

China Lake Mountain Rescue Group

The Talus Pile

February, 2001 #117

TRAINING SCHEDULE

Feb 10-11 Sat-Sun Avalanche lecture and rescue practice Runkle
Feb 12 Mon Meeting (Radios--Finco) Sakai/Doerr/Myers
Feb 16-19 Fri-Mon Whitney Runkle
Feb 19-22 Mon-Thu Pear Lake Hueber
Feb 24-25 Sat-Sun Introduction to winter mountaineering Sakai
Mar 3-4 Sat-Sun CRMRA technical recertification Roseman
Mar 10-11 Sat-Sun Spanish Needle Green
Mar 12 Mon Meeting (First Aid kits--Schafhauser) Huey/C. Burge/A. Mitchell
Mar 14 Wed Rock skills Hinman
Mar 16-18 Fri-Sun Charleston Roseman
Mar 24-25 Sat-Sun Winter skills Runkle
Mar 30-Apr 1 Fri-Sun Peak 13259, Pinchot Sakai
Apr 3 Tue First Aid Topic A Schafhauser
Apr 7-8 Sat-Sun Olanca, SE Couloir Myers
Apr 9 Mon Meeting (GPS--Hinman) Hinman/Renta/D. Burge
Apr 10 Tue First Aid Topic A Schafhauser
Apr 13-15 Fri-Sun Grand Canyon Traverse Roseman
Apr 17 Tue First Aid Topic A Schafhauser
Apr 21-22 Sat-Sun Tunnabora from Hogback Creek Rockwell
Apr 24 Tue First Aid Topic A Schafhauser
Apr 27-29 Fri-Sun Peak 13520, The Thumb Rockwell

SUNDAY ROCK CLIMBING coordinated by Bud Gates

CLMRG is funded in part by United Way of Indian Wells Valley.

GROUP OFFICERS for 2001

The members present at the 11 December 2000 meeting elected the following officers for 2001:

President Tom Roseman

Vice President Bob Huey

Secretary Elaine Riendeau

Treasurer Werner Hueber

MRA Representative Walter Runkle

The members present at the 8 January 2001 meeting elected the following to the **Qualifications Committee** for 2001:

Tom Sakai (Chair and Operations)

Mike Myers (Activities)

Bob Rockwell (Roster and New Members)

President Roseman has appointed members to the several committees as follows:

PUBLIC EDUCATION

Gina Najera-Niesen (Chair)

Terry Mitchell

Carol Burge

Bob Rockwell

Mary Schmierer

TRAINING

Curtis Davis (Chair)

Walter Runkle

Debbie Breitenstein

Bob Huey

EQUIPMENT

Dave Doerr (Chair)

Werner Hueber

Eric Toler

Mike Renta

Paul DeRuiter

SHERIFF'S OFFICE

Tom Sakai (Chair)

Al Green

Tom Roseman

ASTM

Dennis Burge

FIRST AID

Ellen Schafhauser (Chair)

Debby Breitenstein

Bill Ferguson

Andy Mitchell

Gina Najera-Niesen

Janet Westbrook

QUALIFICATIONS

Tom Sakai (Chair & Operations)

Mike Myers (Activities)

Bob Rockwell (Roster)

EMERGENCY SERVICES COUNCIL

Linda Finco

SUMMER CLASS

Bud Gates (Chair)

Bob Huey

Andy Mitchell

Tom Roseman

Barry Niesen

Al Green

Debbie Breitenstein

WEB PAGE

Janet Westbrook

STORES

Carol Burge

THE TALUS PILE

Loren Castro (Editor)

Sheila Rockwell

The desert at night is a great open-air dome, the largest bedchamber in the world.

--Carlos Fuentes

2000 COMMITTEE REPORTS

Qualifications Committee

Tom Sakai

Summary of operations

Incidents: 1; Alerts: 1; Mobilizations: 1; Transits: 0; Searches: 3; Rescues: 1;
Recoveries: 0

Total: 7

Operations by month

Jan: 0; Feb: 0; Mar: 0; Apr: 3; May: 1; Jun: 1; Jul: 0; Aug: 0; Sep: 1; Oct: 1; Nov: 0;
Dec: 0

Requesting agencies

Inyo County: 2; Kern County: 1; Mono County: 1; Riverside County: 1;
San Bernardino County: 1; Shasta County: 1

Subject outcomes

Found uninjured: 3; Found injured: 2; Not found: 3*; Total: 8

*Two of the subjects were found dead some time after the initial searches.

