participate in a search for Elizabeth Barbara Bartholomew; an 80-year old who had wandered away from her home. She had last been seen on Tuesday morning at 1030.

I called Carol Burge to call the roster, then Arnold Gaffrey of Sierra Madre for more information. Base camp was to be at Midpines County Park, which is 9 miles north of Mariposa. When Arnold informed me that only 10 searchers from other Region teams had committed to go, I asked if I could invite the Indian Wells Valley Search and Rescue Team to help. Arnold said yes, if IWV would go as part of China Lake. I called the IWV team captain, Jerry Young and he said they would be willing to go and to go as part of CLMRG.

We left Ridgecrest at 0030 and arrived at base camp at 0700. Phil Umholtz, from Bay Area Mountain Rescue Unit was the MRA Joint Operations Leader. It was Phil's job to insure MRA teams were given assignments suitable to their training.

Mrs. Bartholomew had wandered away from her home four times in the last year and had been found within four hours each time. She was in the habit of walking five miles to the post office each day. Several times she was found sitting in parked cars waiting for her husband. It was stated that she might be suffering from Alzheimer's disease. She had mentioned wanting to visit her sister and mother who live in New York.

China Lake was asked to split up into three field teams to do a line search. We were to follow a dog search team - a handler and a dog. We were in the field by 1100.

For the first three days the area around the residence was heavily searched and no clues were found. The roads around the search area were mostly dirt and any foot prints may have been driven over by searchers on the first day. Twenty-eight

search units and agencies participated. There were 31 searchers on Tuesday, 75 on Wednesday, 150 on Thursday, 200 on Friday, 250 on Saturday, 250 on Sunday and 150 on Monday. Nothing was found.

Participating field team members: Finco, Stogsdill, Mitchell, Renta, Sakai, Leiser, D. Lucas, and Buffum. Coordinators: C. Burge and Betty Meng. Nine IWV members took part.

Comments:

1. Base camp could have used more personnel to help with assignments. Only one person was giving assignments and it took between two and three hours before all 26 teams were in the field.
2. Cooperation between IWV and CLMRG was excellent.
3. Each field team was given a Task Assignment Form. This form contained instructions, radio frequency and other important information. Field teams were given a photocopy of the topographic map of the search area which was marked with their assignment.
4. Support from the local residents was great. Whenever we were in base camp there was plenty of hot food and drink.
5. Even though the temperature at night was below freezing, two ticks (one embedded) were found.
6. A team member was struck by a stick which caused a minor injury above the left eye.

**91-2 3/17/91  
Red Rock Canyon**

**Alert  
Mitchell**

When the pager went off at 9:50 pm, it was the Kern County Sheriff reporting that there was a 10-year-old male who had not returned from dirt bike riding to his 'campsite in Red Rock Canyon. Sheila Rockwell called the roster and we met at the hut at 11:00pm. Also at 11:00pm, the sheriff called to inform us that the lost 10-year-old had been found.

Those who committed to go were: Huey, Roseman, D.Lucas, D. Burge, Wisecarver, Antonsen, Seibold, Hueber, Martin and Mitchell.

**91-3  
Pinon Pines, CA**

**3/11-12/91**

**Search  
Mitchell**

On Monday, March 11 at 0045, I received a call from Janet Westbrook looking for an Operations Leader to lead a search for a missing 3-year-old boy. Travis Jay Zwiieg was last seen at 1000 on Sunday, March 10, near the home of a friend in Pinon Pines. I accepted the call and asked Janet to call everyone on the roster and to have them meet at the hut at 0200. The weather report for the area was wind driven rain and snow. I called the MRA Region Coordinator for more information and to request authorization for Indian Wells Valley SAR to go. The reply was yes; however, IWV was unable to send anyone.

We left the hut at 0230 and arrived at 0600. During the brief we were given the physical and clothing description of Travis. Also included was a "maybe" description of Travis' footprint. The friends' dog may have been with him. We were briefed and in the field by 1000.

Shortly after Travis was reported missing, local residents and sheriffs conducted a house to house search for him. The dirt roads were heavily traveled by vehicles, foot searchers and horses. Sunday night the wind driven rain and snow helped destroy any footprints or clues.

