

The Talus Pile

Newsletter of the China Lake Mountain Rescue Group

January 1998

SPRING SCHEDULE

Jan 31-Feb 1 Sat-Sun Manly Finco

Feb 6-8 Fri-Sun Black and Diamond Roseman

Feb 9 Mon Meeting (Navigation) Finco

Feb 14-16 Sat-Mon Winter mountaineering TBD Davis

Feb 16-20 Mon-Fri Pear Lake Hut and Alta Peak Hueber

Feb 16 Mon Jenkins Runkle

Feb 20-22 Fri-Sun Checkered Demon Rockwell

Feb 25 Wed Avalanche lecture Training Committee

Feb 28-Mar 1 Sat-Sun Black Myers

Mar 7-8 Sat-Sun CRMRA rock recertification MRA Representative

Mar 9 Mon Meeting (radio antennas) Westbrook/Roseman/Burge

Mar 11 Wed Snow skills hut night Training Committee

Mar 14-15 Sat-Sun Winter skills (bivouac) Training Committee

Mar 20-22 Fri-Sun Charleston Sakai

Mar 28-29 Sat-Sun Open

Mar 31, Apr 7,14,21,28 Tue First Aid Topic A First Aid Committee

Easter Week TBD Girl Scout Encampment Schmierer

Apr 11-12 Sat-Sun Lamarck Hueber

Apr 13 Mon Meeting Hueber/Rindt/Kong

Apr 17-19 Fri-Sun Tahquitz Hueber

Apr 25 Sat Search seminar Breitenstein

May 2-3 Sat-Sun SCMA workshop Hinman

May 6 Wed Stretcher hut night A. Mitchell

May 10 Sun Stretcher practice A. Mitchell

CLMRG is funded by United Way of Indian Wells Valley.

OPERATIONS REDUX

95-09 12-14 Jul 95 **Search** Yosemite **Linda Finco**

Jeanne Hesselschwerdt, a 37-year-old woman from Boston, and her companion were driving around Yosemite after a week-long backpacking trip in the Sierra with the Sierra Club and a visit to San Francisco. They stopped to explore Summit Meadow on the Glacier Point Road. Jeanne went missing after separating from her companion, and an unsuccessful seven-day search ensued. Jeanne's body was found by fishermen later in the year. She had apparently fallen into a swollen creek and was unseen until the creek receded. (Ref: *The Talus Pile* #97)

97-06 22 Jun 97 **Search** Jawbone Canyon Mike Myers

Bill Hurdle and two boys went off-roading in Bill's truck and wedged it between a tree and a boulder in a gully off a motorcycle trail near Kelso Valley Road. The search team rescued the three humans but had to leave the truck. John Paull, a former

member of the Indian Wells Valley Search and Rescue team, was able to extract Bill's truck from its predicament some time later. (Ref: *The Talus Pile* #101)

ACTIVITIES

Owens Peak Sunday, 14 Dec 97 Bob Rockwell

Tom Sakai, Mark Lambert, Walter Runkle, Eric Toler, Paul Weimholt, and I left the donut shop promptly at 0800. Bob Joy arrived at 0801 so drove by himself. Snow stopped us a little past the Blue Max mine, but it only was a 10-minute walk to the regular parking place.

The snow was too shallow to cause us much of a problem until we got on the talus around 6500 feet. Normally, snowshoes would have been helpful then, but with enough tigers willing to trade off post holing through the crust, only the guy in front was doing any hard work. Up high, the snow got to be about 3 feet deep.

We were on the summit in a little over 4 hours-at 1330. Because of the cold, wind, and overcast, and because it began to threaten a little, we stayed only a short while and were back at the vehicles by 1600. Joy had turned around early, and his truck was gone.

Telescope Peak Sunday, 21 Dec 97 Bob Rockwell

Al Green, Tom Sakai, Barry Niesen, and I met at the CalTrans parking lot at 0700. Because the weather prediction had been for snow and storm, we didn't know what we would do for sure (maybe just go to Denny's for breakfast). Telescope was obviously out of reach.

The weather channel's early report said that the storm was delayed until afternoon, and it was still clear-though cold and a little breezy-so we thought Rogers was a likely target.

We were able to drive quite a ways past the charcoal kilns to about 7200 feet before the snow stopped us. We hiked up the road to Rogers in good style by noon-then over to Bennett. We took snowshoes, ice axes, and crampons but never needed them. We had beautiful views. We had just a few clouds although the ranges in all directions all

had their problems. It was cold, though; some of the water bottle lids froze tight in spite of being inside our parkas.

Back to the car around 1430 and home by 1630. A nice way to spend the winter solstice.

FROM THE PEN OF

A Sierra Nevada Adventure

by Bob Rockwell

May is a marvelous time for snow climbing in the Sierra. A few years ago, I spotted a beautiful sustained 1000-foot snow face-among the finest I have encountered in the range. It is nestled on the north face of a peak located between Echo Col and Mt. Powell, and one must climb above Echo Lake to see it. On the 15-minute quadrangles, the peak is not named and does not show an elevation; a figure between 13,360 and 13,440 feet is suggested.