Group data

Callouts: 7; Total hours expended: 917; NAWC excused hours: 0;

Total vehicle miles: 3145; Average number of members per callout: 7.5

Equipment Committee

Werner Hueber

Members: Werner Hueber (Chair), Paul DeRuiter, Dave Doerr (Quartermaster), Al Green, Bob Huey, Mike Renta, and Elaine Riendeau.

We met at the beginning of the year to assign the various maintenance and repair jobs for our equipment. The major repair effort was replacing the cable for the antenna on top of the mast at the hut. (Thank you, Phelps TerHeun, for helping Paul.)

In the fall, many Group members helped with cleaning up the yard around the hut and vacuuming and sweeping the hut floor.

The major purchases were new batteries for the power drill and five new ropes.

The Sheriff provided us with two new digital cellular phones.

The difficult raising of an injured climber on the east face of Mt Whitney prompted us to evaluate the French Rescue Hoist, which one of us had seen at the Technical Rescue Symposium. We contacted the Zion National Park Rescue Rangers who had purchased this hoist. They generously agreed to travel to Red Rock Canyon near Las

Vegas and demonstrate the hoist and let us try it. They also demonstrated the Arizona Vortex, which can function as a tripod or an A-frame to establish a high anchor point and thus make the problem of getting a rescue load over the edge a lot easier and safer. A committee of senior Group members and leaders will evaluate these two devices and make a recommendation to the Group.

Training Committee

Walter Runkle

For the calendar year 2000, CLMRG members participated in more than 20 scheduled training events that totaled more than 92 hours. (This does not include First Aid and CPR classes, which are covered in another report.) This training was done on weeknights, weekends, as part of regularly scheduled trips, and before the monthly meetings. Training was taught both by qualified members of the CLMRG and by paid experts outside the Group, such as John Moynier in his avalanche class. Training was done as a Group activity and in conjunction with other Search and Rescue organizations, such as Zion and Las Vegas Municipal Search and Rescue. Training included, but was not limited to, the following:

Emergency Locator Transmitter (ELT) lecture and practice (3 hours)

Radio operation and programming (1 hour)

Avalanche transceiver practice (8 hours)

Avalanche lecture and movie (1 hour)

Team tracking and search recertification-MRA requirement (8 hours)

Noon tracking (8 hours)

Night sign cutting (2 hours)

Mock search exercise (8 hours)

Map and compass lecture (1 hour)

Global Positioning System (GPS) practice (1 hour)

Stretcher lowering lectures (6 hours)

Stretcher rigging, raising, and lowering (24 hours)

Stretcher raising systems (1 hour)

Stretcher Winch and Vortex System (4 hours)

Knots for climbing (1 hour)

Knots for stretcher rigging (1 hour)

Technical rock skills-ascending and descending (6 hours)

Belay practice (2 hours)

Operations etiquette (1 hour)

In addition, each member of the Technical, Rescue, and Support categories is required to climb, at a minimum, three mountains and to make one overnight mountaineering trip every year. As a result, members climbed more than 34 different desert and Sierra

peaks and one peak in Mexico (Picacho del Diablo). Members also went on numerous technical rock climbing trips and climbed routes of various difficulties.

Public Education Committee

Terry Mitchell

Activities

4/12/00 Mojave Primitive Encampment 66 girls, 3 adults; 7 CLMRG members

6/3/00 Balsam Street Faire Static Display & Information for Local community; 12 CLMRG members

Hug-a-Tree presentations

Apr 14 Rand Elementary 12 Terry Mitchell, Andrew Mitchell

May 9 Faller Elementary K-5 492 Linda Finco, Tom Roseman

May 12 Las Flores Elementary K-5 532 Terry Mitchell, Bud Gates

May 19 Richmond Elementary 96 Terry Mitchell, Al Green
Special Education

May 19 Richmond Elementary K-5 368 Terry Mitchell, Al Green, Jeannette Rudy

May 26 Gateway Elementary K-2 ..240 Terry Mitchell, Karen Botham

Jun 1 Pierce Elementary K-5 400 Linda Finco, Tom Sakai

Jun 2 Inyokern Elementary K-5..264 Linda Finco, Bud Gates

Total Number 2,404

Combined Federal Campaign donors

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Karen Botham

MEMBERS ON THE RUN

Editor: The Over the Hill Track Club (OTHTC)--a popular local social club--offers and participates in some unusual foot races each year. These activities seem to appeal to several members of CLMRG. This is a summary of the racing accomplishments of our members last year as reported in OTHTC's newsletter THE ROADRUNNER.