Our first search area, with three other CRMRA teams, was the area north of the house for about one mile and the east side of Santa Rosa Road. CLMRG was to do a line search, looking for any clues. During our third sweep of the area, we came upon a non- search team person searching on his own. He had heard there was a missing child in the area and wanted to help. I incorporated him into our line search. I figured it was better to have him with us, than wandering around destroying evidence. We returned to base camp at 1630. At 2000 there was a meeting of all field team leaders to discuss the search strategy for the next day. At the meeting we heard about a set of tracks a search team was following on the south side of Highway 74. We decided to send field teams back into the field that night to cut for sign on each side of those tracks.

We were back in the field by 2200 with four team members from Ventura and their search dog. We did not find any clues and we returned to base camp at 0300.

At 1000 on Tuesday morning we got our first assignment of the day which was to cut for sign along the Omstott Creek, south of Highway 74, and go up the drainage until it was impassable. No clues were found and we returned to base camp.

All field teams were assembled for a shoulder to shoulder line search in the area of the tracks on the south side of Highway 74. During the second sweep of the area, we saw two men who were searching in our area. They also were non-search team people. We asked them to join us in our search line. They were kept at the end of the line and in an area which had already been searched.

At 1400 all field teams were asked to return to base for a debrief. We were informed that Travis might have been killed by a mountain lion. Base camp was 90% sure. Mountain lion paw prints and scuff marks of something being dragged away were found in the area where the last set of tracks were lost. An expert on hunting mountain lions was called and he would arrive on Wednesday morning. At that time all teams were released.

CLMRG field team members were Bob Huey, Kit Antonsen and Andrew Mitchell. Janet Westbrook was the coordinator.

**Notes:**

1. We spent little time in base camp. Assignments were given out quickly.
2. More time could have been spent debriefing field teams. Field team leaders weren't interviewed until Tuesday afternoon.

**91-4 3/25-26/91  
Amador County**

**Alert  
Finco**

The pager went off around 1800 on Monday, March 25. BAMRU wanted to notify the MRA of a search in Amador County for a missing San Mateo County Sheriff's Deputy. No assistance from the MRA was being requested at that time. The conditions were severe winter with lots of snow. Skiers and snowshoers with avalanche awareness were being requested. Each team was asked to alert their members and more information would be made available later in the evening.

The message was never updated, but on Tuesday, Sierra Madre called saying no assistance would be required from the MRA.

Coordinators were Janet Westbrook and Mary Schmierer. People committing to the operation were Green, Hinman, Finco, Stogsdill, Mitchell, Leiser, Wisecarver, Antonsen, R. Walker, and Hueber.

Comments: Our paging system worked well on this callout. I did not hear the original page, and when no one called back on the pager, I assumed it was a false page. But, out of curiosity I called our pager number and played back the message.

**9 1 - 5  
Fossil Falls**

**4 / 6 / 9 1**

**Rescue  
Hine**

The pager went off at 1630 with a request from the Inyo County Sheriff for assistance with a seriously injured man at Fossil Falls. While getting the operation started, the pager went off again. This time the Bureau of Land Management was requesting assistance with a seriously injured man at Fossil Falls. Both agencies had deputies responding to the accident.

The "Falls" is a narrow, dry gorge that ranges from 60 to 110 feet in depth. The sides are water smoothed volcanic rock. Richard Wilcox was trying to reach a natural tunnel about 20 feet off the ground. When he could not reach the tunnel, he decided to go for the top. He soon ran out of footholds for his tennis shoes and fell fifty feet. The hospital later reported Richard had sustained eleven broken ribs, a punctured lung, and a fractured pelvis.

The small Fossil Falls parking lot was nearly full when we arrived at 1745. There was a car from the Inyo County Sheriff's Department, Bureau of Land Management, and the California Highway Patrol. There were also two Liberty ambulances and two fire trucks from the Cartago/Olancho Volunteer Fire Department. Additionally, the Naval Weapons Center helicopter would be arriving in approximately thirty minutes.

Richard had already been stabilized and placed into a Thompson litter by the ambulance crew. He was in pain and having difficulty breathing. The ambulance EMT was concerned that his condition could deteriorate at any time.