A reconnaissance trip into the area two weeks earlier told us what the snow conditions would be like, and now the time had come. Tom Roseman and I, joined by frequent CLMRG climbing guests Tom and Sigrid Sexton from Orange County, found ourselves at the cool and breezy Lake Sabrina parking lot on Saturday, May 24. We brought ropes and snow pickets and-since there was steep rock above the snow-some rock protection as well.

In spite of good progress hiking in on the spring snow, we could not resist stopping at a fine campsite-with large trees and boulders to provide a windbreak and an expanse of dry sand for our sleeping bags-near Topsy Turvy Lake.

On Sunday, we were on our way at 0700. May in the Sierra is not like May in Ridgecrest! It got colder and windier as we walked across frozen Echo Lake. The snow was much harder than two weeks earlier. It was still secure for easy cramponing, but an arrest would be difficult. As we climbed, we were happy that the slope was not so steep as it had appeared-about 35 degrees down low and 45 degrees or so at the top. The ropes were not necessary.

At noon, we reached the saddle just west of the summit. The elevation was just over 13,000 feet.

It was below freezing, and the wind was blowing about 30 mph for a wind chill factor well below zero. With these conditions, and not knowing what the remaining rock held in store, we carried the hardware on up. But the summit turned out to be only about 200 feet higher over easy class 3 terrain.

The top was entirely free of snow, and we spent quite a bit of time looking for a register or other evidence of someone having been there before. We found nothing. A first ascent? Hard to believe.

We built a small pile of rocks and left a Band-Aid can register.

Sigrid brought out a new 7.5-minute quad (not allowed in my house), and our snow face was very obvious on it. On this map, the peak not only has a specific elevation-13,364 feet-but a name: Mt. Powell.

Now on the 15-minute map, Mt. Powell is shown as a slightly lower summit a quarter-mile to the east. So the question is, is the old map correct and we climbed an unnamed peak, or does the new map correct an error on the old one?

The possibilities are interesting. At best, we made the first ascent of a major Sierra Nevada peak

(a remarkable feat in 1997!)-a 13,000-footer on the crest of the Sierra named for famed explorer and scientist John Wesley Powell. At worst, ours was nonetheless a fine snow climb of a still significant unnamed Sierra peak with only a couple of ascents preceding ours. The truth? Probably somewhere in between.

In any event, we proved once again that there can be adventure, challenge, and reward by venturing off the beaten path.

ON THE MOVE

Long-time CLMRG member **Larry Seibold** and Alameda County SAR member **Stacey Carlson** were married on Dome Rock in the Sequoia National Forest on September 13, 1997. Many CLMRG members attended the ceremony performed by Al Green, another long-time member and leader. Von, Stacey's search dog, was the ring bearer and presented the rings on a satin ring pillow. The newlyweds will live and

work in San Jose and plan to end up eventually in Bend, Oregon. Congratulations and Good Luck!

Member **Mike Dorey** has run off to Boulder, Colorado to write space physics and atmospheric software for the University of Colorado and to enjoy all the outdoor activities that are available there.

1998 COMMITTEES

Tom Sakai

PUBLIC EDUCATION T. Mitchell (Chair), Schmierer, C. Burge

SHERIFF'S OFFICE Green (Chair), Myers, Sakai

EMERGENCY SERVICES COUNCIL Finco (Chair)

SUMMER CLASS, Schafhauser (Lead Instructor), A. Mitchell, Green, Runkle, Breitenstein, Hueber, McCormick

TRAINING Hueber (Chair), Renta, Breitenstein

ASTM D. Burge (Chair)

FIRST AID Schafhauser (Chair), Antonsen, Ferguson, Rindt, Westbrook

EQUIPMENT Huey (Chair), B. Niesen (Quartermaster), Creusere, Finco, Hueber, Renta, Runkle

WEB SITE HOME PAGE; J. Westbrook (Chair)

QUALIFICATIONS; Roseman (Chair), Myers, A. Mitchell

THE TALUS PILE; Castro (Editor)

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DONATIONS

Gina Najera-Niesen

CLMRG gratefully acknowledges recent gifts from the following friends:

Russ and Edith Huse Westlake Village CA

Mr. and Mrs. Robert Dow Chevy Chase MD "To remember Robby Dow"

James K. Wilson Inyokern CA

Lois & Ross Adamsen North Salem NY "In memory of Carl Heller"

Clifton J. Chandler Ridgecrest CA

Bryson Van Gundy Jr Sterling CO

John J. Olley Dunsmuir CA

SCREE

Check our web page at <http://www.clmrg.org>.

All telephone numbers in *The Talus Pile* are area code 760 unless noted otherwise.

A committee headed by Al Green is planning CLMRG's **40th Anniversary Celebration** for **Saturday and Sunday, October 24 and 25, 1998** at the Carriage Inn in Ridgecrest, California. More details later.

The sun, with all those planets revolving around it and dependent on it, can still ripen a bunch of grapes as if it had nothing else in the universe to do.

-Galileo

Jan 28, 1998

html by Janet Westbrook