San Gabriel Mountain 50K (29 Jan 00)

Andrew Mitchell 7:28:30

Los Angeles Marathon (5 Mar 00)

Mark Lambert 4:25:52

Curtis Davis 4:25:54

American River 50-Miler (1 Apr 00)

Andrew Mitchell 11:34:27

Rademacher Ridge Run 10-Miler (8 Apr 00)

Elaine Riendeau 1:40

Marine Air Detachment (MAD) Dash 10K (22 Apr 00)

Elaine Riendeau 50:14

Andrew Mitchell 54:43

Dennis Burge 57:24

Mikie's Masochistic Trail Fun Run (29 Apr 00)

Elaine Riendeau 1:50:55

Andrew Mitchell 2:02:11

Dennis Burge 2:12:03

Inyokern 10-Miler (6 May 00)

Elaine Riendeau 1:18:44

Dennis Burge 1:30:01

Wild Wild West Marathon XXII (7 May 00)

Mark Lambert 5:30:41

Marine Volkslauf Mud Run 10K (23 Sep 00)

Bakersfield, CA

By Mark Lambert

Curtis Davis (team captain), Dan Goriesky, Andrew "Mitch" Mitchell, and Mark Lambert competed as a team in the Marine's Volkslauf Mud Run held at the Sheriff's complex north of Bakersfield. All four team members had to start and finish together. Dan's wife, Amy, also competed with another team made up of her family members. Several hundred people showed up early that Saturday morning in the flat farmlands approximately 10 miles north of Bakersfield. The racers formed all-male, all-female, and co-ed teams. After singing the National Anthem and listening to a rousing bagpipe rendition of the Marine Corps Hymn, they were set to start. From the start/finish line, they could see many ominous obstacles in the distance. One was a 100-foot long mud ditch of unknown depth. No one seemed willing to venture into the ditch before the race started to see how deep it was. It really didn't matter because by the time the racers reached that particular mud ditch, they were already so muddy and slimy and tired that it was just one more thing to wallow through before the finish. The course was approximately 10K in length with many serious obstacles consisting of mud pits and ditches, fences, rope swings, rope traverses, and a 20-foot high wall. It was reported that there were 60+ obstacles although it was probably more like 30, which was still a significant number of things to deal with. It gets pretty hard to run after your boots and pants are filled with water and slimy mud.

This is a race where teamwork plays a vital role in competing. The obstacles are such that an individual can have great difficulty climbing over, under, or through without some help from teammates.

Dan characterized the race "as a wallow of a good time!" Curtis said he was so happy to be finished that he forgot where he put his beer. Mitch, who routinely runs 50-mile races, said he thought it was a good warm up but was wondering when the real race got started. Mark couldn't be reached for post-race comments because he had found the complimentary massage tables and was repeatedly standing in line for massages. The team finished 17th out of 21 all-male teams in a time of 1:23:40. To their dismay, Kern County Sheriff Carl Sparks and his wheezing sheriff's team were able to beat them out at the end.

Mt. Baldy Peaks 50K Ultra (21 Oct 00)

Andrew Mitchell 11:39:36

OTHTC Half Marathon (18 Nov 00)

Mark Lambert 1:57:10

OTHTC High Desert 30K (10 Dec 00)

Andrew Mitchell 3:11:33
Elaine Riendeau 3:13:35
OTHTC High Desert 50K Ultra (10 Dec 00)
Curtis Davis 5:39:18
Mark Lambert 5:39:18
Tom Sakai 5:58:09

OUTINGS

Loren Castro

Towne Peak

Saturday, 4 October 2000

Four old men and one youth from the Clandestine Climbing Group (CCG) climbed Towne Peak (7287 feet) twice and Peak 7284 once from Towne Pass on State Highway 190 in Death Valley. (The reason for the "Clandestine" part of the group's name is best left unexplained.) The climbers were Bob Rockwell (Ringleader), Al Green, Dennis Burge, Tom Sakai, and Loren Castro (me).

The climb involved about 10 miles of foot travel and about 4000 feet of total elevation gain and was all cross country from the highway. Traversing from Towne Peak to Peak 7284, we skirted another lesser lump in the landscape, but--ever adventurous--we climbed it also on the way back. (We figured we bagged three summits that way.)

We got fairly close to a wrecked airplane that went down in the '60s.

One of the goals of the outing was to assess the likelihood of getting to Panamint Butte from this direction as a day trip. We decided not to attempt it on this day, but we considered possible approaches from both Towne Peak and Peak 7284. The consensus was that the better route was the more direct approach from Towne Peak, which seemed to involve a shorter distance and less elevation drop and gain.