While CLMRG was setting anchors for the Z raising system, the NWC helicopter arrived. The pilot confirmed that gusty wind conditions prevented using a short haul. The raising was accomplished with the fire department personnel providing most of the horsepower. A short carry to the helicopter and a quick check by the medic had Richard flying into the gathering darkness at 1900.

CLMRG members involved with the operation were: Hine, Huey, Roseman, Leiser, Antonsen, Wilson and D. Burge. The coordinator was Mary Schmierer, assisted by Betty Meng.

**91-6 4/10/91  
Little Lake**

**Transit  
Mitchell**

My pager went off at 1015 on 10 April 1991. It was the Inyo County Sheriff's Office (ICSO) wanting us to go on standby for the possible rescue of a photographer who had fallen into a hole while filming a commercial near Little Lake. I informed the deputy that he would have to call the Office of Emergency Services (OES) and they would have to call the Kern County Sheriff's Office (KCSO) before we could leave.

I asked Mary Schmierer to call down the roster and see who could go. Six minutes later, ICSO called wanting us to go. I called the pager and requested those leaders who could respond to meet at the hut in 20 minutes; I had Mary ask everyone else who could go to meet at the hut at 1115.

The advance team was ready to leave the hut at 1045. However, we had to wait 10 more minutes for the call from the KCSO with the OES number. The advance team departed at 1055. While waiting for the rest of the team to assemble, the ICSO called to cancel the rescue. The photographer's co-workers had lifted him out of the hole, using a camera boom.

CLMRG members participating: Green, Hinman, B. Rockwell, Finco, Huey, Stogsdill, Roseman, Sakai, Leiser, S. Walker, D. Lucas, Wisecarver, Gray, Seibold, Wilson, Atkins, Mary Schmierer, Betty Meng and Mitchell.

Comments: It took 30 minutes from the time we received the call to roll from the ICSO until we received the call from the KCSO with the OES number.

Donors

CLMRG truly appreciates donations we have received from the following individuals and groups.

Sierra Peaks Section of the Sierra Club  
Janet Hammond  
Southern California Mountaineers  
Mr. or Ms. Davis

1990 Activity Reports

Summary of 1990 Operations  
Al Green

There were a total of 31 operations with 53 victims (13 from the Mt. Whitney lightning accident). Of these, 37 were OK, 13 were injured and 3 were dead. Of the deaths, one was caused by lightning, one was a probable suicide and the third a fallen climber. CLMRG expended 1932 total person hours; of these 642 were excused NWC hours. We drove a total of 10,648 miles. There was an average of 9.8 CLMRG members per operation.

Operations by Type	By Requesting Agency		
Rescues	6	Inyo County	15
Recoveries	1	Kern County	7
Searches	7	Riverside County	2
Alerts	8	Mono County	3
Transits	6	San Diego County	1
Incidents	1	Yosemite NP	1
Mobilizations	2	Joshua Tree NM	1
		Sequoia NP	1

Equipment Committee

Mike Renta

The Equipment Committee expended \$1611.24 in 1990. Of this, the largest amount, \$570 went for ropes and pulleys. Radios and radio repairs took \$403. The rest was spent on miscellaneous items like batteries, stretcher and tent repairs etc.

Public Education - Bob Huey

The Public Education Committee made 13 "Hug-a-Tree" presentations to 2,294 children and 18 other presentations to 785 people. We provided basic rock climbing instruction to 150 participants at the Girl Scout Encampment near Trona.

Scree

CLMRG hosted a very successful meeting of the national Mountain Rescue Association June 14-16. Approximately 90 mountain rescue team members from all over the United States attended the 3-day meeting in Ridgecrest. Besides business meetings, attendees had the option of doing a climb of the Mountaineer's Route on Mt Whitney, technical climbing at Owens Ridge and sightseeing in Death Valley and at the Petroglyphs (ancient rock art) on the ranges of the Naval Weapons Center. At the banquet, Glen Dawson, a pioneer climber (who has been a life-member of the Sierra Club for 70 years!) gave a fascinating slide show of his climbing experiences.

Marking the 38th anniversary of the first conquest of Mt. Everest, the Nepal Mountaineering Association's president, T.C. Pokharei, said climbing expeditions have left behind 50 tons of litter on the 29,028-foot mountain, the worlds tallest. -The Wall Street Journal

The Talus Pile is edited by Carol Burge