To the best of my knowledge, this was the climb where fun-loving Tom dreamed up the Geriatric Section (GS) appendix to our official group name. Thus we became the CCG GS+1. Tom, at the tender age of 55, was of course the +1. Our total age was 321 years, and our average age was 64 years.

Owens Peak

Saturday, 25 November 2000

Thirteen of us climbed Owens Peak (8453 feet) from Wedding Rock (~5200 feet) in Indian Wells Canyon just west of Inyokern. We were an oddly assorted bunch. (No,

really.) Some hard-core mountaineers, some flatlanders, some in-betweeners. All with a connection to CLMRG. Karen Bothom, an enthusiastic short-term member of the Group, who organized the climb to celebrate her imminent move to Virginia Beach. Rick Bothom, Karen's husband and an F/A-18 pilot stationed at China Lake. David Botham, Karen and Rick's young son. Frank Buffum, who had retired as an engineer from China Lake and from the Group and had started a second career as a physician's assistant. Mark Buffum, Frank's son. Carol Burge, a long-time member as an in-town coordinator. Dennis Burge, a long-time member. Bobby Burge, Carol and Dennis's son. Al Green, Tom Sakai, and Daryl Hinman, all long-time members and leaders. Lisa Bennett, a recent graduate of our summer mountaineering class. And Loren Castro (me), member.

I, at 68, was the oldest by three months over Al. David, at 6 11/12, was the youngest. It was a nice day for a climb--clear and warm enough for light clothing but cool enough to make it pleasant. The fastest among us reached the summit in less than three hours--the slowest in a little more than three hours.

Reading the register at the summit is always fun; it took a long time for all of us to enjoy it. I like to print my name followed by "CLMRG" in summit registers. On this trip, I signed in first. When the register came back to me, I saw that Tom--ever the cut-up--had added "GS" after my name. "GS" (for "Geriatric Section") is the term Tom has dreamed up for the elders in the Group.

We decided to take the so-called shortcut down. Because none among us actually knew the shortcut route, it took rather longer than expected. But we all got out one way or another Just another great hike in our nearby Sierra Nevada.

Corkscrew Peak

Monday, 27 November 2000

The Occasional Peaks Gang (OPG) climbed Corkscrew Peak (5803 feet) from Highway 374 (~2700 feet) in Death Valley. We were CLMRG members Bob Rockwell, Tom Sakai, and Loren Castro (me) and guest Diana Rogers. Diana is the wife of Greg Rogers, who was a member in the late '80s. Greg was supposed to go with us, but he came down with a bug of some sort and wasn't up to it. They live in Colorado at about 7000 feet, and both are active in hiking, climbing, and skiing. Corkscrew is an unmistakable sight from the highway with its bands of dark strata winding around it. It even has its own highway sign to alert tourists. It has no trailhead, though. It's all cross-country with a few stretches of faintly defined trail and many steep pitches of the loose rocks called scree.

Corkscrew is remarkable as a lookout point. We could see Mt. Charleston (near Las

Vegas) to the southeast, Death Valley to the south, Telescope Peak to the southwest, and the Sierra Nevada to the west. We could see both Badwater (-280 feet) and Mt. Whitney (14,495 feet)--the lowest and highest points in the continental United States. Given the roughness of the climb, its popularity is surprising. The summit register records a steady stream of visitors. One fellow, Paul, whose last name was indecipherable, preceded us to the summit earlier that day. We saw no other trace of him all day. (The chances are that he saw or, more likely, heard us and chose to avoid us.)

Madcap Tom continued having fun by writing "GS+2" in the register. "GS" (for "Geriatric Section") indicates respect for the elders, Bob and me, and "+2" honors the two youngsters, Diana and himself.

It was a great climb on a great day.

Skinner Peak

Saturday, 16 December 2000

Ellen Schafhauser led a hike up Skinner Peak (7120 feet) from the trailhead at Bird Spring Pass (5355 feet) on Saturday, 16 December. The Pacific Crest Trail rises gently on switchbacks to where we left it for the easy push to the summit.

On the summit, we found a new notebook in the register can that Greg Vernon had placed there in December 1999. A full year later, we had the honor of being the first to sign it. Although two of us were fully qualified, nobody thought to add GS (for Geriatric Section) by our names.

The climbers were CLMRG members Ellen, Tom Roseman, Al Green, Carol Burge, Debbie Breitenstein, and Loren Castro (me) and guests Herb and Eve Laeger and Howard the Dog.

DONATIONS

Terry Mitchell

CLMRG gratefully acknowledges recent gifts from the following friends:

Mr. & Mrs. Mario Gonzalez Valley Village, California